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Women and Men in Afghanistan

BASELINE STATISTICS ON GENDER

Ministry of Women's Affairs

United Nations Development Fund for Women

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Women and Men in Afghanistan:

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CONTENTS



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
Abbreviations used
List of tables
List of figures
INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1 • <i>Gender and Population</i>	1
CHAPTER 2 • <i>Security, Legal Protection and Human Rights</i>	9
CHAPTER 3 • <i>Leadership and Political Participation</i>	19
CHAPTER 4 • <i>Economy, Work and Poverty</i>	29
CHAPTER 5 • <i>Health</i>	35
CHAPTER 6 • <i>Education</i>	47

CONCLUSION
References
Appendices
End Notes

Abbreviations used

ADB	Asian Development Bank	IMR	Infant Mortality Rate	TAF	The Asia Foundation
AIHRC	Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission	ISAF	International Security Assistance Force	TFR	Total Fertility Rate
ANA	Afghan National Army	IWGGG	Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Gender and Statistics	U5MR	Under Five Mortality Rate
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy	MAPA	Mine Action Program for Afghanistan	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ANDSS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy Secretariat	MDGs	Millennium Development Goals	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
ANP	Afghan National Police	MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
AWBF	Afghan Women's Business Federation	MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
CDC	Community Development Council	MOE	Ministry of Education	UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
CEVAW	Commission on Violence Against Women	MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education	UNMACA	United Nations Mine Action Center for Afghanistan
CG	Consultative Group	MOJ	Ministry of Justice	UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
CIPE	Centre for International and Private Enterprises	MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs	UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes
CPHD-KU	Center for Policy and Human Development - Kabul University	MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development	UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
CPR	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate	NAPWA	National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan		
CSO	Central Statistics Office	NGOs	Non Government Organizations		
DHS	Demographic Health Survey	NHDR	National Human Development Report		
EMINE	Electronic Mine Information Network	NRVA	National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment		
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	NSP	National Solidarity Program		
GDI	Gender Development Index	PPP	Purchasing Power Parity		
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	RALS	Rapid Assessment of Learning Spaces		
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure	SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation		
GNI	Gross National Income	SRS	Sample Registration System		
GTZ¹	German Technical Cooperation				
HPI	Human Poverty Index				
IAB	Independent Appointments Board				
IANDS	Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy				
IDP	Internally Displaced People				
IDU	Injectable Drug Users				
INGO	International Non-governmental Organization				

List of tables

1.1	Settled population of Afghanistan by five year age groups and sex, 2005
1.2	Total settled population of Afghanistan by provinces and sex, 2005
1.3	Assisted returned refugees from March 2002 to December 2006, by sex
2.1	Assisted returned internally displaced persons by sex, Afghanistan, 2002-2006
2.2	Number of people injured in Afghanistan by landmines and UXOs
2.3	Number of people killed in Afghanistan landmines and UXOs
2.4	Number of schools attacked, looted, burned down or destroyed from July 2005 to February 2007 in Afghanistan by types of schools
2.5	VAW in Afghanistan, cases registered in the Legal Department of MOWA in 2005 to 2006
2.6	VAW in Afghanistan, cases registered in AIHRC, 2006
2.7	Number of police personnel in Afghanistan as of July 2007 by sex and rank
2.8	Proportion of women and men as judges, attorneys, and prosecutors in Afghanistan
2.9	Number of women and children in shelters in Afghanistan, 2006
2.10	Number of girls and boys in Juvenile Rehabilitation Centers
2.11	Number and percent of detainees and prisoners in Afghanistan, as of 15 April 2007
2.12	Influence and decision making in jirgas and shuras
2.13	Percentage of access to sources of
3.1	Regular government employees by ministries and departments by sex,

¹ Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit

List of figures

3.2	Contract workers in Afghanistan by ministries and departments by sex, 2006	5.3	Health facilities under the MOPH in Afghanistan as of June 2007	No.	TITLE	5.6	Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia
3.3	Proportion of female and male regular government employees by level of education in Afghanistan, 2007	5.4	Health personnel under the MOPH in Afghanistan by sex and position as of 18 June 2007	1.1	Sex ratios in settled population by five year age groups, Afghanistan 2005	5.7	Contraceptive prevalence rate in Afghanistan and five other countries in South Asia
3.4	Level of education of female and male contract workers in the Afghan government, 2006	5.5	Health facilities and health personnel in Afghanistan by year	1.2	Percentage of total population by five year age groups and sex, Afghanistan 2005	5.8	Population with access to improved water source in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia, 2004
3.5	Proportion of females and males appointed in decision making positions grade 1 and above Afghanistan in 2005/06	6.1	Number of girls and boys in primary schools in Afghanistan, 2005	1.3	Population by broad age groups in Afghanistan and five countries of Asia in 2005	5.9	Population with access to improved sanitation in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia, 2004
3.6	Proportion of women as members of the National Assembly, 2007	6.2	Number of girls and boys in secondary and high schools in Afghanistan, 2005	1.4	Age dependency ratios per 10 working age population and five other countries of South Asia, 2005	6.1	Adult literacy rate by sex in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia, 2004
3.7	Proportion of female and male candidates in the national election in 2005	6.3	Number of university students by university and by sex in Afghanistan, 2006	3.1	Gender related Development Index in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia, 2002	6.2	Literacy rates of 15-24 year olds by sex for urban, rural, nomadic and national populations in Afghanistan, 2005
3.8	Number of staff by rank and sex in one private daily newspaper in Kabul, April 2007	6.4	Number of university students who graduated in Afghanistan in 2005 and 2006 by university and by sex	4.1	Per Capita GNI in Afghanistan and five other countries of Asia, 2004	6.3	Net primary enrollment ratio by sex for urban, rural, nomadic and national populations in Afghanistan, 2005
3.9	Number of staff by sex and rank in one private television in Kabul, April 2007	6.5	Number of students enrolled in technical and vocational schools in Afghanistan by sex in 2005	4.2	Per capita GDP PPP adjusted in US\$ in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia, 2002	6.4	Gross secondary enrolment ratio in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia, 2004
3.10	Number of Community Development Councils in Afghanistan by province and members in these CDCs by sex as of March 2007	6.6	Overall literacy rate for population aged 6 years and above by province and by sex in Afghanistan, 2005	4.3	Human Poverty Index in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia, 2002	6.5	Gross tertiary enrolment ratios in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia, 2004
5.1	Maternal Mortality Ratio, Total Fertility Rate and births attended by skilled health personnel in Afghanistan by province	6.7	Overall literacy rates in Afghanistan for 6 years old and above	4.4	Economically active population by sex in Afghanistan and five other countries in South Asia	6.6	Percent of pupils starting grade 1 who reached grade 5 in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia, 2003
5.2	Top ten causes of death in Afghanistan, 2002	6.8	Number of school teachers in general education in Afghanistan by province and by sex in 2005	5.1	Life expectancy at birth for females and males in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia, 2004	6.7	Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia
		6.9	Number of university teachers by university and by sex in Afghanistan, 2006	5.2	Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births in Afghanistan and five other countries in South Asia, 1990 and 2004	6.8	Ratio of literate women to men aged 15-24 in Afghanistan and four other countries of South Asia, 2000-2004
				5.3	Under 5 Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia		
				5.4	Maternal Mortality Ratio per 100,000 live births in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia, 2000		
				5.5	Total Fertility Rate in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia, 2004		

iNTRODUCTION

The status of Afghan women is one of the lowest in the world. Despite a slight increase in its GDI since NHDR 2004, Afghanistan still ranks below all other countries but Niger (0.292). Although this is generally accepted in Afghanistan, the absence of hard facts has made it difficult during the past six years to bring women's problems into policy and development planning because public discourse and government decisions have to be backed by empirical evidence. Effective development planning depends on statistics that capture the realities of peoples' lives. To be invisible in statistics means to be invisible in policy making, planning and the allocation of resources.

Past experience has shown that, although women and girls constitute nearly one half of the country's population, they can remain invisible in statistics. This is because data collection instruments and analytical capacities are not gender sensitive. This first publication on *Women and Men in Afghanistan: Baseline Statistics on Gender* is therefore an effort to establish a statistical data base that

would help strengthen advocacy, planning and policy making from a gender perspective, especially within government. By putting together and analyzing little-known facts about women and men in Afghanistan, the publication attempts to bring to the fore the realities that marginalize women and girls, make them invisible, and inadvertently lead to discrimination in various aspects of their lives. This handbook provides an initial source of the evidence needed to bring their concerns into public decision making.

The importance of gender sensitive statistics

Statistics that reflect the situation of women and men are called gender statistics. Based on the standards set by the Statistics Division of the United Nations and other professional statistical bodies, they are also simply good statistics. Statistics that are disaggregated by sex are both the backbone of gender statistics and a basic requirement of a gender-sensitive national statistical system. Data that denote gender issues and are specific

to women or men are also an essential element of both gender sensitive statistics and a comprehensive national statistical system. Gender sensitive statistics allow for a systematic understanding of differences in the life situations and needs of women and men. They are essential for monitoring changes in the lives of women and men and for the formulation of appropriate policies, plans and measures that directly address the core of people's difficulties.

The Government of Afghanistan recognizes that existing statistics do not yet meet these requirements. It has committed that *“government data development and monitoring efforts will focus on poverty and vulnerability analysis, disaggregated by population groups, economic status and gender, building upon National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) analysis.”*² Toward this end, the IANDS mandates MOWA and other cross cutting ministries and agencies to *“work closely with Consultative Groups (CGs) to develop monitoring systems that provide data and*

information disaggregated by end-user requirements including gender.”

Background of the publication

Since 2003, the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) has been working with various ministries to promote the collection, processing and use of sex disaggregated statistics in development planning. With the help of UNIFEM and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP), MOWA conducted trainings on gender sensitive statistics and organized an Inter-ministerial Working Group on Gender and Statistics (IWGGS) composed of the statistical units of 13 ministries and two agencies.³ The IWGSS has conducted

² Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (IANDS), p.187

³ The Inter-ministerial Working Group on Gender and Statistics is composed of: 1) Ministry of Justice, 2) Ministry of Public Health, 3) Ministry of Education, 4) Ministry of Higher Education, 5) Ministry of Interior, 6) Ministry of Information, Culture, and Youth, 7) Ministry of Commerce, 8) Ministry of Economy, 9) Ministry of Energy and Water, 10) Ministry of Finance, 11) Ministry of Women's Affairs, 12) Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, 13) Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, 14) Supreme Court, and 15) Central Statistics Office.

various trainings on gender and statistics, and worked for the mainstreaming of gender in the Statistical Master Plan.

The drafting of the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) in 2005 to 2006 resulted in the consolidation of available information and statistics on women and men in the country. MOWA took the initiative of compiling data from 56 studies and publications and used them in developing the Gender Policy Framework which then became the basis for developing an analysis of the situation of women in Afghanistan for NAPWA. Moving the process forward, the Ministry of Women's Affairs, with the help of UNIFEM, the Norwegian and Italian governments, and the members of the ad hoc Technical Advisory Group on Gender and Statistics, produced this first publication to ensure that realities about women's lives are captured by the body of knowledge that inform policy making, planning, programming and budgeting. The statistics in this handbook will serve as baseline information that the development community can use in charting the

direction of their interventions for the female population and in tracking changes in the lives of women and girls in the future. This handbook is only the beginning and has tried to make the most out of data that are available at the moment. It will be revisited after one year and an updated edition will be produced periodically.

Objectives

- To make gender sensitive data and analysis available to as many development actors as possible;
- To establish a common baseline on gender sensitive statistics that government and partners can use in the process of promoting women's advancement and monitoring changes in their lives and status; and
- To facilitate development of capacities for the collection, processing, analysis, dissemination and utilization of gender sensitive statistics for gender-responsive planning and policy making.

Target users

This publication is designed to be used by statisticians, planners, policy and decision makers, budget officers, program developers and implementers, media, teachers, students, NGOs, law makers, researchers and any one who works for social justice and pro-people development.

Overview of key contents

The main body of the publication begins with a gender analysis of data on population. The rest of the chapters follow the six sectoral chapters of the NAPWA, with chapters on security, legal protection and human rights taken together as a single chapter. Each chapter presents the available statistics on women and men in that particular sector. More importantly, it gives an analysis of the statistics from a gender perspective, surfacing the gender

inequalities and calling attention to the issues that must be addressed. Whenever necessary, comparisons were made with countries in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

The publication also informs the reader about essential data that are not yet available, in the hope that such data will be considered in future data collection and analysis.



CHAPTER 1

Gender and Population

The subject of gender and population deals with the relationships between gender and population variables, such as, fertility, mortality, migration, age structure of population, labor force, and size and growth rate of population. In this chapter, however, because of data limitations, only basic and available facts about population in Afghanistan in relation to gender are discussed, such as, size and growth rate of population, location of residence, age and sex structure, sex ratios, dependency ratios, and women headed households.

1.1 Total Population

- The population of Afghanistan may be classified into two: first, is the “settled” population, composed of people who reside in a fixed place, whether in rural or urban areas, and the second is the “nomadic” population, composed of the so-called “*kuchis*” who do not have permanent areas of residence.
- The total population of Afghanistan was estimated at 23.6 million in 2005⁴; composed of 22.1 million settled, and 1.5 million nomadic populations. Of the settled population, 10.8 million (48.8%) were female and 11.3 million (51.2%) were male. This means that for every 100 females, there are 105 males in Afghanistan. This kind of comparison is called the sex ratio⁵. The growth rate of population in Afghanistan was estimated by CSO at 2.03% per annum.

1.2 Population by Sex and Age Groups

- Disaggregating population by sex and age shows demographic patterns in various age groups that may be indicative of problems that policies and programs have to address, both for females and males.
- The profile of the population may be analyzed by sex and age groups, which may be either ‘5-year’ or ‘broad age’ groups. Figure 1.1 of sex ratios for 5-year age groups shows:
 - In the age group 0-4 years, there are more females than males. The natural sex ratio at birth is approximately 1,007 males per 100 females. However, more males than females die in infancy.

Thus the larger number of females may be due to more females being born in Afghanistan or, more likely, more deaths among males in this age group. Measuring infant and under-5 mortality rates for both sexes are necessary to validate the ratio and analyze the causes for such results;

- In the age group 5-24 years, the larger number of males than females may indicate that more females are dying in this age group. However, this should be confirmed by sex disaggregated data on mortality;
- In the age group 25-44 years, the larger number of females than males is likely to be due to higher male casualties during the war;

⁴ CSO, Afghanistan Statistical Yearbook 2006.

⁵ Sex ratio is defined as the number of males per 100 females in a given population. It is calculated by dividing the number of males by number of females, and multiplying the quotient by 100.

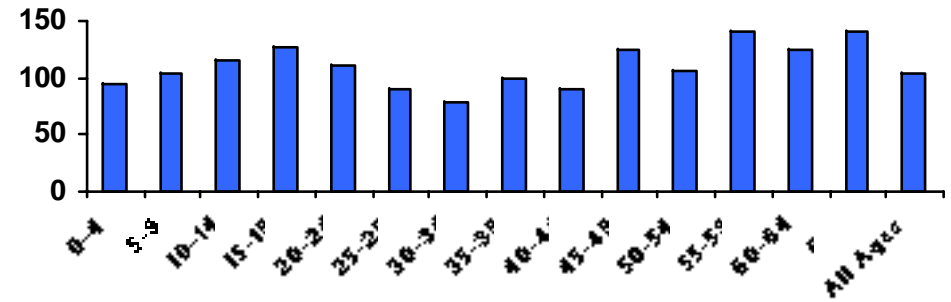
- In the age group 45 years and above, there are more males than females, indicating that men live longer than women, which is contrary to global trends. The causes of this deviation require further study.

Figure 1.2 shows the trend in the total population for females and males by 5-year age groups. Males predominate in all age groups except for 0-4 and 25-44 years.

Table 1.1: Settled population of Afghanistan by five year age groups and sex, 2005						
Age group	Total		Female		Male	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
00-04	4280259	19.4	2201760	10.0	2078499	9.4
05-09	3138903	14.2	1550018	7.0	1588885	7.2
10-14	2614357	11.8	1214921	5.5	1399436	6.3
15-19	2031239	9.2	895609	4.1	1135630	5.1
20-24	1757790	8.0	835104	3.8	922686	4.2
25-29	1382936	6.3	733626	3.3	649310	2.9
30-34	1236885	5.6	690151	3.1	546733	2.5
35-39	1054318	4.8	528672	2.4	525646	2.4
40-44	1078994	4.9	571222	2.6	507772	2.3
45-49	758939	3.4	339504	1.5	419435	1.9
50-54	862440	3.9	416470	1.9	445971	2.0
55-59	492686	2.2	204824	0.9	287862	1.3
60-64	554195	2.5	246982	1.1	307213	1.4
65+	853959	3.9	354606	1.6	499353	2.3
Total	22097900	100.0	10783469	48.8	11314431	51.2

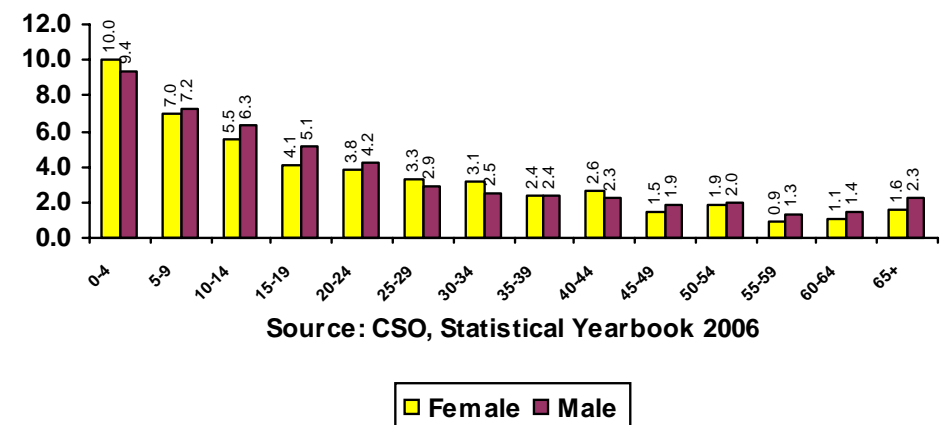
Source: CSO, Statistical Yearbook 2006.

Figure 1.1 Sex ratios (number of males per 100 females) in settled population by five year age groups, Afghanistan 2005



Source: CSO, Statistical Yearbook 2006

Figure 1.2 Percentage of total population by five year age groups and sex, Afghanistan 2005



Source: CSO, Statistical Yearbook 2006

Female Male

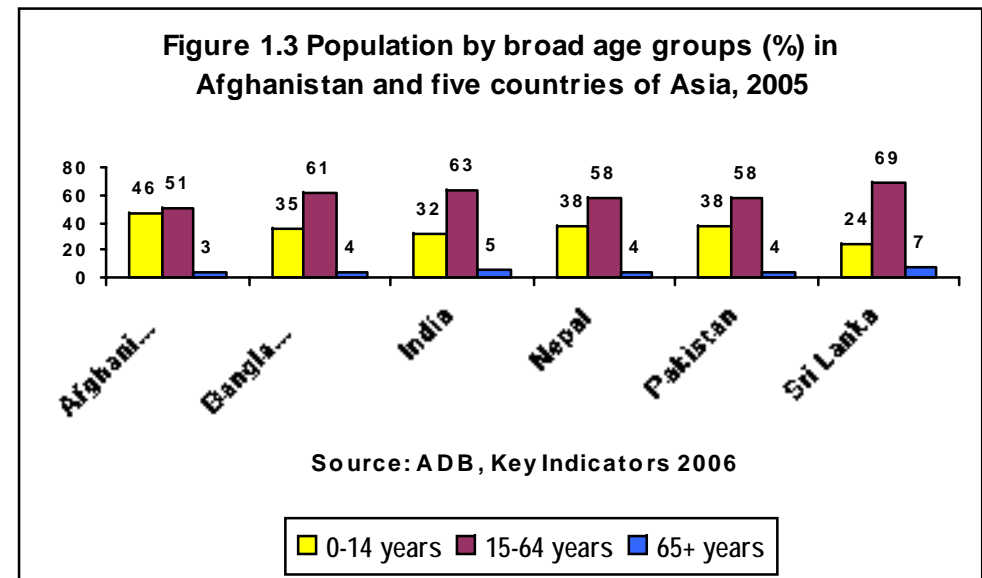
- Dissecting the population by broad age groups⁶ reveals that Afghanistan has one of the highest child populations and the smallest working age⁷ population in the world.
- The child population in Afghanistan (46%) is nearly two times greater than that of Sri Lanka (24%) in 2005 (Figure 1.3).
- A high percentage of children in the population is a direct result of high fertility. Afghanistan's total fertility rate⁸ was 6.3 in 2003 (UNICEF Best Estimates, 2006). Such high fertility combined with illiteracy, poverty, low levels of knowledge on health, and absence of female health care providers and facilities put Afghan women at high risk of mortality.
- A high proportion of children in the population means greater competition for food, clothing and shelter, and for social services like health and education. In cultures where male-preference is pervasive, competition for

limited resources results in serious disadvantage of females, particularly girls.

- Not only is Afghanistan challenged by a high proportion of children in the population, it also has low proportion of people of 'working age' (15-64 years) in the population. In 2005, the proportion of working age population in Afghanistan (51%) was 18 percentage points lower than that of Sri Lanka (69%).
- Among the settled population in Afghanistan in 2005, females and males constituted 24.7% and 26.0% of the total working age population, respectively.
- A high proportion of children and low proportion of people of working age in the population means a high age dependency ratio and a high age dependency burden.

- The age dependency ratio is the ratio of the non-working age population (0-14 years and 65+ years) to the working age population (15-64 years). It can also be obtained by adding the child dependency ratio⁹ and the old age dependency ratio¹⁰.
- In Afghanistan, in case of the settled population, the child dependency ratio was 8.95 persons per 10 working age population. The old-age dependency ratio was 0.76 persons per 10 working age population. Therefore, the age dependency ratio was 9.71 persons per 10 working age population in 2005.

- A child dependency ratio of 8.95 per 10 working age population means that, on average, every 10 persons of working age have to support 8.95 children.
- An old-age dependency ratio of 0.76 per 10 working age population means that every 10 persons of working age have to support 0.76 old-age persons.



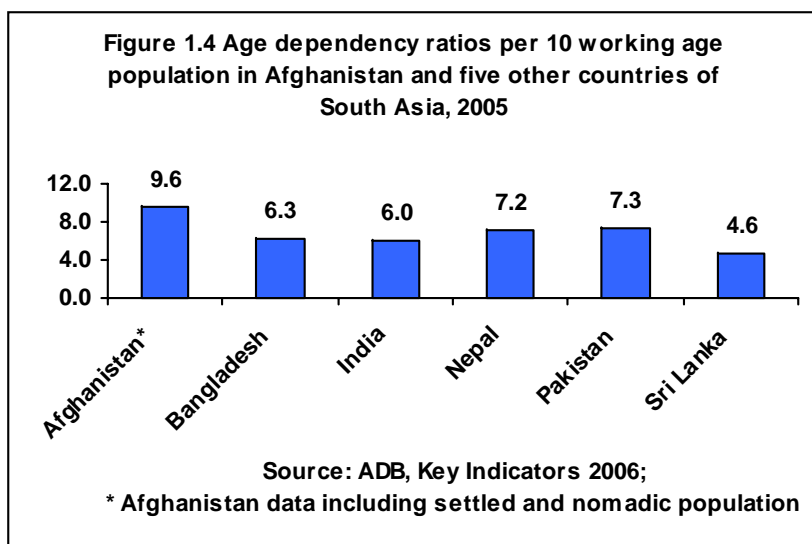
⁶ The broad age groups are 0-14, 15-64, and 65 years and above.
⁷ Working age group is 15-64 years.
⁸ The number of live births per woman of reproductive age group (15-49 years).
⁹ The child dependency ratio per 10 working age population is obtained by dividing the number of persons in the age group 0-14 years by the number of persons in the age group 15-64 years, and multiplying the quotient by 10.
¹⁰ The old-age dependency ratio per 10 working age population is obtained by dividing the number of persons in the age group 65 years and over by the number of persons in the age group 15-64 years, and multiplying the quotient by 10.

- In economic terms, higher child and old-age dependency ratios mean a higher burden on the working age population. A high proportion of children and old age persons leads to a scarcity of resources in poorer families. It is girls and women who become the first victims of such a scarcity.
- Compared to Afghanistan, age dependency ratios were lower in the five countries of South Asia in 2005 (ADB, Key Indicators 2006) (Figure 1.4). For example, the age dependency ratio was 9.6 per 10 working age population in Afghanistan, but only 4.6 in Sri Lanka during the same year. Reduction of age dependency ratio requires corresponding reduction in the birth rate.

- Recent data are not available on economic activity for women and men in Afghanistan. The 1990 data show that only 38.2% of females were economically active¹¹ in the country. During the same year, the proportion of males who were economically active was 88.7%¹²
- The majority of women in Afghanistan are involved only in unpaid household work. The male population therefore largely bears the economic burden of age dependency in terms of their better access to participation in the economy. This problem should be addressed by promoting employment for women and enhancing women's economic productivity through education and training.

- In 2005, among the settled population, there were 5,462,164 women and 5,748,258 men in the age group 15-64 years. Assuming that during this year, 38.2% of women (2,086,547) and 88.7% of men (5,098,705) in the age group 15-64 years were economically active, the estimated number of economically active persons in 2005 for both sexes combined would be 7,185,251. These economically active persons in 2005 had to support 10,887,478 dependents, which meant that 10 economically active persons in 2005 had to support 15.2 dependents. In other words, each economically active person in 2005, whether employed or unemployed, had to support 1.52 dependents.

- Rural population - 17,338,700 (73.5%)
- Urban population - 4,759,200 (20.2%)
- Nomadic population - 1,500,000 (6.4%)
- Nearly 80% of the population lives in the rural/nomadic areas. This poses a challenge to the government to focus on development policies and strategies that are rural based and can be sustained and implemented through the building of local capacities and mobilization of the rural population.
- At an average household size of 7.4 persons at the national level, 7.5 persons for the rural and nomadic populations, and 6.8 persons for the urban populations, as reported by NRVA 2005, the estimated total number of households¹³ is 2,311,827 in the rural, 200,000 in the nomadic, and 699,882 in the urban areas.



1.3 Location, Households and Gender

- The population of Afghanistan is largely rural, representing 73.5% of the total population. The breakdown of Afghanistan's total population by location (according to CSO,2006) is:

¹¹ Economically active persons are those who are employed and those who are unemployed, but looking for job.
¹² ADB Key Indicators, 2006.
¹³ A household is defined as a domestic unit consisting of the members of a family who live together along with non-relatives such as servants. The average household size refers to the average number of persons living in the household in a country or area.

- The NRVA estimates of average household size suggest that, on the average, there are 3 to 4 females and a similar number of males in every household.
- Female headed households¹⁴ comprise a slightly less than 2% of the households (1.8% of the households in rural and nomadic areas and 2.4% of the households in urban areas), according to NRVA 2005.
- Although the percentage of female-headed households is small, the absolute number is still large, at around 41,613 in the rural areas, 3,600 in the nomadic areas, and 16,797 in the urban areas. This is a critical concern that government must address because a significant number of female-headed households do not have any able-earning member and the women themselves have no sustainable income, making them highly vulnerable to economic shocks.¹⁵
- According to Zalesne¹⁶, because of the long drawn war in Afghanistan for 23 years until 2001, there are also an estimated one million widows¹⁷ including an estimated 30,000 to 50,000 in Kabul.

Table 1.2: Total Settled population of Afghanistan by provinces and sex, 2005.
(Population in '000)

Provinces	Total		Female		Male	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Kabul	3,071.6	13.9	1,485.3	6.7	1,586.3	7.2
Kapisa	374.5	1.7	185.5	0.8	189.0	0.9
Parwan	560.8	2.5	277.1	1.3	283.7	1.3
Wardak	506.3	2.3	247.9	1.1	258.4	1.2
Logar	332.4	1.5	163.3	0.7	169.1	0.8
Ghazni	1,040.1	4.7	508.6	2.3	531.5	2.4
Paktika	369.1	1.7	179.7	0.8	189.4	0.9
Paktya	467.5	2.1	228.5	1.0	239.0	1.1
Khost	487.4	2.2	237.8	1.1	249.6	1.1
Nangarhar	1,261.9	5.7	616.1	2.8	645.8	2.9
Kunar	381.9	1.7	186.4	0.8	195.5	0.9
Laghman	378.1	1.7	184.4	0.8	193.7	0.9
Nooristan	125.7	0.6	61.6	0.3	64.1	0.3
Badakshan	805.5	3.6	395.1	1.8	410.4	1.9
Takhar	827.5	3.7	405.5	1.8	422.0	1.9
Baghlan	762.5	3.5	371.7	1.7	390.8	1.8
Kunduz	833.3	3.8	409.3	1.9	424.0	1.9
Samangan	327.7	1.5	159.9	0.7	167.8	0.8
Balkh	1,073.0	4.9	524.2	2.4	548.8	2.5
Jawzjan	452.0	2.0	222.0	1.0	230.0	1.0
Sar-i-pul	472.7	2.1	230.7	1.0	242.0	1.1
Faryab	840.4	3.8	411.5	1.9	428.9	1.9
Badghis	420.4	1.9	205.5	0.9	214.9	1.0
Herat	1,544.8	7.0	762.3	3.4	782.5	3.5
Farah	428.8	1.9	208.9	0.9	219.9	1.0
Nimroz	138.5	0.6	67.7	0.3	70.8	0.3
Helmand	782.1	3.5	380.6	1.7	401.5	1.8
Kandahar	990.1	4.5	482.3	2.2	507.8	2.3
Zabul	257.6	1.2	125.5	0.6	132.1	0.6
Urozgan	297.2	1.3	144.2	0.7	153.0	0.7
Ghor	585.9	2.7	286.6	1.3	299.3	1.4
Bamyan	379.2	1.7	187.0	0.8	192.2	0.9
Panjsher	130.4	0.6	63.7	0.3	66.7	0.3
Daykundi	391.0	1.8	190.2	0.9	200.8	0.9
Total	22,097.9	100.0	10,796.6	48.9	11,301.3	51.1

Note: The percentages of female and male slightly differ in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 because of rounding of numbers in Table 1.2.

Source: CSO, Kabul, Statistical Yearbook 2006.

- These widows, whether heads of households or not, are relatively young, with an average age of only 35 years. Ninety four percent of them are unable to read and write. Around 90% of Afghan widows have children, and many of them are in a great difficulty in supporting their children.¹⁸

1.4 Settled Population in Provinces by Sex

- Understanding the population size of the provinces by sex and age is essential for identifying the development needs of females and males in the provinces, and for the allocation of development funds based on the priority needs of people in these provinces.

¹⁴ A female headed household refers to a household whose head is a female, who is not currently married or living with her husband. In such households, the female heads are responsible for the economic sustenance of their family. Such female heads also make most of the major decisions in household matters.

¹⁵ WFP Rural Poverty Report/2003 NRVA notes that "there is a strong relationship between the sex of the household head and household welfare as follows: female-headed households, defined as such by the households themselves, are more concentrated in the lowest consumption quintiles. Given the constraints that rural women face in Afghanistan ... it is not surprising to find female-households amongst the poorest."

¹⁶ Deborah Zalesne. Beyond the 11th. The Gendered Politics of Water: Stories of Afghan Widows.

[http://www.beyondthe11th.org/Gendered Politics of Water.pdf](http://www.beyondthe11th.org/Gendered%20Politics%20of%20Water.pdf)

¹⁷ A widow is a woman whose husband has died and who has not remarried.

¹⁸ It should be noted, however, that the data on widows cited by Zalesne are only estimates. The proposed Afghanistan census to be conducted in 2008 will provide the actual number of widows and their situation. Yet, in the mean time, the information on widows in Afghanistan provided by Zalesne would help in designing policies and programmes to improve the situation of widows in the country.

- The total settled population and the proportion of Afghanistan by province and sex, as per CSO estimates, are given in Table 1.2. The table shows more males than females in 23 of the 34 provinces of the country. The male population only slightly exceeds the female population in the remaining 11 provinces. The higher number of males in the 23 provinces may have been due to higher female mortality rates attributable to many factors including poor health, weak nutrition, violence against women (VAW) and economic difficulties.

1.5 Returned Refugees

- During the 23 years of civil war in Afghanistan, it is said that up to 6 million Afghans became refugees, especially in Pakistan and Iran. Refugees started returning to the country from early 2002.
- A total of at least 4.5 million refugees returned during the period March 2002 to December 2006. Of these, 80.5% were 'assisted refugees' and 19.5% were 'spontaneously returned refugees' as reported to UNHCR.
- Data disaggregated by sex are available only for the assisted returned refugees (Table 1.3). The proportion of females

among assisted refugees (47.2%) is slightly less than that of the males (52.8%). This may reflect the higher number of males who had become refugees in foreign lands.

- Interventions for returnees, including programmes on health, education, shelter, legal services and economic support, should take into account the different needs of women and men. Data on service recipients should also be disaggregated by sex.

1.6 Data Gaps

- Afghanistan never had a complete census of population. The data used in this chapter are those estimated by the CSO and published in the Afghanistan Statistical Yearbook 2006. The accuracy of these data is limited by the assumptions made by the CSO in estimating them.
- Currently, significant data gaps do not allow for the full examination of relationships between gender and population variables. Further data collection and research is needed in this regard.

1.7 Research Needs

- There is an urgent need for a complete census of the population of Afghanistan. The Census of Population aims to take an inventory of the total population in Afghanistan and to collect sex-disaggregated data and information on demographic characteristics such as fertility, mortality and migration, population size and structure and household characteristics such as average household size. Census data provides government planners, policymakers and administrators with valuable information on which to base their social and economic plans and programs. The CSO plans to conduct a national population census in July 2008.
- Improved implementation of the vital registration system (VRS) is also needed to generate statistics on birth, death, and marriage. Apart from the crucial need for vital statistics of the population, the CSO should also issue certificates of birth, death and marriage that serve as legal documents at the time of need. Gender sensitive analysis of statistics on births, deaths, and marriages per year could also be carried out on the basis of the data generated from the VRS system. At present, the VRS in Afghanistan, located at the Ministry of Interior, is in a very elementary stage

Table 1.3: Assisted returned refugees from March 2002 to December 2006, by sex

Year	Female		Male		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	Number
2002	855,278	46.6	979,259	53.4	1,834,537
2003	214,334	45.1	261,305	54.9	475,639
2004	364,915	47.9	396,207	52.1	761,122
2005	253,956	49.4	260,134	50.6	514,090
2006	69,567	49.8	70,237	50.2	139,804
Total	1,758,050	47.2	1,967,142	52.8	3,725,192

and requires considerable development.

- Complete vital registration systems, however, are expensive. A sample registration system (SRS) would be less expensive, compared to VRS. Therefore, the sample registration system could be implemented to collect, analyze and disseminate data on births, deaths and marriages.
- In addition to a population census and vital registration/sample registration systems, special surveys are needed to collect, analyze and disseminate sex-disaggregated data on the status of women and men in the sectors of health and nutrition, family income and expenditures, family planning, and labor force/employment.
- All individual-level data from these various sources should be disaggregated by sex, as they are needed to understand the extent of gender equality or inequality in society.
- As mentioned above, further data collection and research is needed to discuss the relationships between gender and population variables in Afghanistan. For example, research is needed on the effects of women's empowerment on the age at marriage, age at first birth, fertility, contraceptive

use, proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel, breast feeding, birth spacing, pre-natal, post-natal and during delivery care, infant, child, under five and maternal mortality rates, age structure of population, participation of women in labor market, internal and international migration of women, and size and growth rate of population.

- Demographic and health surveys are also a special kind of survey needed to understand the state of fertility and mortality, as well as health and nutrition, and the factors that influence them.
- There is a need to systematize the collection of other data and information on the population generated by various ministries and other organizations, including:
 - *Administrative data* - data maintained by government and non-government institutions as part of their administrative records;
 - *Service statistics*- data from the services provided through programs and projects of government and non-government institutions; and

- *Secondary data* - data generated by research, assessment or special studies conducted by government, non-government, academic and research institutions as well as individuals on specific themes/areas. •



Security, based on the traditional concept, is defined as becoming free from external and internal threats¹⁹. People, however, do not feel secure from these threats in several provinces of the country, especially in the southern part, because of continuing gun-battles with anti government elements. The country also lags behind most of its neighbors in terms of providing human security²⁰.

The enjoyment of women's rights in Afghanistan remains elusive in spite of the Constitutional guarantee of equality in rights and duties of women and men because of on going armed conflict, cultural beliefs and practices, and the limited capacity of the justice system.

Although gender sensitive statistics are generally unavailable throughout the country, they are even more unavailable in the sectors of Security and Legal Protection and Human Rights. This Chapter attempts to capture the effects of conflict and violence on the lives of women and gives a glimpse of women's participation in justice institutions as well as government initiatives to respect, protect, and fulfill women's rights.

2.1 Concept of Security in NAPWA

- According to NAPWA, "For women, security means being free from intimidation, threats, and violence in both the public and domestic spheres of life, allowing them to freely exercise their rights, and pursue activities that will develop their capacities and lead a full and satisfying life."²¹
- Insecurity in Afghanistan caused by civil war and land mines has led to displacement of a large number of people. In addition, threats against school girls, burning of schools and kidnappings and killings of teachers and students by anti-government forces as well as VAW are causing a great deal of insecurity among women and girls in the country. The threats have also been disrupting the delivery of services in the areas of health, education and income generation, and the effective participation of women in both the political and social spheres.

2.1.1 Internal Displacement of People

- Displacement of people within the country is generally caused by two factors: (1) insecurity due to "fear" of violence and actual violence by armed groups, and (2) insecurity due to "want" of basic needs, such as, food, water, clothing, health, and shelter.
- According to research carried out by AIHRC (2006)²², insecurity due to "fear" caused displacement of 20.9% of the internally displaced persons in Afghanistan. Other factors that led to displacement of people were related to their want of basic needs, such as, housing (39.7%), employment (25.8%), land (5.8%), drinking water (4.0%) and other reasons (3.7%).

¹⁹ Security is defined in terms of traditional and modern concepts. According to the traditional concept, a country's military is responsible for providing security for its people from external threats, while the police force is responsible for providing internal security. The intelligence service helps contain both external and internal threats. The modern concept of security, on the other hand, is based on the principle of "human security".

²⁰ Human security is the complex of interrelated threats associated with civil war, genocide and the displacement of populations. It is about protecting individuals and communities from any form of social, economic, political and cultural violence.

²¹ National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan, p. 27

²² Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Afghanistan in Social and Economic Rights, May 2006, p. 10.

Table 2.1: Assisted returned internally displaced persons by sex, Afghanistan, 2002-2006

Year	Female		Male		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	
2002	176,646	49.0	183,856	51.0	360,502
2003	40,213	49.0	41,854	51.0	82,067
2004	13,422	49.0	13,969	51.0	27,391
2005	4,204	49.0	4,376	51.0	8,580
2006	4,413	49.0	4,593	51.0	9,006
Total	238,898	49.0	248,648	51.0	487,546

Source: UNHCR records, Kabul, unpublished data, May 2007.

■ According to Relief Web, the estimated number of internally displaced persons in Afghanistan was 758,600 on 1st January 2001.²³ During 2002-2006, UNHCR assisted 487,546 displaced persons, including 238,898 (49%) females and 248,648 (51%) males, to return to their homes/provinces (Table 2.1).

■ In February 2007, a total of 63,456 females and 66,047 males remained as residual internally displaced persons yet to be returned to their homes/provinces.

■ Women and girls suffer more, in terms of their basic needs, such as food, shelter, health, education, and others, before, during and after their

displacement. Security should be strengthened, and programmes to improve standards of living need to be initiated in high risk areas to contain displacement.

2.1.2 Land Mines

■ Land mines cause a great deal of insecurity in Afghanistan, one of the most heavily land-mined countries in the world. Some 2,180 communities are affected by more than 700 million square meters of known minefields. More than four million Afghans live in these communities in 32 of the 34 provinces.

■ According to the United Nations Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (UNMACA), the number of people injured due to landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXOs) was 771 in 2005 and 617 in 2006 (Table 2.2).

■ The number of people killed due to landmines and UXOs was 160 in 2005 and 116 in 2006 (Table 2.3).

■ Each month, landmines and UXO killed or injured an average of 61 persons in 2006, that is, approximately two persons every day.

■ Landmines and UXO not only threaten Afghans with death or dismemberment, they rob farmers of their livelihoods and impede reconstruction.

Table 2.2: Number of people injured in Afghanistan by landmines and UXOs

Sex	2005		2006	
	No.	%	No.	%
Female	71	9.2	68	11.0
Male	698	90.5	549	89.0
Unknown	2	0.3	0	0.0
Total	771	100.0	617	100.0

Source: United Nations Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (UNMACA) file.

Table 2.3: Number of people killed in Afghanistan by landmines and UXOs

Sex	2005		2006	
	No.	%	No.	%
Female	13	8.1	11	9.5
Male	146	91.3	105	90.5
Unknown	1	0.6	0	0.0
Total	160	100.0	116	100.0

Source: United Nations Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (UNMACA) file.

²³ <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/AllDocsByUNID/29add271b5b471d085256adb004fd0f1>

- The Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA), established in 1989, employs some 8,000 Afghans across the country. These data are not sex disaggregated.
- So far, the MAPA has cleared about 60% of all contaminated land. Since 1989, the MAPA has destroyed more than 327,216 anti-personnel mines, more than 18,682 anti tank mines, and almost 7 million pieces of UXO.
- In 2006, almost two million Afghans received mine risk education through MAPA's briefings, community meetings, mass communications, mobile theatre and peer-education programmes. MAPWA's clearance and mine risk education efforts have resulted in a 55 percent decrease in the number of Afghans killed or injured by mines or UXO. The government has aimed at clearing land mines and UXOs by 2012.
- Half of the victims of landmines and UXOs in Afghanistan are under the age of 18 years, about 90% are males. Women and girls in rural areas remain within the household compound/farm for cultural reasons. In spite of this, females comprised 10% of landmine and UXO victims.

2.1.3 Number of schools attacked, looted, burned down or destroyed

- Girls in Afghanistan started to go to school after the formation of the new government in December 2001. Prior to that, under the Taliban, they were barred from schooling. Some of the highly conservative families in Afghanistan, especially in the southern and eastern parts of the country, still do not allow their daughters to attend schools.
- A total of 192 schools were attacked, looted, burnt down, or destroyed by the rebels in Afghanistan between July 2005 and February 2007 (Table 2.4). Of these, 75 were primary, 49 secondary and 31 high schools. Type of school was not reported in 37 cases.
- Parents fear sending their children to school, especially daughters, because of such attacks. This type of insecurity and the system of early marriage of girls need to be stopped in order to improve the very low participation of girls and women in education.

Table 2.4: Number of schools attacked, looted, burned down or destroyed during July 2005 and February 2007 in Afghanistan by types of schools

Provinces	Total no. of schools burned	Types of schools burned			
		Primary	Secondary	High	Unknown
Helmand	39	16	14	6	3
Logar	16	2	1	2	11
Ghazni	13	5	5	3	0
Zabul	11	3	2	4	2
Kandahar	11	5	3	1	2
Wardak	11	5	1	4	1
Paktika	10	6	2	1	1
Balkh	9	1	6	2	0
Paktia	8	3	2	1	2
Farah	8	5	1	1	1
Urozgan	5	1	1	0	3
Khost	5	3	1	1	0
Kunduz	5	2	3	0	0
Parwan	4	0	0	1	3
Badakhshan	4	1	1	1	1
Badghis	4	3	0	0	1
Kunar	3	2	0	1	0
Sar-i-pol	3	2	1	0	0
Kapisa	3	0	2	0	1
Ghor	3	2	0	1	0
Kabul	3	1	1	0	1
Nangarhar	3	1	0	0	2
Laghman	2	1	1	0	0
Nimroz	2	2	0	0	0
Takhar	2	1	0	0	1
Jawzjan	1	0	0	0	1
Faryab	1	1	0	0	0
Daykondi	1	0	1	0	0
Nooristan	1	1	0	0	0
Panjsher	1	0	0	1	0
Total	192	75	49	31	37

Source: Ministry of Education, Kabul, May 2007.

2.1.4 Violence against Women

- Violence against women¹ is one of the main security problems for women in Afghanistan. VAW cases are related to physical, sexual and psychological violence.
- According to a study conducted by UNIFEM², out of the 1,327 VAW incidents considered in Afghanistan, 30.7% were related to physical violence³, 30.1% psychological violence⁴, 25.2% sexual violence⁵, and 14.0% a combination of the above-mentioned three types of violence as well as kidnapping and attempted kidnapping.
- Violence against women may be committed by family members, the community or the State. The UNIFEM study reported that a majority of the violence (82%) were committed by family members, compared to 9% by the community, and 1.7% by State authorities. This puts women in a precarious situation because Afghanistan culture dictates that the woman's place is in the home.
- Current data on violence against women are mainly from the MOWA and the AIHRC. It should be noted, however, that there are ongoing efforts within

government and NGOs to systematically record cases of VAW.

- Table 2.5 records cases received and assisted by MOWA in 2005 to 2006. The top three reported cases of VAW are: beating (47.4%), forced marriages (36.1%), and husband not giving economic support (4.7%), which comprised almost 90% of all reported VAW cases.

- Other cases on VAW included: murder, violence through improper behavior (*Khoshonat*), rape, abduction, women's property taken away by husband's relatives, girls' exchange, selling of women and girls trafficking, theft accusations against women, and heritage (property) not received from natal home.

- Table 2.6 shows the number of cases registered in the AIHRC headquarters in Kabul, and its seven regional offices (Herat, Kandahar, Bamyan, Balkh, Kunduz, Nangarhar and Paktia) and three provincial offices (Daykundi, Badakhshan and Faryab) in 2006. Similarly, beating (46.5%), forced marriage (17.8%), and lack of economic support from husband (16.5%) constituted the top three reported cases of VAW.

Table 2.5: VAW in Afghanistan, cases registered in the Legal Department of MOWA, 2005 to 2006

Reported Cases of VAW	Registered Cases	
	No.	%
Beating	1011	47.4
Forced marriage	769	36.1
Husband not giving economic support	100	4.7
Murder	87	4.1
Violence, improper behavior (<i>Khoshonat</i>)	69	3.2
Rape	33	1.5
Abduction	24	1.1
Women's property taken away by husband's relatives	20	0.9
Girls' exchange	10	0.5
Women selling/girls' trafficking	5	0.2
Theft accusation on women	3	0.1
Heritage (property) not received from natal home	2	0.1
Total	2,133	100.0

Source: Ministry of Women's Affairs, Legal Department.

Table 2.6: VAW in Afghanistan, cases registered in AIHRC, 2006

Type of Violence	Cases Registered	
	Number	%
Beating	558	46.5
Forced marriage	213	17.8
Lack of economic support from husband	198	16.5
Property taken away by husband's relative	74	6.2
Murder	50	4.2
Girls exchange	41	3.4
Rape	34	2.8
Prevention of women in social activities	19	1.6
Selling/ trafficking of girls	12	1.0
Total	1,199	100.0

Source: Afghanistan Independent Human Right Commission, Kabul.

²⁴ VAW is defined as "any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life" (BPFA, para.113).

²⁵ UNIFEM, May 2006, Uncounted and Discounted: A secondary data research project on violence against women in Afghanistan.

²⁶ Physical violence included physical assault, physical harassment and murder.

²⁷ Psychological violence included denial of food or basic needs, refusal to communicate, preventing mother from children, physical threats to family, verbal insulting, and threats to kill.

²⁸ Sexual violence included forced marriage, child marriage, forced engagement, forced prostitution, rape, forced sexual intercourse with husband, sexual assault, and refusal to grant divorce.

- Cases of suicide and self immolation/ burning are not included in Tables 2.5 and 2.6. A total of 34 cases of suicide and 106 cases of self immolation by women were registered in MOWA during 2005-2006. Similarly, 14 cases of suicide and 106 cases of self immolation by women were registered by AIHRC in 2006.
- Suicide and self immolation by women in Afghanistan are serious problems, brought about by domestic violence being a common practice in most of the communities. In Kandahar province for example, more than 100 cases were reported during the first eight months of 2006, with at least 64 women attempting suicide and 36 others taking poisons such as rat-killers. (Afghanistan HDR 2007: 58) Thus, it is very important to find out the reasons behind them in order to prevent such acts.
- The above tables report only a few cases of VAW. There are two major reasons for this. First, because the country is patriarchal and traditional, women, especially in the rural and nomadic areas, are not allowed to go alone outside of their home and farm compound unless accompanied by their husbands or a male family member. Therefore, most women in rural and nomadic areas, and even in the cities,

are not able to go outside of their homes to report cases of violence against them.

- Secondly, the elders in the villages and the police, who are mainly men with traditional values, are the decision makers in such cases. Women do not feel that they will get justice and therefore do not report cases to them. Although the number of cases in the tables is small, they show the types of brutality committed against women by family members and others.
- A new form of violence that needs examination is *prevention of women from participation in social activities* because it is a direct contradiction of the government's policy to promote women's participation in all aspects of life.²⁹ Selling and trafficking of girls, while low in percentage terms, is another form of VAW that needs to be monitored.

2.2 State Security Providers

- The Afghan National Police, Attorney General's Office, Ministry of Justice, and Courts are the main organs of the government that handle the security and justice concerns of the people. The Afghan National Army also provides security from internal and external threats.

The number and proportion of women in these services is important for providing security to women. The higher the proportion of women in the security services, the more women would be encouraged to seek justice.

2.2.1 Afghan National Police³⁰

- As of July 2005, there were a total of 75,353 police personnel, including 8,991 auxiliary police in the country. Auxiliary police become eligible for integration into the regular police after three years of satisfactory performance and further training.
- There were only 275 (0.4%) female police personnel in the country as of July 2007. By rank, women police constituted only 0.5% of officers, 2.0% of sergeants, and 0.1% of soldiers. There are no women police in the auxiliary police service. Women constituted 6.5% of administrative

employees and 7.9% of contract workers and cleaners in the police force. Policewomen, however, suffer from systemic gender biases within the police institutions. According to the Afghanistan NHDR 2007, these gender issues include low level of participation of women in the police force, policewomen performing minor support role to policemen, and male-defined organizational and rank structures, policies and standards, trainings, and promotions systems.

²⁹ Strengthening women's participation in all spheres of life is a component of the ANDS gender equity goal.

³⁰ Afghan National Police (ANP) is the main department of the Ministry of Interior (MoI).

Table 2.7: Number of police personnel in Afghanistan as of July 2007 by sex and rank.

Ranks	Female		Male		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	
Officers	93	0.5	17221	99.5	17314
Sergeants	131	2.0	6341	98.0	6472
Soldiers	51	0.1	42525	99.9	42576
Auxiliary Police	0	0.0	8991	100.0	8991
Total	275	0.4	75078	99.6	75353
Employees (Administrative)	32	6.5	463	93.5	495
Contract Workers and Cleaners	484	7.9	5648	92.1	6132

Source: Ministry of Interior, July 2007.

- The above data showed that the number of women in the police service is very small, comprising only 0.4 percent of the total number of police personnel. In 2005, there were only 80 female officers and 84 female sergeants for a total of 164 women in the police force. (Afghanistan HDR 2007: Table 4.4: 83) More women, however, have entered the police force with the numbers reaching 275 as of July 2007, as shown in Table 2.7. Increasing women's representation in the ANP is an imperative because almost half of the population are women. More women suffering from violence will go to police stations to report if there are police women in the stations. Thus, the employment of women in the police is a vital component of improving the accessibility of police services to the female population.

2.2.2 Afghan National Army

- The role of the military is to protect the country's borders and provide security to the people from internal and external aggression. In the Afghan National Army (ANA), there were 43,000 military personnel as of 8 March 2007³¹. Of the total military personnel, only 259 (0.6%) were women, including 122 sergeants and 137 ordinary soldiers³².
- The right to serve in the military is one of the human rights of women. Therefore, the number of women in the ANA should be increased to a reasonable proportion in order to secure this right. An affirmative action policy is necessary to ensure that the percentage of women in the military increases progressively.

2.2.3 Women and men in justice agencies

- According to the Supreme Court, there were 73 female Judges and 1,474 male Judges in Afghanistan as of July 2007. Similarly, according to the Attorney General's Office, there were 76 female attorneys, 1,165 male attorneys, 35 female prosecutors and 511 male prosecutors as of December 2006 (Table 2.8). The Afghanistan 2007 HDR further reported that of the 1,919 total posts in the Ministry of Justice, 1,325 are filled with 1,235 men and 90 women (7.28%).
- Table 2.8 reveals that the proportion of female judges was less than 5% in 2007 and the proportion of females among both attorneys and prosecutors was about 6% in 2006. Further, of the 170 students who completed the 2005 – 2006 judicial stage course, only 12 were women. Similarly, data from the Supreme Court showed that of the 30

women out of the total 365 applications, only 17 women were selected for the same course in 2007. (Afghanistan 2007 HDR:71)

- These low proportions would have adverse consequences to the ability of women to access justice. This is another area where focused targeting and an affirmative action policy should be adopted.

2.3 Legal Protection

2.3.1 Number of cases on violence against women registered vs. acted upon in MOWA

- All of the cases reported to MOWA were said to have been processed. Cases of women being beaten were solved in MOWA, while the rest of the cases were sent to Attorney General's Office and appropriate courts.

Table 2.8: Proportion of women and men as judges, attorneys, and prosecutors in Afghanistan.

Position	Female		Male		Total
	No	%	No	%	
Judges*	73	4.7	1,474	95.3	1,547
Attorneys**	76	6.1	1,165	93.9	1,241
Prosecutors**	35	6.4	511	93.6	546

Sources: * Supreme Court, Afghanistan, data as of July 2007.

** Attorney General's Office, data as of December 2006.

³¹ Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Afghan_National_Army

³² Data provided by the Afghan National Army by telephone.

- Of the women/girls who registered cases on VAW in MOWA in 2006, 46 were referred to shelters, where all reportedly received legal assistance from the Ministry. The Ministry is currently giving legal assistance to 10 women/girls in various shelters.

2.3.2 Centers for Women/Girls in Difficult Situations

- There are no referral centers in Afghanistan for women in difficult situations. A few women in such situations go to MOWA, AIHRC, Women’s Judicial Union or the Assistance Department of the Supreme Court to register their cases, and seek advice and support. Where appropriate, these offices send them to shelters for protection.
- In 2006, there were four shelters in the country for women in difficult situations. Statistics on the number of women and children who were served by three of the four shelters and whose cases were followed up are shown in Table 2.9.
- The number of women served by the three shelters was 105 in 2006. The shelters also supported 59 children. Of the total number of women in the shelters, the court gave final decisions

Table 2.9: Number of women and children in shelters in Afghanistan, 2006.

Shelter	No. of Women	No. of Children (boys and girls)	Total
Shelter 1	64	50	114
Shelter 2	20	4	24
Shelter 3	21	5	26
Total	105	59	164

Source: MOWA Legal Department

on 51 cases in 2006, and these women were reintegrated to their families. The Ministry is currently giving legal assistance to 10 women in shelter. The fact that all these centers are in Kabul underscores the sad reality that women in the provinces suffer invisibly from violence and violation of human rights without any support or recourse.

2.3.3 Girls in Juvenile Rehabilitation Centers

- There is one juvenile rehabilitation centre in each province of the country. However, only 8 are said to be currently functioning. In some cases, children are kept in prisons for adults because of the lack of appropriate facilities. However, children are kept in separate rooms. Boys and girls are also kept in separate rooms.

- There is one fully functioning juvenile court in Kabul. In other provinces, juvenile courts are not fully functioning.
- The numbers of girls and boys in Juvenile Rehabilitation Centers in Afghanistan as a whole (according to Ministry of Justice) and in Kabul only (according to UNICEF) are given in Table 2.10. The table shows a significantly lower number of females in the Juvenile Rehabilitation Centers. It is important to know the causes associated with the confinement of both girls and boys to such centers.

2.3.4 Women and Men in Detention and Prison

- In Afghanistan, there are overwhelmingly more men than women in detention and in prison (Table 2.11). In April 2007, the proportion of men was 98.1% in pre-trial and 96.7% in prison. Although the proportion of female detainees and prisoners is small, there is a need to find out whether majority of the women in prison are actual offenders, and whether they have gone through proper trial.

Table 2.10: Number of girls and boys in Juvenile Rehabilitation Centers

Sex	Source			
	MOJ* (Afghanistan, May 2007)		UNICEF (Kabul only, Feb 2007)	
	Number	%	Number	%
Girls	30	9.4	20	16.7
Boys	290	90.6	100	83.3
Total	320	100.0	120	100.0

Note: * Data collected by UNODC from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), Kabul

Table 2.11: Number and percent of detainees and prisoners in Afghanistan, as of 15 April 2007

Type	Female		Male	
	No.	%	No.	%
Detainees	86	1.9	4,348	98.1
Prisoners	204	3.3	5,952	96.7

Source: Data compiled by UNODC, Kabul 2007

- The government has instituted reforms in the corrections system to address the deplorable conditions of prisoners and detainees, particularly the need for separate housing for women and children that can address their basic needs, such as adequate food, sleeping space, proper ventilation, health care and toilet facilities. Of note is the construction of a new, closed women's facility and a closed juvenile reformatory in Kabul, which, according to the Afghanistan 2007 HDR, are due to be completed in 2007.

2.4 Legal System

2.4.1 Informal Legal System: Jirga and Shura

- Although the Constitution of Afghanistan guarantees equal rights to women and men before the law, women have a weaker legal position in both rural and urban areas, particularly in Family Law³³ and the informal justice system³⁴. Women's access to these justice systems is also very limited, because local tradition prevents women from going to these systems without

being accompanied by their husbands or a male relative.

- As there is no representation of women in the local shuras/jirgas as shown in Table 2.12, women rarely get justice from such systems, which are male-dominated and heavily influenced by patriarchal local traditions. Hence, outcomes of these traditional legal processes can be detrimental to women and girls. Specifically, the Afghanistan 2007 HDR stressed that *baad* (the marriage of a woman from the offender's family to the victim's close relative to settle a dispute), although practiced rarely, is still regarded as a violation of Afghanistan's laws, *Shari'a* and human rights principles.

2.4.2 Formal Legal System

- The formal legal system is also dominated by people who are educated in the traditional systems of law. The traditional system of law is heavily influenced by the patriarchal value system, which seriously disadvantages women.

Most women and men rely heavily on media for information on human rights. In the 2007 survey conducted by the CHPD, local leaders were the second most sought source of human rights information, followed by the Mosque/Mullah and the AIHRC. More women than men, however, sought information from local leaders. A significant percentage of women on the other hand, have not known human rights in the last five years. (Afghanistan 2007 HDR:105). The data confirmed the continued influence of patriarchal value systems on the choice of information sources, but there is also a recognition of other sources of information on human rights available to both women and men (Table 2.13).

Table 2.12: Influence and decision-making in Jirgas and Shuras

Group	Has most dominant role	Has one of two most dominant roles
Ordinary elders (rishsafidan)	63	78
Mullahs	18	48
Local Leaders (khan or malik)	15	46
Commanders	3	17
Women	0	3
Other	1	1
Don't know	0	0

Source: 2007 Afghanistan NHDR

³³ Family law is an area of the law that deals with family-related issues and domestic relations including, but not limited to marriage, divorce, spousal abuse, child custody and visitation, property, alimony, and child support awards, as well as child abuse issues, and adoption.

³⁴ Local shura/jirga, consisting of local elders, who are exclusively men, provide justice informally in the local area.

Table 2.13: Percentage of access to sources of information on human rights by sex		
Source	Women	Men
Media (television, radio, newspapers)	63	65
Local government leaders	3	4
Local elders	11	9
Mosque/Mullah	4	8
Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission	5	6
Haven't received information on human rights in the last five years	11	7

Source: 2007 Afghanistan NHDR, Table 5.4, p. 105

- According to Medica Mondiale (January 2007)³⁵ “The judiciary overwhelmingly tends to hold women responsible for crimes even when they themselves are the victims and cases are judged employing tribal law or traditions instead of codified law. In particular, accusations of zina, or sexual intercourse outside of marriage - irrespective of the truth - are often prosecuted and the woman sentenced to prison, even when she was the victim of rape. As a result, most women avoid going through the courts altogether rather than face the humiliation it will bring them and the perceived dishonour to themselves and their families. In general, there is a serious lack of professionalism within all levels of the judiciary, with

widespread accusations of corruption at all levels and a systematic failure to apply the law in a standardized fashion, particularly with respect to family law cases.”

- In this context, there is a need to recruit more female and male law graduates from modern systems of legal education to provide equal justice to both women and men.

2.5 Data Gaps

- Number of military and administrative personnel in the Ministries of Defense and Intelligence Agencies by sex and rank.

2.6 Further Research needs

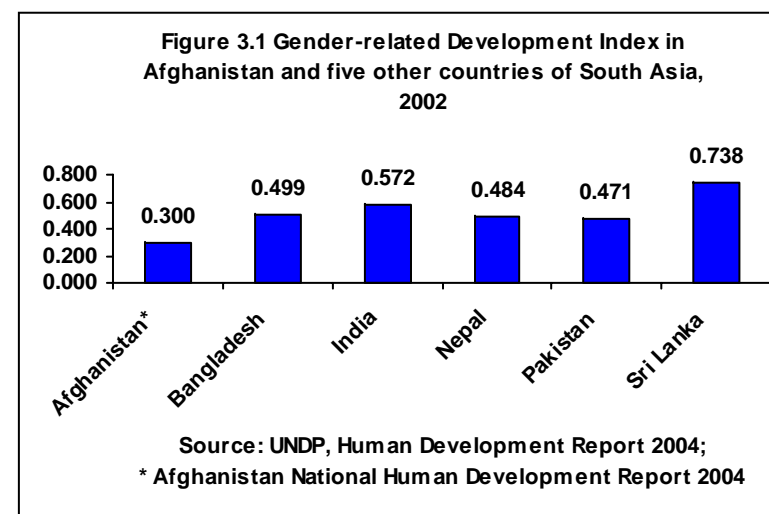
- Research on the gender impacts of the land mines and UXOs clearance programme of UNMACA and other organizations.
- Gender oriented research on the police and military organizations, the systems, procedures and culture to determine policy reforms and entry points to increase women’s participation in these organizations.
- In-depth studies on the impact of school burning by the rebel forces on the psychology of teachers and parents, and on the education of girls and boys.
- A study on the extent and causes of suicide and self-immolation among women and girls.
- A detailed study on legal protection provided to women by governmental and non-governmental organizations.
- Studies of whether the majority of the women and girls in prison are actual offenders, and whether they have been properly tried under the law.
- Research on other potential sources of human rights information for rural women.

³⁵ Medica Mondiale, January 2007, “Women, Peace and Security in Afghanistan, Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, Five Years On: Post-Bonn Gains and Gaps.

The Government of Afghanistan recognizes that women's leadership and participation in all spheres of life, especially in decision, policy, and law making, is both a right and an imperative of democratic governance. This chapter provides data on the participation of women in public life including civil service, Parliament, and media organizations. The analysis provides insights on what else needs to be done to attain the Afghanistan's goal of at least 30% representation of women at all levels.

3.1 Measuring women's empowerment

- Two composite indices are used globally to measure advancements in the life of women. One is the GDI or Gender Development Index. The GDI is a composite of indices from the human development index on (a) a long and healthy life; (b) knowledge; and (c) a decent standard of living – adjusted to account for inequalities between women and men. A higher GDI reflects a higher level of development for women and men as well as a higher level of gender equality.
- Among the countries of South Asia, the GDI in Afghanistan is the lowest. In 2002, it was 0.300 in Afghanistan (Afghanistan NHDR 2004), compared to 0.471 to 0.738 in the other five countries of South Asia (Figure 3.1). The GDI in Afghanistan is also smaller than its human development index in 2002 which stood at 0.346. This means that there is both low level of human development and high gender inequality in the country.



- The second index is the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM). The GEM shows the participation of women in political and economic life. It is computed from the data on: percentage of seats held by women in parliament, percentage of female legislators, senior officials and managers, percentage of female professional and technical workers, and ratio of estimated female to male earned income.
- A low GEM shows that women's participation in political and social life is limited, and that they lack opportunities to make use of their capabilities. The GEM cannot currently be computed for Afghanistan due to the absence of data.

.2 Women and Men in the Government Service

- According to the CSO 2006⁸⁶, there were a total of 295,169 government workers in the country in 2005, including contract workers, but excluding the police and army personnel. Of these, 219,985 (74.5%) were regular government employees and 75,184 (25.5%) were contract workers. Of the total government workers, about one-fourth, i.e., 76,392 (25.9%) were females. This means that there was only one female for every three male government workers in 2005.
- In 2005, there were 68,634 female regular government employees and 151,351 male regular government employees. Thus, there was only one female regular government employee for every two male regular government employees in the country.
- Unpublished data of CSO 2007⁸⁷ reveals that, in 2006, there were a total of 217,444 regular government employees and 88,438 government contract workers in the country, excluding the police and army

personnel. Of the total number of regular government employees, only 48,496 (22%) were females (Table 3.1). This is a significant decline from the number and proportion of females in regular government employment of 68,634 (31.2%) in 2005. The decrease in both the number and the proportion of women in regular government service is attributed to the result of the Priority Reform and Restructuring (PRR) programme which began in Afghanistan in 2005. For the same reason, the number of female workers in government contractual service decreased from 7,758 (10.3%) in 2005 to 6,585 (7.5%) in 2006. The PRR programme obviously had a negative impact on women's employment in the civil service.

- Table 3.1 below shows that, among the total 40 Ministries and Departments in 2006, the proportion of female regular government employees was more than 30% in only two Ministries: (1) Ministry of Women's Affairs, and (2) Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled. The proportion of female regular government employees was less than 30% in 95% of the Ministries and Departments. It may be noted, however, that of the total number of employed females across various ministries, 78% worked with the Ministry of Education. Similarly,

of the total number of males in the government, 68% were employed in the same ministry.

Table 3.1: Regular government employees by ministries and departments by sex, excluding police and army personnel, 2006

Ministries and Departments	Female		Male	
	Number	%	Number	%
Ministry of Women's Affairs	415	67	200	33
Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled	3118	56	2499	44
Ministry of Education	37861	25	115261	75
Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission	57	23	187	77
Ministry of Public Health	2084	22	7278	78
Banks	420	21	1536	79
Administration of Anti Corruption and Bribery	16	21	62	73
Ministry of Communication	291	19	1206	81
Ministry of Higher Education	565	19	2467	81
Ministry of Urban Development	121	18	538	82
Attorney General's Office	460	18	2120	82
Afghan Red Crescent Society	119	16	604	84
Ministry of Economy	71	15	411	85
Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism	309	14	1862	86
Central Statistics Office	78	14	471	86
Academy of Science	39	13	266	87
Ministry of Mines and Industries	251	12	1901	88
Ministry of Defense	46	12	352	88
Ministry of Commerce	264	11	2053	89

⁸⁶ Central Statistics Office, Afghanistan Statistical Yearbook 2006, Kabul, Afghanistan.

⁸⁷ Central Statistics Office, unpublished data collected for Afghanistan Statistical Yearbook 2007, Kabul, Afghanistan.

Geodesy and Cartography Department	48	10	449	90
Ministry of Repatriation and Refugees Affairs	63	10	594	90
Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	288	9	2830	2
Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development	123	9	1211	91
Kabul Municipality	118	9	1178	91
Control and Audit Office	18	8	205	92
National Environmental Protection Agency	15	8	174	92
Supreme Court	226	7	2814	93
Ministry of Finance	210	7	2764	93
Disaster Preparedness Department	8	7	107	93
Secretariat of Ministerial Council	27	7	367	93
Ministry of Water and Power	262	7	3506	93
Ministry of Justice	89	6	1281	94
Ministry of Frontier Affairs	45	6	652	94
General Directorate of administrative affairs and secretariat of ministerial council	21	6	312	94
National Olympic Department	11	6	169	94
Ministry of Public Works	53	5	916	95
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	38	5	774	95
Independent Elections Commission	8	5	142	95
Ministry of Guidance, Pilgrimage and Pious	50	4	1310	96
Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation	164	4	4473	96
Ministry of Counter Narcotics	7	3	208	97
Ministry of Interior Affairs	19	2	1238	98
TOTAL	48496	22	168948	78

Source: CSO, unpublished data collected for Afghanistan Statistical Yearbook 2007.

- Similarly, Table 3.2 shows that, among the total 40 ministries and departments, females constitute more than 30% of contract workers only in MOWA. This implies that, in order to achieve the official target, there is a need for a compulsory affirmative action

programme to increase the proportion of female regular government employees and government contract workers to at least 30% in all ministries and departments within a reasonable period of time.

Table 3.2: Contract Workers in Afghanistan by Ministries and Departments by Sex, 2006				
Ministries and Departments	Female		Male	
	Number	%	Number	%
Ministry of Women's Affairs	99	39	158	61
Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled	545	29	1340	71
Ministry of Higher Education	375	27	985	72
Ministry of Finance	86	25	264	75
Ministry of Public Health	902	22	3107	78
Academy of Science	22	20	90	80
Ministry of Justice	37	15	204	85
Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism	229	15	1305	85
Ministry of Urban Development	73	13	506	87
Ministry of Defense	376	13	2623	87
Control and Audit Office	6	13	42	87
Banks	179	12	1311	88
Central Statistics Office	24	12	184	88
Ministry of Repatriation and Refugees Affairs	48	11	388	89
Ministry of Economy	27	9	287	91
Geodesy and Cartography Department	17	9	181	91
Independent Election Commission	6	9	62	91
Ministry of Education	2334	8	26097	92
Afghan Red Crescent Society	40	8	439	92

National Environmental Protection Agency	8	8	91	92
Attorney General's Office	74	8	860	92
General directorate of administrative affairs and secretariat of ministerial council	32	7	424	93
Ministry of Frontier Affairs	36	6	539	94
Office of Administrative Affairs	33	6	540	94
Ministry of Commerce and Industries	94	6	1580	94
Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development	33	5	606	95
Ministry of Mines	223	5	4520	95
Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission	4	4	91	96
Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation	113	4	2769	96
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	12	4	306	96
Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation	187	4	4946	96
Administration of Anti Corruption and Bribery	1	3	31	97
Ministry of Communication	33	3	1033	97
Ministry of Public Works	49	3	1581	97
Ministry of Counter Narcotics	3	3	97	97
Ministry of Water and Power	136	3	4587	97
National Olympic Department	3	2	120	98
Disaster Preparedness Department	1	2	48	98
Ministry of Interior Affairs	17	1	1632	99
Ministry of Guidance, Pilgrimage and Pious	30	1	5854	99
Kabul Municipality	14	0	8753	100
Supreme Court	0	0	1296	100
TOTAL	6561	7	81877	93

Source: CSO, unpublished data collected for Afghanistan Statistical Yearbook 2007.

Data for both regular personnel and contract workers in government reflected gender stereotyping in employment, where women constitute more than 30 percent of the workforce in ministries associated with women's traditional roles, namely, MOWA and MOLSAMD.

Data provided by CSO also shows that the level of education of both women and men in regular government service is low (Table 3.3). In 2007, more than 40 percent of regular government employees, both women and men, had reached only an upper high school level of education.

Table 3.3: Proportion of female and male regular government employees by level of education in Afghanistan, 2007

Level of Education	Female		Male		Sex Distribution	
	Number	%	Number	%	Female	Male
Private Education	46	0	906	1	5	95
Primary School	5662	12	41066	24	12	88
Technical School	76	0	248	0	23	77
Vocational	1097	2	4065	2	21	79
High School	24202	50	88448	53	21	79
Upper High School	11254	23	16438	10	41	59
Bachelors	5585	12	13977	8	29	71
Masters	504	1	3093	2	14	86
Doctorate	7	0	195	0	3	97
Total	48433	100	168436	100	22	78

Source: CSO, unpublished data collected for Statistical Yearbook 2007

Table 3.4: Level of education of female and male contract workers in the Afghan government, 2006.

Level of Education	Female		Male	
	Number	%	Number	%
Uneducated	2981	7	39763	93
Private Education	557	9	5831	91
Primary School	592	6	8983	94
Technical School	40	8	440	92
Vocational	3	27	8	73
High School	28	10	241	90
Upper High School	0	0	3	100
BA and over	0	0	11	100
Not Reported	2384	36	26097	32
Total	6585	7	81377	93

Source: CSO, unpublished data collected for Statistical Yearbook 2007

proportion of women in the General Directorate shows that an affirmative action policy could increase women's

participation and could be projected as a model for other agencies.

Table 3.5: Proportion of females and males appointed in decision making positions(Grade 2, Grade 1 and Above Grade) in Afghanistan in 2005/06.

Ministries/ Agencies	Female		Male	
	No.	%	No.	%
Ministry of Commerce and Industries	20	5	344	95
Ministry of Women's Affairs	125	58	92	42
Ministry of Energy and Power	20	5	344	95
Ministry of Counter Narcotics	11	6	181	94
Ministry of Education	155	7	2163	93
Secretariat of Parliament	2	8	23	92
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	23	6	357	94
Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs	218	12	1519	87
Ministry of Transportation	27			
Ministry of Immigration and Returnees Affairs	12	8	139	92
Ministry of Justice	57	5	1088	95
Ministry of Public Health	1	3	29	97
Geodesy and Cartography Department	26	9	255	91
Academy of Science	40	12	281	88
Disaster Preparedness Department	5	5	92	95
Pashtani Commercial Bank	60	29	145	71
Ministry of Guidance , Pilgrimage and Pious	17	2	758	98
General Directorate of Administrative Affairs and Secretariat of Ministerial Council	25	45	31	55
Ministry of Interior Affairs	1	3	34	97
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food	135	10	1212	90
Office of the Vice- President	0	0	1	100

Most of the government contract workers, both women and men, had no education at all (Table 3.4). About one third of all contract workers, both women and men, did not report their education. This group may also fall in the uneducated category.

The CSO 2007 unpublished report did not disaggregate data by sex by grade/ position. This is an important data gap that should be corrected.

3.3 Women and Men Appointed in Decision Making Positions

It is important to know the share of women and men in decision making

positions because women and men may have different perspectives and priorities. Table 3.5 shows the proportion of women and men appointed in decision making positions³⁸ between September 2005 and September 2006. The proportion of women appointed was only 9%, much less than the international benchmark of at least 30% women in policy and decision making positions. The 9% of female appointments in decision making positions is again overwhelmingly provided by MOWA and the General Directorate of Administrative Affairs and Secretariat of Ministerial Council. The high

³⁸ Government's Grade 2, 1 and above Grade.

Urban Development Ministry	63	22	220	78
Ministry of Finance	78	5	1394	95
Ministry of Borders And Tribunal Affairs	6	6	102	94
Ministry of Higher Education	12	12	86	88
Ministry of Public Works	21	5	396	95
Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development	30	6	468	94
National Olympic Committee	0	0	2	100
National Environmental Conservation Agency	18	9	175	91
Audit and Control Office	9	5	181	95
Attorney general's office	75	6	1303	94
Ministry of Communication	36	11	298	89
Kabul Municipality	26	4	655	96
Total	1354	9	14368	91

Source: Research and Statistics Office, MOWA

3.4 Women and Men as Members of the National Assembly

- Afghanistan has a bicameral legislature (National Assembly). The lower house (Wolesi Jirga or People's Council), consists of 249 members, in which members are elected directly for a five-year term. As per the 2004 Constitution, 68 seats in the lower house are reserved for women. In the upper house (Meshrano Jirga or House of Elders), there are 102 members, 34 of which are appointed by district councils for a three-year term; another 34 by provincial councils (one member from each of the 34 provinces) for a four-year

term; and the remaining 34 by the President for a five-year term. The Constitution specifies that 50% of the 34 presidential appointees in the upper house must be women.

- In 2007, women held 68 (27.3%) of the total seats in the lower house and 23 (22.5%) of the total seats in the upper house of the National Assembly (Table 3.6). Although this is a great achievement, it is still below the minimum globally prescribed baseline of 30%. The long term national goal is 50% representation of women in both lower and upper houses of the National Assembly.

- In the provincial council there are a total of 420 seats. Of these, 124 are reserved for women by law. However, women won only 121 seats in 2005 as no woman was available to run for the remaining 3 positions, despite the prospect of automatic acquisition of a seat.

indicators of the empowerment of women in politics. In 2005, 11.7% of the candidates for the lower house of parliament were women. In the provincial council, their proportion was 7.5% (Table 3.7). This shows that women are far behind men in terms of participation in national and provincial level politics.

3.5 Women and Men Candidates in the National Election in 2005

- The proportion of women who stood as candidates for the national parliament and provincial councils are also

Table 3.6: Proportion of Women as Members of the National Assembly, 2007

National Assembly	Women		Total number of seats
	Number	%	
Lower House (Wolesi Jirga)	68	27.3	249
Upper House (Meshrano Jirga)	23	22.5	102

Source: Parliament, Kabul, Afghanistan, 2007.

Table 3.7: Proportion of Female and Male Candidates in the National Election in 2005

House/Council	Women		Men	
	Number	%	Number	%
Lower House of Parliament	317	11.7	2387	88.3
Provincial Council	211	7.5	2590	92.5

Source: Asian Development Bank, 2005.

3.6 Women in Cabinet and Diplomatic Posts

- The present Cabinet has 25 Cabinet Ministers, of which only one (4%) is a woman.
- Afghanistan had a total of 17 Ambassadors in its missions abroad in early 2007. Of these, 15 (88%) were males and 2 (12%) were females.

3.7 Women in Press / Media Sector

- As in other sectors, women lag behind men in participation in the press and media sector. In April 2007, there were 881 staff members in the government press sector, of whom only 208 (23.0%) were females.
- There are fewer women in the private press/media sector. One of the private daily newspapers in Kabul reported that only 20.9% of its staff members were females (Table 3.8). Although the editor-in-chief of this newspaper was a woman, it has fewer middle level female personnel, and more female cleaners and cooks.

- The situation was not very different in the private television sector. In one of the private televisions in Kabul, the number of staff in April 2007 was 202 (10.4%) females and 1,748 (85.8%) males (Table 3.9).
- Women's low participation in the press and media sector contributes to inadequate coverage and dissemination of knowledge and information on women's issues and rights. Hence, women's decision-making has been based only on the limited information and understanding of the issues they acquired in the various forms of media.

Rank	Female		Male		Total Number
	Number	%	Number	%	
Editor in chief	1	100.0	0	0.0	1
Reporter	6	33.3	12	66.7	18
Admin. Staff	0	0.0	2	100.0	2
Distributors	0	0.0	20	100.0	20
Cleaners and cook	2	100.0	0	0.0	2
Total	9	20.9	34	79.1	43

Rank	Female		Male		Total number
	Number	%	Number	%	
Administrative staff	108	8.4	1178	91.6	1226
Contract workers and cleaners	94	14.2	570	85.8	664
Total	202	10.4	1748	89.6	1950

Source: Data collected by MOVVA.

3.8 Women in Community Development Councils

- Community Development Councils (CDCs) are established through the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) of the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development (MRRD)³⁹. These councils are engaged in community development, including in the construction, improvement of community roads, water and sanitation, and other infrastructure projects that affect the lives of women, men and children.
- The number of CDCs by province and the number of members by sex in these CDCs are given in Table 3.10. There were 9,394 CDCs in the country in March 2007. The number of members was 21,239 females (24%) and 67,212 males (76%).
- Ideally there should be 50% representation of women in all CDCs. However, only 9 provinces met the minimum baseline of 30%. There is a need to examine the profile of the CDCs as a whole to find out why other provinces are failing to promote women's participation in the CDCs.

3.9 Data Gaps

- The CSO data does not normally provide the number of regular government employees and contract workers by sex by grade/position. However, the number of employees by sex and by grade/position changed during 2006 and 2007 because of the PRR programme. Therefore, there is an urgent need for current data on this issue to enable a full assessment of the impact of the PRR on women's participation in decision making.

3.10 Research Needs

- Research is needed on women's participation in the CDCs to identify facilitating factors and constraints.
- The Gender Empowerment Measure should be computed by collecting data on: 1) percentage of seats held by women in parliament, 2) percentage of female legislators, senior officials, and managers, 3) percentage of female professional and technical workers, and 4) ratio of estimated female to male earned income.

Table 3.10: Number of Community Development Councils (CDCs) in Afghanistan by province and number of members in these CDCs by sex as of March 2007

Rank*	Province	No. of CDCs	Members			
			Female		Male	
			No.	%	No.	%
1	Hirat	239	1459	45.5	1751	54.5
2	Samangan	240	1047	40.9	1512	59.1
3	Kabul	135	561	38.1	912	61.9
4	Daykundi	192	677	37.8	1113	62.2
5	Badghis	249	966	35.2	1777	64.8
6	Bamyan	334	1192	33.8	2334	66.2
7	Wardak	282	938	32.4	1960	67.6
8	Ghazni	501	1327	30.9	2965	69.1
9	Balkh	290	908	30.2	2094	69.8
10	Kapisa	364	999	29.5	2393	70.5
11	Logar	294	922	28.9	2266	71.1
12	Farah	179	577	27.3	1539	72.7
13	Sari Pul	275	760	27.1	2040	72.9
14	Jawzjan	251	639	26.0	1816	74.0
15	Nangarhar	294	684	25.8	1972	74.2
16	Paktya	448	894	25.2	2654	74.8
17	Takhar	315	625	24.9	1885	75.1
18	Kunduz	315	815	24.2	2551	75.8
19	Faryab	327	850	24.2	2669	75.8
20	Baghlan	420	943	24.1	2966	75.9
21	Khost	306	448	18.5	1971	81.5
22	Paktika	314	475	18.4	2101	81.6
23	Parwan	255	470	18.1	2120	81.9
24	Badakhshan	350	511	18.0	2323	82.0
25	Laghman	353	553	17.7	2579	82.3
26	Ghor	336	406	11.7	3074	88.3
27	Kunarh	215	186	11.2	1475	88.8
28	Nimroz	162	119	9.7	1106	90.3
29	Nuristan	173	118	9.3	1151	90.7
30	Panjsher	103	101	7.5	1246	92.5
31	Zabul	122	39	3.0	1276	97.0
32	Kandahar	328	19	0.8	2220	99.2
33	Hilmand	382	11	0.4	3025	99.6
34	Uruzgan	51	0	0.0	376	100.0
Total		9394	21239	24.0	67212	76.0

Note: *Rank by % of female members.

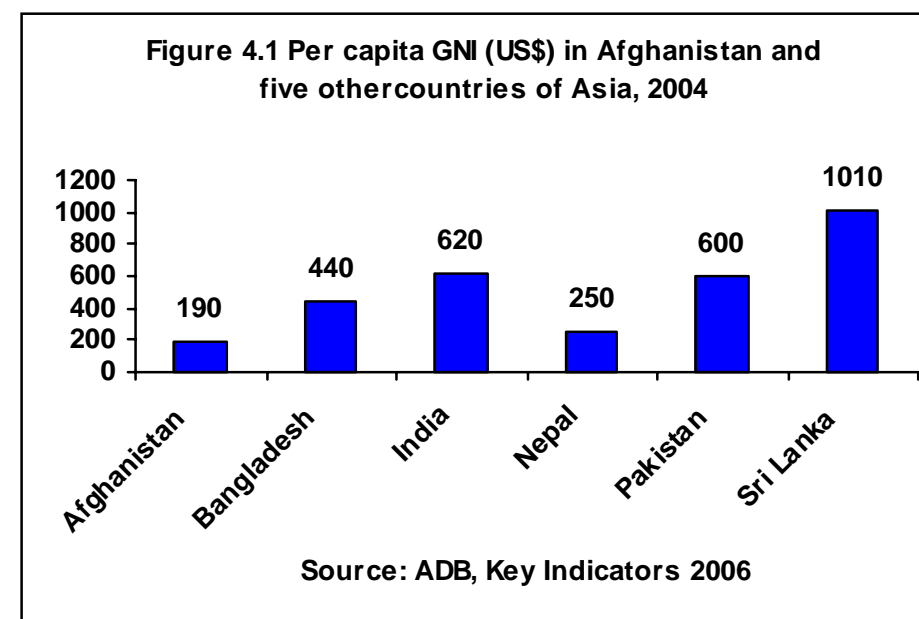
Source: National Solidarity Programme (NSP), Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development, Kabul, May 2007.



Afghanistan has one of the lowest levels of per capita income in the world. The effect of low per capita income is manifested in the poor health, nutrition and education of the people, especially women. This chapter presents statistics on women in the economy showing the extent of women's marginalization as economic agents and its impact to their status and well being.

4.1 Gross National Income (GNI) and Per Capita GNI

- Afghanistan is one of the least developed countries in the world. In 2004, the total GNI⁴⁰ of the country was US\$5,363 million and the per capita GNI was US\$190 (ADB Key indicators 2006). During the same year, in the other five countries of South Asia, per capita GNI ranged between US\$250 in Nepal and US\$ 1,010 in Sri Lanka (Figure 4.1). Low per capita GNI means low levels of individual income. In a male-dominated society such as Afghanistan, women and girls suffer more in terms of lack of food, basic needs and education from low levels of household income for the family and personal income for women.



⁴⁰ Gross national income is the broadest measure of national income. It measures total value added from domestic and foreign sources claimed by residents. GNI comprises gross domestic product (GDP) plus net receipts of primary income (compensation of employees and property income) from abroad. Per capita GNI is obtained by dividing the GNI by midyear population.

4.2 PPP Adjusted Per Capita GDP

- As for per capita GNI, purchasing power parity (PPP)⁴² adjusted per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in US Dollars (PPP US\$) is also low in Afghanistan.
- According to the Afghanistan NHDR 2004, per capita GDP (PPP adjusted) was US\$ 1,182 for males, US\$ 402 for females and US\$ 822 for both sexes in 2002⁴². Thus, the production/earnings of women was about one-third that of men. The per capita GDP in PPP\$ for Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia is shown in Figure 4.2. In the other five countries per capita GDP in PPP\$ ranged from 1,370 in Nepal to 3,570 in Sri Lanka during the same year.

4.3 Percentage of Population below the National and International Poverty Line⁴³

- Recent data on the percentage of population below national and international poverty lines are not available for Afghanistan. However, it is generally observed that poverty is rampant in the country.

4.4 Human Poverty Index (HPI)

- The Human Poverty Index measures deprivations in longevity, knowledge, and a decent standard of living.⁴⁴ For developing countries, human poverty index is denoted by HPI-1. The value of HPI-1 ranges between 0 and 100. The higher value of HPI-1, the higher is the deprivation.
- In 2002, the HPI-1 was 59.3 in Afghanistan. The 2007 Afghanistan HDR estimated that, at 62.3, the HPI for Afghanistan is one of the worst in the world⁴⁵. In the other five countries of South Asia, the HPI-1 ranged between 41.9 in Pakistan and 18.2 in Sri Lanka. A high level of human

⁴¹ Purchasing power parity (PPP) is a method of measuring the relative purchasing power of different countries' currencies over the same types of goods and services. Because goods and services may cost more in one country than in another, PPP allows for more accurate comparisons of standards of living across countries. PPP estimates use price comparisons of comparable items but since not all items can be matched exactly across countries and time, the estimates are not always robust.

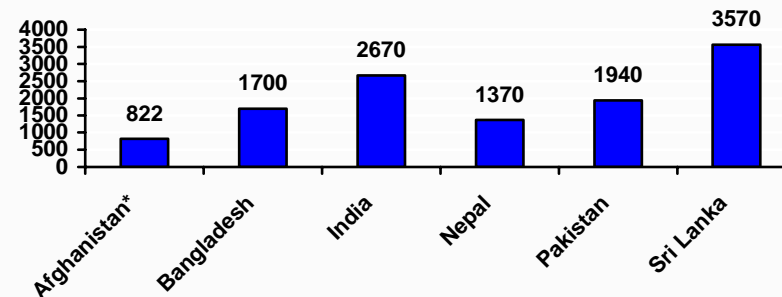
⁴² The Afghanistan NHDR 2007 estimated that total per capita GDP had increased to \$964 in PPP terms: p 19.

⁴³ National poverty line is measured by the percentage of population below the national poverty line. It is defined as the proportion of the national population whose incomes are below the official threshold (or thresholds) set by the national government. International poverty line, on the other hand, is measured by the proportion of population below \$1 per day. It is defined as the percentage of the population living on less than \$1.08 a day at 1993 international prices.

⁴⁴ Deprivation in longevity is measured by the percentage of newborns not expected to survive to age 40. Deprivation in knowledge is measured by the percentage of adults who are illiterate. Deprivation in a decent standard of living is measured by three variables: (1) the percentage of people without access to safe water, (2) the percentage of people without access to health services, and (3) the percentage of moderately a

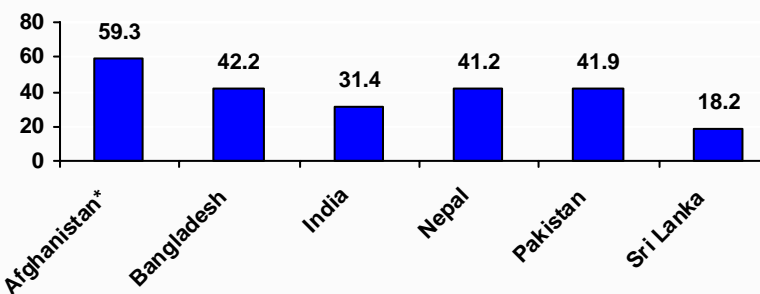
⁴⁵ 2007 Afghanistan NHDR 19

Figure 4.2 Per capita GDP PPP adjusted in US\$ in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia, 2002



Source: UNDP, Human Development Report 2004;
* As reported by Afghanistan NHDR 2004

Figure 4.3 Human poverty index (HPI-1) in Afghanistan and other five countries of South Asia, 2002

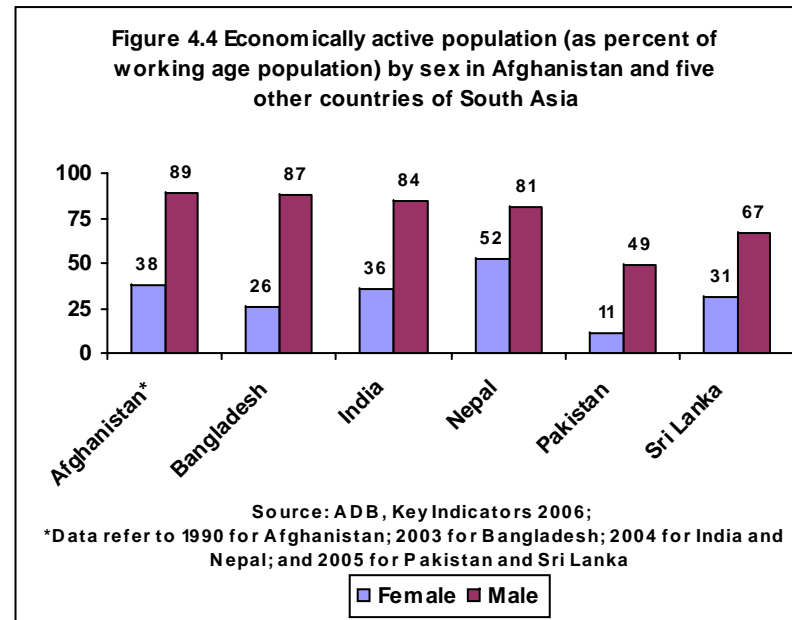


Source: UNDP, Human Development Report 2004;
* Afghanistan NHDR 2004

poverty is a negative factor for the development and welfare of women and girls in particular.

4.5 Economically Active Population

- The economically active population comprises all persons of either sex, above a certain age (usually 15+ years in developing countries), who furnish the supply of labor for the production of goods and services during a specified time reference period. It is divided into two parts: (1) employed (employee, self employed and unpaid family workers producing goods and services, largely in the informal sector, small family businesses or on family farms), and (2) unemployed, but looking for work. The economically active population is also known as the labor force. Children (age group 0-14 years) are not included in the economically active population, as they are not expected to supply labor for the production of goods and services. However, in poor countries and in poor families in particular, many children are in fact economically active. Similarly, because of the lack of pensions and social welfare systems, many people over the age of 65 are also economically active.
- The economically inactive population which is not in the labor force includes: (1) students who are not working, (2)



retired persons, (3) those engaged in unpaid family activities that do not produce marketable goods or services, and (4) other economically inactive persons such as the ill or disabled.

- The above definition of economically active/inactive population categorizes women engaged in unpaid family activities that do not produce marketable goods and services as economically inactive. Because of this definition, fewer women, compared to men are counted as economically active in most developing countries. In addition, male household heads (and even women themselves) tend to report women participating in unpaid family

work that produce marketable goods and services as economically inactive. Such under-reporting is heavily influenced by traditional gender stereotypes that regard men as income earners and women as dependents.

- Figure 4.4 shows the economically active population by sex for Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia. In all six countries, including Afghanistan, the proportion of men in the economically active population is higher than the proportion of women.
- In 1990, 38.2% of females, compared to 88.7% of males were economically active in Afghanistan. However, no

recent data are available. Hence, there is a need to generate statistics that will measure the contributions of women and men to the economy, both paid and unpaid. Such studies will also capture the multiple burdens suffered by women and girls, as well as reflect information that will help determine the social protection schemes and services needed by women and girls, particularly in poor households. Another intervention is to create more economic opportunities for women or facilitate their effective integration into the labor market.

4.6 Women in Agriculture and Informal Economy

- Women in rural Afghanistan contribute most of their labor time in unpaid reproductive family activities such as cooking, cleaning and child care. However, they are also engaged in productive work in agriculture, horticulture, livestock raising, fuel wood collection, carpet weaving, embroidery, tailoring, etc.
- Poor women work more on the family farm than middle class and more affluent women. Women in the eastern, central, northern and western parts of the country from non-Pashtun backgrounds also work more than women in the Pashtun areas in the South

due to socio-cultural differences. In Nuristan province, it is claimed that women contribute 90% of total labor time in agriculture compared to only 10% by men.

- In the eastern, central, northern and western areas, women engage in light agricultural work such as planting, weeding, protecting crops from animals, harvesting and processing food. Some women in various parts of the country, including the south, help their husbands and male relatives in the cultivation, harvesting and processing of opium poppy.
- Women are also engaged in horticulture (fruits, melons, etc.) and livestock production (feeding cows, sheep, chickens, etc.). They also work in the home-based informal economy in activities such as embroidery, carpet weaving and tailoring and thereby contribute to income generation in the household. Although the informal sector accounted for 80 to 90 percent of economic activities in the country, women's work within and outside of their homes remained largely unremunerated. (Afghanistan HDR 2007: 24).
- Most of the women engaged in agriculture, horticulture, livestock production and the informal economy,

including in small business, lack literacy, education and skills. Their productivity, therefore, is low. These women need to be provided with information, technical knowledge, credit, access to market and fair prices for their products to raise their productivity and income.

4.7 Women in Business

- According to the training needs assessment of the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), in 2004, 94.4% of businesses in Afghanistan were run by men. These included import-export (42.2%), trading (16.4%), construction (13.7%), industry (7.7%), crafts (6.2%), services (6.0%), agriculture (2.3%), professional (1.3%) and others (6.2%).
- CIPE noted that, *"perhaps the small participation of women (in business in Afghanistan, which is about 5%) is part of tradition, but it might be related to the property rights in land and a subsequent inability to mortgage in order to get additional funding for business expansion."*⁴⁶
- The Afghan Women's Business Federation (AWBF) in Kabul is actively engaged in the promotion of women in business. It has 51 member associations (33 in Kabul and 18 in provinces).

Between September 2006 and July 2007, the AWBF provided training to 799 persons on aspects of business development, including, business planning, finance, marketing, and export. A total of 552 women and 179 men graduated from these courses.

4.8 Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector

- Adequate data on the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector is not available in Afghanistan. In 1990, the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector was only 17.8% (ADB Key Indicators 2006).
- NRVA 2005 found that 4% of households in Afghanistan participated in cash for work. Of these, 89% were men, while only 3% were women, and 4% were children.

4.9 Wage discrimination

- Women's wages are significantly lower than those paid to men. According to MOWA, citing NRVA 2003⁴⁷, wage ratios (women/men) were 51% for planting, 61% for harvesting, and 50% for other farm work. In the case of non-farm occupations, the wages paid to women for making handicrafts were

only 41% of men's wage, and 53% for weaving. A woman gathering wood earned only 53% of a man's pay for similar work.

4.10 Child Labour

- According to UNICEF, June 2007⁴⁸, poverty, lack of educational opportunities and the demand for cheap labor help to fuel the prevalence of child labor across Afghanistan. UNICEF reported that in 2007, nearly one fourth of Afghan children between the ages 7 and 14 were working, with more girls working than boys.
- Child labor was more prevalent in rural areas. While some types of work teach children skills that can help them become responsible and productive adults, work that interferes with their education obstructs their future development and is a violation of their human rights.

⁴⁶ The CIPE data were provided by the Afghan Women Business Federation (AWBF) in Kabul.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ <http://www.crin.org/resources/infoDetail.asp?ID=13726&flag=news>

4.11 Data Gaps

- Proportion of population below \$1 per day
- Subsistence incidence
- Subsistence level or threshold
- Poverty gap ratio
- Poverty incidence of the population/families
- Share of poorest quintile in national consumption
- Pattern in household expenditure
- Gini coefficient
- Labor force participation rate by sex, by age group
- Labor force participation rate by sex, by sector (agriculture, industry, services, and formal and informal sectors)
- Employment rate by sex
- Employed persons by major occupation groups, by sex
- Employed persons by major industry groups, by sex
- Unemployment rate by sex
- Employed persons by class of worker (wage and salary workers, own-account workers and unpaid family workers), by sex
- Average income by sex
- Employed women and men in paid professional and non-professional, technical and non-technical, and managerial and non-managerial jobs
- Population activity profile: number of hours worked by women, men, girls and boys per day
- Women's and men's access to productive capital (land, equipment, information, technology, material, micro-finance and business services)
- Women's and men's participation in the informal sector
- Women's and men's property income
- Women's and men's degree of control over economic resources
- Women's and men's access to and use of computers and the internet by age

4.12 Research Needs

- Research is needed on the differential impact of poverty on women and men; the roles of women and men in the formal economy, including differences by province; the roles of women and men in the informal economy, child labor among girls and boys and its impact on their development.
- The census of population to be held in Afghanistan in 2008 will fill some data gaps on the labor force and employment. However, a regular labor force survey is needed to generate data for a deeper gender analysis of issues

and situation of women and men in the economy by sector, industry and occupation.

- A time use survey would be useful to provide data on how women and men in the population use their time, including hours spent in paid and unpaid economic work and in unpaid household activities by women, men, girls and boys per day.
- Special surveys or modules in other surveys, as well as research studies, are needed to provide quantitative and qualitative data on access to productive capital and control over economic resources by women and men; computer and internet use among women and men, and economic activity in the informal sector by women and men.



Afghanistan is decades behind its neighbors in South Asia on key health indicators such as life expectancy; infant, under-5 and maternal mortality; and total fertility rates. It has the second highest maternal mortality rate in the world.

5.1 Life Expectancy at Birth

- Afghanistan has one of the lowest life expectancies⁴⁹ in the world. Only some African countries that are highly affected by HIV/AIDS have lower life expectancies. In 2002, life expectancy at birth was 44 years for Afghan females and 45 years for Afghan males (Afghanistan NHDR 2004). Life expectancy further declined after 2002: it was estimated by the UN Population Division at 43.4 years for males and 43.3 years for females in 2006 (Afghanistan NHDR 2007: 160)
- Five member countries of the SAARC region, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, had higher life expectancies than that of Afghanistan for both females and males (Figure 5.1). For example, the life expectancy was 20 years longer for Bangladeshi females than Afghan females, and 18 years longer for Bangladeshi males than Afghan males. Similarly, life

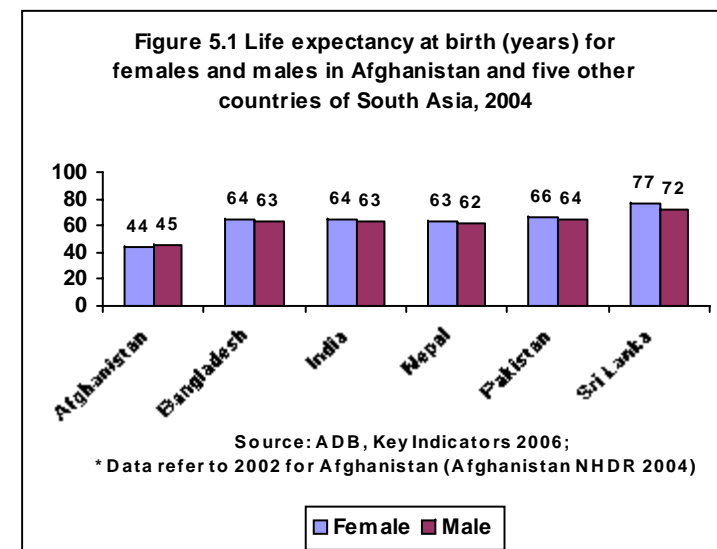
⁴⁹ Life expectancy at birth (years) is the number of years that a newborn is expected to survive if prevailing patterns of mortality at the time of its birth are to remain the same throughout its life. Better health results in higher life expectancy.

expectancy was 33 years longer for Sri Lankan females and 27 years longer for Sri Lankan males, compared to Afghan females and males, respectively.

- In the SAARC region, Sri Lanka has secured a high level of life expectancy in spite of several years of insurgency in the northern and eastern part of the country. Afghanistan, therefore, could learn from the experience of Sri Lanka in improving the health and life expectancy of its population in a conflict situation.

The life expectancy of Afghan women is only approximately one half of the highest female life expectancy in the world (Japan, 85.6 years).

- The life expectancy for women in Afghanistan deviates from world trends. In other countries, women normally live longer than men by an average of three to six years. In Afghanistan, women's life expectancy is shorter than that of men.



5.2 Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)⁵⁰

- IMR can be calculated separately for female and male. However, sex disaggregated data are not available for Afghanistan.
- Afghanistan has a very high IMR, estimated at 140 per 1,000 live births in 2003⁵¹ and 135 per 1,000 live births in 2007 (Afghanistan NHDR 2007: 27). In five other countries of South Asia in 2004, the IMR ranged between 80 per 1,000 live births in Pakistan and 12 per 1,000 live births in Sri Lanka (Figure 5.2). The IMR was much lower in all five countries of South Asia than in Afghanistan.
- The government’s target for Afghanistan is to reduce the IMR to 70 by 2015 and further to 46 by 2020 (i.e., a reduction of about 6 points per year between 2003 and 2015 and 5 points per year between 2015 and 2020). Sex disaggregated data on IMRs are needed

for gender analysis of infant mortality because sex differentials in infant mortality may be a factor in the lower life expectancy of women compared to men in Afghanistan. Organizations collecting data on infant mortality and computing IMRs should address this important data gap.

5.3 Under-5 Mortality Rate (U5MR)⁵²

- Sex-disaggregated data can reveal gender-based factors that make one sex or the other more vulnerable to mortality in this age group so that appropriate measures could be implemented to address them. However, U5MR data in most countries, including Afghanistan, are not sex disaggregated.
- In Afghanistan, the U5MR was 230 per 1,000 live births in 2003⁵³. This is an extremely high level of child mortality. The high child mortality rate was being attributed to low literacy among mothers, lack of access to safe drinking water, food and sanitation (Afghanistan HDR 2007: 4).

Figure 5.2 Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia, 1990 and 2004

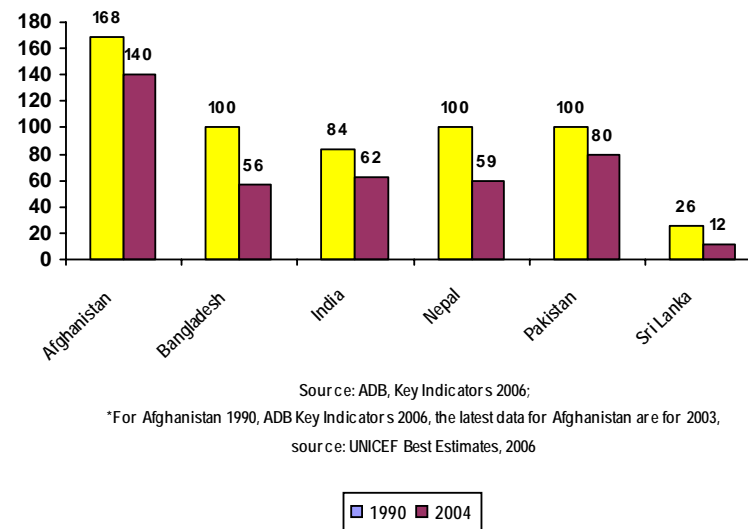
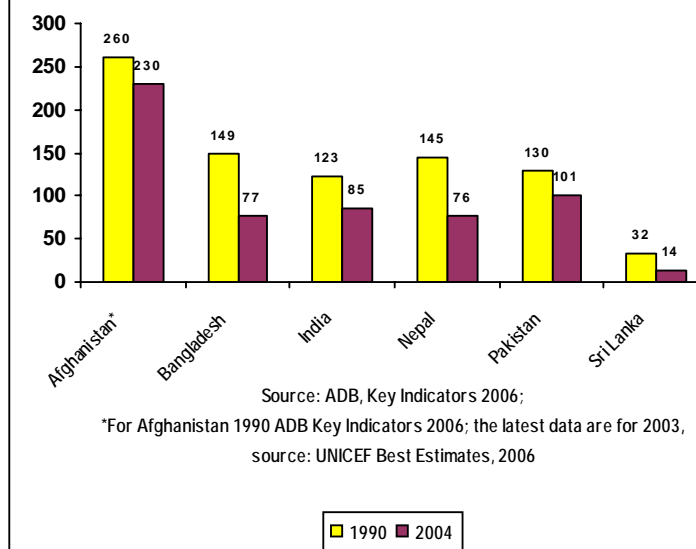


Figure 5.3 Under-5 Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia



⁵⁰ Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) is the probability of infant's death between first day of birth and 12 months (one year) of exact age. It is expressed per 1,000 live births. It is calculated by dividing the total number of deaths in age 0 to 1 year in a given year by the total number of births in that year, and multiplying the quotient by 1,000.

⁵¹ Afghanistan MDG Report 2005, UNICEF estimate.

⁵² Under-five Mortality Rate (U5MR) is the probability of dying between birth and exactly five years of age expressed per 1,000 live births. It is calculated by dividing the total number of deaths in age 0 to 5 years in a given year by the total number of births in that year, and multiplying the quotient by 1,000. U5MR can be calculated separately for girls and boys.

⁵³ Afghanistan MDG Report 2005, UNICEF estimate.

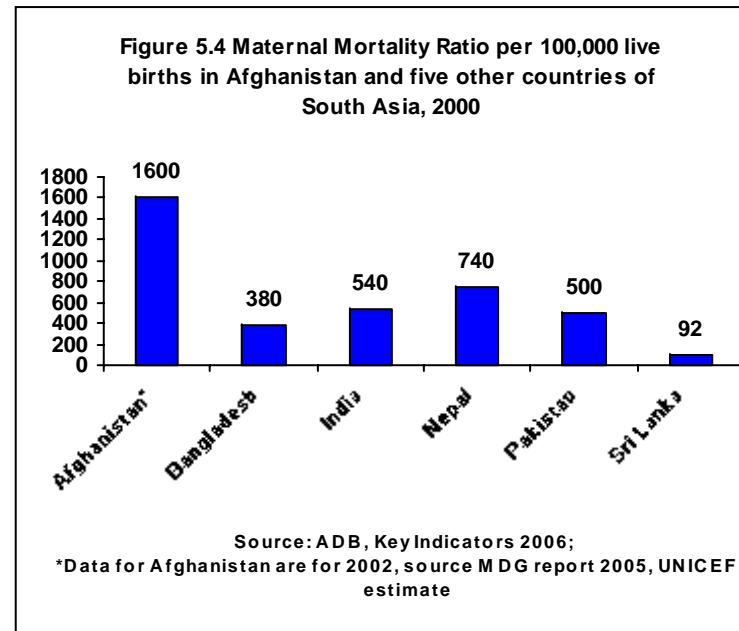
- Only a few countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have similar under-5 mortality rates. The U5MR is far lower in the five countries of South Asia, compared to Afghanistan (Figure 5.3). In 2004, the U5MR ranged between 14 per 1,000 live births in Sri Lanka and 101 per 1,000 live births in Pakistan.

- The government target for Afghanistan is to reduce the U5MR by 50% between 2003 and 2015 to 115 per 1,000 live births, and to one third of the 2003 level by 2020 (76 per 1,000 live births). This requires a reduction of about 10 points per year between 2003 and 2015 and 8 points per year between 2015 and 2020. U5MR data should be disaggregated by sex to identify and address gender-related vulnerabilities in child mortality.

5.4 Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)⁵⁴

- The MMR in Afghanistan is the second highest in the world, next to Sierra Leone. Only a few countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have an MMR similar to that of Afghanistan. In 2002, the MMR in Afghanistan was estimated at 1,600 per 100,000 live births.⁵⁵

- Compared to Afghanistan, the five countries of South Asia have much lower MMRs. In 2004, the MMR in these countries ranged from 92 per



100,000 live births in Sri Lanka to 740 in Nepal (Figure 5.4).

- The government's target for Afghanistan is to reduce the MMR by 50% between 2002 and 2015 to 800 per 100,000 live births, and further to 25% of the 2002 level by 2020 to 400 per 100,000 live births (Afghanistan MDG Report 2005). This requires a reduction of 62 points per year between 2002 and 2015 and 80 points per year between 2015 and 2020).

- Maternal mortality in Afghanistan varies by rural, semi-urban and urban setting. According to UNICEF Best

Estimates 2006, the MMR was 6,500 in one of the remote rural areas of Badakhshan province (Ragh district), 2,200 in a rural area of Kandahar province (Maiwand district), 800 in rural and semi-urban areas of Laghman province (Alishing district), and 400 in the an urban area of Kabul province.

- There is also provincial variation in MMRs, ranging from 2,300 per 100,000 live births in Badgis province to 700 in Kabul province (Table 5.1). The MMR in Ragh district of Badakhshan is the highest in the world. Bringing down such a high rate requires drastic measures.

- MMRs decrease when the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel increases. However, other factors, often gender-related such as lack of services for maternal health care, violence against women, child marriages, overall poor health and frequency of child birth, may precipitate high maternal deaths. Other factors cited as possible reasons for high mortality rates for women as well as children are low literacy, lack of access to safe drinking water, food, poor access to health care services, and inadequate sanitation. (Afghanistan HDR 2007:26) An analysis of the circumstances surrounding maternal deaths must be a priority area for further research.

- Table 5.1 also shows that, in addition to the high level of maternal mortality, the total fertility rate is also very high in the provinces. It supports the view that demand for children remains high in societies where child mortality is high.

⁵⁴ Maternal mortality ratio (MMR) is the number of women who die from any cause related to or aggravated by pregnancy management during pregnancy and childbirth or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, per 100,000 live births.

⁵⁵ Afghanistan MDG Report 2005, UNICEF estimate.

Table 5.1: Maternal Mortality Ratio, Total fertility Rate and births attended by skilled health personnel in Afghanistan by province

Rank of provinces by MMR	Province	Maternal mortality ratio per 100,000 live births* (2002)	Total fertility rate** (2003)	Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)* (2003)
1	Badgis	2,300	5.4	11.6
2	Ghor	2,300	7.3	9.3
3	Takhar	2,300	6.0	0.7
4	Badakshan	2,200	6.0	1.5
5	Faryab	2,100	5.3	2.1
6	Sari Pul	2,100	5.6	0.4
7	Zabul	2,100	6.0	0.9
8	Nuristan	2,100	5.6	1.4
9	Kunar	2,100	7.9	3.1
10	Baghlan	2,100	6.5	5.5
11	Uruzgan-Daikunde***	2,000	6.3	5.7
12	Parwan-Panjshir***	2,000	6.7	3.7
13	Paktika	2,000	7.4	4.6
14	Samangan	1,900	7.0	28.9
15	Bamyan	1,900	5.8	7.6
16	Paktya	1,800	6.5	8.9
17	Helmand	1,800	7.0	1.6
18	Jawzjan	1,800	5.3	9.3
19	Khost	1,800	6.8	17.8
20	Wardak	1,800	5.5	10.8
21	Balkh	1,800	6.2	7.6
22	Kunduz	1,800	6.4	5.8
23	Ghazni	1,700	5.2	7.2
24	Farah	1,600	7.0	12.0
25	Kapisa	1,600	5.4	12.2
26	Nimroz	1,600	6.7	7.1
27	Laghman	1,200	7.9	2.6
28	Logar	1,200	6.2	8.7
29	Kandahar	1,100	7.0	16.0
30	Nangarhar	1,100	6.5	22.2
31	Herat	900	5.6	24.0
32	Kabul	700	6.0	45.5
National		1,600	6.3	14.3

Note: *** Data collected before partition of the province into two provinces.

Source: UNICEF, Best Estimates, Provincial Fact Sheets;

** UNICEF Best Estimates, May 2006, p. 102.

5.5 Prevalence of Underweight Children Under Five Years of Age⁵⁶

■ According to ADB Key Indicators 2006, the proportion of underweight children aged 6-59 months in Afghanistan was 39% in 2003-2004. Underweight in children under 5 years of age is caused mainly by malnutrition.

■ Data disaggregated by sex on underweight children under 5 years of age are not available in Afghanistan. However, such data are needed for gender analysis in a country like Afghanistan, where more value is placed on sons rather than daughters. It is possible that girls suffer more than boys when there is inadequate food in the household.

5.6 Proportion of 1 Year-Old Children Immunized Against Measles⁵⁷

■ In 2004, 61% of the children aged 1 year were immunized against measles in Afghanistan (EPI Routine Report 2006, Ministry of Public Health). This proportion increased to 68% in 2006. Compared to Afghanistan, the percentage of children, 1 year old, who received at least one dose of measles vaccine in five other countries of South Asia ranged between 56% in India and 96% in Sri Lanka in 2004.⁵⁸

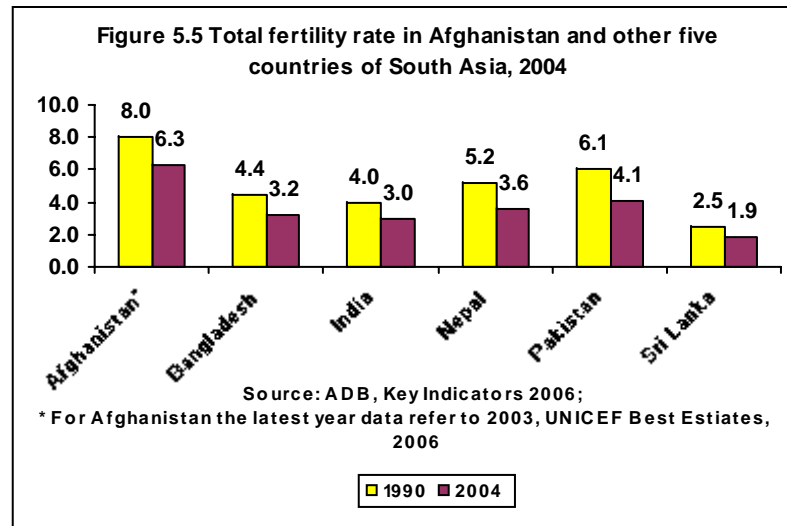
■ The government's target for Afghanistan is to immunize 90% of 1 year old children by 2015 and 100% by 2020. This requires that 1.25% more children need to be immunized each year between 2003 and 2015, and 2% more children each year between 2015 and 2020.

■ In Afghanistan, sex disaggregated data on the proportion of 1 year-old children immunized against measles are not available.

⁵⁶ The prevalence of underweight children under 5 years old refers to the percentage of children under five years (0-59 months) whose weight for age is less than required as per the international standard. It can be calculated for both sexes combined as well as separately for girls and boys.

⁵⁷ This proportion is the percentage of children under one year of age who have received at least one dose of measles vaccine. The proportion can be calculated separately for girls and boys.

⁵⁸ ADB Key Indicators, 2006



5.7 Total Fertility Rate (TFR)⁵⁹

- Afghanistan's TFR was 6.3 in 2003 (UNICEF Best Estimates, 2006, p. 102). Compared to Afghanistan, the TFR in 2004 was much less in the five other countries of South Asia (Figure 5.5). It ranged between 1.9 in Sri Lanka and 4.1 in Pakistan. The TFR needs to be reduced in order that the gains of development may be felt at the family level. This can be achieved by delaying marriage for both females and males, improving their education, and using family planning methods. A reduction in the TFR greatly improves the overall well being of women, children and other family members and reduces the burden on the State to provide for social services to support the needs of a fast

growing population. It will also allow women to pursue education that will help them gain opportunities for productive work in the economy.

5.8 Age at Marriage

- In Afghanistan, "despite legislation forbidding underage marriage, approximately 57% of girls is married before the age of sixteen years."⁶⁰
- According to UNFPA, the mean age at marriage in Afghanistan is about 17.8 years for women and 25.3 years for men⁶¹.
- The NRVA 2005 reported that the most common age at marriage for females in Afghanistan is 20 years. However, it

also reported that several thousands of girls in Afghanistan were married as early as 10 years of age. Forced and child marriages are also forms of violence against women or girls. The 2007 Afghanistan HDR reported that forced marriage was estimated to be between 60 and 80 percent of marriages in the country. (Afghanistan HDR 2007: 26)

- Early marriage of girls, and consequently early pregnancy and child birth, puts women at high risk of maternal mortality. Therefore, child marriage, especially until the age of 18 years, should be discouraged through various means, including awareness creation, advocacy and appropriate legislation. A population policy and programme that address the currently unmanaged growth of population in the country should also be adopted and implemented.

5.9 Proportion of Births attended by Skilled Health Personnel⁶²

- Most births in Afghanistan take place at home, without the support of skilled health personnel. In 2003, only 14% of births were attended by skilled health personnel (UNICEF Best Estimates, 2006), compared to 43% for India and 96% for Sri Lanka in 2000 (ADB, Key Indicators 2006) (Figure 5.6). The

situation is worse in the rural areas, where only 9% of mothers were assisted by skilled health personnel compared to 52% of mothers in urban areas. The huge gap highlights women's lack of access to any form of reproductive health care in the rural areas, and the need to direct more reproductive health care services to women in remote areas in the provinces. (Afghanistan HDR 2007: 27)

- The government's target for Afghanistan is to provide professional antenatal⁶³ care to 25% of pregnant women by 2015 and to 50% by 2020 (Afghanistan MDG Report 2005). This target necessitates the training and employment of more female health practitioners, expansion of health services to remotest areas, and education of women and men on reproductive health, including reproductive health rights.

⁵⁹ Total fertility rate (TFR) refers to the average number of children that women give live births during their reproductive ages (15-49 years).

⁶⁰ UN OCHA Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN), Afghanistan, quoted by Interim National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (I-NAPWA), March 2006.

⁶¹ UNFPA. <http://www.unfpa.org/profile/afghanistan.cfm>

⁶² This is the percentage of deliveries attended by health personnel trained to give the necessary supervision, care, and advice to women during pregnancy, labor, and the postpartum (after delivery) period; to conduct deliveries; and to care for newborns.

⁶³ Pregnant women before delivery

5.10 Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR)⁶⁴

- According to UNICEF Best Estimates, 2006, only 28% of married women of reproductive age (15-49 years) had knowledge of one or more family planning methods in 2003. Consequently, the contraceptive prevalence rate was only 10% in Afghanistan, much lower than that of the five other countries of the SAARC region. The CPR ranged between 28% in Pakistan and 70% Sri Lanka in 2004 (Figure 5.7).
- Few women in Afghanistan receive antenatal care during pregnancy. In 2003, only 16% of pregnant women received antenatal care (UNICEF Best Estimates, 2006). Reproductive health and family planning programmes have not made significant inroads in Afghanistan, especially in the rural and nomadic areas. These areas need to be reached to meet reproductive health needs, including antenatal care for women and contraception for both women and men.

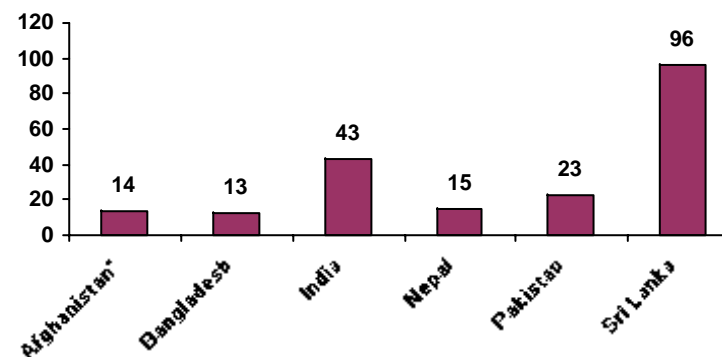
5.11 Population with Sustainable Access to Improved Water Sources⁶⁵

- Under the national MDGs, the Government of Afghanistan has committed to reducing by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water by 2020.
- Morbidity and mortality are greatly affected by sustainable access to safe drinking water. A large number of people, especially children, die due to water-borne diseases in developing countries.
- In Afghanistan, only 31% of the total number of households has access to safe drinking water, with 64% located in the urban areas, while 26% were in the rural areas, according to NRVA 2005.

⁶⁴ Contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) is the percentage of married women aged 15-49 years who are using, or whose partners are using, any form of contraception, whether modern or traditional.

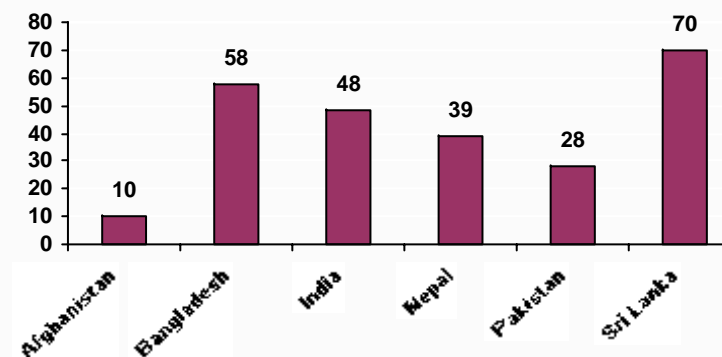
⁶⁵ Population with sustainable access to improved water sources refers to the percentage of the population who use any of the following types of water supply for drinking: piped water, public tap, borehole or pump, protected well, protected spring or rainwater.

Figure 5.6 Proportion (%) of births attended by skilled health personnel in Afghanistan and other five countries of South Asia



Source: ADB, Key Indicators 2006;
* For Afghanistan, data source: UNICEF Best Estimates, 2006;
Data refer to 2003 for Afghanistan; 2004 for Bangladesh and Nepal; 2000 for India and Sri Lanka; and 2001 for Pakistan

Figure 5.7 Contraceptive prevalence rate (% of married women aged 15-49 years) in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia

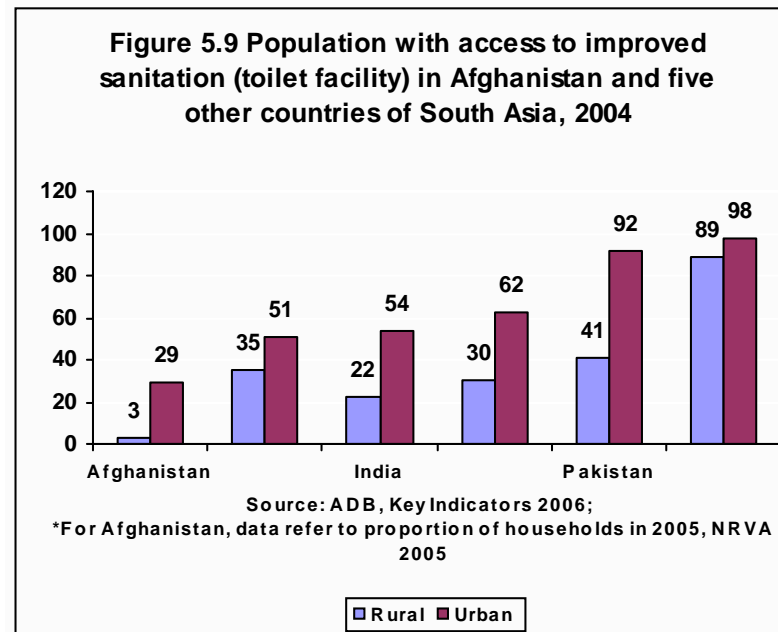
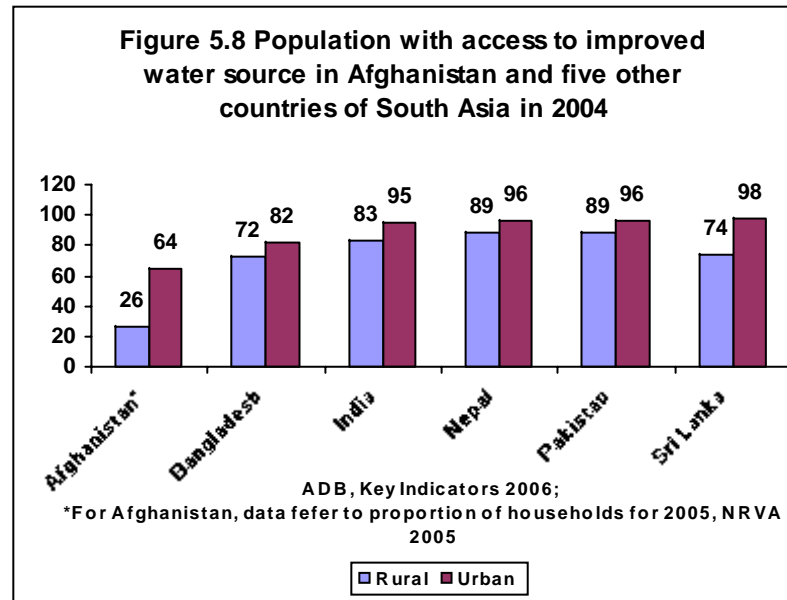


Source: ADB, Key Indicators 2006;
Estimates refer to 2003 for Afghanistan (UNICEF Best Estimates, 2006), 2004 for Bangladesh, 1999 for India; 2001 for Nepal and Pakistan; 2000 for Sri Lanka

- Compared to Afghanistan, sustainable improved water sources were available to 72% to 89% of the population in rural areas, and to 83% to 98% of the population in urban areas in five other countries of South Asia (Figure 5.8).

5.12 Proportion of Population with Access to Sanitation⁶⁶

- Access to an improved toilet facility has a positive effect on health, especially of children. In 2005, according to NRVA 2005, only 3% of households in rural areas and 29% of households in urban areas in Afghanistan had access to an improved toilet facility (Figure 5.9). The government of Afghanistan aims to reduce the proportion of people without an improved toilet facility by half by 2020.



⁶⁶ Proportion of population with access to improved sanitation, urban and rural is the percentage of the population with access to facilities that hygienically separate human excreta from human, animal, and insect contact.

Table 5.2: Top 10 Causes of Death in Afghanistan, 2002.

Sr. No.	Top 10 Causes of Death	Proportion of Deaths (%)
1	Perinatal conditions	13
2	Lower respiratory infections	12
3	Diarrhoeal diseases	9
4	Ischaemic heart disease	7
5	Tuberculosis	4
6	Cerebrovascular diseases	2
7	Congenital anomalies	2
8	Road and traffic accidents	2
9	Meningitis	2
10	Hypertensive heart disease	2

Source: http://www.who.int/whosis/mort/profiles/mort_emro_afg_afghanistan.pdf

5.13 Major Causes of Death

- Data on causes of death by sex are not well researched in Afghanistan. The top 10 causes of death in the country in 2002 for both sexes are shown in Table 5.2.
- Perinatal (period around child birth, especially the period beginning 5 months before delivery and ending 1 month after delivery) conditions are the main cause of deaths in Afghanistan, representing 13% of all deaths. Perinatal causes only affect women, partly explaining the short life expectancy of women and their under-representation in the country's population.

- Lower respiratory tract infections and diarrhea are the major causes of deaths among children. Other diseases affect both women and men. Nevertheless, data on causes of deaths should be disaggregated by sex in order to provide more conclusive insights on the primary causes of deaths for women and men.
- Tuberculosis is also a serious health problem in Afghanistan. According to the Ministry of Public Health, the number of active TB cases was 168 per 100,000 population in Afghanistan in 2006. With 51,000 new TB cases in 2006, exposure is widespread. Currently, however, the 2007 Afghanistan HDR acknowledged that the country has one of the highest

Table 5.3: Health facilities under the MOPH in Afghanistan as of June 2007

Sr. No.	Indicators	Number
1	Basic Health Centre	666
2	Comprehensive Health Centre	377
3	District Hospitals	49
4	Provincial Hospitals	30
5	Regional Hospitals	4
6	Special (Professional) Hospitals	20

Source: Health Information System Department, Ministry of Public Health, 2007.

incidences of tuberculosis in the world. It is estimated at 228 cases per 100,000 population and that the death rate from tuberculosis is still approximately 12,000 deaths per year. The disease tends to strike the weak and unhealthy, especially women. WHO data showed that 2 out of every 3 registered tuberculosis smear positive cases were women.”⁶⁷

5.14 Health Care Facilities

- Health care facilities under the Ministry of Public Health in Afghanistan are shown in Table 5.3. The total number of basic and comprehensive health centers, which are closer to the rural people, were 666 and 377, respectively, as of 18 June 2007.

5.15 Health Staff /Professionals

- There has been some improvement in the fight against TB in Afghanistan. In 2001, only 12% of the district hospitals and 38% of the health centres in the country had DOTs programme. In 2006, all the district hospitals and 81% of the health centres had DOTs programmes. However, data on programme beneficiaries disaggregated by sex is not available. Lack of sex disaggregated data on other causes of death prevents an accurate assessment of their relative impact on women and men.
- Data on the number of health personnel under the Ministry of Public Health are provided in Table 5.4. There were 2,750 doctors and 2,189 nurses in government service as of 18 June 2007. Of the total number of doctors, 21.9% were females, while 17.1% of nurses were females. However, most mid-wives (98.1%) in Afghanistan were females.

⁶⁷ Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul, December 2005. Statistical Compilation on Gender Issues in Afghanistan: Background Study for a Gender Policy Framework.

- In total, the proportion of women working under the MOPH, including doctors, nurses, administrative staff, and contract workers and cleaners, was 23.3%. This is less than the 30% target required to meet international standards and is a major hindrance to women's access to public health.
- Data shown in Table 5.3 and 5.4, however, are only partial data on health facilities and health personnel of the MOPH. They do not include health facilities and women and men in the health field under other Ministries, Universities or the private sector.
- The Ministry of Public Health also compiled data on health facilities and health personnel from all ministries, including the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Higher Education, as well as from the private sector (Table 5.5). However, the data on personnel are not disaggregated by sex. The table shows that the number of hospital beds increased from 9,326 in 2005 to 10,925 in 2006. It may be noted however, that the data on hospitals, doctors, basic health centers government medicos, pharmacists and private laboratories declined for the same period.

Table 5.4: Health personnel under the MOPH in Afghanistan by sex and position as of 18 June 2007.

Rank	Female		Male		Total No.
	No.	%	No.	%	
Doctors	601	21.9	2149	78.1	2750
Nurses	374	17.1	1815	82.9	2189
Midwife	504	98.1	10	1.9	514
Anesthesia Nurse	18	14.8	104	85.2	122
Lab Technician	106	12.1	771	87.9	877
Stomatolog	17	22.7	58	77.3	75
Dentist	54	23.9	172	76.1	226
Radiologist	18	9.4	173	90.6	191
Pharmacist	72	21.3	266	78.7	338
Compounder	8	11.0	65	89.0	73
Vaccinator	97	20.3	380	79.7	477
Health Educator	17	12.0	125	88.0	142
Administrative Staff	344	19.8	1396	80.2	1740
Contract Workers & Cleaners	1013	23.9	3217	76.1	4230
Total	3243	23.3	10701	76.7	13944

Source: Ministry of Public Health, Kabul, June 2007.

Table 5.5: Health facilities and health personnel in Afghanistan by year.

Indicators	2005	2006
Number of hospitals	129	125
Number of beds	9,326	10,925
Beds per 10,000 population	4	5
Number of doctors	5,140	4,220
Health personnel	10,406	11,631
Basic Health Centres	799	755
X-ray units	133	140
Governmental medicos	194	128
Pharmacists	996	830
Governmental clinics	654	1,335
Governmental laboratories	169	566
Private laboratories	488	451
Dentist	202	337
Private medicos	7,714	8,840

Source: Ministry of Public Health, Kabul, 2007.

5.16 HIV/AIDS

- While many countries in Asia are faced with the growing problem of HIV/AIDS, Afghanistan still has relatively low HIV/AIDS prevalence. Since 1998, only 61 actual AIDS cases have been found. In the absence of a surveillance and reporting system, however, the risk of the virus spreading within the population is high.
- A number of factors may contribute to the spread of the virus in Afghanistan. According to the 2007 Afghanistan HDR, these are widespread poverty, high unemployment, low literacy, a large number of vulnerable groups, the low social status of women, sex slavery and prostitution, drug production and trafficking, a large number of drug abusers and Injecting Drug Users (IDU), poor social and public health infrastructure, lack of blood safety and injection practices and limited knowledge of HIV/AIDS.

5.17 Data Gaps

- Infant, child and under-5 mortality rates by sex, by rural-urban disaggregation; prevalence of underweight among children under five years of age by sex; proportion of 1 year-old children immunized against measles by sex; mean age at first marriage by sex; mean age at first birth for women; major causes of death by sex; proportion of population below the minimum level of dietary energy consumption by sex, contraceptive use by family planning method by sex, teenage pregnancies, prevalence of HIV/AIDS by sex, and per capita expenditure on health by sex
- Data are also not available on the number of women and men infected by HIV and AIDS; number of women in prostitution; or the number of women and men suffering from substance abuse

5.17 Research Needs

- A national demographic and health survey (DHS) and a national nutrition survey, are essential for filling these data gaps in Afghanistan. The DHS should be designed in such a way that data, including health expenditure per capita, are disaggregated by sex, age and geographical location (provincial, rural/urban).
- In addition, qualitative research (rapid assessments) should be carried out on the situation of women and men infected by HIV and AIDS; women in prostitution; and women and men addicted by drugs, as well as on the health needs of women, men, girls and boys, and obstacles for improving reproductive health and reducing infant, child and maternal mortality rates. •



Afghanistan has one of the lowest levels of literacy in the world, falling far behind neighboring countries in terms of literacy and educational attainment. Women's educational status at all levels is lower than that of men, a situation that has to be corrected if women are to become active participants in the rebuilding of Afghanistan.

6.1 Number of Girls and Boys in Primary Schools (Grades 1-6)

- The Afghanistan government emphasizes the importance of education for both girls and boys. In 2005, the total number of students in primary schools (grades 1-6) was 4,254,065. Of these, only 35.9% were girls.
- Table 6.1 shows that the proportion of girls declined across levels from 38.7% in grade 1 to 25.7% in grade 6.

6.2 Number of Girls and Boys in Secondary Schools (Grades 7-9) and High Schools (Grades 10-12)

- The total number of students enrolled in secondary and high schools was 626,569 in Afghanistan in 2005. Of these, the proportion of females was 24.1% compared to males at 75.9%. The proportion of female students decreased across levels at higher grades. It declined from 25.0% in grade 7 to 20.6% in grade 12. Retention of girls is a problem in secondary and high schools as well as at primary level.

Table 6.1: Number of girls and boys in Primary Schools in Afghanistan, 2005.

Grade	Girls		Boys		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	
1	346338	38.7	548256	61.3	894594
2	339101	38.9	532774	61.1	871875
3	334178	37.3	562797	62.7	896975
4	322098	35.6	582877	64.4	904975
5	113143	28.5	284409	71.5	397552
6	73947	25.7	214147	74.3	288094
Total	1528805	35.9	2725260	64.1	4254065

Source: Ministry of Education, Planning Department, May 2007.

Table 6.2: Number of girls and boys in Secondary and High Schools in Afghanistan, 2005

Grade	Girls		Boys		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	
7	50983	25.0	153254	75.0	204237
8	32915	23.9	104563	76.1	137478
9	29115	26.3	81749	73.7	110864
10	19502	23.9	62250	76.1	81752
11	10785	19.8	43682	80.2	54467
12	7765	20.6	30006	79.4	37771
Total	151065	24.1	475504	75.9	626569

Source: Ministry of Education, Planning Department, May 2007.

Rank (% female)	Universities	University Students				Total
		Female	%	Male	%	
1	Badakhshan University	136	50.0	136	50.0	272
2	Faryab University	240	45.6	286	54.4	526
3	Education University	1380	38.0	2254	62.0	3634
4	Jawozjan University	399	36.0	710	64.0	1109
5	Balkh University	1796	32.6	3720	67.4	5516
6	Herrat University	1270	31.7	2734	68.3	4004
7	Kabul Medical Institute	700	26.0	1990	74.0	2690
8	Kundoz University	144	24.4	446	75.6	590
9	Kabul University	1954	21.4	7186	78.6	9140
10	Parwan University	163	15.6	880	84.4	1043
11	Baghlan University	195	14.9	1111	85.1	1306
12	Takhar University	118	12.9	799	87.1	917
13	Nangarhar University	359	7.6	4341	92.4	4700
14	Kandahar University	38	4.0	920	96.0	958
15	Kabul Poli-technique University	72	3.2	2181	96.8	2253
16	Alberoni University	30	2.5	1152	97.5	1182
17	Bamyan University	8	2.2	360	97.8	368
18	Paktia University	0	0.0	269	100.0	269
19	Khost University	0	0.0	1310	100.0	1310
Total		9002	21.5	32785	78.5	41787

Source: Statistics Office, Planning Department, Ministry of Higher Education, June 2007.

6.3 Number of college/university students by Universities by Sex⁶⁸

- The proportion of students in colleges/universities is important for gender equality because higher education equips women to participate in better

paid employment and in decision making positions. In 2006, there were a total of 41,787 students in all colleges/universities in Afghanistan but only 21.5% were females (Table 6.3).

- Although Badakhshan University had an equal number of female and male students, most of the women were enrolled in universities located in the

⁶⁸ College/university students include Intermediate level (years 13 and 14) and Bachelor level (years 15 and 16) students, as well as students from the institutes of medicine and engineering.

Sorted by % of female	Universities	Female		Male		Total
		No.	%	No.	%	
1	Badakhshan University	46	80.7	11	19.3	57
2	Faryab University	31	58.5	22	41.5	53
3	Kundoz University	38	51.4	36	48.6	74
4	Education University	275	44.8	339	55.2	614
5	Balkh University	308	35.0	572	65.0	880
6	Baghlan University	45	28.3	114	71.7	159
7	Jawozjan University	9	28.1	23	71.9	32
8	Herrat University	165	27.1	443	72.9	608
9	Parwan University	49	21.1	183	78.9	232
10	Kabul University	451	19.8	1832	80.2	2283
11	Kabul Medical Institute	77	16.8	381	83.2	458
12	Takhar University	19	15.6	103	84.4	122
13	Nangarhar University	91	10.7	757	89.3	848
14	Kabul Poli-technique University	13	4.7	266	95.3	279
15	Alberoni University	1	0.6	161	99.4	162
16	Kandahar University	0	0.0	90	100.0	90
17	Khost University	0	0.0	75	100.0	75
Total		1618	23.0	5408	77.0	7026

Source: Statistics Office, Planning Department, Ministry of Higher Education, June 2007.

cities. In Kabul University, the female students comprise only a little over 1/5 (21.4%) of the total university student population. There were no female students in Paktia and Khost Universities, while the proportion of female students was negligible in Kandahar, Kabul Poli-technique, Alberoni and Bamyan Universities.

6.4 Number of college/university students who graduated in 2005 and 2006 by University and Sex

- A total of 7,026 college/university students graduated in Afghanistan in 2005 and 2006. Of these, 1,618 (23%) were female students (Table 6.4). Of the students who graduated in 2005 and 2006, about 1 in 4 was a female.

6.5 Female and Male Students in Technical⁶⁹ and Vocational⁷⁰ Education

- Very few girls in Afghanistan attend technical and vocational schools. In 2005, a total of 3,559 students attended technical schools but only 1.4% were girls. During the same year, the total number of students in vocational schools was 5,833. Only 16.2% were females. (Table 6.5). Since technical and vocational education lead to paid employment, there is a need to encourage parents to send their daughters to the technical and vocational schools. Family incentives for female enrollment would help

Type of Schools	Female		Male		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	
Technical	49	1.4	3,510	98.6	3,559
Vocational	943	16.2	4,890	83.8	5,833

Source: CSO, Kabul, Afghanistan Statistical Yearbook 2006.

⁶⁹ Technical schools include those providing technical education related to reconstruction, light industries, food related industries, electronic, mechanic/ auto-mechanic, agriculture, management, accounting, oil & gas, engineering, communication technology, etc.

⁷⁰ Vocational schools includes education related to commerce, blind, art, radio, TV, refrigerator, machine industries, road machine, agriculture, chemical technology, oil & gas, teacher training, etc.

⁷¹ Literacy is the ability to read and write. In modern context, the word means reading and writing in a level adequate for written communication and generally a level that enables one to successfully function at certain levels of a society.

⁷² NRVA 2005 determined literacy rate on the basis of whether people were able to read, write and calculate a simple arithmetic.

increase interest to send females to formal schools or vocational training.

6.6 Overall Literacy Rate⁷¹

- For the population aged 6 years and above, the overall literacy rate in the country was 28% in 2005 (NRVA 2005)⁷². The overall literacy rate for females was 18%, compared to 36% for males. Female literacy is much lower than for males in all provinces (Table 6.6). The female literacy rate is less than 10% in 11 provinces: Logar, Ghor, Badghis, Khost, Sari Pul, Kandahar, Laghman, Hilmand, Paktika, Uruzgan and Zabul.

Province	Female	Male	Both sexes
Kabul	48	66	58
Balkh	32	54	44
Hirat	28	43	36
Paktya	26	42	35
Kunduz	24	40	33
Kapisa	23	53	39
Badakhshan	22	38	31
Faryab	22	31	27
Ghazni	21	48	35
Jawzjan	21	40	31
Panjsher	20	43	33
Parwan	20	51	37
Nuristan	19	31	25
Daykundi	18	38	28
Kunarha	18	47	32
Nangarhar	15	41	29
Farah	14	27	21
Baghlan	12	29	21
Bamyan	12	41	29
Nimroz	11	30	22
Samangan	10	28	19
Takhar	10	21	16
Wardak	10	38	25

Logar	9	31	21
Ghor	8	28	19
Badghis	7	14	11
Khost	7	44	28
Sari Pul	6	18	12
Kandahar	5	26	16
Laghman	5	22	14
Hilmand	1	8	5
Paktika	0	4	2
Uruzgan	0	10	5
Zabul	0	1	1
National	18	36	28

Source: NRVA 2005, Kabul.

■ Literacy varies not only by sex and province, but among the urban, rural and Kuchi (nomadic) populations (Table 6.7). While the overall literacy rate is 56% for urban residents, it is 23% for rural dwellers, and only 6% for the nomadic population. The literacy rate is much lower for females than males in urban, rural and nomadic areas.

6.7 Adult Literacy Rate⁷³

■ According to NRVA 2005, the adult literacy rate² in Afghanistan was 23% in 2005. However, the female adult literacy rate was only 11%, which is nearly 3 times lower than the male adult literacy rate of 32%.

■ Figure 6.1 presents comparative sex-disaggregated data on adult literacy rates for Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia in 2004. Adult literacy rates for both females and males are much lower in Afghanistan, compared to the other countries. The adult female literacy rate ranged between 31% in Bangladesh and 89% in Sri Lanka, while adult male literacy rate ranged between 50% in Bangladesh and 92% in Sri Lanka during the same year. As the status of women is directly related to overall levels of education and literacy, this issue should remain a high priority on the government's agenda for the next few decades.

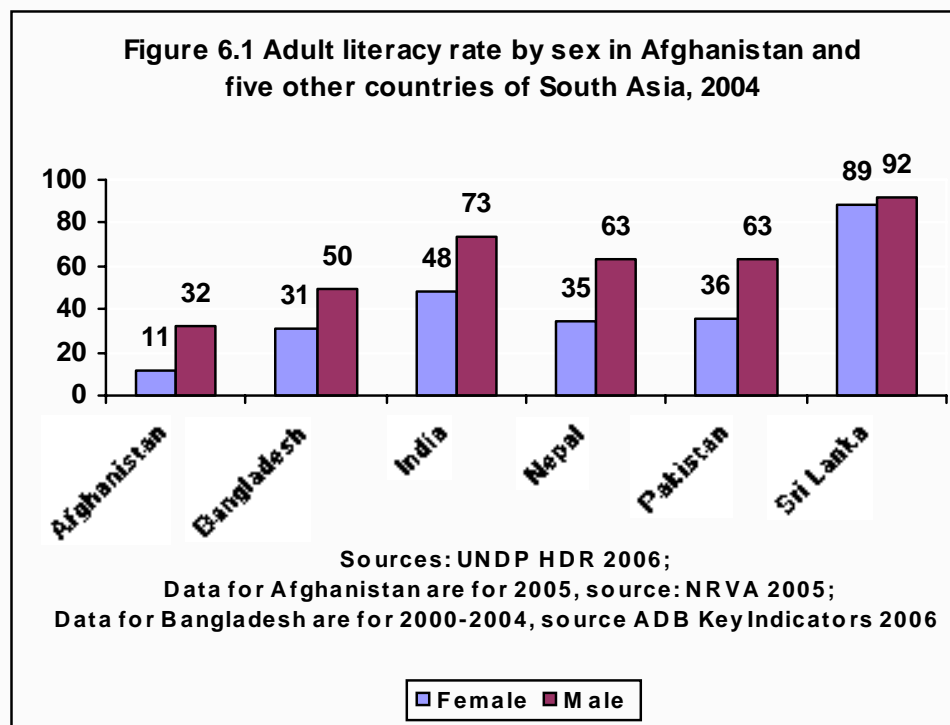


Table 6.7: Overall literacy rates in Afghanistan for 6 years old and above (in %)

Categories	Female	Male	Both Sexes
Kuchi (Nomadic)	4	8	6
Rural	13	32	23
Urban	47	64	56
National	18	36	28

Source: NRVA 2005, Kabul.

⁷³ Adult literacy rate is the percentage of the population aged 15 years and over that can read, write and understand a short simple statement.

⁷⁴ HQ MICS tables, the 2003 MICS results, quoted by UNICEF Afghanistan, May 2006, best estimates of social indicators for children in Afghanistan 1990-2005.

6.8 Youth Literacy Rate ⁷⁵

- It is important to monitor youth literacy (the literacy rate of 15-24 years olds) because the youth are the next generation of adults who will sustain the current peace and reconstruction efforts of the country. In 2005, the overall youth literacy rate in Afghanistan was 31.3%. However, it was only 19.6% for females, half that of males which stood at 39.9%. ⁷⁶
- Youth literacy rates for urban, rural, nomadic populations and at the national level by sex for 2005 are given in Figure 6.2. The youth literacy rate was very low (19.6%) for rural females and extremely low (about 6%) for both females and males in the nomadic population.
- The government target for Afghanistan is to reach 100% literacy rate for 15-24 year olds by 2020 (Afghanistan MDGs Country Report 2005). This requires that the school-age population of today and the future should at least finish the primary level.

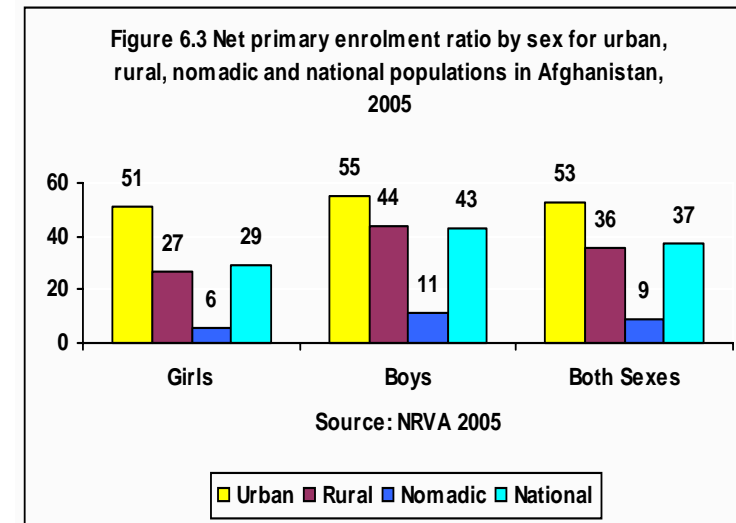
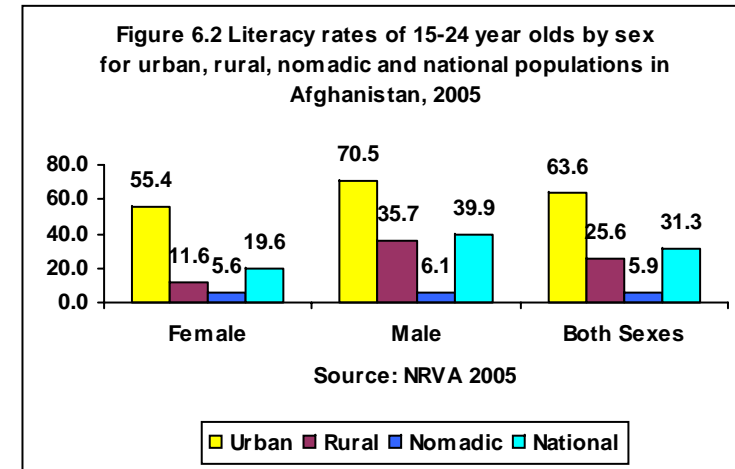
6.9 Net Enrolment Ratio⁷⁷ in Primary Education by Sex

- According to NRVA 2005, the net enrolment ratio in primary education

in Afghanistan for age group 6-13 years was 29% for girls, and 43% for boys, and 37% for both sexes combined.

- The net enrolment ratio in primary education was low for both girls and boys, but comparatively much lower for girls. Thus, while over 2 in 5 boys in the appropriate age group were in primary school, only 1 in 3 girls in the same age group were in primary school. This is a factor that perpetuates gender inequality and the low status of women in society. Thus, while the aim should be to increase the net enrolment ratio of both girls and boys in primary education to 100%, special attention should be given to increasing the net enrolment ratio of girls at a much faster rate.
- The gap in net enrolment ratio between girls and boys is more pronounced in rural areas compared to urban areas. In 2005, the net enrolment ratio for rural girls was 27% compared to 44% for rural boys. In the nomadic areas, the ratio was extremely low for both girls (6%) and boys (11%).

- The government's target for Afghanistan is to attain 100% net enrolment in primary education by 2020.⁷⁸ This will require an increased net enrolment ratio in primary education for both girls and boys. At



the same time a faster rate of improvement in net enrolment in primary education is required for girls in the urban, rural and nomadic areas, with special attention to nomadic and rural areas.

⁷⁵ Literacy rate of 15-24 year olds is the percentage of the population aged 15-24 years that can read, write and understand a short simple statement. It is also referred to as the youth literacy rate.

⁷⁶ NRVA 2005

⁷⁷ Net enrolment ratio in primary education is the ratio of the number of children in official school age group who are enrolled in primary school to the total population of children in the same age group. A net enrolment ratio of 100% ensures that all children in the appropriate age group are enrolled in the school.

⁷⁸ Afghanistan MDGs Country Report, 2005

6.10 Gross Primary Enrolment Ratio⁷⁹

■ In 2004, the gross primary enrolment ratio was 57% for girls and 111% for boys in Afghanistan (RALS estimate quoted by UNICEF best estimates 2006). This means that many over aged boys attended primary school. The number of over aged girls attending primary was much smaller compared to boys. While gaps in education are gradually being corrected for boys, the same is not so for girls. Therefore, there is a need to encourage more over aged girls who do not have any education to enroll in primary school.

6.11 Gross Secondary Enrolment Ratio⁸⁰

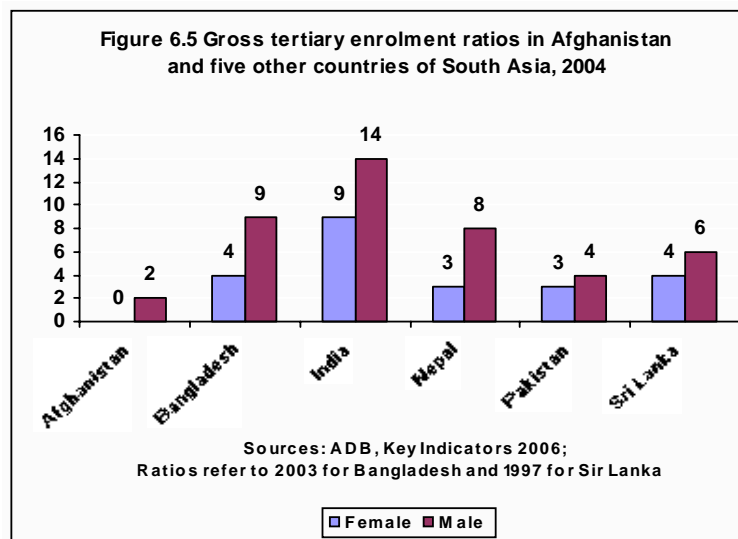
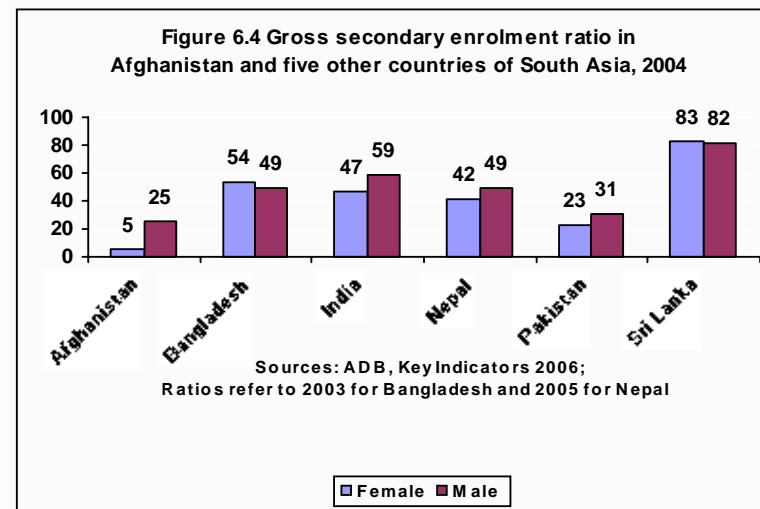
■ The gross secondary enrolment ratio in Afghanistan was 5% for girls and 25% for boys in 2004 (Figure 6.4). Gross secondary enrolment ratios in Afghanistan are low for both girls and boys, but much lower for girls.

■ Figure 6.4 shows that, compared to Afghanistan, gross secondary enrolment ratios are much higher for both girls and boys in five other countries of South Asia. In 2004, gross secondary enrolment ratios ranged between 23% in Pakistan and 83% in Sri Lanka for girls, and 31% in Pakistan and 82% in Sri Lanka for boys.

6.12 Gross Tertiary Enrolment Ratio⁸¹

■ As Figure 6.5 shows, the gross tertiary enrolment ratio for Afghanistan was negligible for females and 2% for males in 2004.

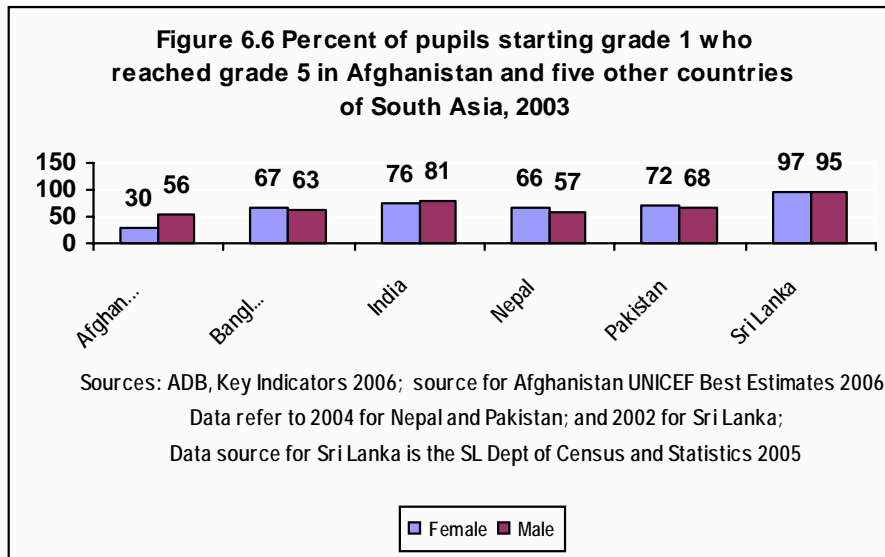
■ The country is facing a serious shortage of educated human resources, especially of educated females. Hence, there is an urgent need to increase the number of female students at the tertiary (college/university) level of education. To achieve this, enrolment of females at the primary and secondary levels must also consistently graduate sufficient females who will be able to enter the tertiary level.



⁷⁹ Gross primary enrollment ratio (%) is the proportion of pupils enrolled in primary schools regardless of their age. The gross enrolment ratio may exceed 100% because some enrolled pupils are below or above the official primary school age.

⁸⁰ Gross secondary enrollment ratio (%) is the total number of pupils enrolled in secondary schools, regardless of their age.

⁸¹ Gross tertiary enrollment ratio (%) is the total number of pupils enrolled in tertiary (college/ university) level of education, regardless of their age.



6.13 Proportion of Pupils Starting Grade 1 Who Reach Grade 5⁸²

- In 2003, the percentage of pupils starting grade 1 who were expected to reach grade 5 was 30% for girls and 56% for boys in Afghanistan (UNICEF Best Estimates, May 2006). The likelihood for girls to complete elementary education is much lower than that for boys.
- Figure 6.6 shows the proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5 in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia in 2003. Compared to Afghanistan, a much

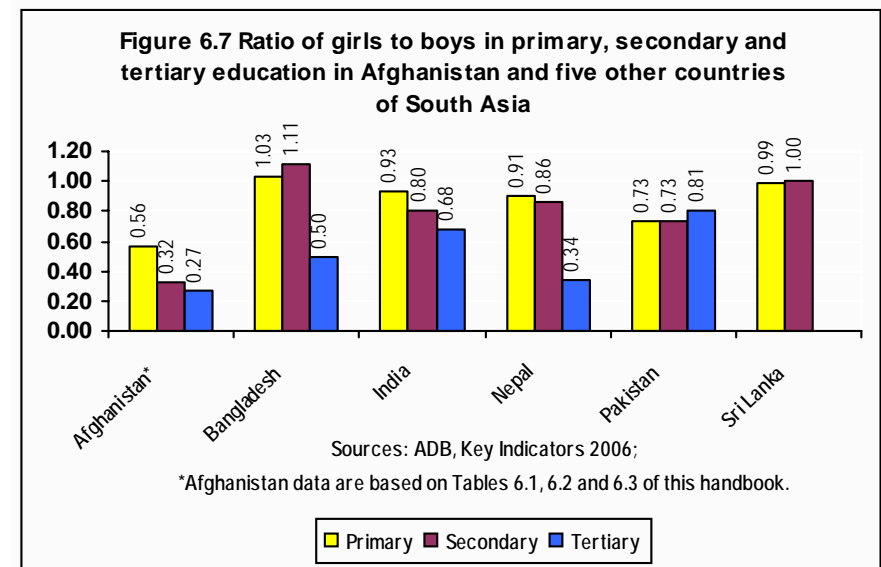
larger proportion of girls and boys are retained in primary schools in the other countries. In Bangladesh, 67% of girls and 63% of boys starting grade 1 reached grade 5 in 2003. In Sri Lanka, 97% of girls and 95% of boys starting grade 1 reached grade 5 by 2003.

- The government's target for Afghanistan is retention of all pupils in primary level of education by 2020 (Afghanistan MDGs Country Report 2005). To achieve this, special programmes to promote enrollment and retention will be required, particularly for girls.

6.14 Ratio of Girls to Boys in Primary, Secondary and Higher Level of Education⁸³

§ In Afghanistan, the ratio of girls to boys in primary school (grades 1-6) was 0.56 in 2005. It was 0.32 for secondary/high school (grades 6-12) during the same year. The ratio of girls to boys in tertiary (college/university) level education was 0.27 in Afghanistan in 2006.

- The ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education in Afghanistan and five other countries of South Asia are given in Figure 6.7 (ADB, Key Indicators 2006). There are nearly 100 girls per 100 boys at the primary and secondary level of education in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka could be a model for primary and secondary education for the other countries in the region.

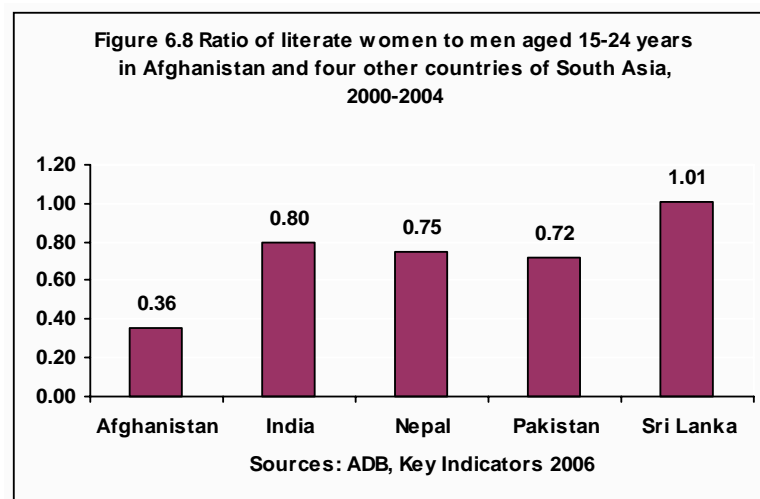


⁸² Proportion of Pupils Starting Grade 1 Who Reach Grade 5 is the percentage of pupils enrolled in grade 1 of primary schools who are expected to reach grade 5.

⁸³ Ratio of girls to boys in primary education is defined as the ratio of the number of female students enrolled in primary level of education (in public and private schools) to the number of male students enrolled in the same level. Ratios of girls and boys in secondary and tertiary level of education are defined in similar ways. Tertiary level refers to college/university education.

6.15 Ratio of Literate Women to Men 15-24 Years Old

- In Afghanistan the ratio of literate women to men for 15-24 years olds, was 0.36 in 2000-2004 (Figure 6.8)⁸⁴ Women in the age group 15-24 years have much lower literacy than men in the same age group, reflecting the poorer access of girls to primary and secondary schooling.
- Figure 6.8 shows the ratios of literate women to men 15-24 years old in Afghanistan and four other countries of South Asia. Compared to Afghanistan, the ratios are much higher in the other countries. In Sri Lanka, it was 1.01 in 2000-2004, indicating that nearly equal proportions of females and males in the age group 15-24 years were literate during the period.



6.16 Number of School Teachers in General Education by Sex

- According to the Ministry of Education, there were a total of 128,400 school teachers in general education in the country in 2005. Of these, 28.1% were female (Table 6.8). This means that, at the national level, less than 1 in 3 school teachers were women.
- However, the proportion of female school teachers varies by province. While nearly 64% of school teachers were female in Kabul, the proportion was less than 5% in Kunar, Paktika, Khost and Uruzgan provinces.

⁸⁴ The ratio equals 1.00 when women and men have equal literacy.

Table 6.8 Number of School Teachers in General Education in Afghanistan by province and by sex in 2005.

By % of female	Province	Female		Male		Total
		No.	%	No.	%	
1	Kabul	12,422	63.8	7,047	36.2	19,469
2	Balkh	4,014	46.5	4,614	53.5	8,628
3	Herat	3,866	41.6	5,438	58.4	9,304
4	Jawzjan	1,389	38.6	2,207	61.4	3,596
5	Nimroz	269	33.6	531	66.4	800
6	Badakhshan	2,201	26.9	5,976	73.1	8,177
7	Faryab	1,447	26.5	4,009	73.5	5,456
8	Kunduz	1,267	24.6	3,873	75.4	5,140
9	Farah	521	23.2	1,727	76.8	2,248
10	Panjsher	121	22.7	412	77.3	533
11	Bamyan	523	21.8	1,880	78.2	2,403
12	Sari Pul	474	21.4	1,736	78.6	2,210
13	Baghlan	1,711	21.1	6,413	78.9	8,124
14	Daikundi	231	20.1	920	79.9	1,151
15	Takhar	1,051	19.5	4,332	80.5	5,383
16	Samangan	344	18.9	1,478	81.1	1,822
17	Logar	378	18.2	1,696	81.8	2,074
18	Ghazni	750	17.6	3,508	82.4	4,258
19	Badghis	167	15.8	889	84.2	1,056
20	Parwan	572	13.3	3,744	86.7	4,316
21	Kapisa	283	12.1	2,047	87.9	2,330
22	Zabul	115	11.7	867	88.3	982
23	Helmand	184	11.4	1,437	88.6	1,621
24	Nangarhar	582	11	4,713	89	5,295
25	Kandahar	267	9.8	2,457	90.2	2,724
26	Nuristan	78	8.4	855	91.6	933
27	Laghman	208	8.1	2,366	91.9	2,574
28	Paktia	121	6	1,881	94	2,002
29	Wardak	168	5.5	2,870	94.5	3,038
30	Ghor	116	5.2	2,134	94.8	2,250
31	Kunar	133	4.9	2,609	95.1	2,742
32	Paktika	92	3.5	2,516	96.5	2,608
33	Khost	66	3	2,126	97	2,192
34	Uruzgan	9	0.9	952	99.1	961
Total		36,140	28.1	92,260	71.9	128,400

Source: Ministry of Education, Kabul, June 2007.

6.17 Number of University Teachers by Sex

- In 2006, there were 1,982 teachers in the colleges/universities in Afghanistan (Table 6.9). Of these, only 15.3% were female. The proportion of female teachers was zero in Pakita, Takhar and Khost universities, while it was nearly negligible in Baghlan, Kandahar, Nangarhar and Alberoni Universities.

Sorted by % female	Universities	Female		Male		Total
		No.	%	No.	%	
1	Badakhshan University	7	58.3	5	41.7	12
2	Faryab University	10	33.3	20	66.7	30
3	Parwan University	4	30.8	9	69.2	13
4	Jawzjan University	13	26.5	36	73.5	49
5	Education University	36	25.0	108	75.0	144
6	Kundoz University	4	23.5	13	76.5	17
7	Balkh University	49	21.6	178	78.4	227
8	Kabul University	95	19.4	395	80.6	490
9	Herat University	23	14.6	134	85.4	157
10	Bamyan University	5	13.9	31	86.1	36
11	Kabul Poli-technique University	18	13.6	114	86.4	132
12	Kabul Medical Institute	24	11.0	194	89.0	218
13	Baghlan University	2	9.5	19	90.5	21
14	Kandahar University	4	6.9	54	93.1	58
15	Nangarhar University	8	3.0	255	97.0	263
16	Alberoni University	1	2.2	44	97.8	45
17	Paktia University	0	0.0	9	100.0	9
18	Takhar University	0	0.0	24	100.0	24
19	Khost University	0	0.0	37	100.0	37
Total		303	15.3	1679	84.7	1982

Source: Statistics Office, Planning Department, Ministry of Higher Education, June 2007.

6.18 Spending on Education

- According to CSO, recurrent expenditure on primary and secondary/high school education in Afghanistan was 1.7% of GDP in 2004. During the same year, public spending in the education sector as a whole in terms of percentage of GDP was 2.0% in Bangladesh, 4.1% in India (in 2002), 2.7% in Nepal (in 2000), 2.2% in

Pakistan and 1.9% in Sri Lanka.⁸⁵ Afghanistan needs to increase public spending in education sector to a level above that of India in 2002 (4.1% of GDP) in order to catch up with other South Asian countries.

6.19 Data Gaps

- Average number of years of educational attainment of females and males in Afghanistan
- Dropout rates of girls and boys in primary and secondary/high school levels and college/university level education
- Projected estimates of requirements for women and men professionals in labor force in the country in the next 5 to 10 years

6.20 Research Needs

- The average number of years of educational attainment of females and males in Afghanistan could be provided by the upcoming population census of Afghanistan.
- There is a need to analyze the existing administrative data collection, analysis and reporting system in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education and recommend measures to generate data on dropout rates in primary and secondary/high schools and at college/university levels.
- Studies are also needed to project requirements for educated female and male human resources in the labor force in Afghanistan in the next 5 to 10 years.

⁸⁵ SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu. SAARC Regional Poverty Profile, 2005.

CONCLUSION

In a country like Afghanistan, where the statistical infrastructure and technical capacity have been devastated by over two decades of armed conflict, producing a publication like this was almost an impossible feat. This publication may not be as comprehensive or perfect as MOWA wished, but readers are assured that all possible measures were taken to ensure that it contains no less than the best data and analysis that could be had at the time of publication. This is only the beginning, and improvements will be continuously made in subsequent editions.

The process that gave birth to this publication has been both challenging and inspiring. Proceeding from a notion that data are scattered or not available at all would have discouraged MOWA from starting the task. Yet, the need for empirical evidence on gender issues became increasingly pressing as MOWA worked to mainstream gender in the finalization of the ANDS. There was no alternative but to commence work on this publication.

The support given by members of the Adhoc Advisory Group was more than encouraging. They led MOWA to sources of data, helped in deepening the analysis, and affirmed that the process was on the right track. The discussions were highly informative as they provided empirical evidence for notions that were previously based on anecdotes. To many, the power of hard facts has been a compelling and instructive lesson on how to strengthen their work to improve the well being of women.

This publication confirmed and substantiated previously known “facts” about the lives of women and men. In addition, however, it also uncovered shocking new facts that serve to enrich the existing body of knowledge about women and men’s lives in Afghanistan. The “shocking facts” that could move readers to immediate action have been culled out and published in a separate handy flyer targeting legislators, government executives and policy and decision makers.

Finally, this publication is not only about available data. It is also about data that are not available but are so important that they need to be collected in the next five years. Within its bedrock is a call for measures to address the poor state of data generation systems in the country. Good information builds the mind and character of the nation. Rebuilding the country’s capacity to generate and process intelligent data is therefore a highly compelling imperative.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

FIRST MEETING of Adhoc Advisory Group on the publication "Women and Men in Afghanistan: A Handbook on Baseline Statistics on Gender", 17 January 2007, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul, Afghanistan

1. **Mohammad Sami Nabi**, Central Statistics Office, Kabul
2. **Ismatullah Ramzi**, Central Statistics Office, Kabul
3. **Amanullah Assil**, NRVA Team, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Kabul
4. **Gulalai Habeeb**, NRVA Team, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Kabul
5. **Mohammad Mosa Zabih**, Ministry of Higher Education, Kabul
6. **Dr. Hamrah Khan**, Ministry of Public Health, Kabul
7. **Dr. Mohammad Edriss**, Ministry of Public Health, Kabul
8. **Nima Khenjani**, GTZ, Kabul
9. **Kawus Jahish**, Afghanistan International Bank, Kabul
10. **Pauline Tweedie**, The Asia Foundation, Kabul
11. **Lida Naderi**, The Asia Foundation, Kabul
12. **Shipra Bose**, UNDP, Kabul
13. **Rachel Wareham**, GTZ, Kabul
14. **Halima Kazem**, National Human Development Report Team, Kabul University
15. **Gulghotai Azimi**, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul
16. **Maliha Salihi**, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul
17. **Farida Mohibzada**, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul
18. **Ermelita Valdeavilla**, UNIFEM

19. **Homa Sabri**, UNIFEM
20. **Sulieaman Hedayat**, UNIFEM
21. **Marzia Alam**, UNIFEM
22. **Dilli Prasad Bhattarai**, UNIFEM

APPENDIX B

SECOND MEETING of the Adhoc Advisory Group on the Publication "Women and Men in Afghanistan: A Handbook on Baseline Statistics on Gender", Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul, Afghanistan, 19 June 2007

1. **Amanullah Assil**, NSS, NRVA Team, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Kabul
2. **Ghalib Meyakhail**, Ministry of Interior Affairs, Kabul
3. **Ahmad Kawus Jahish**, Afghanistan International Bank, Kabul
4. **Attahullah Wahidyar**, UNICEF, Kabul
5. **Shipra Bose**, UNDP, Kabul
6. **Palwasha Hassan**, GTZ, Kabul
7. **Fariha Jabarkhail**, GTZ, Kabul
8. **Roya Yousifzada**, Kabul University, Kabul
9. **Lida Naderi**, The Asia Foundation, Kabul
10. **Pouline Tweedie**, The Asia Foundation, Kabul
11. **Hossai Wardak**, UNFPA, Kabul
12. **Bashir Najeeb**, UNFPA, Kabul
13. **Tahmina Imadi**, UNFPA, Kabul
14. **Dr. Zibulnessa**, UNFPA, Kabul
15. **Morwarid Ziayee**, UNAMA, Kabul
16. **Meryem Aslan**, UNIFEM, Kabul
17. **Dr. Hamrah Khan**, Ministry of Public Health, Kabul
18. **Dr. Mazari Safa**, Honorable Deputy Minister, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul

19. **Dr. Hamida Hamid**, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul
20. **Zahra Hafizi**, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul
21. **Gulghotai Azimi**, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul
22. **Maliha Salihi**, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul
23. **Farida Mohibzada**, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul
24. **Ermelita Valdeavilla**, UNIFEM
25. **Homa Sabri**, UNIFEM
26. **Sulieaman Hedayat**, UNIFEM
27. **Marzia Alam**, UNIFEM
28. **Dilli Prasad Bhattarai**, UNIFEM
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APPENDIX C

FINALIZATION MEETING for the Publication "Women and Men in Afghanistan: A Handbook on Baseline Statistics on Gender", Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul, 2 September 2007

1. **Abul Rashid Fakhri**, Central Statistics Office, Kabul
2. **Mohammad Sami Nabi**, Central Statistics Office, Kabul
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8. **Kamila**, Ministry of Finance, Kabul
9. **W. Barakzai**, Kabul
10. **Naqal Ahmad**, Ministry of Repatriation and Refugees Affairs, Kabul
11. **Hamadi Soboot**, UNFPA, Kabul
12. **Hossai Wardak**, UNFPA, Kabul
13. **Rahila Kaveer**, UNICEF, Kabul
14. **Nadia Behbodi**, UNICEF, Kabul
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16. **Rosanita Serrano**, UNDP, Kabul
17. **Lida Naderi**, The Asia Foundation, Kabul
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19. **Mohammad Taher Popal**, Ministry of Interior Affairs, Kabul
20. **Tahmina Azizi**, Ministry of Justice, Kabul
21. **Abdul Manan Hakimi**, Ministry of Justice, Kabul
22. **Sayed Naqeeb Adel**, Ministry of Education, Kabul
23. **Munira Haidary**, Ministry of Education, Kabul
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37. **Nooria Banwal**, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul
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39. **Horia**, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul
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41. **Gughotai Azimi**, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul
42. **Maliha Salihi**, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul
43. **Farida Mohibzada**, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Kabul
44. **Ermelita Valdeavilla**, UNIFEM
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46. **Sulieman Hedayat**, UNIFEM
47. **Marzia Alam**, UNIFEM
48. **Dilli Prasad Bhattarai**, UNIFEM
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