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**AFGHANISTAN**

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# FACT SHEET

## Afghanistan Social Outreach Program (ASOP)

### OVERVIEW

The Afghanistan Social Outreach Program (ASOP) aims to strengthen security and peace, improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of service delivery, and build local governance through the revival of traditional practices of collective decision-making, community solidarity, and promoting cooperation and partnership with the government. The program is designed to put in place mechanisms to ensure ongoing communication and collaboration between the government and communities through the creation of community councils at the district level.

ASOP has established more than 115 district community councils to facilitate communication between the government and communities, mobilize community support to reduce conflict, promote development, and encourage more efficient and transparent use of district resources. These councils will gather the concerns and needs of communities and establish channels of communication and coordination with government authorities. An elected set of council leadership will lead the councils, thus encouraging coordinated government support for communities and a response to their concerns. Until district-level elections are held, the district councils created under ASOP are intended to be the key governing bodies at the district level that will facilitate interaction between communities and government across a full range of sectors, services, and activities.

### CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- Foster community solidarity to prevent support for anti-government elements and activities in the district
- Monitor services and development projects entering the district, and communicate concerns to line ministries and donors
- Serve as a vetting mechanism for Afghan local police recruits and encourage reconciliation with insurgent groups
- Ensure liaison and communication with government officials and security services to improve security and enforce the rule of law
- Provide a forum for conflict resolution at the district level when issues have not been able to be settled at the local level
- Provide a conduit for public grievances by informing government on shortcomings, malpractices, and problems in the provision of public services and working jointly with government officials to identify and implement appropriate solutions
- Provide quality assurance for sustainable development through ensuring the security of development projects and monitoring and reporting on project outputs
- Facilitate communications, coordination, and cooperation between the government and communities to increase the level of trust and confidence between the government and the people, and establish a stronger base for democratic governance

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Created more than 115 councils in insecure districts
- Provided orientation and service monitoring training for council members
- Trained 8,052 community council members--including 282 female members--on themes such as management, good governance, conflict resolution, peace building, and disaster risk reduction in 106 districts