

# Draft

## Women's Guide to Winning in the 2005 Afghan Elections

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# **Women's Guide to Winning in the 2005 Afghan Elections**

## **1. Introduction: Elections, A Defining Opportunity**

### **1.1 Afghan Women and 2005 Elections**

The elections for the Parliamentary and Provincial Councils that are being held on September 18, 2005 (27 of Sunbula, 1384) are a defining moment for Afghan women. On this day, Afghan women in an unprecedented way, both give and receive votes from the Afghan public. Women form more than 44% of voters and it is hoped that a majority of them will go to the polling booths to elect their preferred candidates.

Approximately 25% of the seats in the Wolesi Jirga and 25% of the seats in each of the Provincial Councils are reserved for women (Article 83 of the Constitution defines the number of seats for Wolesi Jirga; Elections Law for Provincial Councils). In many countries of the world, women have fought for a long time to get to this number. And in others, they still either don't have this number or they have not reached this figure in either of these two important chambers of power and decision making. The women of Afghanistan must take full advantage of this great opportunity.

The number of women who are candidates for the Wolesi Jirga is 335.

The number of women who are candidates for the 34 Provincial Councils is 247.

Bravo and congratulations! Each female candidate is a pioneer of the new Afghanistan and has something in common in the elections. As a female candidate, you are deciding the fate of Afghan woman in the areas of power and decision making. While you prove the dignity and ability of Afghan women to your own society and to the international community, you also present a great role model for the world at large.

In fact, as a female candidate, you are working for peace, stability and progress of Afghanistan. The future is us!

Success is with you when you are fully aware of the special problems of Afghanistan and when you run a special and successful campaign based on this knowledge.

### **1.2 A Look to the Past**

This election of 2005 is not the first election for Afghan women. In the past also, Afghan women were candidates and became winners of Wolesi Jirga elections. For example, in the elections that followed the constitution of 1964 women became candidates and four of them won to become members of the Wolesi Jirga. They

were Mrs. Khadija Ahrari, Mrs. Massouma Wardak, Mrs. Anahita Ratebzad and Mrs. Roqia Abubakre.

In those days, there were many women with lives that are relevant to today's situation. If as an example we take a short look at the life of one of them, we see that their lives were not so very different than today. Mrs. Roqia Abubakre (later known as Mrs. Roqia Habib) was born in Chehelstoon of Kabul to an educated and middle class family. When she was nine years old, she was engaged. The fiancé of her older sister had died and the groom's family did not have a son of a suitable age to continue to have the older sister as a bride. The family therefore asked for the hand of Roqia to a younger son. Roqia was married when she was thirteen; she had a baby girl at fourteen; and she became a widow at fifteen when her husband died of tuberculosis. With much chagrin over the death of her beloved husband, she was forced to take her infant daughter and move back to her father's family home.

There, she turned to studying and became one of the six women who for the first time in the history of Afghanistan, graduated from a girls' high school in 1947. In 1946, while studying, she worked as a teacher and was one of the founders of the Women's Institute, the precursor of today's Ministry of Women's Affairs. In 1951, she became one of the first females to earn a university degree. Shortly after, she became the head of the household for her four infant children when her second husband was imprisoned during the First Democracy Movement.

Later, Roqia became a member of the Loya Jirga that ratified the constitution of 1964, and after its promulgation, became a candidate from Kabul.

In those days, Roqia had to conduct her successful campaign without the help of guide books, workshops, or civil society. She had to work hard to find supportive social networks.

After the imprisonment and disappearance of her oldest son, Roqia became a refugee in 1980. When she died in 2002 at the age of 84 in the United States of America she left behind 35 books and numerous articles and was still fighting for the cause of women of her country. Her last words to her daughter were: "Every Afghan woman is a daughter of mine!"

A picture of Roqia during her years in the United States is in Appendix E.

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***In your opinion, what are some similarities between the life of this one woman and today's Afghanistan? Between you, as a candidate, and Roqia? Between the society, then and now? Mention three things:***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
-

### **1.3 National Assembly and Provincial Councils of 2005**

The National Assembly and Provincial Councils have come into being as a result of articles in the constitution of 2004. The constitution has also specified that the members of these two chambers come from direct elections.

According to article 83 of the constitution, the National Assembly of Afghanistan is composed of two chambers: The Wolesi Jirga (House of the People) and the Meshrano Jirga (House of Elders). The members of the Wolesi Jirga are directly elected from each province according to population size. The total number comes to 249.

The second chamber of the National Assembly is the Meshrano Jirga. According to article 84 of the constitution, the members of this chamber are composed of: One third is representatives of the Provincial Councils, one third is representatives of the District Councils, and one third is members appointed by the President of the Republic. In other words, members of the Meshrano Jirga are not directly elected. The total number is 102.

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***How many members of the Wolesi Jirga are women? How many members does the Meshrano Jirga have? How many are women?***

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The members of the Provincial Council of each province are elected from the people of that province. The number is different in each province based on the population.

The number of women in the Wolesi Jirga is specified by the constitution. The Joint Electoral Management Body (JEMB), through the elections law, has decided that the number of women in each Provincial Council should be 25% of the total number for the council. The number of women in the Meshrano Jirga is not yet known.

The exact number of women from each province to the Wolesi Jirga and the Provincial Council has been decided upon by the JEMB.

The elections law describes the manner and procedures of the elections. The Joint Electoral Management Body (JEMB), composed of Afghans and United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), oversees the process and administration of the elections.

According to the elections law, women are declared winners according to this criterion: Those women from among the female candidates of each province, who receive the highest number of votes, are the winners.

However, women must not be content with this JEMB guideline. To be successful in the Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council, as a candidate you must show that you are totally worthy of representing the Afghan people. In this regard, you have many hurdles to overcome.

In this guide, we have attempted to help you better solve some of these problems and challenges. We have organized the guide into different sections. In section two we talk about the challenges women face. In section three we explore the current situation and condition of Afghan women. To find solutions, we first start with the constitution in section five. In light of all of these, in sections six and seven we discuss some keys to success - - for you. Finally, in section eight we try to describe to you, the representative of the people, a little of what your new office will look like and what you should expect once you are there.

Also, we have compiled extra information in several appendices. You can draw on this information as the need arises.

To make sure that the information we provide and issues we discuss are effective, we ask you to take an active role in every step of this guide because it is your own ideas that will define a winning and unique Afghan solution. To this end, at the end of each section and subsection we have asked pertinent questions.

## **2. Challenges Women Face in the Elections**

Afghan women face many challenges in this election. These challenges affect women's ability in many ways: in the process and procedures of their campaign, presentation of a platform, delivery of a message, and the relationships that they must develop in order to get the people's vote.

In this section we discuss some of these challenges so that hopefully an understanding of them will help women find effective ways of not only dealing with them, but also developing better campaign strategies - - and becoming better representatives.

### **2.1 The Gender Gap**

Unequal relationship between men and women in society means unequal access for women. Therefore, inevitably, election campaigns are also unequal.

This is not only the case in Afghanistan. Being a woman makes the election race difficult and unequal in all parts of the world because women have only relatively recently come into the public life. Thus, some things that exist for men exist scantily for women. For example, for men, it is normal to draw upon official customs, bureaucratic experience, institutional memory, culture and habits of working in the public sphere or being in powerful, decision making positions. But for women such things either do not exist or they are new and unfamiliar. In other words, women do not have many examples and role models.

Men and women are physically and socially different. Women get pregnant, give birth, have to be obedient to the in-laws according to strict rules, and often have to manage the home environment. All of these raise women with separate habits and customs. Men also have their own habits and customs. With these separate habits and customs, society also expects different things from each of them.

When both men and women start working in the same work environment, for either of them, models of behavior do not exist. This situation creates difficulties, especially for women.

Social differences that exist between men and women in Afghanistan and the different expectations that society has from both of them has created unequal access to needed social spheres for women. For example, in Afghan society it is often a shame (ayb or sharm) for a woman to speak or eat in front of men, a woman must always get her husband's permission even for going to the market let alone becoming a candidate, and gathering people to talk about her platform. For Friday's prayer, women do not go to the mosque and do not have contacts with the mosque's mullah.

Women must perform all household chores such as cooking, washing clothes, collecting water and fuel, watching and raising children, and others, all of which take up the majority of a woman's time.

For men, it is a shame to listen to a woman or ask a woman's permission, and having a professional contact with a woman is not considered manly. It is also shameful for men to be considered 'zanchoo' or woman-like, and it is not only 'nang' or 'a-ar', or shame, but a man is considered lacking (na-mard or un-man), if he cannot properly provide for his wife and family or if he lives off his wife's income.

With such mentality, female candidates' access to offices, social institutions, social services and getting society's acquiescence in their social activities is limited and affects their capabilities in the campaign.

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***How can female candidates work under such circumstances? Mention three things:***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

## **2.2 Security**

Security in Afghanistan today is not good. We still have groups that are against the success of our country. They still endanger us. On a daily basis, there are enemy attacks on our land and our young men lose their lives defending our country. The enemy not only engages in armed battles, but also bombs public areas, and participates in kidnappings and terrorist activities. The enemy wants to create, at all costs, fear and terror in the people.

As far as women are concerned, there are serious threats because women's activity in the social sphere is totally against our enemy's objectives and is contrary to their philosophy and principles.

On those occasions when women gather for a meeting or when they have campaign activities, they are threatened and some times they are socially isolated and excluded. Our enemies encourage people not to attend such gatherings. They put pressure, under many guises, on the women's neighbors and even relatives.

The enemy executes this evil objective using many means and tactics. They create insults and indignity to women so that women lose their courage.

There are also other risks in society: people resisting the social role of women, delinquents, extremists, and even sometimes, people belonging to rival groups, be it men or women.

These risks take many forms, including shouting at women, accusing women of immoral behaviour, spreading rumours about women, kidnapping women and girls,



burning girls' schools, attacking female candidates, tearing up their business cards, accusing them to be anti-tradition, etc.

Female candidates and their entourage must pay attention to these risks and they must not abandon the fight too quickly.

Female candidates must know about all official sources of candidate protection, security and safety. They should always have on them the names and telephone numbers of the local police, JEMB and other related offices.

---

***List three official sources of protection for the candidates:***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

***In your opinion, in what ways can female candidates safeguard their own safety and security as well as that of their entourage and audience of a gathering?***

---

### **2.3 Social Issues**

Women candidates must also fight against unacceptable social issues such as gossip, accusations, snide remarks, harassment, cursing, innuendo, intimidation, loud and lewd remarks, etc. All these may be used to scare away women and force them to leave the campaign.

Women have important tools to fight such problems: The best way to fight back is to directly confront the situation. If somebody has gossiped about you, you should as soon as possible face the person and clarify it to the public. Tell them this is not true. Confront them by saying: "I am not an immoral woman; I am not a corrupt woman. I am an upstanding citizen. I am a good mother, wife and daughter. And I have the support of my family, my father, and my husband."

Currently in Afghanistan women must play a more active role in society because the rebuilding of the new Afghanistan is not possible with the work of men alone.

We must be aware that the requirements of our time have put many pressures on both men and women. Society is always thinking of morals and ethics.

As a female candidate, you should always make it clear to society that working to get a better social and familial status, to participate in reconstruction of the country, to give a helping hand to men, also are moral and ethical actions and do not take away from the traditional place of respect for women.

In Afghanistan, female candidates should always, and in many different ways, say that they are moral and ethical and upstanding women. They should always mention that they are good mothers, daughters and wives. If they have reached middle age,

they should mention that, as in our society, age gives more social credibility to women.

Women must always remind people that they are good and humanitarian Afghans.

---

***What kind of laws can we create to help achieve social justice, to make it more everyday?***

***Mention three strategies that female candidates can use to increase their social credibility:***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

#### **2.4 Lack of Professional Experience**

Of the 14% of literate and educated women, only a small portion work in an office and have had experience with office and bureaucratic environments. But because the number of these women is small, and most just in Kabul, often society thinks that women are not very professional, do not work in offices and are neither well aware of the situation of Afghanistan and their own community nor can they present solutions.

Your rivals will try to always remind the public about this perceived lack in you.

To alleviate this problem, as a female candidate, you should use many different venues to make it clear to your audiences and the public that you understand the country's needs, that you are very well versed in the problems of your own community and have developed practical solutions to them, which you will try to implement after your victory.

Also, female candidates should try to familiarize themselves with office and bureaucratic expressions used in Afghanistan such as those in memorandum, job description, accounts receivable, executive office of the president, development budget, computer files, including courts, their names, and other jargon used in the offices of the executive and judiciary. Female candidates should, from time to time, and as needed use these expressions.

---

***What are some of your professional problems? How are they used against you? What is your solution? Where would you find a list of these? An NGO, a government office, a newspaper? Write down three more potential sources:***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
-

## 2.5 Length of War

The length of war in Afghanistan has also created challenges for women. Because women in general did not go to war, they were marginalized. Men who were busy fighting in the trenches remained isolated from the situation of women. This situation created in men a worldview that in their world there is no place for the presence of women. When something is not in the mind, the conditions, needs and problems of that thing also do not exist in the mind. In other words, war created an environmental separation between the society of men and the society of women. This separation has caused men not to be aware of the situation and status of women and the problems they face as women.

Today, Afghan society has become very segregated. For example, today, women do not use the word "husband." They refer to their spouses as the father of my children, etc.

Or, men never use the word "wife" or "spouse." They use words such as household, children, furnishings or even goat when referring to their wife.

Also, many Afghan men have developed the mentality that they participated in the wars without the presence of women and can now rebuild society also without the presence of women; that it is not a manly thing to include women.

In such a situation, men rarely give their vote to women.

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*In your opinion, how women can help men actively and consciously think of women's presence and credibility? In the gatherings you have for your elections, how often do men ask questions about women's situation? How about you, how often do you address men's issues?*

*Mention three men's issues:*

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
-

### **3. Situation of Afghan Women Today**

To represent people in the Wolesi Jirga or the Provincial Councils, as a female candidate, you need to understand the current conditions of Afghanistan and especially be conversant in the situation of women, in the country and in the world at large.

In spite of much activity by the Government and the international community, the current conditions of Afghanistan includes many challenges which have put the country as one of the poorest, most illiterate and most backward in the world. For example:

- The national per capita income is about \$200 per year. This is about 800 Afs per month, which is not enough for one person. And most Afghans do not get this as this is only an average.
- Afghanistan is the source of about 80% of the heroin going to Europe and cultivates more than 75% of the opium of the world. Which means that the number of those people involved in drug-related jobs, in illicit jobs, is very high. And addiction threatens our youth.
- The number of people living in the rural areas is about 72.2% and in the cities about 28.8%.
- The active economy of the country includes 70% men and about 30% women.

In the world also, according to the United Nations statistics for the last decade, the situation of women shows that they face difficulties in many areas.

For example, look at the following:

- Women perform two thirds of the work of the world.
- Women receive only one tenth of the world's income.
- Women make up two thirds of the world's illiterate population.
- Women own less than one hundredth of the world's wealth.

In addition, inside Afghanistan, the situation of women is one of the most important causes of poverty, backwardness and pain. The decades of war especially affected women in many different areas.

The population of Afghanistan today is estimated at about 25 million. Women and girls comprise more than 50%.

Unfortunately, we do not yet have reliable statistics in every instance but in many areas compared to other countries Afghanistan, is in the bottom ranks.

We discuss some of these in the following sections.

#### **3.1 Illiteracy**

Only 14% of women over 15 years of age are literate. This means that about 86% of Afghan women do not have literacy and education.

In other words, the majority of women who can vote and can receive votes cannot write their own name, cannot read the doctor's prescription for their children, cannot read the name of their candidate, etc.

The number of girls that go to school is about 29.57%. In other words, about 70.43% of our girls are not in school yet. And therefore, illiteracy will continue in this new generation.

From those girls that go to school, only one or two percent will finish sixth grade. The rest will again stay home. In this way, the number of literate and educated women will continue to remain very small.

Only 54% of children go to school. In other words, about 46% of our children have not seen school yet.

Less than perhaps 5% of Afghan women know a foreign language. Less than 1% of Afghan women know computers.

The reasons for all this are complex and vary from area to area. Some of the reasons may be lack of schools, lack of teachers, lack of transportation, school's distance, poverty, etc.

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***In your area, how is the state of education? What are its needs? For women? For children? As a member of the Wolesi Jirga or Provincial Council what solutions might you present? For secondary laws in this area what articles of the constitution might come in handy?***

***Mention three needs of education in your area?***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### **3.2 Health**

Health conditions also are very poor in Afghanistan. Look at these statistics:

- A woman dies as a result of childbirth complications every 30 minutes.
- More than 70% of births are at home, the majority without the presence of a midwife or nurse.
- There are on average about 6.8 pregnancies for each woman.
- Maternal mortality rate is 1,600 per 100,000 (in Badakhshan it is 6400 per 100,000, the highest in the world).
- The government can spend on public health only one dollar (about fifty Afs) per person in one year.
- Only 40% of Afghan children receive important vaccinations.
- Access to drinkable water is only 23%.

- Cost of health services is very high.
- Annually, there are about 15,000 deaths from tuberculosis; 12,000 to 13,000 of them are women.

There are many reasons for the poor conditions of health in Afghanistan such as lack of enough doctors, lack of midwives and nurses, lack of emergency centers, repetition of childbirth, illiteracy, young age at marriage, mal-nutrition, etc.

---

***What are the health problems of your area? What are the solutions? What proposals might you give the Wolesi Jirga or the Provincial Council? How can you use the constitution to solve some of the problems?***

***Mention three important health problems in your area:***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### **3.3 Economic Conditions**

Outside the home women comprise 29% of professional and office workers. These women usually work in ministries and non-governmental offices. There is also one female governor.

Until now, we do not have a woman member of the Supreme Court. Nor does a woman represent Afghanistan in foreign countries as an ambassador.

Afghan women have a very important role in the economy of the country but their activities are not officially recognized. Statistics taken on Afghanistan label these activities under the informal economy, such as with agriculture, handicrafts, transportation and trade, and argue that these areas are not part of the productive sector whose statistics are used for the formal economy.

Among this informal economy, women comprise about 64% of the agricultural workers. Traditionally, most of the carpet weaving has been done by women and children. Transport of most of the family's foodstuff is the work of women; women are also involved in the processes of barter and trade with other farmers.

Often the role and work of women in these areas carry no wages and income to the women. Therefore their income does not get reflected in the official statistics. Many times the money and wages women earn is half that of men and even less than that of children.

There are many reasons why this economic situation exists. Some may be lack of literacy and education, lack of skills, lack of control over the income, lack of investment money, and presence of undesirable and old customs.

---

*How is the economic situation of women in your area? What are some of the factors? How will you use the Wolesi Jirga or Provincial Council to attend to some of these problems?*

*What are three economic problems in your area?*

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### **3.4 Infrastructure Problems**

After decades of war, the infrastructure of Afghanistan is mostly destroyed. Roads, bridges, wells, karizes (water aqueducts), schools, office buildings, parks, courthouses, utilities, transportation facilities, and other such necessities are all in ruin and unusable. This situation also affects access to those facilities and services that help the situation of women.

Shortage of professional personnel for social works such as judges, teachers, doctors and others have caused many problems in general and for women in particular.

---

*What are some of the ways that you might work in the Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council to address some of these issues? In what ways can you be of service to your people?*

*Mention three infrastructure areas that affect you negatively?*

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### **3.5 Customs and Mores**

Some of our social customs are enriching. But some of them are also very old and are causing problems in society.

High cost of girls' dowry and trousseau, expensive weddings, not being accustomed to dealing with officials, putting so much emphasis on relations rather than on regulations, not giving women's inheritance, are all customs that are causing women a lot of difficulty.

One of the newer and more undesirable habits/customs is that of being disrespectful to women and committing violence against them. Women are being forcibly married, are being given to a family as replacement for a killing, sold for two rifles, beaten without a second thought, shoved aside, cursed and ignored.

At the same time, men do not have behavior models for some of the new situations, such as taking more of an active role in raising their children. Developing men's

role in the family life and helping to create closer relationships between men and their children are important steps.

We women do not want a war with men. We want peace and cooperation.

---

***How can we lower the ratio of violence against women with social services? What types of violence and undesirable customs are causing problems? In what ways can we use our good customs and traditions to help solve our problems?***

***Name three areas?***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
-



#### **4. Special Mission of Afghan Women Today**

From discussions in the above sections we can conclude that in this coming election women have a special mission.

##### **4.1 Towards Afghanistan**

Women delegates represent men, women and children; they speak for the conditions of all of Afghanistan. However, at this particular time, women also have other special missions in this first post-war Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Councils.

##### **4.2 Towards Women**

It is up to the female delegates to articulate Afghan women's situation and needs. This must be one of the goals of the female candidates in this first parliament: to address the problems of Afghan women.

##### **4.3 Towards Men**

Afghan women must also help their brothers understand the situation of Afghan women. It is up to these women candidates and representatives to show that being involved in the reconstruction of our homeland, Afghanistan, does not make us immoral women; that women are not in competition with men. But that we want to be equal helpers in rebuilding our country together, for ourselves and for our children.

Fulfilling these three missions, we women can draw upon some special and important things. There are areas for hope and opportunity.

In the next sections we highlight a few of these.

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*Why do you think these different aspects are all important?*

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## 5. The Constitution of 2004

The constitution of 2004 is a very important document for women. Utilizing the articles and principles of the constitution, female candidates can develop necessary and useful platforms and later, once they are in the Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council, important and useful programs for our society.

### 5.1 General Overview

The constitution has one preamble and twelve chapters. It contains a total of 162 articles and some of the articles contain several paragraphs. The following table shows the chapters, their titles and numbers of articles in each chapter.

<b>Chapter Number</b>	<b>Chapter Title</b>	<b>How Many Articles</b>	<b>Numbers of Articles</b>
Preamble			
Chapter One	State	21 articles	Articles First to 21 <sup>st</sup>
Chapter Two	Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens	38 articles	Articles 22 <sup>nd</sup> to 59 <sup>th</sup>
Chapter Three	President of the Republic	11 articles	Articles 60 <sup>th</sup> to 70 <sup>th</sup>
Chapter Four	Government	10 articles	Articles 71 <sup>st</sup> to 80 <sup>th</sup>
Chapter Five	National Assembly	29 articles	Articles 81 <sup>st</sup> to 109 <sup>th</sup>
Chapter Six	Grand Assembly	6 articles	Articles 110 <sup>th</sup> to 115 <sup>th</sup>
Chapter Seven	Judiciary	20 articles	Articles 116 <sup>th</sup> to 135 <sup>th</sup>
Chapter Eight	Administration	7 articles	Articles 136 <sup>th</sup> to 142 <sup>nd</sup>
Chapter Nine	State of Emergency	6 articles	Articles 143 <sup>rd</sup> to 148 <sup>th</sup>
Chapter Ten	Amendments	2 articles	Articles 149 <sup>th</sup> to 150 <sup>th</sup>
Chapter Eleven	Miscellaneous Provisions	7 articles	Articles 151 <sup>st</sup> to 157 <sup>th</sup>
Chapter Twelve	Transitional Provisions	5 articles	Articles 158 <sup>th</sup> to 162 <sup>nd</sup>

For candidates for the Wolesi Jirga, chapters on National Assembly (fifth), Government (sixth) and Transition Rules (twelfth) are very important.

Candidates for the Provincial Councils should also read chapter eight, Administration.

Both of these two groups of candidates must be very knowledgeable about chapter two, Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens.

### 5.2 Specific Articles Regarding Women

It is very important that female candidates know and understand all the articles in the constitution that directly or indirectly affect women. These articles that number more than eleven are as follows:

<b>Chapter Number</b>	<b>Article Number</b>	<b>Text of the Article</b>	<b>Relationship to Women's Issues</b>
One	7	The United Nations Charter, inter-state agreements, as well as international treaties to which Afghanistan has joined, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights shall be respected. The state shall prevent terrorist activities, cultivation and smuggling of narcotics, and production and use of intoxicants.	These documents contain important articles regarding women that female candidates should know about.
Two	22	Any kind of discrimination and distinction between citizens of Afghanistan shall be forbidden. The citizens of Afghanistan, man or woman, have equal rights and duties before the law.	Understanding this article is very important for women so they do not allow patriarchal behaviour to take advantage of them.
Two	26	Crime is a personal act. Investigation, arrest and detention of an accused as well as penalty execution shall not incriminate another person.	Women should know that we cannot call an individual a criminal until the court has issued a decision.
Two	33	The citizens of Afghanistan shall have the right to elect and be elected. The conditions of exercising this right shall be stipulated by law.	The most important right for you...
Two	43	Education, being the right of all citizens of Afghanistan, shall be offered up to the B.A. level in the state educational institutes free of charge by the state. To expand a balanced education as well as to provide mandatory intermediate education throughout Afghanistan, the state shall design and implement effective programs and prepare the ground for teaching mother tongues in areas where they are spoken.	What are some things we can do in this area as a member of the Wolesi Jirga or Provincial Council?
Two	44	To create and foster balanced education for women, improve	If there are no girl's schools or there are

<b>Chapter Number</b>	<b>Article Number</b>	<b>Text of the Article</b>	<b>Relationship to Women's Issues</b>
		education of nomads as well as eliminate illiteracy in the country, the state shall devise and implement an effective plan.	many handicapped and widows without literacy in our area, what can we do in the Wolesi Jirga? In the Provincial Council?
Two	53	To regulate medical services as well as regulate financial aid to survivors of martyrs and missing persons, and, for the reintegration of the disabled and handicapped and their active participation in the society, the state shall adopt necessary measures in accordance with the provisions of the law. The state shall guarantee the rights of retirees, and shall render necessary aid to the elderly, women without caretakers, disabled and handicapped as well as poor orphans in accordance with the provisions of the law.	Because of this article, what kind of help can you provide to widows or children who are sick in your area?
Two	54	Family is the fundamental pillar of the society, and shall be protected by the state. To attain the physical and spiritual health of the family, especially of the child and mother, upbringing of the children, as well as the elimination of related traditions contrary to the principles of the sacred religion of Islam, the state shall adopt necessary measures.	When you read this article what matters come to your mind that you could raise in the Wolesi Jirga or in the Provincial Council?
Two	55	Defending the country shall be the duty of all citizens of Afghanistan. Conditions of compulsory military service shall be regulated by law.	Do you think Afghan women should become soldiers?
Two	58	To monitor respect for human rights in Afghanistan as well as to foster and protect it, the state shall establish the Independent Human Rights Commission of	What instances of violation of human rights of men, women and children can you think of that you could

Chapter Number	Article Number	Text of the Article	Relationship to Women's Issues
		<p>Afghanistan.</p> <p>Every individual shall complain to the aforementioned Commission about violations of personal human rights.</p> <p>The Commission shall refer human rights violations of individuals to legal authorities and assist them in defense of their rights.</p> <p>Organization and method of operation of the Commission shall be regulated by law.</p>	<p>bring up to the Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council?</p>
Five	83	<p>Members of the House of the People shall be elected by the people through free, general, secret and direct balloting.</p> <p>The work period of the House of the People shall terminate, after the disclosure of the results of the elections, on June 22<sup>nd</sup> of the Fifth year and the new parliament shall commence work.</p> <p>The elections for members of the House of the People shall be held 30-60 days prior to the expiration of the term of the House of the People.</p> <p>The number of the members of the House of the People shall be proportionate to the population of each constituency, not exceeding the maximum of two hundred fifty individuals.</p> <p>Electoral constituencies as well as other related issues shall be determined by the elections law.</p> <p>The elections law shall adopt measures to attain – through the electorate system – general and fair representation for all the people of the country, and proportionate to the population of</p>	<p>What is the number of deputies? What is the number of women? Why?</p>

Chapter Number	Article Number	Text of the Article	Relationship to Women's Issues
		every province, on average, at least two females shall be elected members of the House of the People from each province.	
Five	84	<p>Members of the House of Elders shall be elected and appointed as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. From amongst each provincial council members, one individual shall be elected by the respective council for a four year term;</li> <li>2. From amongst district councils of each province, one individual, elected by the respective councils, for a three year term;</li> <li>3. The remaining one third of the membership shall be appointed by the President, for a five year term, from amongst experts and experienced personalities, including two members from amongst the impaired and handicapped, as well as two from nomads.</li> </ol> <p>The President shall appoint fifty percent of these individuals from amongst</p>	<p>Meshrano Jirga has how many members? How many are women?</p>

<b>Chapter Number</b>	<b>Article Number</b>	<b>Text of the Article</b>	<b>Relationship to Women's Issues</b>
		<p>women.  The individual elected as a member of the House of the Elders shall lose membership to the related Council, and, another individual shall be appointed in accordance with the provisions of the law.</p>	

## **6. Keys to Success for Women**

Because of the problems and issues that we have discussed female candidates need to work harder to receive more votes in the elections, and to be successful and effective in the Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Councils.

In this regard, some things play a key role such as organization, networking, and dealing correctly with patriarchal behaviour – be it from men or women.

In this section we talk about some of the most important keys to success in today's Afghanistan.

### **6.1 Preparation and Knowledge**

The most important keys to winning in the elections are good preparation and solid knowledge. If a candidate has preparation and lacks knowledge she cannot win. The reverse is also true that if she has knowledge and no organization, she cannot gain the vote of the people.

These two issues are more important for women than for men since society thinks women lack these two and we women ourselves must prove what we are capable of.

#### **First: Preparation**

All over the world, preparing for an election campaign requires certain basic principles, and Afghan female candidates have perhaps learned these in other conferences.

In short, one can say that a candidate must pay attention to the following: Developing a platform acceptable to the candidate and to the people, developing a message by which people remember the candidate and her platform, organizing the campaign office, finding sources of funding, having campaign teams who can implement good campaign activities, and finally developing social and professional networks with special attention to good relations with the media.

The first activity of a candidate with her campaign office and campaign workers is that after knowing how many votes in total she needs, they count the number of people that will vote for her and identify the people and their number whose vote she will need to win. Only then must the candidate develop her campaign strategy, her plan of action as to how she would get the votes of these last ones.

For this preparation a candidate must have the names of her supporters, and the names of those individuals and organizations whose vote she is seeking. She must also be a good manager, or the workers who work for her must be good managers. Finally, a candidate must be knowledgeable about her election rivals.

---

*You as a female candidate, what steps have you taken in this area?*

*Mention four things you have done:*



- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### **Second: Knowledge**

Knowledge of the elections process, of the conditions and needs of Afghanistan, especially of our own local society and community is also an important requirement of a successful candidate.

A candidate must fully know the constitution, the election law, the election procedures and all the announcements of the JEMB.

Also, a candidate must be aware of Afghanistan's history, geography and especially its provinces and people. She must be aware of the economic conditions and the assistance of the international community.

A candidate must be knowledgeable about the laws of the Afghan court system and be aware of problems in these laws.

At the same time a candidate should keep abreast of daily events and their reporting in the media as well as events in the world and their impact on Afghanistan.

All this knowledge is needed so as to use it during discussions with the people so the people are aware of your level of knowledge and become certain that you can discuss issues in the Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council in an effective manner.

And so, you female candidates are very busy people. Becoming knowledgeable takes a lot of time.

Learning all of this is also difficult for both men and women. Actually you should select a few topics that you are interested in and learn about them a lot. Either read about them or acquire the knowledge by discussing your topics with friends and supporters.

Afterwards, in discussions with potential voters you can discuss your own special topics - - and look like an expert!

For acquiring knowledge, you female candidates should develop a daily schedule of say working on this one hour per day.

---

***What are some sources of information and knowledge for you? Mention three of them:***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_

- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### **6.2 Networking: Where Women Can Go and Men Cannot**

For women it is easier to be in contact with other women. For example in the day of the visit to the shrines, in women's wakes, where women carry the water from wells, karizes and sources, in engagement or wedding parties, in the women's public baths. Using these occasions, female candidates can talk with other women.

These contacts with women are a very good way of getting the votes of the entire family including their men folk.

You should attend wakes and get to know the important women of the community.

---

*In your area where else can women go to meet other women?*

*Name three?*

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### **6.3 Networking: Where Men Can Go and Women Cannot**

There are many places where men can meet each other such as the market, Friday prayer, funerals, wakes, Khatems (Reading of the Koran in one sitting), circumcision ceremonies, tea houses, town squares, and construction sites.

It is very important that women deliver their campaign message to men also. You must seek ways so you can attend these meetings and discuss your campaign.

For example, if going to the mosque and meeting the mullah is difficult, try to visit the mullah's wife and request from her to set up a meeting with him.

You must also attend all the official and institutional events to which you are invited. If there is an event that you would like to attend but are not invited, find a way to attend it. Either call and get an invitation, or just go and see what happens (most probably, they will let you in).

These events are held by associations, media, government offices, universities, ethnic councils, and other civil society organizations. Every event and gathering can be an opportunity for you to make yourself better known and get a few more votes.

Also, if you can, take with you a male member of your family or your campaign organization to these events. In this way, two people will be presenting your message and collecting information on the wishes of the people.

If you cannot attend one of these events due to other engagements, send a worker from your campaign office to represent you.

But try not to send a male member of your family instead of you because it will give the wrong message about you: People might think that you are not competent enough to stand elections.

---

***In your area, where are some other places where it is difficult for you to go?  
What are three solutions?***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

#### **6.4 How to Counter Men's Show off and One-upsmanship?**

Some men are accustomed to showing off in front of women. In a way this is their way of showing themselves as better and more important. For this, men use different tactics. For example, they speak in a loud voice, or talk in an angry manner, or say 'this is not a place for the black head ones (sia-saran, Afghan expression denoting women)'.

Since an election campaign or being a member of Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council is professional work, women must not let such things silence or scare them.

You should make your presence known with dignity. Always remind people not to put women down.

Show that such actions are against the best traditions of Afghanistan and people do not like such behavior.

---

***Mention three strategies that have worked for you:***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

#### **6.5 How to Deal with Women's Put Downs?**

Although most women have a sense of solidarity with women, this is not always a given. Some of them will try to prevent other women to become socially more active. In traditions of the world competition among women has been commonplace and often women have supported men and men's platforms. In this way, women have hurt women.

The best way to combat this is to confront women and explain to them how you are working for their benefit as well. Show women the common areas of concern that you both have.

---

*What are some of the successful approaches you have taken in this area?*

*Name three:*

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

---

## 7. More Keys to Success

There are other ways to reach success. We describe some of these keys to success in the following sections.

### 7.1 Your Election Kit

As we mentioned one of the tools of success for you is your preparation. In this regard one of the things you can do for yourself is to prepare an election kit. This kit that can fit in a handbag should include all the things that you need when running into people, meeting potential voters or attending a gathering.

In this kit the following items are necessary and you should be able to give copies of these out should the need arise:

- 1- Copies of your biography
- 2- Copies of your platform
- 3- Copies of your name, election picture, election emblem, election number
- 4- Your telephone number and address written on a card
- 5- A list of those whose votes you are trying to garner, so if necessary you can refer to and double check.
- 6- Also, you should have a list of all those offices for which you might develop a need such as the police office, JEMB, complaints office, voting booth office, governor, etc. You should have the name of a responsible person in each office along with their telephone number and address.
- 7- Also for your personal needs you should have tissue, make up items such as lipstick and comb, soap with a wet towel and one dry towel. Even a bottle of water, gum and toilet paper. These personal items are because the conditions of Afghanistan are not so easy and this summer heat causes a lot of emergencies.
- 8- A little emergency cash.

All these items should be separated in envelopes and then can be organized in a larger envelope or file folder and carried in your brief case or your handbag.

During a campaign a lot of important meetings happen by chance. If you have this kit, you will never lose an opportunity to offer information about yourself and to gain a few more votes for yourself. Personally, you will also be able to campaign in a comfortable manner.

---

***What else might you need to have in your kit? Name three things:***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### 7.2 A Word on Fund Raising

Many female candidates do not have much money to run good campaigns. To alleviate this situation, you can get one of your supporters to hold a fundraiser event

for you. In this event your supporter should invite your other supporters and ask them for donations to your campaign.

You can also do the fund raiser from your own campaign office. Let your staff invite your supporters to a gathering.

Remember that in these fund raisers you have to be present and usually you should give a speech in which you talk about your platform. Normally, you should highlight the points in your platform that the gathered group would be most interested in hearing. For example, if you have invited business people in the fundraiser, make sure you mention the points in your platform for the business community.

You will be surprised how eager people are to give you some money.

Do not fret. This is a legal way of raising campaign funds. Also, don't be ashamed. This is the way most candidates around the world obtain the funds needed to run for elected office.

Per JEMB guidelines, for running the campaign a Wolesi Jirga candidate can obtain 750000 Afs and a Provincial Council candidate 375000 Afs.

---

*What things have you done to raise funds for your campaign? Who have you contacted to provide you with a fund raising gathering? Such as a teacher's organization, a chamber of commerce, a handicapped or widows organizations, national association of doctors, etc.*

*What are four organizations or individuals that might be able to hold a fund raiser for you?*

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

### **7.3 Your Election Souvenir: Your Unforgettable Gift to Your Constituents**

One of your major objectives is for people that will vote for you on elections day to easily distinguish you from other candidates. It is easy to forget your face if they have not seen you many times. It is easy for people not to remember your election symbol or to confuse it with somebody else's if they are illiterate.

You should find ways by which people will remember you easily. For example if you are going to a gathering, if you can give them a small token of appreciation. This way they will identify you with the gift and remember you more readily.

Maybe print your symbol in large buttons or postcards and give it to them... Or print it on a pin and distribute it.

At the very least, in every gathering you must put up your name, election symbol and picture as well as your election number all on a large poster and hang it. Make sure everyone understands to vote for this person, this picture, this symbol and this number. They are sure to remember at least one of them on elections day.

Also, try to wear the same scarf and clothes that are on your picture. The identification is easier.

Remember, for your voters you must remain UNFORGETTABLE till the elections day!

---

***Name three things by which people can remember your specific information on elections day:***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
-

**8. Congratulations, You Have Won! Welcome to Your New Office!**

The National Assembly is located in Kabul. The Provincial Council of each province will be located in the center of the province.

The first session of the National Assembly will be opened by President Karzai.

The first thing the National Assembly will do is it will elect its own leaders and establish its own administration and procedures. Then, perhaps it will decide to act on the decrees President Karzai has signed since assuming elected office.

Also, one of the first actions will be to assign your seat to you. Do not allow that women sit in one special area. You are an elected member and should have seat assignments like all the members of the National Assembly.

In addition, commission assignments will be decided upon. Make sure you are in the commission for which you have an interest and experience.

You must understand the workings of the National Assembly, its administration, procedures and facilities.

You must learn the code of ethics of the National Assembly.

You must learn your responsibilities and have your agenda to work on.

You must get to know those working in the administration of the National Assembly as well as your colleagues. Also, learn to ask for help from the legislative assistance group in the National Assembly administration.

You should stay in close touch with your constituents. And do not forget the media!

Most of what we have said in this section also applies to the Provincial Council members.

Madam Deputy, Welcome to your new office! We wish you success!

---

***Mention three things about your new office in the Wolesi Jirga:***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

***Mention three things about your new office in the Provincial Council;***

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
-



## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### List of Female Seats & Candidates per Province, Wolesi Jirga

Number	Province	Allocated Female Seats in WJ	Number of Female Candidates
1	Uruzgan	1	2
2	Badghees	1	5
3	Bamyan	1	7
4	Badakhshan	2	9
5	Baghlan	2	14
6	Balkh	3	16
7	Parwan	2	8
8	Paktia	1	5
9	Paktika	1	4
10	Panjshir	1	4
11	Takhar	2	13
12	Jowzjan	1	8
13	Khost	1	10
14	Daikundi	1	5
15	Zabul	1	3
16	Sari Pul	1	7
17	Samangan	1	5
18	Ghazni	3	12
19	Ghor	2	8
20	Faryab	3	10
21	Farah	1	3
22	Kabul	9	50
23	Kapisa	1	6
24	Kunduz	2	15
25	Konar	1	8
26	Kandahar	3	11
27	Laghman	1	8
28	Logar	1	11
29	Nangarhar	4	18
30	Nooristan	1	6
31	Nimroz	1	4
32	Wardak	2	9
33	Heart	5	18
34	Helmand	2	6
Kuchis		3	7
Total		68	335

**Appendix B**  
**List of Female Seats & Candidates per Province, Provincial Council**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Province</b>	<b>Allocated Female Seats in PC</b>	<b>Number of Female Candidates</b>
1	Uruzgan	3	
2	Badghees	3	3
3	Bamyan	2	9
4	Badakhshan	4	11
5	Baghlan	4	6
6	Balkh	5	15
7	Parwan	4	5
8	Paktia	3	5
9	Paktika	3	4
10	Panjshir	3	4
11	Takhar	4	7
12	Jowzjan	3	11
13	Khost	3	4
14	Daikundi	3	6
15	Zabul	3	2
16	Sari Pul	3	4
17	Samangan	3	5
18	Ghazni	5	9
19	Ghor	4	6
20	Faryab	4	7
21	Farah	3	4
22	Kabul	8	31
23	Kapisa	3	6
24	Kunduz	4	10
25	Konar	3	3
26	Kandahar	4	6
27	Laghman	3	6
28	Logar	3	3
29	Nangarhar	5	4
30	Nooristan	3	3
31	Nimroz	3	3
32	Wardak	3	7
33	Heart	5	31
34	Helmand	4	7
Kuchis			
Total		124	247

**Appendix C**  
**Some Important Addresses**

- 1) Joint Electoral Management Body (JEMB) 070298992
- 2) United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) 070209015
- 3) The Independent Complaint Commission 070222892
- 4) Afghanistan's Independent Human Rights Commission 2500197

**Appendix D**  
**Bibliography of Useful Books and Documents**

- 1) The Constitution of Afghanistan, 2004.
- 2) The Elections Law of 1382. Joint Electoral Management Body and United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), Kabul, 2004.
- 3) Afghanistan's Parliamentary Elections 2005, Learning Election Campaigns, National Democratic Institute (NDI), Kabul.
- 4) Book of Learning for Master Trainers, First Regional Workshop, Holiday Inn Islamabad, August 2004, NDI, Kabul.
- 5) Our Country, My Role, Women Without Borders, Vienna, 2004.
- 6) Parliamentary Guide, Legal and Fundamental Rules, UNIFEM, Kabul 1384.
- 7) Gender Training Manual (Draft), UNDP, Kabul, 2005.
- 8) National Human Development Report, UNDP, Kabul 2004.
- 9) World Bank Reports, various.
- 10) What is the National Assembly? SUNY/USAID, Kabul, 2005.

## **Appendix E**

### **Some Interesting Pictures**

- 1) Mir Hashem, Finance Minister of King Amanullah with his family in Paghman, circa 1927.
- 2) Five generations of educated Afghan women: From the great-great grandmother, great grandmother, grandmother, mother and daughter (Mrs. Hajera Ziyayee and her family) all attended Malalay High School in Kabul. Mrs. Ziyayee was the first woman director of a factory during the time of King Amanullah.
- 3) Roqia Abubakre AKA Habib (3<sup>rd</sup> from left) at age 78 with other Afghan women in the USA.
- 4) Women delegates in the Constitutional Loya Jirga of 2003.