



European Union



GUIDE for Female Candidates to the WOLESI JIRGA

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FOR ELECTORAL SUPPORT

WJ (Parliamentary) Elections' Candidates From 34 Provinces Of Afghanistan

Province	women candidates	Men candidates	P.party's candidates	Independent candidates	Percentage of women	Percentage of men	Total Candidates	Seats Per Province	DQC
Badakhshan	9	68	3	73	10.50%	89.50%	76	9	0
Badghis	9	26	2	33	25.70%	74.28%	35	4	1
Baghlan	12	76	5	83	13.63%	86.36%	88	8	1
Balkh	22	63	15	70	25.88%	86.36%	85	11	0
Bamyan	11	29	7	33	27.50%	72.50%	40	4	1
Daykundi	8	33	8	33	19.51%	80.49%	41	4	0
Farah	3	39	0	42	7.14%	92.86%	42	5	0
Faryab	19	43	15	47	30.64%	69.36%	62	9	0
Ghur	5	25	4	26	16.66%	83.33%	30	6	0
Helmand	9	83	0	92	9.78%	90.22%	92	8	0
Herat	28	133	10	151	17.39	82.61%	161	17	0
Juzjan	4	26	3	27	13.33%	86.67%	30	5	0
Kabul	119	685	37	767	14.80%	85.20%	804	33	10
Kandahar	13	99	6	106	11.60%	88.40%	112	11	2
Kapisa	8	27	1	34	22.85%	77.15%	35	4	2
Khust	2	53	2	53	3.63%	96.37%	55	5	1
Kunarha	3	28	1	30	9.67%	9.33%	31	4	1
Kunduz	17	73	13	77	18.88%	81.12%	90	9	1
Laghman	4	20	3	30	12.12%	87.87%	33	4	0
Logar	5	30	0	35	14.28%	85.71%	35	4	3
Nangrahar	18	119	10	127	13.13%	86.86%	137	14	1
Nimroz	3	9	0	12	25%	75%	12	2	0
Nooristan	7	11	1	17	38.88%	61.11%	18	2	4
Paktia	5	73	2	76	6.41%	93.58%	78	5	2
Paktika	8	25	0	33	24.24%	75.75%	33	4	0
Panjshir	2	10	0	12	16.66%	83.33%	12	2	0
Parwan	11	17	1	27	39.28	60.71%	28	6	1
Samangan	6	25	3	28	19.35%	80.64%	31	4	0
Sarepul	4	29	7	26	12.12%	87.87%	33	5	1
Takhar	12	61	6	67	16.43%	83.56%	73	9	1
Uruzgan	9	16	3	22	36%	64%	25	3	0
Wardak	9	31	7	33	22.50%	77.50%	40	5	2
Zabul	6	18	1	23	25%	75%	24	3	0
Ghazni	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0
Kuchi	8	35	2	41	18.60%	81.39%	43	10	0
Sikh	0	1	0	0			1	1	0
Total:	418	2139	178	2386	16.26%	83.39%	2565	250	35

Female Political Leadership in Afghanistan: For having decided to participate as a candidate for 2018 parliamentary elections, you are a leader! As in the rest of the world, women have been underrepresented in Afghan political dialogue and public institutions. But now, there is growing recognition of the unexploited capacity and talents of women and women's leadership. The full and equitable participation of women in public life is essential to building and sustaining a strong, vibrant Afghan democracy. Over the last two decades, the rate of women's representation in the political life has grown exponentially. There's a lot to do still to achieve gender equality in social and political life, and you are leader of this change: be aware of this!

Women in the Afghan Legal Framework: The 2004 Constitution declares that "any kind of discrimination and privilege between the citizens of Afghanistan are prohibited. The citizens of Afghanistan—whether man or woman—have equal rights and duties before the law." Through a quota system of "at least two females for the Wolesi Jirga from each province", the Afghan Constitution introduces one of the most striving measures to attain, through the electorate system, general and fair representation for women in Afghan institutions. The Wolesi Jirga consists of 249 delegates directly elected by single non-transferable vote (SNTV) elected for five years. Out of the 418 current female candidates, 68 will be elected through the quota, and many others have the opportunity to win the seat by planning and carrying out a smart and proactive electoral campaign. That constitutional language and provisions represent an incredible victory for Afghan women, however there's still a long path to reach gender equality.

Electoral Integrity and Credibility: Afghanistan has made significant progress in its path towards democratic consolidation, with notable milestones including the first-ever peaceful democratic transfer of power; increased citizen participation with a more active engagement of women and civil society; and the bolstering of an electoral framework

that is in line with international standards. However, elections in Afghanistan have been characterised by electoral fraud casting a shadow of public distrust of Afghan public in democratic institutions. Public scepticism in the electoral process risks endangering the progress that has been made in the past fifteen years. Through new ways of leadership and doing politics, females candidates to the Wolesi Jirga have a great potential to contribute to enhance electoral integrity and re-establishing the credibility of the democratic and electoral processes in the eyes of the Afghan population.

Female Wolesi Jirga Candidates: Strengths, Opportunities, Challenges and Threads

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater participation by women would bring new insights to all kinds of debates • Women contribute to redefining political priorities, placing new items on the political agenda, which reflect and address women's gender-specific concerns, values and experiences and provide fresh views on mainstream political issues. • Women tend to work in a less hierarchical, more participatory and more collaborative way than male colleagues • Women lawmakers tend to see "women's" issues more broadly as social issues • An increase in women's participation in the political life of their countries often leads to improved socio-economic conditions, as many of these women-- more readily than their male counterparts-- tackle poverty reduction and service delivery as areas of primary importance to their constituents and supporters • When women are empowered as political leaders, countries experience higher standards of living, positive developments can 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature of the Afghan electoral system, which is favorable to women candidates. Measures supporting women's political participation across the electoral cycle. • Many young Afghans wish changes in politics • Women are 50% of the population and increasingly voting in higher numbers • It is primarily a question of political justice and equality • There can be no true democracy or real participation in national development until we see equal numbers of women and men in all spheres of life including public decision-making • Elections support women's political participation in multiple way but specific measures may be required to overcome the barriers of gender discrimination. • Training women as effective political candidates and leaders. Engagement with political parties encourages greater gender sensitivity, such as through internal regulations and practices to promote women's leadership.

<p>be seen in education, infrastructure and health, and concrete steps are taken to help make democracy deliver.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women are deeply committed to peace building and post-conflict reconstruction and have a unique and powerful perspective to bring to the negotiating table
<p style="text-align: center;">Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty for a woman to enter politics (internal decision, family support and political system support are not conducive) • Women candidates may face gaps in capacities or resources that prevent them from competing effectively, Solutions • Poverty and unemployment; • Lack of adequate financial resources; • Illiteracy and limited access to education and choice of professions • The dual burden of domestic tasks and professional obligations • Women's lack of confidence to run for elections • Women's perception of politics as a "male" game • Lack of and/or weak Legal and institutional frameworks • The absence of well-developed education and training systems for women's leadership and for orienting young women toward political life in particular. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security threats as a major challenge that undermine women's participation in elections in many regions, particularly in rural areas • Political pattern is organized by male norms and values. the political model is based on the idea of "winners and losers", competition and confrontation, rather than on mutual respect, collaboration and consensus building. • The prevalence of the "masculine model" of political life and of elected governmental bodies. • The lack of party support, such as limited financial support for women candidates; limited access to political networks; and the prevalence of double standards • The lack of contact and co-operation with other public organizations such as trade (labor) unions and women's groups.

Roles of the Wolesi Jirga representatives: The role of Parliament Members should play in community leadership and strategic decision making is common feature across the world. Parliament Members need to adapt to an evolving and rapid changing environment.

Political representative: the ability to connect with all different groups (youth, elder, women, ethnic, religion, profession...) living in your constituency/province and represent everyone fairly, and to balance local concerns with the political demands of your political party or group.

Community advocate: be a skilled advocate for people from different backgrounds, cultures, and values who live in your constituency; analyse the areas of improvement in your community and have the confidence to speak freely and advocate to the government on behalf of your co-residents.

Community leader: involve yourself and engage with community development skills – support local projects and initiatives, and educate people about local participation; be a good communicator – explain what political decisions and structures mean to constituents and community organisations.

Service transformer: understand the complexity of the public services provided to your community; have the confidence and ability to hold service providers to account and the ability to understand local problems and use this knowledge locally and strategically in local action planning; setting and monitoring service standards.

Place shaper: being a local example or role-model that people feel they can turn to; can shape the community environment – ability to identify priorities, work with officers and service providers to address public realm problems,

Knowledge champion: be the primary source of local intelligence flowing between your province and voters and the Wolesi Jirga, and the link with Ministries and Agencies in Kabul; have the skills to collect and analyse local information and use it in benefit of the community.

Wolesi Jirga Candidates		
Rights	Duties and Responsibilities	Don'ts
Per the Constitution, at least two females shall be the elected members of the House of People from each province. (Art 83)	Campaign for the Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Councils starts 20 before E-Day (art. 76, Electoral Law)	Do not start the campaign before the official date and do not continue the campaign during the mandatory silence period: 48h before E-Day (in addition to being deprived of the rights under this law, pay a cash fine of 50,000 up to 100,000 Afghani based on the circumstances, art 98 El. Law)
Raise funds at the national level according to the limits established in the electoral (art. 77)	Keep a clear account of the campaign expenses and report to the IEC the funding sources (art 77, Electoral Law)	The candidates may not accept or receive financial assistances from foreign citizens or states and/or diplomatic missions of the foreign countries based in Afghanistan. (art. 77 El. Law)
Publish and broadcast campaign objectives State-owned mass media are obliged to publish and broadcast the opinions, aims, and manifestos of candidates in a fair and impartial manner, while taking into account the procedure of the Commission (art 78 El. Law)	Do take into account procedures established by the Media Commission.	Do not display posters and other electoral campaign materials, do not broadcast 48 hours before E-day (art. 79, El. Law)

Candidates and their designed party agents have the right to be accredited by the IEC, to be in the polling stations during polling and counting and to file a complaint (art. 83 El. Law)	To abide by the procedures and provisions of the law, to refrain from spreading rumours or create panic	Do not interfere with the work of election officials, poll workers and security personnel during e-day
Be informed about electoral offences and crimes	Avoid using symbols and signs like those of the governmental and non-governmental organizations and symbols of the Independent Election Commission and other political parties and coalitions (IEC Code of Conduct for Political Parties, art. 98 Electoral Law)	Do not express offensive and instigative opinions which provoke the feelings of people (IEC Code of Conduct for Political Parties)
Receive the help of the IEC and relevant authorities to guide you through the electoral process and give clarifications as needed	Cooperate with the Independent Election Commission and members of the Electoral Complaints Commission in official investigations of complaints or allegations related to any violations of the Election Law, regulations, procedures, guidelines, and the code of conduct and notices of the Independent Election Commission	Do not use the symbol and other signs related to a candidate in polling centers; (cash fine of 5,000 up to fifty thousand 50,000 Afghanis based on the circumstances, art 98, Electoral Law). Do not conduct any campaigns in favour or against a candidate by a government employee; (cash fine of 10,000 Afghanis, art 98, Electoral Law)

Representation: Wolesi Jirga candidates are elected by eligible voters. Wolesi Jirga members must represent their constituents on a wide range of issues: governing in the best interest of the entire constituency, as policy makers; shaping their community's future, as strategists or making the most of available funds, as budget overseers. Wolesi Jirga members should feel like being an employee of the voters of their constituency. You should be aware of the important role you can play in your community. Your power of representativeness is encompassed in the Constitution and further developed in laws. Thus, while representing citizens, Wolesi Jirga members must obey the Afghan law, but also to abide by ethical values and principles. Wolesi Jirga members must also deal with a range of requests and complaints from their constituents which they need to find ways to deal with, preferably in conjunction with the administration. That's why communication skills will help you to better represent your community.

Accountability: As members of a Wolesi Jirga, Parliament Members are accountable in multiple ways. Councillors are accountable to both the community and to their own constituents. Political accountability is the accountability of the government, civil servants and politicians to the public and to legislative bodies such as a congress or a parliament. In ethics and governance, accountability is answerability, blameworthiness, liability, and the expectation of account-giving. While there are internal rules and regulations as mechanisms to hold Wolesi Jirga members accountable, for modern leaders, accountability is the acknowledgment and assumption of responsibility for actions, decisions, and policies that affect your constituents' lives. This encompasses the obligation to report, explain and be answerable for resulting consequences. Your accountability is your credibility and the trust you generate: clear commitments that – in the eyes of your community – have been kept. Accountability cannot exist without proper accounting practices; in other words, an absence of accounting means an absence of accountability. The right and the means to examine the process of decision making is known as transparency. In politics, transparency is used as a means of holding public officials accountable and fighting corruption.

Developing your Leadership Skills as candidate for the Wolesi Jirga: Campaigning to get a seat in the Wolesi Jirga is a golden opportunity to develop your leadership or soft skills, which is the cluster of personality traits that characterize one's relationships with other people. These skills can include social graces, communication abilities, language skills, personal habits, cognitive or emotional empathy, and leadership traits. Leadership is a set of practical skills encompassing the ability of an individual or organization to "lead" or guide other individuals, teams, organizations or entire communities and countries. Leadership could be defined as a process of social influence in which a person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common goal.

- ✓ We are all leaders. Leadership is not a position; it is a mindset. You have the amazing power to lead your own life and guide with your leadership skills people around you.
- ✓ Ideally, leaders become leaders because they have credibility, and because people want to follow them.
- ✓ One of the most important aspects of leadership is that not every leader is the same: there are many different styles of leadership. Different leadership styles are appropriate for different people and different circumstances, and the best leaders learn to use them all.
- ✓ The role of women is also changing and they increasingly play leadership roles, and many times do it better!
- ✓ Self-awareness: Leaders must have an accurate picture of their strengths and weaknesses.
- ✓ Learning agility: This is an individual's readiness, willingness and ability to learn from experience.
- ✓ Emotional intelligence: Emotional intelligence is a constellation of abilities that help leaders deal with their emotions and the emotions of others. High emotional intelligence may be linked to increased career success, entrepreneurial potential, leadership talent and happiness, among other things,
- ✓ Resiliency: Bouncing back from adversity.

- ✓ Building relationships at all levels: Being able to show compassion, sensitivity and have a sense of humour with others — above and below in organizational structure — and being able to cultivate these relationships toward positive business performance.
- ✓ Political savvy: The ability to influence people to obtain goals. The heart of being politically savvy, is networking, reading situations and thinking before speaking. Not every leader likes politics, but it's present in every organization.
- ✓ Motivating and engaging others: How many leaders have been successful when they cannot motivate their teams?
- ✓ Building and leading effective teams: Building trust, setting strategic direction and breaking down silos are some of the micro skills needed.
- ✓ Creating a culture of trust and respect: This has become a big challenge since the rise of virtual communication yet trust and respect among team members — and chiefly among leaders — is paramount.
- ✓ Communication: Voicing goals and inspiring others is vital — but so is listening.

Knowing better your Constituency/Potential Voters: In politics, your constituency is the people of the area or province who voted or will vote for you as their Wolesi Jirga representative and are represented by you for the established period (5 years). Wolesi Jirga representatives may spend much of the time serving the needs or demands of individual constituents, meaning either voters or residents of their district. Your constituency is then the board of your Wolesi Jirga game, and has delimited boundaries. Inside these boundaries, there is the most important think, the residents. It's is important to believe and act as representative of ALL your constituency, no matter of their ethnicity, gender, age, political views or whether they voter for you. You work for you community and all the people within it.

Your community/constituency is the group of people living in the same place. Afghanistan is a young democracy with very particular origins and history. Pashtun, Tadjik, Hazara, Uzbeks, Nooristani, Women, Youth, Male, Kutchis, Elder, People with Disabilities etc... are all considered together inhabitants of Afghanistan. And probably they are also represented in your constituency. Divides and tensions of the past cannot drive the future of your community te and others have a strong characteristic in common. Wolesi Jirga members have a key role in ensuring that those common interests prevail and that collective Afghan values and responsibilities are developed.

Relationships are the key! Developing stronger relationships with your constituents is critical. The success of your electoral campaign will depend on your ability to build relationships. Your constituents, and voters, are at the centre of this relationship. The successful Wolesi Jirga candidates need to be sensitive and aware of all this different interests and needs of the different groups living in its province. To be effective, you must focus on them. The steps in relationship building:

1. Respect and understand the needs and motivations of your constituents.
3. Communicate your programs and activities and their value to the constituents.
3. Follow up and nurture the relationship.

Communication for Female Candidates to the Wolesi Jirga: Good Parliament Members devote a great part of their time communicating. Communication is a key factor for Wolesi Jirga representatives to carry out the basic functions of their mandate: planning, organizing, leading and oversight. Effective communication is a building block of successful leaders. It is important to know how the communication process works.

The importance of communication in a Wolesi Jirga representative:

1. Communication promotes transparency and accountability by informing and clarifying citizens about the tasks you are doing or to be done, the way you are undertaking the task, and the expected results.
2. Communication is key to promote public engagement and participatory decision-making.
3. Communication is key to negotiate with Ministries, agencies, private sector and other stakeholders.
4. Communication is key to negotiate and coordinate actions with your Wolesi Jirga fellows and to influence in the decision-making process as it helps identifying, analysing and deciding among different options.
5. Communication is key to advocate in the interest of your community and province.
6. Communication also plays a crucial role in altering resident's attitudes: a well-informed resident will have better attitude than a less-informed one.
7. Communication helps to manage expectations from residents. As you know, your power is limited and through good communication you will be able to clearly explain what you can and cannot achieve.
8. Communication with local and national media can increase the impact of your work.
9. During election period, the Wolesi Candidates who better communicate their achievements and plans for the constituency will have better chances to get the post.

10. Overall, communication helps in socializing. In today's life, the only presence of another individual fosters communication.

Public Speaking/Giving Presentations: Using your communication skills is a crucial aspect of a candidate. While this can seem intimidating, the benefits of being able to speak well outweigh any perceived fears. If you speak well in public, it can help you get a job or promotion, raise awareness for your team or organization, and educate others. The more you push yourself to speak in front of others, the better you'll become, and the more confidence you'll have. Whether we're talking in a team meeting or presenting in front of an audience, we all have to speak in public from time to time. We can do this well or we can do this badly, and the outcome strongly affects the way that people think about us. This is why public speaking causes so much anxiety and concern.

The good news is that, with thorough preparation and practice, you can overcome your nervousness and perform exceptionally well. Being a good public speaker can enhance your reputation, boost your self-confidence, and open countless opportunities. The good news is that speaking in public is a learnable skill.

To become a better speaker, use the following strategies:

- ✓ Plan appropriately
- ✓ Practice
- ✓ Engage with your audience
- ✓ Pay attention to body language
- ✓ Think positively
- ✓ Cope with your nerves

Did you think you were going to enhance your presentation skills after reading just half a page: you dream! But now that you are aware of the importance of it, check out the numerous resources on the Internet to enhance your communication skills and start your own learning!

PLANNING AND CARRYING OUT YOUR ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN

Full scale campaigning is an option than few female candidates can afford in Afghanistan, especially if they lack the support of a big party organization, they don't have access to funding or when they stand for elections in urban and rural areas without the political marketing tools to attract voters. Full-scale meetings and media campaigns are a must than very few female candidates can actually afford. Therefore, successful female candidates need to proactively plan and implement an electoral campaign adapted to their needs and their constituencies. Here some practical recommendations:

Establish your electoral campaign team with volunteers: A successful electoral campaign can not be based on only one person. Politics is a team sport – you cannot win without the right players, so think about who is on the team and whether they can help you. Ahead of the start of the political campaign, try to set up team of volunteers, including family members, young people from your environment with specific skills or other women that can be interested in joining your project. Planning and implementing an electoral campaign can be an opportunity to build up the capacity of a team. For example, you can find young people as a media/public relations adviser and community manager for the use of social media. Or women that can help you with outreach activities to voters, posting posters or engage in door-to-door activities. Knowing how to delegate is important. Having an accountant to deal with your campaign

expenses can be also a good idea. A team with clear responsibilities from day 1 it is more likely to succeed. Choose energetic people that are able to motivate people.

Explore fundraising opportunities: Fundraising is the one part of you would most definitely need help with if this is your first time running for an election. Even incumbent candidates or those with experience in campaigns have to figure out their fundraising strategy well in advance of the actual campaign. Fundraising also varies a lot between campaigns for local and national elections. Candidates often have to cater to their families, political parties or major donors and collaborate with special interest groups to reach funding requirements in a large-scale campaign.

Draft a Budget for your campaign: Besides being a legal requisite, the best campaigns are the most financially disciplined campaigns. With limited resources, you should focus and understand how and where to spend money on a few things. You should spend your money in effective ways to reach out voters and convince them to vote for you and not your opponent. The worst campaigns waste money on things that don't communicate a powerful message. Your question is: am I spending my money on the right things?

Planning tasks/ prioritising financial, administrative and logistics aspects: This entails detailing/ mapping out all the needs, steps, tasks of your electoral campaign with internal and external dates until the end of the campaign 48 hours before Wolesi Jirga elections on October 20. It further involves the elaboration of a work plan including objectives, activities and the necessary resources (financial, administrative and logistics) followed by the development of a timeline. 32

Time Managing: Managing your time is a key element in to succeed in the 20 days you have for convincing voters that you are the best candidate. It is important to organise the time you have available and motivate yourself and your team to use it wisely. Prioritization is the essential skill that you need to make the very best use of your own efforts and those of your team. It's also a skill that you need to create calmness and space in your life so that you can focus your energy and attention on the things that matter. Begin to prioritise all activities needed to implement your campaign by listing the tasks you need to do in order of importance – in other words compile a simple 'to do' list. Make sure you break the large tasks down into more manageable ones and perhaps split your list into things to do 'now', 'tomorrow' or 'this week'. You only have 20 days!

23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20

Stay tuned and updated by read all relevant documents and information: It's important that you and your team are familiar with legal provisions for female candidates and the IEC code of conduct female candidates. Being aware of the political and electoral developments through radios, newspapers, social media and IEC and ECC websites will help you to take informed decisions and avoid mistakes or prohibited acts.

Your political Manifesto: Your manifesto combines your ideas and proposals for your community, your reasons and skills to be the best parliament member. All these are your key messages. Your key messages are the words and sentences that build and deliver your narrative during the electoral campaign – critical messages you want that your

constituency/stakeholders will hear and remember. In politics, key messages are made by political parties or individuals to outline stances around key political or social issues. You can print out your political manifesto and key messages to hand out to your potential voters in markets, mosques or door-to-door activities.

Some Key Messages Benefits:

- Key messages are core communications that female candidate wish to embed in voters' mind
- A methodological tool that will allow a female candidate to function in a more professional way
- Key messages are a professional methodological list that can be very helpful to explain to voters, press statements, declarations or any other exchange with your audience.
- Key messages follow-up and regularly updates allow CECG members to share strategic analysis throughout the different phases of the electoral cycle and the Afghan political context.

Crafting the Key Messages of Your Campaign: To be interiorized and efficiently communicated, key messages should be short and straightforward statements on critical issues of the electoral process and phases of the electoral cycle. Making key messages is a little task. They should be both clear to all audiences but at the same time content enough punch with relevant information to provoke stakeholder's interest.

Factors to be considered:

- A message must be short: voters have very little patience for listening to long discourses. Conciseness is crucial – voters' attention is limited. You should be able to effectively deliver your message to a voter in one minute or so, to avoid losing their attention and probably their vote. Key messages should be relevant, clear, concise and honest to grab election stakeholders' attention
- Information should be credible

- Use words that can appeal to the emotion of your audience and provoke change, rather than a defensive approach.
- A message must be targeted
- A message must be repeated again and again. Messages should be repeated to voters if you want them to have effects – effective frequency.
- A message must be truthful and credible the message needs to come from the values, practices, policies and history of the candidate. it cannot be inconsistent with the candidate's background. once your campaign determines what message will persuade your target voters to vote for your candidate, then you must repeat that same message at every opportunity.
- A message must show contrast with other candidates. since voters must make a choice between you and other candidates, you need to make it clear to the voters how you are different from the other candidates in the race by contrasting yourself with them
- Key messages need a purpose behind them – mostly to inform, generate awareness or provoke change in the electoral process
- Simple language should be used to make it accessible to the broadest possible audience. This means that election technical terms communicated should be understood by the Afghan layman. So, be careful with election jargon and technical language!
- Language should be – as much as possible – constructive. While the role of domestic observers is to monitor, identify and point out election flaws and pitfalls, a useful approach will offer, along with legitimate criticism, solutions, recommendations or opinions which contribute to the ongoing electoral process and overall Afghan democracy.

Screen each key message by asking:

- ✓ Is it believable? Make sure evidence supports your core message.
- ✓ Is it easy to understand? Make your language concise, professional, and to the point.
- ✓ Is it positive? Be positive and use active language.
- ✓ Is it purposeful? Make sure your message represents your agenda appropriately.

Areas for Key Messages:

Your ideas and proposals to enhance quality of life of your voters	Analysis and proposals to improve basic services	Participation of Women and youth in politics and social life	Your personal values, why you are the best candidate
The future of your community	Financial security	Morality	Security
Relations with Government	Environment	Child rights	Transport
Peace and stability	Your connections, the people that endorse your candidacy	EMBs capacity-building	Economy
Participation of Youth	Infrastructures in the province	Education	Health & Hospitals
Participation of minorities	Water	Agriculture	Human rights
The need to promote integrity and fight against corruption	Roads	Women's leadership	Democratic values
Transparency	...and many more based on you close engagement with your constituency		

Are You Great Candidate¹?

1. Make a list of all the reasons why voters should vote for you as Wolesi Jirga candidate
2. Choosing the most persuasive reasons from above, write a brief statement about. This should be the answer to the question "why are you running for this office?" or "why should I support you?"
3. Read the statement aloud and time yourself. You must be able to complete the statement in less than one minute. If you go over a minute, you must trim your message. Takeout any long phrases or explanations. Remember that voters will not be paying attention to all of your ten-minute speech.
4. Grade your message against the above criteria. Is it credible and truthful? Do you backup your statements with personal experience from your past? Are you talking about things that will be important to your target voters? If you are running over one minute, then there are probably a lot of useless words and phrases that you can delete. Do you offer a clear choice between your candidate and your major opponents?
5. Now rewrite your statement, taking into account those things you missed the first time. You still must keep your message under one minute. As you write and rewrite this statement, as you begin using it as you talk to voters, it will continue to improve.

¹ https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/Political_Campaign_Planning_Manual_Malaysia.pdf

Stay on the message: Once you have build your key messages (manifesto) around your ideas and proposals and values and skills to be a great candidate, you have to continue repeating the same messages to all potential voters groups and media. The voter should have a clear idea of the core message of your campaign, every time you repeat your message you build your reputation as candidate. Remember that the voters will forget what you said in the speech. They would not recall your policies or the candidate's background and the way they all tie together. They will, however, remember how you made them feel².

Mapping your potential voters: With the quota for female candidates and the SNTV system, you have good chances to get a seat in the Wolesi Jirga. To ensure a sufficient number of voters, knowing and defining your target groups of voters is vital before defining key messages. You will need to break the voters in your province into manageable groups. This is the basis you will later use to develop a strategy for targeting particular voters. With your campaign team, study your chosen area; while there are many cultural commonalities in Afghanistan, ethnically speaking, Afghanistan is a country with a cultural diversity. As the inhabitants of a village have different differences with the neighboring village. So check your voter coverage carefully. You must know which voters make up your vote goal, and who makes up your winning coalition. Write it down in the campaign plan.

Focus on female voters through door-to-door activities: Female voters in the 2018 Parliamentary elections represent some 34% of the registered voters. In 2014, women participation in the polling represented 36% and 37,6% respectively in the first and second rounds of the Presidential election. For you as a female candidate, they are a first-choice interlocutors as they are able to understand the needs for women to be represented at the Wolesi Jirga. You

² <https://callhub.io/political-campaign-messages/>

can meet female voters in a variety of locations and situations: at home with their families, at the market, at school and university, at their working place, in maternity centers, etc. Messages should be tailored to the respective expectations of different socio-economic groups of women, in order to attract attention and reinforce their will to actually go and vote for a female candidate on O-20.

Focus on the vote of the youth both male and female: Youth, because they are likely to be most receptive to gender balance issues, especially when educated, should be considered as serious potential voters in favor of female candidates. They can be reached easily through workshops and debates held locally for instance within secured facilities.

Sometimes, tailored information and a specific tone for different target groups will be needed. Therefore, you should held a session with your electoral campaign team to list and describe your different audience groups. What do they need and want to hear from you?

Women of your province	Youth of your province	Elders of your province	Students
Government civil servants	People in need	People with disabilities	Market workers
Urban Workers	Agriculture workers	Teachers	Security Forces
Male of your province	Mosque prayers	Kutchis	Different Ethnicities
Learn what are their needs and interests and tell them what would you do for them if you are elected!			

Get Out The Vote: This means you should take a proactive approach to identify, localize and reach voters of different target groups. If voters do not know about your skills values, ideas and proposals, they will not vote for you. Individual voters often feel that their one single vote does not matter.

Community mobilization: As part of your electoral campaign, you could use community mobilization techniques engaging with your community individuals, groups, or organizations to evaluate together about the problems and solutions of key subjects in your constituency (health, economy, education, environment or any other needs on their own initiative or stimulated by others). Mobilization increases the participatory decision-making. In this processes, you can bring diverse stakeholders to the table, including those people to the table who may not normally be involved in the decision-making process. Mobilization also fosters strong relationships between parliament members, local governments, businesses, civil society and community members.

A community decision-making process enables your community to:

- Develop a broad, inclusive vision or agenda for the results you want to achieve
- Support community stakeholders as co-investors and accountable partners in achieving your community's results agenda
- Promote the use of timely, relevant and reliable data and other information to assess your community's needs, make decisions, monitor progress and ensure accountability
- Develop an action plan that is aligned with your community's vision and needs to ensure implementation of effective strategies
- Ensure sustainability and the ability to take desired programs to scale through results-driven financing strategies, strategic alliances and supportive public policies the structural inequities that contribute to and reinforce disparate outcomes

Use banners, tickers, leaflets and billboards: According to your financial possibilities, use banners, stickers, leaflets and billboards. Their use should focus on specific geographical parts of the constituencies like neighborhoods, villages, markets, shopping areas, hospitals, educational centers and sports facilities, in order to address identified groups of voters. If you have limited resources, do not expend too much on this means. Your campaign can also hand out literature wherever people gather in large numbers. This could be at markets, universities, factories, mosques, transport stations.

Paid political advertisement: Paid ads in the media is a costly way of campaigning. As per your funding possibilities, you may want to limited and combined with other campaign means. Paid political advertisement should be targeted in audience and focus in order to be effective. Also, the law imposes electoral expense limits for candidates with an impact on paid advertisement in the media.

Electoral expense limits (Election Law, Article 77) (4) The media including audio, visual, printed and electronic shall be obliged to report to the Commission the amounts of money that they have received from the candidates (...) during their electoral campaign.

Use Media to pass your message across: The appropriate use of media outlets in the provinces and at the national level is key to multiply the number of voters that you can reach. Traditional and mainstream media (radio, television, news websites, dailies and other periodicals both at national and local levels) mostly offer free editorial coverage and may be keen to focus on women candidates since they are less numerous in the election race than their male counterparts. It is also a way for the media to develop gender balance in politics. Also, a number of international NGOs active in the field of media and governance do support specific programs aimed at promoting women's views and

perspectives in the daily news, including female candidates during election periods.³ Plan an agenda and try to visit as much as possible.

Broadcast and publication of candidates' objectives (Election Law, Article 78) – (1) In the course of the electoral campaign, television, radio, newspapers, publications and other mass media may disseminate and publish, in compliance with the procedures enacted by the Commission, the manifestoes, views and objectives of the candidate in a fair and objective manner. (2) The state-owned mass media are obliged to publish and broadcast the opinions, aims, and manifestos of candidates in a fair and impartial manner, while taking into account the procedure of the Commission. (3) The mass media are obliged to stop publishing and broadcasting of the electoral campaign related activities 48 hours before the start of Election Day.

Local and regional radio stations as first media partners: Local and regional media are prominent partners during Parliamentary elections campaigns, since most of local voters listen to radio daily as it first means of choice. Radio channels in the provinces, especially in rural areas, enjoy a strong audience, and thus have to be prioritized by female candidates. Salam Watandar and Killid, two independent radio networks with dozens of stations in the provinces, are key media partners for female candidates mainly because of their coverage of the country at the local level and their capacity to sustain gender oriented editorial lines.

³ Rasana program, implemented by Internews, provides specific support to 17 women-led stations of the Salam Watandar Radio Network in 11 provinces of Afghanistan (Badakshan, Balkh, Khost, Wardak, Helmand, Herat, Jowzjan, Kunduz, Nangarhar and Takhar. Through this program, these stations have produced and broadcast over 800 radio reports by women reporters and about women, promoting women's rights and women's engagement with society.

Salam Watandar and Killid radio networks: Killid operates through a network of 11 radio stations directly owned plus 32 radio stations affiliated, mostly in the provinces. Salam Watandar includes 67 Afghan-owned and operated partner stations across all 34 provinces and enjoys a broadcast footprint of over 14 million people, according to Internews.

Importance of Television at the regional and national levels: Regional and national television channels, because of their strong impact in terms of image, play an important role in the campaign, and shall not be neglected by female candidates, even though access to the news and debate programs may sometimes be limited. It is vital to target national television channels since they attract wider audiences and inspire other media within a copy-paste editorial syndrome, whereas regional television channels have a stronger capacity to rally voters at province level. International television like BBC, Al Jazeera, CNN and CCTV may also influence Afghan media when covering female candidates and gender issues in politics, building credibility and support.

Underrepresentation of women in the media during election processes. During the last Presidential elections in 2014 when no women stood for presidency nor for vice-presidency, “female political actors were evidently underrepresented in mainstream media, particularly in State-owned media”, as underlined in the EU Election Assessment Team Final Report.⁴ In the first round, commercial broadcasters, with the exception of Shamsad TV, did not grant female political actors more than 4% of the total time allotted to candidates. Coverage before the run-off showed a similar pattern, not justified by the fact that none of the aspirants had a female vice-presidential candidate because, whenever a female opinion leader, CSO or youth organization’s representative was endorsing a candidate, media featured the candidate or the event’s male participants. For the run-off, out of 25 debates monitored, only one was devoted to issues affecting women.

⁴ http://www.eods.eu/library/FINAL-REPORT-EUEAT-AFGHANISTAN-2014-c_en.pdf

Traditional versus alternative campaign activities: Running a full-scale campaign including all kinds of election-related activities promoting the candidate might prove costly and sometimes ineffective, especially in a context of potential criticism and violence against female candidates. Reducing the size of campaign events while selecting those really tailored for reaching out to voters might both reduce the costs of the campaign and improve its capacity for success, while reducing risks.

Women candidates and violence – According to the OSCE/ODIHR Election Support Team Report for the Parliamentary elections in 2010, “the under-representation of women remained a key feature of the 2010 parliamentary elections. Only 16 per cent of all candidates were female. **Women candidates and their staff appeared to be particular targets of violence and intimidation by the Taliban and other illegally armed groups.** The low number of female domestic observers and candidate agents increased opportunities for fraud in female polling stations.”⁵

Recruit a talented media/public relations adviser: Since liaising with the media is time-consuming and maybe hazardous in terms of effective coverage, it is advisable to rely on a trustable and dedicated media/public relations adviser, who can also be a student, a relative or a militant, in order to contact journalists and chief editors, settle for interviews, debates and campaign reports. These contacts are to be on track before the campaign actually starts, because all candidates will have to engage similarly with the media and hence competition will be fierce. It is highly strategic for female candidates to build an efficient network with journalists, in order to interact with the media and to promote their candidacy in the best possible way. In that prospect, female journalists are the ideal interlocutor of female candidates in the media, because both candidate and journalist share the same concerns in terms of gender

⁵ www.osce.org/odihr/elections/73723?download=true

advocacy. Another advantage of a media adviser is his/her capacity to react when the media is making erroneous statements or defamations in their coverage, and to request due correction.

Social Media Campaign: Growing Internet accessibility, particularly through mobile phones (average 20 million users), are making social media an important platform for campaigning and mobilizing the youth. They were 5,7 million internet users as of December 31, 2017 (15,7% penetration rate), with 3,2 million Facebook subscribers (8,8% penetration rate), out of a total population of 36,3 million people. ⁶

Community Manager: Media campaign in an election process is usually a costly issue. Even without a dedicated agency, it can involve a press officer, a social media community manager, a photographer/video cameraman, and a lot of time. One good tip is to select a “geek” like a student, with a good capacity in using social media. In 2014, 76% of social media users were accessing platforms via their smartphones (source: ATR Consulting, 2014). Main social media used are Facebook, WhatsApp, IMO, Instagram, Twitter, WeChat, Tango. The profile of social media users has been clearly analyzed by a recent study (see below).

SOCIAL MEDIA IN AFGHANISTAN: USERS AND ENGAGEMENT ⁷ - As of 2017, internet and social media users remained predominantly urban and young. According to a credible study in 2017 (Altai Consulting), 80% of respondents declared being between 18 and 30 years old. “For those over the age of 30 however, men are more likely to be social media users

⁶ <https://www.internetworldstats.com/asia.htm#af>

⁷ https://www.internews.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/Social_Media_Afghanistan_2017-4-pager.pdf

that women, as the repartition of female users tends to be younger.⁸ **Social media users are overwhelmingly literate, with no difference across gender lines** 21% of social media users are students, this being true for both male and female: however, the remainder of female respondents are chiefly divided among teachers and housewives, whereas male respondents have a more varied set of occupations. **Social media use is concentrated on two types of platforms** 95% of social media users have a Facebook account, and 75% of users have a Facebook messenger account. 84% of social media users have an instant messaging apps Twitter is limited and only used for higher-level and international audience. Media organizations (18%), government bodies and international organizations (29%), and CSOs (10%) are the most represented categories on Facebook public pages. Social media users mostly interact with friends (56%) and family (25%). Women limit their interaction to a circle of trust, relatives only (35%) or women only (19%). **Social media remains a double-edged sword for activists** 59% of users find that has had a positive effect on gender, and 62% find it had a positive effect on corruption. They experience the benefits of having an online platform while facing divisive, discriminatory and at times violent language online (as seen during the 2014 elections). Influencers and organizations feel the need for stronger social media regulation or monitoring.

Social Media Content: Accent is to be put on candidate program and activities. Videos and photos of door to door campaigning, gatherings, meetings, and other significant campaign events can be easily put online and made accessible to the public and to the media. Also, leaflets, press releases, programs and campaign messages are to be uploaded in order to reach out to voters.

⁸ Youth form a predominant part of the population, with 40% of the population under the age of 14 and 22% between 15 and 24 years old (UNStats, 2013).

Specific safety precaution measures: A number of restrictions may be adopted in order to limit risks of being targeted: do not advertise activities in advance on Facebook and Twitter, do not expose yourself, friends, relatives, militants, restrict sensitive information for instance to reliable WhatsApp groups.

Online marketing tools: Facebook and Twitter can also be used as platforms for paid advertisement services developed by a number of communications and media companies.⁹

Websites: Political campaign and advocacy websites are a very efficient way of conveying programs and messages to voters. Dedicated online services, freelancers and companies offer affordable or free rates for launching a website presenting a woman candidate's program, bio and campaign activities. When developed on an easy-to-use content management system (CMS) like Wordpress or Drupal, it can be self-managed with less costs. Websites are also very convenient when used as an "online campaign echo chamber" together with social media apps (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), so as to have the public interact between them. Nevertheless, in comparison with websites, creating a Facebook account for a candidate does not cost anything, is easy to manage, with a capacity to upload any document, photo and video, and a unique opportunity to attract followers with whom to interact during the campaign.

SMS Texting: SMS services are usually more affordable than most advertising and marketing tools. Also, they are available even when internet is not accessible. Mobile phone operators, communication companies and media organizations usually may provide such services. For instance, Pajhwok Afghan News is considering offering women candidates a dedicated text message system in order to enable them "to disseminate electoral messages and provide

⁹ Pajhwok Afghan News is offering women candidates a multimedia service (MMS) through its social media accounts claiming close to two million followers (1,5 million Facebook followers and some 300,000 Twitter followers, according to Pajhwok).

a cheaper and practical way of communicating their messages and political agendas to their constituents and to seek votes.”¹⁰ In terms of costs, targeting with SMS a whole province as a constituency may end up being expensive, since provincial voter lists range from an average 57.000 voters in some provinces to some 1,6 million voters (Kabul).¹¹ It would then be rational to reserve this to the very last days of the campaign (except silence period 48 hours prior to Election day), and to target voters in specific areas where female candidates want to gain new voters or reinforce their strongholds.

Use live or recorded video messages to reach out to voters: Instead of meeting voters physically, female candidates can use live or recorded video messages on Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and other social media. This may be at times restricted because of a lack of access to internet in remote areas. Video transmission can also be held simultaneously in different locations each gathering small groups of voters in order to reach in total a sizeable audience. This video form of campaigning is also safer than rallies and meetings.

Attention with large and middle-size rallies and meetings in urban and rural areas: For security reasons, large and middle-size gatherings of voters in support of a female candidate should be avoided, in order to protect both candidates and public. On the other hand, this is also a way to spare money, as the budget allocated to stage such events is usually sizeable in terms of transportation, food and drinks, sound equipment and campaign material.

¹⁰ Furthermore, it “has the capacity to send candidate specific SMS to a specific geographic location that is the electoral district/city or province of the candidate.” - Pahjwok Afghan News *Summary concept note, Supporting women in their right to political activism and participation in the elections*, September 2018.

¹¹ Average price estimates range between 3 and 5 AFN per message (0,04 to 0,07 USD), according to experts.

Motorcades: Motorcades and all kind of rallies with vehicles and motorcycles are a way to be visible but entail security risks due to its visibility.

Get out and Get the Vote trough a Successful Electoral Campaign!



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