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## **Gender Integration** **An Afghan Priority**

*Office of the  
Deputy to the Commanding General*

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## Introduction

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the various governments of Afghanistan were actively involved with the international community in adopting human rights initiatives, including gender equality. However, the conservative nature of Afghan society coupled with weak central governance limited each regime's ability to extend modern programs beyond the major urban areas. Initiatives that the constitutional monarchy and communist government attempted to implement often faced significant opposition from the countryside and were ultimately eliminated with the rise of the Taliban. Afghanistan joined the international community in ratifying the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) in 1948 and established legislation and processes to integrate women into public life from the 1950s through the 1980s. However, in 1996 the Taliban relegated women to a domestic role with brutal enforcement. With the establishment of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA), Afghanistan entered a new era for gender integration. In compliance with modern international human rights agreements and reaffirming its commitment to the UDHR, Afghanistan reopening opportunities in the public and private sector through its Constitution and supporting legislation. With the assistance of NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), GIROA is establishing the governmental institutions and societal conditions necessary to implement and enforce these laws.

*Afghanistan will not achieve peace, development and human rights without the full participation of women.*

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon  
Kabul Conference, JUL 2010

ISAF's mandate is to assist the GIROA by supporting security, strengthening government structures and contributing to development and reconstruction as supported by the *Constitution of Afghanistan* (Olsson and Tejpar 2009). One of ISAF's goals is to enable GIROA to continue its gender strategy without ISAF support. ISAF's subordinate headquarters for force generation of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) is the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A). NTM-A's mission is to generate the ANSF, develop capable ministerial systems and resource the fielded force to build sustainable capacity and capability in order to enhance the GIROA's ability to achieve stability and security in Afghanistan. NTM-A, in coordination with NATO allies, partners and key Afghan stakeholders, develops the ANSF in compliance with international agreements and Afghan law and thereby enables Afghan gender integration within the ANSF, Ministry of Defense (MoD) and Ministry of Interior (MoI).



As ISAF transitions security operations to the GIRoA by 2014, NTM-A is executing a supporting plan to transition security force generation, education and training to the ANSF. Care must be taken to execute the transition in a manner that underwrites hard-won gender integration accomplishments. Gender integration is both the right thing to do and the pragmatic thing to do. It upholds international principles and bolsters Afghan security and stability. Nevertheless, its implementations must be metered through Afghan governmental authorities and the Afghan society's willingness to adapt.

### Problem Statement

This white paper describes the GIRoA's legal framework and policy for gender integration and NTM-A's supporting role as NATO's force generation headquarters in Afghanistan. It provides an analysis of the ANSF, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats or challenges. It proposes considerations as NTM-A transitions the force generation mission to the ANSF by 2014 that would bolster support to GIRoA national objectives regarding gender integration.



### Idealistic and Realistic Requirements for Gender Integration

Afghanistan needs strong gender integration policy and programs for both idealistic and realistic reasons, but will continue to be challenged with implementation because of its conservative Islamic culture and tradition of strong rural independence. The GIRoA has participated actively in multinational agreements supporting gender integration and has incorporated gender integration into its foundational legislation. Since 2002, Afghanistan has been the recipient of significant international aid to support its reconstruction. The international community is vested in Afghanistan and is scrutinizing how Afghanistan meets its obligations under the United Nations agreements. The *Constitution of Afghanistan* declares that men and women have equal rights and duties before the law and GIRoA has integrated, or mainstreamed, gender into its stated national goals and into government at all levels. The MoI and MoD have an obligation to contribute to the attainment of national goals on gender equality. Gender integration within the ANSF will support the attainment of national goals and improve security and stability in Afghanistan.

Pragmatically, the ANSF need female members in order to be effective security forces. Afghanistan is a conservative, Islamic society. The Afghan National Police (ANP) and Afghan National Army (ANA) are virtually all-male organizations. As a result, the ANP cannot respond effectively to incidents involving women as suspects, complainants or victims. Properly empowered



policewomen can react to violence against women, family violence, children in trouble and kidnappings. They can interrogate, detain and investigate female suspects; provide support to female victims of crime; and ensure the security of women in communities (Murray, Report on the Status of Women in the Afghan National Police 2006). The ANA is equally ill equipped to conduct counterinsurgency operations within the Afghan population without female counterparts to attend to female detainees and female casualties on the battlefield as well as interact with female citizens. Female soldiers can support combat operations in career fields such as intelligence, logistics, medicine and aviation. Similar to their police counterparts, they can interrogate and detain female combatants; provide support to female casualties; and ensure the security of women on operational objectives. Female ANSF can provide culturally mandated separation between male security force members and females encountered in the course of duty. Additionally, they can provide critical service and support capabilities by serving in logistics and aviation specialties. The GIRoA can utilize the ANSF as a tool to implement gender integration policy and gain greater security and stability.

### **History of Afghan Women's Organizations**

Organized women's interest organizations in Afghanistan date back to 1943, during Zahir Shah's reign, when a twenty-member union of women established an institution called the to organize, train and educate women in Kabul. In 1963, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs incorporated the Women's Grand Organization and renamed it the Women's Association. In 1978, the name of the Women's Association was changed to the Women's Central Club and in 1986. This club was transformed to Women's Central Association and continued its activities until 1991. Concurrently in 1978, the Government of Afghanistan formed the Women's General Council as a social-political organization. Supported by the government and the Women's Central Association, this 360-member organization established branches in the capital and provinces across Afghanistan.

In 1991, when the mujahedin came to power in Kabul, the Women's Grand Organization was restored. In 1994, parallel to Women's General Organization, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs restored the Women's Association. On 26 September 1996, Kabul fell to the Taliban and by October, they forbid women and girls to go to school or work. At that time, women ran one-fourth of Kabul's civil service, the elementary education system and much of the health care system (Jones 2010, 62). The Taliban incorporated the Women's Grand Organization with the Women's Association and hired men instead of women. The Bonn Conference in December 2001 marked a new beginning for Afghanistan as the Interim Administration developed a democratic government with renewed emphasis on gender integration.



### International Legal Basis

NTM-A's efforts to support gender and human rights in Afghanistan is consistent with a number of international and Afghan documents. These include the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR), *UN Security Council Resolution 1325*, *The Bonn Agreement*, subsequent United Nations (UN) and Afghan communiqués and NATO orders and directives.

Afghanistan was one of 48 member nations that voted in support of the UDHR. The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the UDHR in Paris on 10 December 1948 as part of General Assembly Resolution 217 A (III). It was a milestone document in the history of human rights because it set a common standard for the universal protection of human rights. The Declaration is not a legally binding agreement, but the UDHR was ratified through proclamation with a count of 48 votes to zero with only eight abstentions (Universal Declaration of Human Rights 2011) (United Nations Association in Canada 2011).

Afghanistan signed the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) on 14 August 1980 and ratified it on 5 March 2003 (United Nations Treaty Collection 2011). The UN describes the CEDAW as an international bill of rights for women. Consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination.

Additionally, Afghanistan supports the implementation of UN Security Council passed Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325). The international community officially recognized the importance of the role of women in security and stability when the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1325 on 31 October 2000, which accounts for the effect of conflict on women. The effects of conflict on women in turn affect children and families, destabilizing the population. UNSCR 1325 urges member states to increase representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict. UNSCR 1325 recognizes

“the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations” and calls on all actors implementing peace agreements “to adopt a gender perspective, and fully respect international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls (United Nations Security Council 2000).” The resolution supports the increased role of women in security forces, peacekeeping positions and negotiations. UNSCR 1325 resulted from a study of conflict that demonstrated nations attain increased stability and longer lasting peace when women are involved.

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women defines gender mainstreaming as, “a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women 2011).” They explain that mainstreaming is not an end in itself but a strategy, an approach and a means to achieve the goal of gender equality. It involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities. Gender mainstreaming does not focus solely on women; it focuses on how institutions and processes may affect both men and women differently. It examines how each portion of the population makes unique contributions to peace and prosperity in a society. NATO has also recognized this fact and has written an action plan to implement UNSCR 1325 in NATO missions.

### **Afghan Legal Basis**

NTM-A’s efforts to support gender and human rights in Afghanistan is also consistent with Afghan legislation. The international community has promoted women’s rights in Afghanistan since the mission began in 2001. The series of development and financing commitments undertaken by both the Government of Afghanistan and the international community demonstrates this support, beginning with The Bonn Agreement and continuing through the most recent conference in Lisbon in November 2010.



*The Bonn Agreement* established the Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MoWA) as part of the executive branch of the Interim Administration, employing existing and former male and female members of the Women’s Grand Organization and Women’s Association. The MoWA has overall responsibility for leading and coordinating Government efforts to advance the role of women. It is mandated to ensure that policies and programs are reviewed from a gender perspective (Afghanistan National Development Strategy 1387-1391 (2008-2013) (English Translation) 2008). The MoWA has 9 central department and 34 provincial departments. With the establishment of the MoWA, women’s governmental



activities transformed from charity activities to policy making. The Interim Administration Ministers' Council passed the first procedural regulation of the MoWA on 5 April 2004 and the President of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan approved it by Decree No. 26 on 24 May 2004. It consisted of four chapters and 24 articles. Article three of this regulation states that the MoWA has responsibility for the implementation of political and social policy of the government in order to secure and expand legal rights of women and ensure the rule of law in their lives within its activity area (Ministry of Women's Affairs 2011).

The preamble to the *Constitution of Afghanistan (Solar) Year 1382* states that the people of Afghanistan observe the United Nations Charter and respect the UDHR. It states they are for the "creation of a civil society free of oppression, atrocity, discrimination, and violence and based on the rule of law, social justice, protection of human rights, and dignity, and ensuring the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people." Most importantly, Article 22 of the Afghan Constitution states: "The citizens of Afghanistan -- whether man or woman -- have equal rights and duties before the law (The Constitution of Afghanistan Year 1382 (English Translation) 2004)."

The *Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS)* identifies gender mainstreaming as GIRoA's principal strategy for achieving gender equality in Afghanistan. However, it recognizes several conditions that constrain gender initiatives. It acknowledges that the government has weak capacity to mainstream gender and that cultural, social and religious sensitivities relating to gender issues hinder implementation. Obstacles to education for girls and women, low literacy rates, lack of mobility and lack of available financing restrict the participation of women in the economy. Women are poorly represented in leadership and power, including supervisory, managerial, policy and decision-making roles. Moreover, it recognizes that although the Afghan Constitution guarantees gender equality under the law, widespread inequalities persist. Consequently, GIRoA established mechanisms in national policy such as the *National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA)* (Larson 2008, 1) (Afghanistan National Development Strategy 1387-1391 (2008-2013) (English Translation) 2008).

Gender is a crosscutting theme in the *Afghanistan Compact* as well. Approved at the 2006 London Conference on Afghanistan, the *Afghanistan Compact* projected, "By end-2010: the National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan will be fully implemented; and, in line with Afghanistan's [Major Development Goals], female participation in all Afghan governance institutions, including elected and appointed bodies and the civil service, will be strengthened (The Afghanistan Compact 2006)." With the support of UN agencies, the Ministry of Women's Affairs developed the NAPWA, adopting it in 2008 to address the gender element of the Compact (Murray and de Saint-Claire 2007). It is the Afghan government's

main vehicle to pursue these goals and emphasizes the importance of gender mainstreaming with specific objectives.

The communiqué from the January 2010 London Conference addressed the issue of gender rights. It stated, "The government of Afghanistan reiterates its commitment to protect and promote the human rights of all Afghan citizens and to make Afghanistan a place where men and women enjoy security, equal rights and equal opportunities in all spheres of life (Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan 2010)." The National Consultative Peace *Jirga* held in Kabul in June 2010 also addressed gender and adopted a resolution at the end of the conference that addressed the issue of gender rights. It stated, "The people of Afghanistan demand a just peace which can guarantee the rights of all its citizens, including women and children (Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan 2010)." For the purpose of social justice, the *jirga* urges that laws be applied equally on all citizens of the country.

At the Lisbon Summit in November 2010, NATO and the Afghan government signed a formal declaration that addressed an enduring partnership between NATO and Afghanistan. This declaration, which was signed by the NATO Secretary-General Rasmussen and Afghan President Karzai, stated:

The government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan reaffirms its commitment to actively carry out its security, governance and development responsibilities in a manner consistent with the commitments made at the London conference of January 2010, in the Kabul conference of July 2010, such as combating terrorism, strengthening the economy, addressing corruption, regional security and economic cooperation, and respect for human rights, in particular the rights of women ( North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan 2010).

### Ministry of Defense Situation



The working draft of the ANA *tashkil* for Solar Year 1390 has 20,770 of 171,600 positions coded for either men or women in 54 occupational specialties. The ANA has staffed this working draft, but MoD has not yet signed it. ANA is also staffing a version of this *tashkil* with 224 positions coded for only women. NTM-A is working with ANA to develop a supplemental *tashkil* with 2,000 positions coded for women. Currently, there are 334 women in the approximately 170,000 strong ANA, or 0.2%. Of those women, most of the officers are in the medical field, a traditional area for women, and most of the enlisted are in logistics. The ANA has three female



general officers; two are in the medical field and the third is in Reserve Affairs. In September 2010, the first female OCS class graduated with 49 female lieutenants commissioned. They expanded the career fields for women by going into intelligence, finance, signals and human resources. The third OCS class began on 18 June 2011. Last year, MoD signed Order 0306 increasing the end strength of women in the ANA to 10%, or 9,500. This is an ambitious goal; the US has about 15% women in their forces.

Currently, MoD in partnership with NTM-A is identifying priority areas for the OCS graduates and developing a project to create a school for enlisted women. MoD is also establishing a Gender Office in MoD. As it looks to future growth, the MoD is identifying greater numbers of female positions on the *tashkil*, identifying functions and specialties for women in a manner that creates populations or “clusters” of females in a unit and creates opportunities for leader development and career progression. As ANA develops plans to increase its end strength from 171,000 to 195,000, the dual male/female coded positions could increase from 20,770 to 27,000. Finally, MoD is developing plans to increase recruitment to OCS, expand literacy training to females, establish an NCO training capability and develop a program for female candidates in the National Military Academy of Afghanistan (NMAA).

### Ministry of Interior Situation

Mol Decree 055 established a goal of having at least 5,000 women police officers in the ANP by 2014. This equates to 3% of the force. In many respects, it is easier to integrate women into the police because they tend to work in their local community and the community sees the value of women on the police force such as to search other women and to interview other women. There are currently 1173 women in the ANP, or almost 1%. The ANP also have three general officers, to include the Chief of Gender Integration, Human and Child Rights, General Shafiq Quraishi. US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton selected General Shafiq as one of the recipients of the International Women of Courage Award in 2010. Former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice established the annual International Women of Courage Award in March 2007 to recognize women around the globe who have shown exceptional courage and leadership in advocating for women’s rights and advancement. This is the only Department of State award that pays tribute to emerging women leaders worldwide.



Mol is currently increasing the status of the Gender Office in the Ministry. They are also developing plans to increase female representation in Afghan Border Police (ABP), Afghan Anti-Crime Police (AACP) and Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP). Mol is developing mechanisms to ensure that all ANP female officers receive basic entry training and reach a minimum level of literacy. Finally, the Mol is developing a 5-year female recruitment plan to achieve their goal of 5,000. To facilitate this, they increased the number of female billets on the SY1390 *tashkil* to 2,783.

### NTM-A's Supporting Role

Both the international community and the Afghan Government have identified the importance of the inclusion of women. GIRoA's goal is "gender equality" where women and men can fully enjoy their rights, starting with the Afghan Government. NTM-A is working with the Mol and MoD to develop and implement policies that integrate more women into the ANSF. NTM-A operates under the authority of NATO Bi-SC Directive 40-1 and supporting NATO and ISAF orders and policies.



NATO Bi-SC Directive 40-1 (2009), *Integrating UNSCR 1325 and Gender Perspectives in the NATO Command Structure Including Measures for Protection during Armed Conflict*, integrates UNSCR 1325 and gender perspectives by "addressing measures NATO forces will undertake in the planning and conduct of NATO-led operations and missions to protect women and girls." It also establishes gender advisors within NATO commands to ensure commanders and staffs consider gender mainstreaming as part of operational planning to improve operational effectiveness and integration of UNSCR 1325 (North Atlantic Treaty Organization 2009, 1-2). NATO supplemented this directive with NATO/EAPC Policy (2007/2010) and the *NATO Action Plan on Mainstreaming UNSCR 1325 into NATO-led Operations and Missions (2010)*.

Headquarters, ISAF published supporting orders and policy to NATO Bi-SC Directive 40-1 that include COM ISAF OPLAN 38202 Rev 5 ANNEX X, *Gender* (31 Dec 2010), HQ ISAF Memorandum *Engagement with Afghan Females Directive* (31 May 2010) and HQ ISAF FRAGO 123.1-2010, *Female Engagement Team Guidance* (Dec 2010). Headquarters, NTM-A further defined its mission regarding gender integration in COM NTM-A/CSTC-A OPORD 01/2011 ANNEX X, *Integration and Human Rights* (Jul 2011). NTM-A realizes that although its focus is on the ANSF, the effects of its operations are potentially far-reaching for the Afghan society. Therefore, NTM-A nests its authorities with commensurate

Afghan authorities and is very deliberate to ensure Afghan leaders take appropriate steps to avoid overwhelming Afghan society or violating cultural norms.

NTM-A supports GIRoA by assisting the Mol and MoD in recruiting, training and assigning the ANSF. NTM-A uses Ministerial Development Plans (MDPs) to identify actions and then facilitates Mol and MoD efforts by developing supporting policies and processes. Mol and MoD started development of their Gender Integration MDPs in the summer of 2010. NTM-A has worked with its ANSF partners to enhance opportunities for women in both the ANA and ANP, achieving notable success since 2009. These achievements include working with Mol and MoD to code specific positions and specialties in the *tashkils* for women, improvements in facilities and expanded training opportunities. Additionally, NTM-A has pioneered supporting women-owned Afghan businesses that produce commodities the ANSF require. However, challenges persist and new opportunities continue to develop. The following section summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of the ANSF from a gender perspective, identifies threats and challenges that persist and highlights opportunities for future Mol and MoD initiatives.

## ANSF SWOT Analysis

### Strengths



Over the past nine years, GIRoA has established modern legislation, balancing it with Islamic law and Afghan tradition that recognizes international agreements regarding gender integration. The Mol and MoD have established leadership and offices to oversee gender integration programs, develop plans and implement policy. The ANSF has significantly increased the number of women serving in the ANA and ANP in the last two years and begun infrastructure builds to meet female requirements.

A 2007 evaluation of Mol gender initiatives by the Gender Advisor, Ministry of Interior Affairs, Tonita Murray, noted leadership strengths, some facility improvements and evidence of public support. She noted that the leadership for gender functions is qualified and well motivated. Additionally, the Mol management structure for gender is well formed and well staffed. The rehabilitation of the National Police Academy and the building of the women's residence have provided ample space and basic equipment to train the officer and mid-level police cadres. Gender awareness training has strengthened at Basic Patrolman Course. The report also noted that women are going to police stations in Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif to report acts of violence to the new police

family violence units, and police are sometimes approached on the streets for help (Murray and de Saint-Claire 2007).

The MoI has continued to improve manning, facilities, and gender awareness since the Murray report. The number of women in the ANP women has nearly doubled from 617 to 1173 with patrolwomen increasing from 166 to 456, NCOs increasing from 350 to 530 and Officers increasing from 101 to 187. The generic police station design has been modified to include women's entrances. Gender Integration Training has been added to Police Basic School requirement and male Kandahar police trainers have been instructed on the Elimination of Violence Against Women Law.

MoD, although challenged with recruiting, continues to demonstrate strengths regarding gender integration. MoD Order 0407 developed female training, making it the same length and quality as training for males. MoD expanded five branch schools to incorporate women with 29 graduates.



These were the Signal School (6), Religious and Cultural Affairs (RCA) (11), Finance (4), Human Resources (6) and Intelligence (2). MoD deployed four female aviation officers to the US for language training and rotary wing pilot instruction and MoD has established a women's sports program starting with volleyball. The new MoD headquarters design includes women's bathrooms and prayer rooms and they established a women's center at the Logistics Command. Finally, NMAA established a Women's Integration Committee to prepare for female cadets in 2012.

Broader ANSF initiatives that effect both ANA and ANP have also strengthened gender integration. For example, MoD held an International Women's Day Celebration on 7 March 2011 where they highlighted the key role of Afghan women in the Afghan National Security Force. In addition, a female episode incorporated into the "Birth of an Army" documentary aired on Tolo, an Afghan television station that highlighted the growing role of women in the Afghan Army and Air Force.

International support remains critical to developing the police force as addressed in NTM-A White Paper *EUPOL: Partnering for Civil Police*, dated 8 August 2011. Several initiatives by international partners have improved conditions for gender integration. For example, Germany has built a secure female residence at the Police Academy with 120 beds and nursery facilities, Canada is funding a gender adviser for the Ministry of Interior and Norwegian police deliver in-service training to policewomen. US police advisers, with some support from UN agencies, have set up a family violence unit in one of the police stations in Kabul to give police

women experience and to serve female victims of crime (Murray and de Saint-Claire 2007).

### Weaknesses

Workplace climate surveys and operational assessments highlight areas for further improvement. Literacy continues to challenge recruiting overall, but female recruits generally have a lower literacy rate than males due to the Taliban elimination of girls' schools prior to 2001. Deep seated cultural biases toward women in traditionally "male" roles, a lack of family support, cultural restrictions on females' travel away from home, a general lack of security, a lack of transportation and a low public opinion of ANP integrity continue to hamper recruiting efforts. Ms Murray notes in her report, "Policing is considered a low status occupation, so not quite respectable for women. Recruitment, therefore, is a challenge (Murray and de Saint-Claire 2007)." Often these biases manifest as negative attitudes within the male ranks of the ANP, creating a difficult work environment.

A significant portion of the ANSF infrastructure lacks separate female latrine facilities or even a toilet with a locking door. Additionally, the majority of female ANP are married with children. There are not adequate childcare facilities or services to support these women working and they often have to leave work early or arrive late due to domestic requirements. At present, there is indirect discrimination against policewomen because the limited scope of positions in the *tashkil* limits their role and prospects for professional development and promotion (Murray, Report on the Status of Women in the Afghan National Police 2006). Finally, the security-centric focus for police development has limited the amount of community policing projects that could employ a great number of policewomen. Community outreach programs addressing domestic violence, child protection, and sexual assault crimes are virtually non-existent.

### Opportunities



Afghan traditions and Islamic cultural requirements are both a challenge and an opportunity. In Afghan Islamic culture, men and women must maintain separation in public. This creates opportunities for culturally sensitive missions. The MoD and MoI can rapidly integrate women into culturally acceptable roles with little resistance. The ABP is one example where it makes sense culturally to employ women. At border crossing sites and airports,

women ABP are required to search women travelers in order to maintain cultural standards. In the MoI, civil police activities such as the establishment of special



victims units are also ideal locations to consider for gender integration. Ms Murray notes, “The separation of the lives of men and women in Islamic tradition requires the ANP to have sufficient numbers of policewomen to deal with female offenders, victims and children to be an effective police organization (Murray, Report on the Status of Women in the Afghan National Police 2006).”

Other less obvious opportunities relate to the conditions under which the ANSF employees work. The personnel field, logistics field and aviation field, which generally operate from fixed bases, are more suitable starting points for gender integration in the Army than other specialties. The fact that these specialties generally operate from fixed sites maximizes the benefit of modifying existing infrastructure or building new infrastructure that meets the needs of a mixed gender workforce.

Economic and social conditions provide recruiting opportunities at a time when capacity is increasing. With widespread unemployment, the ANP is an attractive job option due to its local nature and improving perceptions of ANP within communities. Widows, particularly martyrs’ widows, have a need for employment and may be attracted to public service. Recruitment of widows into the ANP with its local stationing and improving policies regarding childcare and domestic responsibilities may provide a necessary economic benefit and provide needed policewomen. These recruitment opportunities are maturing as NTM-A and the ANSF complete current infrastructure builds.

Opportunities for women will increase as a function of increased institutional capacity. For example, the construction of the National Military Academy of Afghanistan creates the opportunity for a minimum of 10 percent of the new enrollees to be female. As institutional capacity increases and ISAF begins to transition security responsibilities with the ANSF, changes in police focus could also increase opportunities for gender integration. As argued in *EUPOL: Partnering for Civil Police*, ANP priorities need to shift from security police functions to civil police functions. This transition will create opportunities for women. The community-policing model is capable of changing the police culture, enabling police to operate within a democratic framework according to the rule of law and giving equal weight to the needs of women and children (Murray and de Saint-Claire 2007). Finally, international attention provides an opportunity. As GIRoA postures for future strategic partnerships, it will consider greater gender integration if future training, equipping and funding is linked as an incentive. This provides an opportunity for the international community to emphasize management development and leadership training for women.

### **Threats/Challenges**

“Recruitment and the expansion of the role and responsibilities of policewomen are a challenge, first, because there has been no significant allocation of resources to gender programs and, second, because there is no political will or



ability in the Ministry to bring about the changes needed (Murray and de Saint-Claire 2007).” That critique of the MoI by their gender advisor in 2007 sums up the two largest challenges that continue to face gender integration in Afghanistan. Without political will and the dedication of resources, the MoI and MoD will be unable to sustain their strengths, improve their weaknesses and develop the above opportunities into realized gains.

Part of this challenge is rooted in the lack of civilian control over the military and a continued disproportionate number of older, conservative, male military officers in senior ministerial leadership positions. It is an issue of civilian control over the military, which is a broader topic for a future paper. However, the lack of civilian control does affect gender integration and it will not be resolved in the near term. The Afghan Civil Service Institute should develop a full bureaucracy that includes civilians (not retired military officers now serving as civilians) that work with the military to create a civil-military coordination. GIRoA cannot solve this problem quickly because there is a deficit of experienced and educated women in the proper age category to be competitive for these positions largely due to the effects of Taliban repression. The Civil Service Institute is focusing on a younger population of recent college graduates from local universities such as Kabul University and these numbers are very encouraging concerning gender mix, but it is not yet equal.

Indirect challenges that continue to hinder gender integration include hostile work environments and a hostile public reception. These are the challenging aspects of developing gender integration in a conservative, Islamic country. Many consider it traditionally or culturally inappropriate for women to enter the work force, particularly in roles that have traditionally been men’s roles. As noted in *Reforming the Afghan National Police*, published by the Foreign Policy Research Institute, “Cultural attentiveness is more than simply a normative matter. The failure to adapt programs to historical tradition and practice is one of the major problems with police reform. ... While ethically desirable (from the point of view of this author at least), few have considered the practical repercussions of transplanting gender-equal policing models into countries with different ethical codes and cultural practices. ... In this regard policing models from Pakistan and Bangladesh, which both have women only police stations may be more appropriate for Afghanistan than Germany or Canada (Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (London) 2009, 176) (Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (London) 2009, 107).” ANSF training and fielding must be context-specific and attentive to public needs. Additionally, senior GIRoA leaders must communicate their understanding of the compatibility between gender integration, Afghan constitutional law and Islam.

As noted in NTM-A White Paper, *Environmental Initiatives: Finding What is Right for Afghanistan*, the majority of the adult population in Afghanistan is illiterate. Over 70% of the Afghan population is illiterate and the percentage for women is



significantly higher than it is for men. Illiteracy negatively effects gender integration. UNICEF defines adult literacy rates as the percentage of persons aged 15 and over who can read and write. They estimate the literacy rate for female youth (age 15-24) was 18 percent for the period between 2004 and 2008, while the percentage for youth males during the same period was 49 percent (UNICEF 2010). Operations in Afghanistan demonstrate a much lower percentage for incoming recruits with an average of 14 percent and one can extrapolate that the female component is lower than the average (Caldwell and Finney 2011, 78). Literacy is a critical component of gender integration in the ANSF because illiterate police cannot write reports, take notes, obtain witness statements or engage in further study of criminal law and procedure. Illiterate soldiers cannot take inventory, account for pay, fly helicopters or even read a map. NTM-A will discuss literacy in detail in a future paper, but it is sufficient to say that literacy efforts for women entering the ANSF must take into account their lack of access to education.

Finally, there are risks as ISAF transitions with GIRoA. These risks center on concern about weakened resolve of gender leadership as Coalition Forces depart. There is a possibility that as the number of international advisors decrease, interest could wane and some fear a violent backlash against women viewed as “co-opted” if the Taliban return. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, who has vowed to make women’s issues a focal point during her term as Secretary, made several clear statements at the Kabul Conference on 20 July 2010 regarding gender integration in Afghanistan and the US stance. Secretary Clinton stated in her formal remarks, “I also want to emphasize the importance of President Karzai’s recent statement that the rights of women, Afghan ethnic groups, and civil society will not be sacrificed in pursuit of reintegration and reconciliation...the work of Afghan women and civil society groups will be essential to this country’s success. If these groups are fully empowered to help build a just and lasting peace, they will help do so. But if they are silenced and pushed to the margins of Afghan society, the prospects for peace and justice will be subverted (US Department of State 2010).” While addressing the press that same day she clarified:

I don’t think there is such a political solution that would be a lasting, sustainable one that would turn the clock back on women. That is a recipe for a return to the kind of Afghanistan, if not in the entire country, in significant parts of the country, that would once again be a breeding ground for terrorism. So we’ve got our red lines and they are very clear: Any reconciliation process that the United States supports, recognizing that this is an Afghan-led process, must require that anyone who wishes to rejoin society and the political system must lay down their weapons and end violence, renounce al-Qaida, and be



committed to the constitution and laws of Afghanistan, which guarantee the rights of women (US Department of State 2010).

### **A Way Ahead**

By 2014, GIRoA should have made discernable progress towards accomplishing its recruiting and training goals. Women should constitute close to 10% of the ANA end strength, or 9,500 women, and the ANP should be close to achieving 5,000 women in their end strength. Recruits should be graduating basic entry training with a functional level

#### **Endstate 2014**

- ***ANA close to 9,500 female soldiers***
- ***ANP close to 5,000 policewomen***
- ***Functional literacy of force improving***
- ***Gender integrated facilities***
- ***Secure transportation***
- ***Public acceptance growing in urban areas***

of literacy, providing an equal foundation of education for both men and women. Workplaces should have adequate facilities to accommodate the integration of women and address childcare requirements. Women should be able to travel securely to and from work and GIRoA should have made inroads into public acceptance of women working in public service in the urban areas. Realizing this end state for 2014 will require GIRoA and NTM-A to sustain ongoing initiatives and develop strategies to capitalize on opportunities while mitigating threats.

NTM-A initiated several activities over the last two years to reinforce MoI and MoD gender integration programs. Many of these activities have the potential to bolster gender integration through transition. These initiatives established liaison, guidance and training, fostering better partnership with the MoI and MoD. NTM-A established an Integration and Human Rights (IHR) office focused on gender initiatives and assigned an advisor to the MoI Chief for Gender, Integration and Human Rights from the Office of the Assistant Commanding General for Police Development (ACG-PD). The IHR developed and published Annex X, *Integration and Human Rights*, to the NTM-A base operations order to focus gender integration into NTM-A operations. Finally, Counterinsurgency (COIN) Training Center-Afghanistan (CTC-A) instructors trained leaders and advisors on techniques to incorporate gender perspectives as part of their COIN curriculum. As NTM-A transitions with the ANSF, it should address the existent threats or challenges and opportunities addressed above and determine the emerging threats and opportunities that transition will present.

NTM-A should encourage the MoI and MoD to address the challenges and opportunities for recruitment, training, career development, family and social approval, availability of health and childcare and hostility at the workplace noted



in the SWOT analysis. As NTM-A has done in the past, it should continue to nest its initiatives in Afghan authorities and gain senior Afghan leader buy-in. NTM-A should help MoI and MoD identify the causal factors within Afghan tradition that are limiting acceptance of gender integration by the more conservative portions of Afghan society. Once these are identified, then NTM-A can assist MoI and MoD develop education and recruiting programs that confront and address these limiters in a manner that is consistent with Afghan tradition and Islamic custom. Training must be improved through continued emphasis on literacy and equality. Women must have an equal education to be empowered to perform at an equal level. Because the Taliban repressed women, MoI and MoD should provide increased opportunities for female literacy programs.

As NTM-A and the Ministries develop recruiting projections, they should ensure that the training infrastructure and fielded force infrastructure improvement projects are synchronized with the projected numbers of women entering the training base and the force. Female facilities and childcare should be available before the female police and soldiers arrive at the training center or assignment location. Finally, the Ministries should address security for females in the ANSF. This includes reducing hostility in the workforce through education and enforcement of gender integration standards and providing secure transportation for female police and soldiers as they transit between duty and domicile. The Ministries should demonstrate that they value women in the workforce and demonstrate that they are willing to enforce integration and the safety of their female police and soldiers until Afghan society adapts to the re-introduction of females into public service.

As addressed in *EUPOL: Partnering for Civil Police*, police activities should transition from security functions to civil policing functions. Police reform efforts should be directed towards making the ANP more responsive to community needs and more respectful of human rights. ANP professional development should focus on improving operational and managerial competence. Gender balancing the force to serve all of the population with well-equipped and trained policewomen will improve community policing. Additionally, the ANP should develop mechanisms to become more transparent and open to external oversight to reduce hostility in the workplace (Murray and de Saint-Claire 2007).

Finally, NTM-A should support the development of *tashkils* in conjunction with the ANA and ANP professional development programs to ensure female police and soldiers have adequate opportunity for advancement. Working through MoI and MoD, NTM-A can ensure females are empowered at their assigned grade to act with equivalent authority as males in the same or similar positions.

## Summary

In summary, women are a valuable resource for the ANSF. Identifying the right positions and supporting actions that will facilitate their success is ongoing. As ISAF plans for transition of security operations to the GIRoA in 2014, NTM-A must develop a supporting plan to transition with the ANSF in a manner that underwrites hard-won gender integration accomplishments. By sustaining the current philosophy of operating within Afghan authorities, NTM-A can continue to support GIRoA implementation of Afghan gender integration legislation. Gender integration upholds international principles and bolsters Afghan security and stability. However, NTM-A must continuously assess the ANSF strengths and weaknesses combined with an assessment of the threats and opportunities emerging in the changing operational environment in order to focus limited resources on initiatives that will provide sustainable, enduring gender integration programs.





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