



Afghanistan Justice Sector Support Program Update August 2008

U.S. DOS/INL's JSSP program seeks to increase the capacity of the Afghan Government and Afghan legal practitioners to deliver fair and transparent criminal justice and rule of law services to the people of Afghanistan. To that end, JSSP advisors work with the Attorney General's Office and the Ministry of Justice on a wide range of initiatives. In addition, JSSP conducts police/prosecutor training in four provinces and works to promote Afghans' access to justice services by implementing provincial justice conferences, training and mentoring of defense lawyers, and working on a range of other projects.

JSSP/UNIFEM Supports Victim Advocacy in Jalalabad



An MOI/MOWA Referral Center Stakeholder from the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission responds to a question from JSSP's ALC Angeella Barezai during a session on the legal basis of victims' rights at the JSSP/ UNIFEM Victim Advocacy Workshop in Jalalabad.

From August 19-21, JSSP and UNIFEM conducted the first of a three-part victim advocacy workshop in Jalalabad. The workshop's participants included 33 victim advocates and stakeholders from 19 organizations that are parties to the Ministry of Interior (MOI)/Ministry of Women Affairs (MOWA) Referral Center Protocol. During the workshop, JSSP's Afghan legal consultants and Gender Justice Advisor conducted trainings on: (1) the legal basis for victim's rights, (2) criminal defendants' rights, (3) how cases flow through the criminal justice system, (4) the fundamentals of victim advocacy; and (5) how to draft standard operating procedures. They also facilitated a discussion on the MOI/MOWA Referral Center Stakeholder Protocol and led the group in drafting standard operating procedures (SOPs) for handling rape and domestic violence cases. The final SOPs will be included in the Jalalabad Referral Center Operations Manual that JSSP and UNIFEM are helping to complete. JSSP and UNIFEM will conduct a similar workshop for the Parwan MOI/MOWA Referral Center in October.

Pol-i-Charkhi Prison Project Effects Release of 27 Inmates

In response to a request by the United States Department of State/INL, Kabul Afghanistan Embassy, JSSP and the Corrections Sector Support Program (CSSP) are jointly managing an inmate documentation project at the Pol-i-Charkhi Prison in Kabul. The project seeks to determine the legal status of the inmate population and strengthen the ability of Afghan's justice sector to review the inmates' legal status on a regular basis. The specific objectives of the project include:

- Document the identity of the inmates;
- Document the legal basis for the detention of each inmate; and
- Effect the release of those inmates that are not lawfully confined.

In the last week of August, JSSP's Afghan legal consultants reported:

- 195 inmate interviews were completed this week (PiC, Block 2);
- 964 inmate interviews have been completed to date;
- 1,570 case file reviews have been completed to date;
- 3 additional prisoners were released this week;
- 27 inmates have been released to date; and
- 6 additional cases were identified and submitted to the monitoring prosecutors for further investigation for possible release.

JSSP chaired the joint weekly meeting with the Corrections System Support Program (CSSP) on August 21 to reconcile statistics and discuss current challenges. Legal research regarding the authority of the Central Prison Directorate (CPD) to release inmates upon completion of their sentence and any statutory notice requirements continued.