



Afghanistan Justice Sector Support Program Update November 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 Strengthens Justice Reform in Bamiyan



Bamiyan Provincial Governor Habiba Sarabi—Afghanistan's only female governor—greets attendees of the Bamiyan Provincial Justice Conference and voices her support of JSSP's continuing rule of law training.

On Nov. 9th and 10th, JSSP facilitated a two-day Gender Justice training in Bamiyan province. Eighty-two Afghan justice actors attended the training including over 20 women. Instruction focused on the role of women in the Afghan judicial system, the legal rights of Afghan women and small group sessions on hypothetical cases involving gender justice issues. JSSP members helped facilitate the breakout sessions.

JSSP-R Program Expands to Paktia Province

Establishing its fifth regional team in Paktia, JSSP initiated a three-month assessment of the justice sector as part of an effort to identify students for the regional police-prosecutor coordination and Focused District Development (FDD-Law) programs. The assessment will determine the needs of police and prosecutors and include interviews and visits with justice sector stakeholders in Gardez, 10 other Paktia districts, and selected districts in Paktika, Khost, Ghazni, and Logar provinces.

JSSP Trains Criminal Defense Attorneys on Fair Trial Practices

From Nov. 24th - 25th, JSSP presented trainings on fair trial practices to criminal defense attorneys in partnership with the Legal Aid of Afghanistan (LAOA) at the Independent National Legal Training Center (INLTC). Twenty six students participated on the first day and 24 students on the second. The trainings included the following topics: duties of judges, prosecutors, and defense lawyers during trial; equality before the law and equal treatment; non-retroactivity of criminal law; presumption of innocence; the right to silence; prohibited forms of examinations; the freedom from arbitrary detention; the right to a defense attorney; and case studies. Posters created by Da Qanoon Ghushtonky, a local non-governmental organization, were displayed and used throughout the training and played an important role in reinforcing information. The students commented on their usefulness and encouraged JSSP to create and distribute posters addressing legal rights. At the conclusion of the course, each student received copies of the criminal law reference set.



Criminal defense attorneys study fair trial practices at the INLTC.