



## Afghanistan Justice Sector Support Program Update October 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 Supports Victim Advocacy



*A legal aid attorney from the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) presents proposed standard operating procedures for victim advocates to use when handling rape cases.*

As part of its support for victim advocacy, JSSP has been training Referral Center counselors and paralegals as victim advocates. Referral Centers provide legal advice, paralegal and other services to women seeking legal action, such as a divorce, an end to domestic violence, or the acquisition of land rights and ensure that women receive assistance should their case be referred to the formal justice system. Referral Centers are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and are staffed and utilized solely by women. In special circumstances, the Referral Centers also assist women in obtaining temporary shelter.

The need for these Centers was recognized as an increasing number of women began seeking legal assistance from the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) for services that were not part of the Ministry's mandate. The basic concept for these Centers was developed by UNIFEM in cooperation with the MOWA and the Ministry of Interior. Two Centers currently exist in Jalalabad and Parwan and two additional Centers are planned in Bamiyan and Faryab.

Since the spring of 2008, JSSP has designed and conducted victim advocacy workshops for victim advocates and stakeholders from organizations that are parties to the Ministry of the Interior /Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOI/MOWA) Referral Center Protocol. JSSP and UNIFEM plan to conduct similar workshops next year for victim advocates and stakeholders from the Bamiyan and Faryab MOI/MOWA Referral Centers.

### JSSP Facilitates \$578,000 Czech Donation for Logar Prison Reconstruction

JSSP, in conjunction with the Corrections System Support Program (CSSP) assisted the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) in securing support from the Czech Republic to rebuild the prison in Logar province. At an Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> meeting attended by Minister Sarwar Danish, Administrative Deputy Minister Abdul Qadar Adalatkhwa, MOJ General Head of Prisons Amir Mohammad Jamshead, and Czech Ambassador Jiri Nekcasil, the parties signed a memorandum of understanding for the reconstruction of the prison. The project is anticipated to begin once projects documents, including work plans and designs are completed.



*MOJ Minister Sarwar Danish, left, and Czech Ambassador Jiri Nekcasil sign the memorandum of understanding under which the Czech Republic will donate \$578,000 to reconstruct Logar Prison.*