

24 Sept 2010: 6 days after E-Day

Afghanistan *Wolesi Jirga* Elections, 18 Sept 2010

For the 2010 Afghan *Wolesi Jirga* elections, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) is conducting an observation mission and analyzing the electoral process before, during and after election day. This mission involves more than 160 international analysts and Afghan observers throughout the country. For more information, visit [NDI.org](http://NDI.org) and [AfghanistanElectionData.org](http://AfghanistanElectionData.org).

## Afghanistan goes to the polls

### Election day snapshots from NDI observers around the country



*Polling center staff display an empty ballot box before counting votes in Mazar-e-Sharif, Balkh.*



*Women vote at a polling station in Kabul.*

### Afghan National Police and Army respond to security incidents on and around election day

The Afghan National Police (ANP) took charge of almost all of the 500 security incidents recorded by the Ministry of Defense during the 24 hours before and 24 hours after election day. The Afghan National Army (ANA) handled four of the incidents. As local security forces were able to deal with these incidents, it did not become necessary to call upon the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

Two main factors could explain the ANP's posture in carrying out its mandate with little assistance: in contrast to the 2009 elections, attacks this year were less complex and on a smaller scale. In addition, the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) — which involve the ANP, ANA and the National Directorate for Security — were better able to allocate resources. In early 2010, the ANSF cooperated with ISAF to conduct risk assessments of all potential polling locations. Risk levels for these locations were then categorized as high, medium and low. The exercise allowed security forces to concentrate personnel and assets where they were most needed.



*A man dips his finger in indelible ink at a polling station in Mazar-e-Sharif*



*Police detain men with multiple voting cards in Jaji Mайдan district, Paktia.*



*An election worker folds a ballot in a women's polling station in Kabul.*



*Voters fill in ballots at an open-air polling station in Jaji Mайдan district, Paktia.*

As in previous elections, security forces were organized in concentric circles of defense around polling centers. About 52,000 police officers were deployed directly in the vicinity of the 5,816 polling centers throughout the country. The ANA deployed about 63,000 troops in a second circle around the ANP. ISAF positioned itself in a third circle of defense, including quick reaction forces ready to deploy upon request from ANSF. To respond to possible post-election violence, security forces will remain positioned near high risk polling locations until Sept. 28.

## ECC receives more than 3,000 complaints, IEC releases first preliminary results

The Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC) announced on Sept. 23 that it had received more than 3,000 complaints on electoral irregularities, the bulk of which were lodged at its provincial offices (PECCs). The national ECC received 86 complaints, and sent all but one back to provincial offices for investigation. On election day, PECCs received 126 complaints; the number of submissions dramatically increased in the succeeding days.

Currently, PECCs are in the process of assessing and classifying complaints into three categories. Category A are those that, if found to be valid, could have a numerical impact on the election results. Category B includes complaints that are serious but do not have the potential to affect the results. Category C involves complaints that are determined to be irrelevant, unsubstantiated or need no further investigation. By Sept. 22, PECCs relayed that 1,767 complaints had been categorized, with 1,032 tagged as category A. The national ECC said it had not received information on the categorization of complaints from offices in Kandahar, Nuristan, Paktika and Zabul. It mentioned that the information gap was due to the lack of internet connectivity in those PECCs.

The national ECC said it is not obligated to review provincial decisions, and promised that PECCs would publicly post decisions on the walls of provincial offices as complaints are resolved.

Also on Sept. 23, the Independent Elections Commission (IEC) announced its first set of partial results. Rather than releasing exact figures, the IEC provided bar graphs showing approximate tallies for Panjshir province. The leading candidates in this race are: Dr. Zohair Sadaat with approximately 3,600 votes, Mohammed Wasel with approximately 2,200 votes, and Ustad Aziz Ahmad Hanif with 1,400 votes. There are two female candidates in the province vying for the single seat reserved for a female representative: Qazi Rahila Salim is ahead with approximately 3,400 votes, followed by Fatima Yasar with an estimated 250.

The IEC also said it has received information from 19 provinces with the reports on campaign contributions and expenses that candidates are required to submit. The IEC regulation on campaign finance disclosure for *Wolesi Jirga* candidates stipulates that the reports are due to provincial IEC offices no later than 48 hours before election day. Of the 19 provinces, the IEC said that six candidates have not declared assets, 22 have not submitted forms, and two received campaign contributions exceeding the official limit. The IEC has referred all these candidates to the ECC for investigation.



*Voters wait in line at a polling station in Kabul.*

## Despite violence, Afghan voters show commitment to democratic process, NDI finds

On Sept. 20, NDI's observation mission released its preliminary statement on the 2010 *Wolesi Jirga* elections. The statement noted that although violence marred the electoral process in many parts of the country, millions of Afghans turned out to vote on Sept. 18, showing courage and resolve to move their nation toward a more democratic future.

"Afghanistan's 2010 electoral process has demonstrated that millions of Afghans – as candidates and their agents, voters, domestic election monitors and polling officials – are committed to ensuring that the nation's government reflects the will of the people," the Institute said.

But NDI also pointed out that many problems, some dating back to Afghanistan's first elections in 2004, still have not been addressed. These include a defective voter registration process, barriers to women's participation, and the need to secure the independence from the executive of Afghanistan's two election bodies, the Independent Election Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission.

The observation mission, made up of 164 Afghan and international observers, operated in 30 of the country's 34 provinces and visited over 700 polling stations on election day, despite limitations created by the security situation. NDI's full preliminary statement can be found at: [http://www.ndi.org/files/NDI\\_Afghan\\_2010\\_EOM\\_preliminary\\_statement.pdf](http://www.ndi.org/files/NDI_Afghan_2010_EOM_preliminary_statement.pdf).



*The National Tally Center awaits results forms from the provinces to initiate vote tabulation. Data entry began on Sept. 20, and the first preliminary results were released on Sept. 23. The last delivery of results to the tally center is expected on Sept. 26. The IEC announced that data entry is anticipated to end on Oct. 20.*

NDI, which has worked in Afghanistan since 2002, is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental organization working to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. For the 2010 elections, NDI conducted seminars nationwide for over 1,700 candidates and 36,000 candidate agents, organized training for political parties and more than 240 women candidates, and provided technical assistance to the Free and Fair Elections Foundation of Afghanistan (FEFA), the country's largest domestic election monitoring organization.