

THE INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN, PEACE & SECURITY (RIWPS)
NATIONAL DIALOGUE FOR PEACE & RECONCILIATION

A proposal developed by the women members of the Provincial Peace Councils
March 2015



Photo: A female member of PPC in Badakhshan has reintegrated the commander together with his armed men following her outreach to his family and community.

Introduction:

The undersigned women members of the Provincial Peace Councils (PPCs), representing 34 provinces have actively engaged in efforts to advance peace and security in their country. The Research Institute for Women, Peace & Security (RIWPS) has supported these women over the past three years to advance women's inclusion in Afghanistan's peace process. Over that time, women PPC members have become apt advocates for peace, consulting women and men in their communities while also engaging provincial- and national-level decision makers on the issue of women's meaningful inclusion in the peace process.

Women PPC members joined several members of the High Peace Council (HPC) members in Kabul recently to exchange lessons learned from successes achieved and challenges encountered in peace process implementation. Based on their practical experience, they assembled the following recommendations for how national and international actors can ensure women's meaningful participation in the effort to restore peace and stability in Afghanistan.

First, We, the female members of the PPCs from across the country, support and welcome recent developments made by the National Unity Government (NUG) to re-initiate peace talks with the Taliban and aligned insurgent groups. We believe an inclusive peace and reconciliation process is the only means of stabilizing Afghanistan and the region.

Second, for the past three years, we have worked tirelessly at the community level to foster popular engagement with and support for the reintegration and reconciliation mechanisms established as part of the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP).

Third, we are working with women, girls, men, and boys to raise their awareness of the peace process—we have engaged students and youth through school outreach and have widely promoted a culture of peace and reconciliation. We are taking the message of peace and reconciliation to the homes of the Taleban and insurgents and encourage their mothers, wives, and sisters to convince their insurgent family members to renounce violence and join peace process. We are also working hard to prevent young men in our communities from joining insurgency through community awareness and finding working and engagements for these young men.

Fourth, we are doctors, teachers, nurses, or social worker but through these professions we preach and promote the message of peace. Many of us have conducted outreach to the families of insurgents and encouraged the mothers, wives, daughters and sisters of the insurgents to insist men in their families lay down arms and give up violent means of resistance.

Fifth, We also recognize the community grievances that drive youth to join the insurgency or harbor extreme feelings of anger and a desire for revenge. Many of these grievances are rooted in long-standing injustices and lack of equal opportunities for young men in our

communities. Addressing these grievances and the roots of conflict should be at the heart of the peace process and **therefore we call on the Afghan government to start and support a National Dialogue for Peace and Reconciliation that can be facilitated by the local organizations, High Peace Council, Provincial Peace Councils and other local government authorities.**

If women are systematically included in these peace talks, they will be able to create the momentum and support to ensure sustainable of any agreement reached—recognizing that those who will ultimately be tasked to implement the accord need to feel engaged in developing the final product if they are going to serve as productive members of the processes that advance its implementation. It's time for a national dialogue on reconciliation.

The specific recommendations include:

I. INCREASE WOMEN'S FORMAL REPRESENTATION IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE PEACE PROCESS

To increase the likelihood that women will have access to official institutions conducting peace talks and that the final peace agreement as well as the accompanying implementation plan reflect women's interests, women must have formal representation in all related decision-making structures related to peace process.

Therefore, The President and Chief Executive should:

1. Maintain the PPCs as the structure for implementation of the peace process at the local level.
2. Task national-level representatives tasked with oversight of the peace process to travel to provinces to arrange meetings with each Provincial Governor and head of each PPC to explain his or her responsibility to ensure meaningful engagement of women in all aspects of the Council's work.
3. Direct Provincial Governors to increase the number of women on the PPCs to ensure a minimum of 30% women on each; the Provincial Governors should work with women's NGOs based in their provinces to identify capable women to appoint.
4. Instruct the head of each PPC to include women in all formal decision-making processes of the Council.

II. INSTITUTE A NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

To ensure the sustainability of Afghan-led reconciliation and reintegration efforts, more must be done to ensure broader engagement of Afghan citizens. The majority of fighting takes place at the local level, with the various insurgent networks largely retaining their own areas of operation. Afghan citizens must be engaged to assist in defining what

coexistence among the fighting forces and Afghan communities will ultimately look like. This will improve chances for success of the peace process by cultivating local ownership and enabling community-based monitoring.

Therefore, the National Unity Government should:

1. Implement a participatory and inclusive reconciliation process that includes consultations at the community-, district- and provincial levels in every region of Afghanistan, and a national mechanism for coordination for these consultations.
 - a. Phase One: Civil society organizations will conduct a national survey to document awareness of and positions on the previous Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program and upcoming peace talks.
 - b. Phase Two: The civil society organizations involved in conducting the survey will report findings to the President and Chief Executive. Based on findings, civil society, Council members, and the NUG will develop a strategy for a national consultation.
 - c. Phase Three: Civil society, with oversight from the NUG, will conduct consultations that engage rural communities beginning at the district level and progressing to the provincial and regional levels, culminating in a national-level consultation.
 - i. Consultations should include separate tracks for men and women but outcomes of discussions should be consolidated into a single summary document by trained facilitators to avoid marginalization of women's recommendations.
 - ii. Guiding questions for consultations should explore substantive issues that will be negotiated by GIROA and the Taliban if and when formal talks ensue, including protections for women's rights.
2. Prioritize funds to support technical capacity building for women at the district, provincial, and national levels in conflict resolution and negotiations.
3. Task PPCs to partner with civil society organizations, particularly women-led organizations, to expand the scope and impact of community support efforts; each PPC should appoint a female spokesperson who will ensure effective outreach to women.

III. INCREASE WOMEN'S ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE PEACE PROCESS

Women in civil society, government, and PPCs require information on national-level activities related to the peace process in order to build trust in the process at the provincial level. Further, in order to support peace-related outreach efforts, women require resources but have limited knowledge of the funding options available to support their efforts.

Therefore, the national-level actors tasked with overseeing the peace process should:

1. Ensure a gender unit is established, staffed, and capacitated to conduct regular consultations with women in the PPCs and in civil society.
2. Hold regular monthly meetings with women civil society representatives during which Gender Unit staff members share information about the status of the peace talks and women share information about the work they are doing to promote peace.
3. Make information on small grants and similar resources available to women's groups at the provincial level to improve the ability of NGOs to support outreach related to the peace process. This can be done through:
 - a. Social media and radio programming;
 - b. Workshops in provinces for women's NGOs and Community Development Councils;
 - c. Trainings for PPCs—particularly the women members—that aim to ensure all members are clear on the resources available and the processes to access them.
4. Ensure the transparency of budget allocation for the peace process by making publicly available a list outlining the location, activities, and implementing actors, and posting related information on a public website.
5. Direct Provincial Governors to hold regular monthly meetings with women civil society representatives to share information about the national-level activities and the work they are doing to promote peace; female PPC members could lead this process.
6. Support PPCs and Provincial Joint Secretariat Teams (PJSTs) to develop a monthly newsletter that includes updates on the peace process and profiles specific examples of women's mediation and negotiation efforts.
7. Support female PPC members in playing an increased role on conflict resolution and public outreach committees. In particular, women should lead confidence and trust building efforts and provide community support for both the victims of violence as well as families of former fighters. This can be accomplished by:
 - a. Creation of peace committees based in schools;
 - b. Education and vocational training opportunities to bring communities together; and
 - c. Documenting the direct mediation and negotiations activities led by women to build awareness of their contributions to peace.

Female members of the PPCs in 33 provinces:

No	Names	Position	Province
1	Zarghona Balooch	PPC member	Kandahar
2	Jamila Yousofi	PPC member	Kandahar
3	Rugia Achuzai	PPC member	Kandahar
4	Shahida Husain	PPC member	Kandahar
5	Fawzia Youns kakar	PPC member	Zabul
6	Zarmina Patan	PPC member	Zabul
7	Sidiqa Jalali	PPC member	Zabul
8	Malali	PPC member	Hilmand
9	Qudsia	PPC member	Hilmand
10	Lailuma Siddiqi	PPC member	Farah
11	Kishwar Shaiq	PPC member	Farah
12	Jamila Amini	PPC member	Farah
13	Nasima Sadat	PPC member	Kunar
14	Brishna	PPC member	Kunar
15	Dr. Shah bebe	PPC member	Laghman
16	Jamila	PPC member	Laghman
17	Badamgul Multazam	PPC member	Laghman
18	Shukria Wali	PPC member	Ghazni
19	Fawzia Kakar	PPC member	Ghazni
20	Nahida Asifi	PPC member	Kunduz
21	Muslima Waliji	PPC member	Kunduz
22	Marzia Rustamai	PPC member	Kunduz
23	Adeela Shahab	PPC member	Kunduz
24	Gulalai Raheem	PPC member	Kunduz
25	Shahgul Gulzada	PPC member	Nimroz

26	Amina Hakimi	PPC member	Nimroz
27	Mahbooba Sadat	PPC member	Khust
28	Nafisa Yaqubi	PPC member	Khust
29	Khawar Amiri	PPC member	Khust
30	Taiba Khawari	PPC member	Bamiyan
31	Razia Iqbalzada	PPC member	Bamiyan
32	Massoma Khawari	PPC member	Bamiyan
33	Mahboobad Sadat	PPC member	Balkh
34	Nafisa Ghiyasi	PPC member	Balkh
35	Nilofar Saiyad	PPC member	Balkh
36	Shahla Adeeb	PPC member	Balkh
37	Fahima Rahimi	PPC member	Balkh
38	Amnia Faiza Sharifi	PPC member	Kapisa
39	Saifura	PPC member	Kapisa
40	Anisgul Akhgar	PPC member	Badakhshan
41	Zuffnoon Natiq	PPC member	Badakhshan
42	Humaira Haqmal	PPC member	Wardak
43	Roshanak	PPC member	Wardak
44	Waheeda Ushkuli	PPC member	Wardak
45	Saadat Hamidi	PPC member	Samangan
46	Massoma Assamai	PPC member	Samangan
47	Khadeeja Assamai	PPC member	Samangan
48	Shukria Asil	PPC member	Baghlan
49	Khadeeda Yaqeen	PPC member	Baghlan
50	Zarghuna Himat	PPC member	Paktia
51	Nasreen Oryakhail	PPC member	Paktia
52	Shamil Azizi	PPC member	Herat

53	Mahbooba Jamshedi	PPC member	Herat
54	Muslima Shirzad	PPC member	Badghis
55	Zarghuna Shirzad	PPC member	Badghis
56	Safia Rasouli	PPC member	Badghis
57	Huma Ahmadi	PPC member	Lugar
58	Shaima Zargar	PPC member	Lugar
59	Nafeesa Hijran	PPC member	Lugar
60	Fawzia Arifi	PPC member	Panshir
61	Aliya Siraj	PPC member	Panshir
62	Nadira Gyia	PPC member	Parwan
63	Nazifa Khaliqi	PPC member	Parwan
64	Masooma Anwari	PPC member	Ghur
65	Haji Maryam	PPC member	Ghur
66	Noria Hamasa	PPC member	Jawzjan
67	Najiba Quraishi	PPC member	Jawzjan
68	Maryam Ayoubi	PPC member	Jawzjan
69	Fatima Rasouli	PPC member	Jawzjan
70	Maghfirat Samimi	PPC member	Jawzjan
71	Mahtab jan	PPC member	Urozgan
72	Bibi Khushiwal	PPC member	Paktika
73	Anisa Katawazi	PPC member	Paktika
74	Suria Ahadi	PPC member	Faryab
75	Rahima Jan Baihaqi	PPC member	Faryab
76	Jamila Sadat	PPC member	Nangarhar
77	Zarghuna Zewar	PPC member	Nangarhar
78	Rashida Shaihidi	PPC member	Daikundi
79	Uzra Jafari	PPC member	Daikundi

80	Haji Mahbooba	PPC member	Saripul
81	Nasima Arezo	PPC member	Saripul
82	Abida Rahmani	PPC member	Saripul
83	Razum Ara Hawash	PPC member	Takhar
84	Parwin Arifi	PPC member	Takhar
85	Saliha Ghaffari	PPC member	Takhar
86	Basira Sultani	PPC member	Takhar
87	Turpaykai Zia	PPC member	Kabul
88	Jamila Hashimi	PPC member	Kabul
89	Karima Salik	PPC member	Kabul