

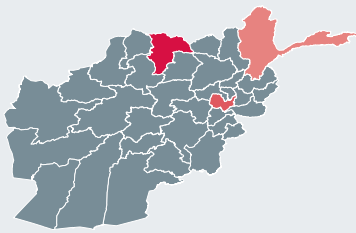
## German Cooperation with Afghanistan

# Strengthening civil society

### Programme



### Overview



Activities in the provinces of Balkh and Badakhshan (top left to right) and Kabul (lower right)

<b>Programme:</b>	Civil Peace Service (CPS)
<b>Commissioned by:</b>	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
<b>Partners:</b>	Afghan non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government institutions
<b>Implementing organisation:</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
<b>Provinces:</b>	Badakhshan, Balkh, Kabul – extending throughout the entire north of Afghanistan
<b>Programme objective:</b>	To consolidate peace at local, regional and national level.

### Situation

After decades of war and unchecked violence, Afghanistan's political, social and economic structures are mostly destroyed. With the country's first parliamentary elections and the establishment of structures at local level to give the people a say, it looked as if the foundations for the country's democratic renewal had been laid. In the larger towns and cities especially the signs of an economic upswing could be seen. In the meantime, however, radical forces have regained influence. People do not have legal certainty and the security situation is deteriorating. Involving actors with a militant background in political and administrative structures has sown dissatisfaction and mistrust amongst the people. Women's lack of participation in the political consensus-building process is just as much an obstacle to democratic change as is nepotism in the provinces where central government now hardly has any say. The struggle for regional hegemony is the root cause of the country's political and economic destabilisation and manifests itself in heightened crime rates, human rights violations, conflicts over resources – especially land and water – and temporary outbreaks of armed hostilities. Nevertheless, the Afghan people have a keen interest in non-violent conflict management strategies, one that is even evident amongst government circles. Their remoteness from the government however makes it difficult for the civil population to influence political processes. And this distance can only be overcome by specifically promoting citizen participation.

### Objective

On behalf of the German Government, the Civil Peace Service Programme (CPS) has been assisting its Afghan partner organisations to drive forward peace-building processes within society since 2004. Through measures such as peace research, conflict-sensitive journalism and peace education, the CPS works with its partner organisations to strengthen information and communication structures and to integrate peace-building measures into key interfaces of social life.



Workshop at Kabul University marking the International Day of Peace  
Photo: GIZ

## Results

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is implementing the Civil Peace Service Programme (CPS). It is helping to establish viable alliances and associations within civil society, which, in the long term, will represent and safeguard the interests of the civilian population. These structures guarantee legal certainty and help consolidate the peace process. Formal and non-formal conflict management structures, such as the police force and Shuras (councils of elders), are being established and strengthened. Human-rights work is linked to topics and methods of non-violent conflict management. In the short term, this protects extremely vulnerable groups against violence and in the medium term, it reduces the level of violence. In the long term, however, it enables state and non-state actors to manage societal processes sustainably and without resorting to violence.

### Impact:

- Teacher training centres instruct their students in the fundamentals of peace education and methods of non-violent conflict management, leading to a reduction in the levels of violence in Afghan schools.
- Faculty members from fourteen Afghan universities have joined together to form a peace network. They are now advocating that peace and conflict research be pursued cross-sectorally in the faculties.
- More than a dozen further training modules for human-rights work and non-violent conflict resolution, with the pertinent materials, have been developed and are now being rolled out.

### CPS programme partners:

- Afghanistan's Children – A New Approach (ASCHIANA) in Kabul
- Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) in Kabul
- Cooperation Centre for Afghanistan (CCA) in Mazar-e Sharif
- Mediothek Afghanistan in Kabul
- Radio Television Afghanistan (RTA) in Kabul
- National Center for Policy Research (NCPR) in Kabul
- Sanayee Development Organization (SDO) in Mazar-e Sharif
- All Afghan Women Union (AAWU) in Kabul
- Ministry of Education / Teacher Training College (TTC) in Mazar-e Sharif and Feyzabad

- Social intermediaries, such as police officers and members of the judiciary, social workers, judges, mullahs and elders, have undergone further training in topics relating to human rights and non-violent conflict management and now apply the knowledge they have acquired in their daily work.
- The CPS Afghanistan has helped raise the Afghan people's awareness of human and women's rights. Women's concerns now command more attention and are more strongly represented in the media. Also, a greater percentage of women now engage in societal processes and discussions.
- The principles of conflict-sensitive journalism are mainstreamed into the training of people who work in the media.
- Reports and broadcasts in the media are based on the principles of conflict-sensitive journalism.



The CPS activities comprises also cultural events | Photo: GIZ

### Status as at January 2013

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