



# **Local Level Restitution and Dialogues Consolidated Report**

**Shakardara, Puli Khumri, Matoon,  
Sorkhroad, Kalakan and Bagram**

**Jan 9 – March 5, 2020**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents ideas of Afghan citizens garnered through community dialogues that aimed to validate findings of our Gender and Conflict Assessment by sharing the reports of our research back with local citizens in all the six target communities including Puli Khumri of Baghlan province, Matoon of Khost, Sorkhroad of Nangarhar, Kalakan and Shakardara of Kabul, and Bagram of Parwan province. For this, we organized and conducted two community dialogue sessions (12 in total) in each of the foregoing target location. Each session was attended by around 30 participants including citizens from different walks of life such as village elders, tribal leaders, religious leaders, school teachers, government officials, CSO activists, and ordinary citizens. Each session witnessed almost equal participation of men and women.

The main research (Gender and Conflict Assessment) was conducted during August – September 2019 using a mix-method of qualitative and quantitative approach where a total of 2,335 people were surveyed, 48 KIIs, and 20 FGDs conducted in all the aforementioned target communities. After analyzing the data, and developing a report, findings of the assessment were shared back with the citizens during February – March 2020 for validation.

Overall, most of the findings from Gender and Conflict Assessment were validated. However, there were few items, such as listed below, that the participants did not agree with or further elaborated on:

**Shakardara (p.4):** 1) further elaborating on findings of the research where it states that violent conflicts afflict women more than men, participants of community dialogues in Shakardara believed that the finding is true in the sense of indirect effects; however, they believed that it is men who are affected more directly by conflicts, especially armed conflicts; 2) according to the findings of the Gender and Conflict Assessment, women being secluded at their homes, and not allowed by their family elders to go out were stated as the two major obstacles preventing women to participate in peacebuilding activities in Shakardar. However, participants of the community dialogues believed that the root causes or obstacles against women’s participation are religious and traditional constrains, from which all other obstacles stem.

**Puli Khumri (p.6):** finding of the research which indicates that more than three-fourth (77%) of the citizens in Puli Khumri refer to police to resolve their conflicts/disputes was not validated. Participants of the community dialogues agreed that people approach police for conflict resolution, but not as high percentage as 77.

**Matoon (p.8):** as findings of the research indicate that women have had limited role in conflict resolution and peace process due to various reasons, including confinement to their homes, participants of the community dialogues in Matoon remained divided in their views on women’s capacity to play effective role in peacebuilding. Some of them believed that women cannot play effective role as mediators and negotiators in peacebuilding activities; while others disagreed with the thought by saying that women can bring different perspectives, ideas and experiences where it can help both men and women to discuss and select best solutions through a more collaborative way. They also had different views as to whether men or women are affected more by violent conflicts in Matoon.

**Sorkhroad (p.9):** looking at the findings of the Gender and Conflict Assessment, some of the participants of the community dialogues did not agree with the result of the report stating ‘Violence against Women’ as the most frequent incidence of violence in Sorkhroad. In contrast to the findings of the research, they also believed that all types of violence have decreased in the past 12 months, adding that the current statistics in the report overstate the level of violence in Sorkhroad district.

**Kalakan (p.9):** participants of the community dialogues in Kalakan believed that ‘domestic violence’ and ‘street crimes’ are not as worrying issues as reflected in the report. The report shows ‘domestic violence’ as the first, and ‘street crimes’ as the third highest types of violence in the district that has occurred in the past 12 months.

**Bagram (p.10):** People in Bagram did not agree with two items from the findings of the Gender and Conflict Assessment. 1) they believed that ‘street crime’ which has been reported as the second highest types of violence in Bagram is not that serious issue because they said they had not heard of any such cases since a very long time. 2) kidnapping, stated as the fourth highest issue in the report, believed to be not an issue at all. Participants believed that in the whole year or perhaps more than this period, there had be only a single case of kidnapping recorded in Bagram. Participants agreed that the most concerning issue in Bagram is drug addiction which has led to domestic violence and violence against women in the past one year.

## DIALOGUE METHODOLOGY

Each dialogue session lasted for four hours and included three main parts, apart from participants registration, opening and closing remarks. Initially, findings of the Gender and Conflict Assessment were presented to the participants and their questions were clarified through a Q&A session by the project team and facilitators. Then the participants were divided into 4-6 groups of 5-7 members to discuss the findings of the research at length. Group working followed by a plenary session were each group presented their discussion points as to what items of the research findings they agreed with and what seemed to be untrue in terms of their communities. They also discussed and presented their recommendations on possible solutions. All participants had the opportunity to ask questions and share ideas with members from other groups. Below are some of the questions that were given to each group to guide their discussion.

- Do you agree with the findings of the report? Please explain in case any of these findings is not the case in your community.
- What do you think of the recommendations suggested in the report? Do you think these will help your community?
- What can we initiate in our communities to prevent or transform conflicts and contribute to peace?
- What specific recommendations would you suggest for women’s empowerment and their participation in peacebuilding activities

## COMMUNITY DIALOGUE RESULTS SHAKARDARA

### AGREEMENTS:

Participants agreed with the findings of the research and below points were mentioned specifically by the them:

- They agreed that their community has not been able to deescalate the conflicts in the past 18 months. They further added that the situation has deteriorated;
- Agreed that power lords, armed groups, and political parties are the main cause of conflicts and believed that they were interlinked in a way or another. They also said that the anti-government armed groups were the main actor of the ongoing conflicts;
- They also agreed that domestic violence was the most concerning issue in their community. They added that unemployment and poverty are among the factors that drive conflicts the most;
- Participants agreed with the findings on local conflict resolution mechanism in Shakardara;
- According to the report, courts, police and community elders have been stated as the most effective mechanisms for resolving local conflicts and disputes. While participants agreed with this, they also added that religious leaders are also a reliable and trusted source of conflict resolution though religious elders and structures have been stated as the least effective conflict resolution mechanism in the report;
- Report says that women are not actively involved in peace building or conflict resolution activities. This was hugely supported by all of the participants. They recommended to conduct programs that can lead to women involvement in peace or any other social related activities;
- Activities/ program suggested in the report were fully supported by the participants, but they emphasized on the inclusiveness of these programs such as involvement of women, youths and other community members;
- Participants believe that there are safe places for peace activities, as also stated in the report, but they asked for dedicated spaces. It is good to resolve problems while sitting in a garden, mosque and Maliks' house, but still there has to be a specific place with all the required facilities. Unfortunately, there do not exist any dedicated spaces for peace activities in Shakardara, according to the participants.

### DISAGREEMENTS:

- There were different ideas about how men and women are affected by conflicts. Participants agreed with the findings of the report saying that women are affected more by conflict than men, but they believed that this impact is indirect because normally women are not exposed to physical violence. Therefore, they believe that men are directly affected by violence sometimes as actors sometimes as victims. For instance, most men are killed, injured in war are physical violence, but still this leads to women as they lose their brother, father or any other relative. So women will lose their income source and the social support they have from their male member of their families. Another argument was that men are involved in conflict and are directly affected by it. This argument was supported by majority of the participants.

- As the report states, participants agreed that women are prevented from participating in peacebuilding activities by their family elders, mainly by male members of their families, but they also added it is due to religious reasons and traditional norms. Therefore, they believe that religious reasons and traditional constraints prevent women from participating in peacebuilding or social activities.

#### THE AGGREGATE RESPONSES FROM ALL PARTICIPANTS ABOUT THE INITIATIVES FOR PREVENTING CONFLICT:

- Inclusive programs for social activities and peace building activities;
- Public awareness especially for women and youths;
- Job opportunities;
- Community dialogues between Maliks, religious leaders, youths and women;
- Increase social awareness on what really conflict is and what can cause conflict in most vulnerable societies.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN PEACEBUILDING ACTIVITIES

1. Women's rights advocacy;
2. Capacity building programs that can enhance women's self-confidence and self-esteem;
3. Encourage local elders such as Maliks and religious leaders to support women's participation in peacebuilding activities through any possible platform;
4. Peacebuilding trainings for women, youths and civil activists;
5. Capacity building programs for women focusing on conflict resolution methods.

#### COMMUNITY DIALOGUES RESULTS PULIKHUMRI

##### AGREEMENTS:

- Participants agreed with the findings of our research on main actors of conflict (armed groups and power lords); however, they also mentioned another group, local government employees. They believed that lingual, tribal, ideological and other types of discrimination exist in governmental institutions that have divided local government officials in Puli Khumri;
- They also agreed that armed groups do exist in the area – they mainly belong to political parties and factions. They are still armed and they have a lot of influence both on the government and the local people;
- Participants also agreed with findings of the report that lack of education/awareness on rights, and presence of armed groups are main sources of conflict. However, they also said that lack of job opportunities and poverty are issues that have led to conflict in Puli Khumri;
- According to the report, courts, police and community elders are considered the most effective mechanisms for resolving the problems. People also added that religious leaders and Maliks are also

a reliable and trusted source for conflict resolution in Puli Khumri. They also stated that some cases are also referred to Taliban to solve;

- Participants also agreed with the findings of the survey stating that armed conflicts/war, domestic violence and VAW are the most frequent problems in the area. In addition, they also mentioned mental, physical, and psychological violence as the most concerning issues of their communities;
- Participants also agreed that people have been sidelined when it comes to peacebuilding activities as well as Afghanistan peace process. Almost all the participants narrated that all their people does not know what is happening on both levels (National and provincial levels);
- All other findings of the research were validated except those mentioned below.

#### DISAGREEMENTS:

- Most of the participants thought that women do not play major role in peacebuilding or conflicts. They mainly thought that women are very peaceful gender but unfortunately they are being confined inside their houses and can't play major role as long as there is not proper awareness among people to allow their daughters and female members of their families to participate in peacebuilding activities;
- Most participants stated that women, if they are involved in peace relevant issues, are very limited in numbers;
- Participants also disagreed with findings of the report stating that around 77% of people refer their cases to police and courts. They all agreed that some people do approach these institutions, but the statistic provided in the report is way higher than the actual cases;
- With reference to women's low participation in peacebuilding activities and social affairs, participants agreed with the findings of the research; but added that these norms are backed by religious leaders, such as Imams and Mullahs, who preach to villagers that women should stay at homes and do the housework;

#### THE AGGREGATE RESPONSES FROM ALL PARTICIPANTS ABOUT THE INITIATIVES FOR PREVENTING CONFLICT:

- Awareness raising programs at the very grassroots level – especially for people who are not aware of the consequences of conflict and are illiterate;
- Participants emphasized on using human-centered approach while designing programs, saying that program designers should work with local people, for whom they design programs, rather than bringing programs that have been designed by people who might not have in-depth understanding of the local context;
- Creation of employment opportunities for local citizens;
- They also suggested programs that will engage and support community leaders to play more active roles in peacebuilding and community development. They believed that these category of people are highly respected; thus, they can play effective role provided that they are equipped with proper skills such as conflict resolution, etc.;
- Public awareness programs on peace process to local dwellers, especially marginalized groups of the community;
- Programs that can encourage harmony, co-existence and tolerance among local citizens.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN PEACEBUILDING ACTIVITIES

- Local government should play a vital role in this regard. There should exist gender department in each of the governmental entities that should look after gender issues and ensure that gender equity and equality are practiced;
- Women empowerment programs shall be implemented at the provincial level. They also called on the government to provide support and encourage voluntary actions so that such interventions are not always dependent on donor's funding;
- They also called on women rights organizations and activists to step up their efforts and advocacy for women's empowerment and their rights;
- Programs that capacitate local women and equip them with skills to participate in peacebuilding activity.

## COMMUNITY DIALOGUE RESULTS MATOON

### AGREEMENTS:

- All participants unanimously agreed with the finding of the research which indicates that their community has deescalated violence in the past 18 months;
- Participants agreed with findings of the research on causes of conflict, but also added that lack of adequate security forces, corruption in governmental sectors, lack of proper complaints receipt mechanism, explosion, suicide attack by Taliban as well as interference of foreign countries in the Afghan peace process, are among the main factors of violence and insecurity in Matoon. They further added that the main players of war and conflicts are powerful people and high-ranking governmental officials who gain benefits from unstable situation in the area;
- They also confirmed that family violence is prevalent in Matoon where women suffer greatly from such violence, also adding that it is all due to women's lack of awareness about their rights and low education level because most women in Matoon are also deprived of access to formal education;
- Recommendation provided for women's empowerment in the Gender and Conflict Assessment report were approved by the participants, and they further suggested that all relevant interventions and programs should be designed based on local approaches;
- They also expressed concerns about child abuses, and violation of laws in Matoon;
- Participants also had concerns about the presence of Taliban and other armed militia groups, alluding that they have disturbed peace in Matoon;
- Participants also said that there does not exist adequate number of Afghan security forces to provide security for local people in Matoon;





#### DISAGREEMENTS:

- Participants had divergent views on women's role in conflict resolution. Some emphasized on vital role women can play in peacebuilding activities and disputes resolutions believing that they might bring different views and perspectives on subject matters where they will then discuss and solve the issues in a more collaborated way. However other participants believed that women cannot play a major role in dispute resolution, thus saying that their involvement is not necessary. According to them, men are better negotiators and mediators than women, and in most cases women are themselves subject of conflict cases;
- Participants also believed that in order for women of their communities to participate in peace process and can play an active and effective role, they first need to acquire proper training and skills;
- They also had different views as to whether men or women are affected more by violent conflicts in Matoon though most of the people surveyed during the study believed that it was women who are affected more.

#### THE AGGREGATE RESPONSES FROM ALL PARTICIPANTS ABOUT THE INITIATIVES FOR PREVENTING CONFLICT:

- Programs that support peacebuilding activities;
- Increase public awareness on peace process;
- Programs that encourage people to cooperate with government;
- Strengthen educational system;
- Create jobs and employment opportunities for local people so that they do not join insurgent groups.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN PEACEBUILDING ACTIVITIES

- Advocate for women's rights and their access to education through influential members of the community such as religious and tribal leaders;
- Special programs on women's empowerment.

#### COMMUNITY DIALOGUE RESULT SORKHROAD

#### AGREEMENTS:

- Similar to the findings of the research, participants were highly concerned about the poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment issues in Sorkhroad, and called these issues as the main factors of conflict;
- They also agreed with the findings of the report which states that most people in Sorkhroad refer dispute cases to community elders and Jirgas (informal system) in order to resolve them.

#### DISAGREEMENTS:

- Some participants disagreed with findings of our research on types and level of violence. They said that the different types of violence do exist but they have been overstated by the statistic provided in the report;
- Violence against women has been stated as the most frequent issue in Sorkhroad, according to our survey report. However, participants in the community dialogues rejected this, believing that it has been overstated. They said there have been VAW cases in Sorkhroad, but not to the extent reflected in the report;

#### THE AGGREGATE SUGGESTIONS OF THE PARTICIPANTS:

- Programs that change people's behavior to stop practicing unfair traditions and cultural norms that are against Islamic teachings and laws;
- Programs that increase justice for women and decrease violence against them;

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN PEACEBUILDING ACTIVITIES

- Involve women in peacebuilding activities;
- Involve women in resolving issues and disputes related to women because they better know about such issues;
- Train women on conflict resolution techniques;
- Encourage religious scholars including Imams to advocate for women. Government should also support such programs;

#### COMMUNITY DIALOGUE RESULTS KALAKAN

##### AGREEMENTS:

- Participants agreed with the finding of the research which indicates that violence has not been decreased. However, a minority of them believed that the security situation has improved.
- They also agreed that the people in Kalakan are optimistic about the ongoing peace process. They said that people trust the government and support the peace process;
- They also agreed with the causes of conflict reflected in the report;
- Participants also agreed with the findings of the research stating that power lords and armed groups are the main actors of conflict in Kalakan.

##### DISAGREEMENTS:

- Participants disagreed with the percentage of the domestic violence as stated in the report, believing that it has been overstated.

- Similarly, street crimes have been reported as the third most frequent issue in Kalakan Participants also disagreed with the finding believing that it is not that serious issue.

#### THE AGGREGATE SUGGESTIONS OF THE PARTICIPANTS:

- Participants approved of the recommendation given in the report of Gender and Conflict Assessment, but emphasized on programs that can increase literacy and job opportunities;
- Increase public awareness;
- Programs on health issues

#### RECOMMENDATIONS ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND THEIR PARTICIPATION ON PEACE BUILDING ACTIVITIES:

- Special programs on women empowerment;
- Give more chance for women to participate in peace process

#### COMMUNITY DIALOGUE RESULTS BAGRAM

##### AGREEMENTS:

- Participants appreciated the method applied in Gender and Conflict Assessment, especially the sample size, and women's participation in the research;
- They agreed with the research findings on main actors of the conflict which are power lords and armed groups;
- They approved of the recommendation given in the Conflict Assessment report.

##### DISAGREEMENTS:

- Participants did not agree with the findings of the research stating 'Kidnapping' as a major issue in Bagram. They said that there had been only a single case of kidnapping over the past one year or even more than a year. Instead, they believed that drug-addiction is the most worrisome problem in Bagram;
- Contrary to the findings of the research, participants believed that women in Bagram are allowed to participate in peacebuilding activities by their families, but they have not been provided with the chance by the local actors so far;
- According to the findings of the research, more than two-fifth (43%) of the respondents have stated that street crime was an issue in Bagram, but the participants believed that this was not a serious issue and has been overstated in the report;
- Though security forces and other government entities have been stated by a very small number of respondents (3.6% and 17.8% respectively) in the Gender and Conflict Assessment report to be causing conflicts in Matoon, participants of the community dialogues believed that they are not triggering conflict at all.



#### THE AGGREGATE SUGGESTIONS OF THE PARTICIPANTS:

- Creating job opportunities;
- Increasing public awareness level;
- Holding inclusive programs for elders and council members;
- Creating equal opportunities for women and youths to participate in social or civil society related activities;

#### RECOMMENDATIONS ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND THEIR PARTICIPATION ON PEACE BUILDING ACTIVITIES:

- Special educational and public awareness programs for women;
- The women should be given more role in the local government.