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بنیاد انتخابات ازاد و عادلانه افغانستان

Free & fair Election Foundation
of Afghanistan

**Monitoring Report of the Birth and Death Registration
and Voting Pilot Process, FEFA**

September 2007

Contents

Event	Page
1. Explanation of summary policy	
2. Acknowledgments	
1.2 Monitors.....	1
2.2 Members and Partners of Foundation.....	1
2.3 Participation of the people	1
2.4 Donors.....	1
3. Reviews on Practical Condition of Birth and Death Registration and Voting Pilot Process.	
3.1 Process Orientations	2
3.2 Considerable Orientations	3
3.2.1 Public Awareness.....	3
3.2.2 Security Issues	3
3.2.3 Locations of Registration Centers	
• Selection and Location Issues of Registration Centers.....	4
• Access of the Applicants to Registration Centers.....	6
• Internal Arrangements of the Registration Centers	6
3.2.4 Start and Completion of Work Proceedings	7
3.2.5 Recruitment and Awareness (Training) of Employees.....	7
• Employees Recruitment for Centers	7
• Awareness of Center Employees	8
3.2.6 Attendance of Monitors.....	9
3.2.7 Relevant Technical Problems of the Process	
In Computerized Process	10
• Database.....	10
• Computer.....	10
• Eye Shooting Camera	10
• Electronic Generator	11
Pen Registration System.....	11
3.2.8 Centers Employees Problems.....	11
3.2.9 Participation and Interest of the People in the Process.....	12
3.2.10 Glance on the Comments of People.....	14
Suggestions.....	16
Introduction of Monitoring Program of the Pilot Registration Process	
1. Recruitment of Monitors.....	19

2. Training of Monitors.....	19
3. Selection of Monitors.....	19

Summary Explanation of Birth and Death Registration Pilot Process:

It is very auspicious that today Afghanistan is passing through the route which really strengthens peace, development and improvement. However there are many economic and security challenges, it exercises and supports those effective methods, which can be considered as basic means to stabilize and reinforce the democratic proceedings and assure the political age for a bright future of our community people.

One of the most critical problems, that Afghanistan has been facing for a long time, particularly in the current situation, is considered to be lack of infrastructures and effective systems, which can respond to the fundamental requirements of the current situation, because the situation is being changed. The things, which didn't exist yesterday, are today and which don't exist today, should be tomorrow. Without this we would not be able to step forward together with development and improvements.

The systems being implemented in the current circumstances, need a profound review, thus from one side to implement them in a better way in accordance with today's current and new demands including the practical form of the constitution provisions, and also to assure the reception of acknowledged international commitments and values, which is relevant to Afghanistan. From the other side, it is an issue of establishing relations and coordination within the systems, because it is difficult for a system to be lonely respondent to all problems and requirements of the related area.

As, these requirements have been felt during the past years. For instance, in the field of election the identification cards didn't meet the requirements of election. On the other hand, since different regimes distributed their own relevant identifications to people it was difficult to identify them. There were people, who had different identification cards; while there were also some people who didn't yet had any identification card. As a result of this problem during the previous elections, however the distribution of the registration cards caused a great amount of fiscal costs, it didn't solve the relevant problems in its appropriate way; in the meantime caused number of shortages to the fields of poll.

Due to this reason the Civil Foundation of Afghanistan, particularly the Free and Fair Foundation of Afghanistan suggested a new system for identification cards and asked for the establishment of a joint project by Independent Election Commission, Ministry of Interior and the Statistic Directorate of Economic Ministry, so that, from one hand to prepare the permanent lists of voters and avoid from repeated votes, and on the other hand to recognize the national identification and exact statistic of population within the country and election departments, in its appropriate way.

Likely, The Independent Election Commission and Ministry of Interior jointly started a of Birth and Death Registration System of the voters in three parts of the country (Bati Koot district of Nanagarhar, Yakaw Lang district of Bamyan and the tenth sector of Kabul city).

However, this project was a pilot process; it was to be used as an effective and high-flying measure for the practical start of the general registration of all the inhabitants of the country, which was to be started soon in the future. Because we have learnt that each process had faced some problems, which were impossible to be avoided at the time of implementation. Therefore, the pilot process informs us about all possible gaps and deficiencies, in fact it provides as with an effective opportunity for the appropriate amendments in our general registration.

The Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan is one of the internal foundations, which monitored the pilot process in a systematic and organized method in all three fields and was committed to prepare and submit the report, explaining the problems and gaps of the process, along with designs and comments of Foundation regarding the specification and provision of the amendment opportunity for the general process, to the relevant sources,

Acknowledgment:

- **Monitors:**

As it was mentioned, FEFA was the only Foundation, which regularly monitored the pilot proceedings of Birth and Death Registration Project of population and voters. The participants within this program were the committed and capable monitors of this Foundation.

Foundation appreciates their cooperation in respect to developments and also their volunteer measures, which they accomplished during the actual monitoring of the process; however they faced number of problems. It also thanks them for their participation as the indicators for gaps and shortages of the process implementation, as well as their multidimensional cooperation in respect to the reinforcement of implementation. Foundation wishes their success for the different constructive levels of the country and expects establishment of further relations with them, so that to assist Foundation in other programs, as well as considers them as their close partner.

- **Members and Partners of Foundation:**

Foundation also thanks from the distinctive cooperation of the other institutions, which have been always cooperative to Foundation and hopes for great successes of the civil society in respect to strengthening the democracy, peace, progress and ascendancy of the country.

- **Support and Active Participation of the People in the Pilot Process:**

Foundation thanks the people for their active participation and interest during the proposed project and appreciates their enthusiastic participation in respect to reinforcement of the basic mechanism, assuring well proceedings of democracy.

- **Implementers and Donors of the Pilot Process:**

Foundation also appreciates the precious measures of all the relevant institutions (both implementers; Independent Election Commission and Ministry of Interior, donors and Supporters; whether they are in monitoring or in implementing fields) regarding the Pilot Process of Birth and Death of Population and Voters, which started its practical efforts amending and completing the establishment of an advanced and accountable system, to meet our community's current requirements.

We should say that, Foundation considers itself as a real and committed partner of those, who honestly thinks and make efforts for a bright and prosperous future of the country and never stay away, helping them at any field.

Review on Practical Condition of Pilot Process of Birth and Death Registration and Voting

Before starting discussion regarding the key findings of the Foundation's project, it is better to have a short review on the important and positive directions of the project and then find about the problems and gaps, which have been pointed out by the monitors while overseeing the process.

Important Directions of Process:

- First of all, the pilot method of the project implementation in different geographical fields of the country before starting it at nation wide is considered to be itself a positive measure. Because at first stage it was a great opportunity to respect the demands and requirements of the people prior to starting the actual program, and then guaranteed the success of the actual program and specified all the shortages and gaps, observed during the implementation of the program. At last identified the opportunities of amendments in the process.
- Taking benefits of new technology and two registration systems (Pen and computer), in order to identify that which system is going to work better in our country, and which one is more useful for evaluating the interest of the people, and finally to assess the technical problems and find about the efficiency of each system.
- Implementation of public awareness program in order to broaden the interest of the people in respect to both supporting the process and applying for registration.
- Including two very essential dimensions in the process:
 - Preparation of the permanent list of voters, helping the transparent proceeding of voting and election.
 - Identification, which finally values the identification system for the residents of the country and helps them in fulfilling all their relevant responsibilities.
- Proper arrangements of logistic and supporting proceedings of the project, accomplished by the implementers.
- Identifying the working passion between the employees in respect to completing properly and progressively their assigned tasks.

- Successful completion of the process with out any security problem, affecting the implementation of process.
- Existence of enough and reasonable opportunities for reviewing the observed problems and gaps during the implementation of the pilot registration process and looking for a proper and experienced opportunity to start and implement the general registration.

Now, we would assess those Points, which need to be considered and studied for the arrangement of better proceedings regarding Birth and Death as well as Voters Registration:

Public Awareness:

Ever since, Foundation didn't have previous information from the authorized institutions; it was not able to monitor the public awareness process on time and on a regular basis. Nevertheless, while monitoring it paid special attention to finding about the success and effectiveness of the applicants' awareness. The process was generally implemented through the following channels:

- Radios
- Multipliers teams
- Tribal elders and community leaders
- Printed publications and brochures

The interviews carried out with the applicants, generally points out that they were not convinced with public awareness measures. First of all, they complained about the mechanism of awareness and said, "We were only informed about the distribution of new identification cards, while we didn't know about the importance of Birth and Death Registration as well as the way we should have registered necessarily. This was the main reason for wasting your employees' time, because they were asked number of questions by the applicants in regards."

From the four mentioned awareness channels, the applicants were mostly informed through tribal elders and community leaders, and it was for the reason that these figures hosted the multipliers in their relevant fields.

The applicants living in Kabul suggested if this program was broadcasted through one of the interesting and famous programs of TV, having many audiences; so it would have had lots of impacts on public awareness.

But in two more fields (Bati Koot and Yakaw Lang) the applicants believed, that the multipliers teams should have gone to all parts of districts and informed the people about all relevant issues of the process, in the meantime they should have explained them about their rights and responsibilities, so that they could understand and participate in the process. They also claimed that the multipliers had no more than some teams, including one man and a woman, which didn't have enough capacity of implementing public

awareness. They were also unable to travel to all areas of the district and aware the people about the process.

Security Issues:

Establishing security centers was one of the necessities of this process because ensuring the safety of the registration employees, applicants, essential materials and equipments used in the process, were all the basic needs of the process.

As it was witnessed during the process, at first there were some police for security in the area, but afterwards, there were no police in surroundings of registration centers at all; and if there were some of them, particularly in Bati Koot, they always rested on the beds and were careless to ongoing. Despite that Ministry of Interior was one of the active participators of this process; they didn't pay any special attention in regard.

When the issue was raised with the directors of the centers, they expressed that the security authorities are in the picture and have told them that if there is any problem, they can contact them. We think this method could not prevent any incident, but could heal it after it took place.

Fortunately, no incidents, which could have affected the process, were observed, but in some cases there were much more need for the security authorities. For instance, in some cases the outsiders interfered in the process or in some cases the unauthorized people transferred the centers from one place to another place, with out any information to the central in charges, which is considered to be against the expected stipulations of the process implementation. From one hand, this resulted disorder in the process and from the other hand caused people crowd and finally diminished the credibility of the process against the people.

Locations of the Registration Centers:

This issue is important from many aspects:

- The issue of selection and locating the registration centers
- Access of the applicants to the registration centers
- Internal arrangements of the Registration centers.

First: Issue of Selecting and Locating the Registration Centers:

This issue had a special importance on the preceding of the registration, because selecting the exact and accessible location could result in active participation of the people while registering.

During monitoring, the monitors found that, the in charges only depended on one criteria, which was to estimate around 300 people for registration in the area, for identifying locations of registration centers, but it should be mentioned that, problems have been noticed in selecting the centers. These problems could be due to the following:

- **Improper Survey and pre study of the area under the project:**

It was necessary, to have had a précised study of the areas, before starting the project, there should have also been a sequence of consultancy and understandings and a proper timetable should have been developed for transferring the centers, while there were problems in this regard.

It was a suitable climate for the implementation of the process in Yakawlang, but the people had left their villages for their season cultivation and had settled in the hillsides, whereas the registration centers were selected in the villages, which itself is a weak point for the process. The people were disappointed in regard.

But, in Bati Koot district the climate was very hot and the centers were mostly selected to be placed in the tribal elders' locations, ignoring this point that, how was the prior basic relations between the tribal elders themselves and also what would be its impacts on the process, when selecting the centers in their sites. As we saw, since the centers were located in some elders' sites, their rival elders prevented their relevant villagers from registration at their places and announced that there is much distance between their residence and the registration centers and is not fair for the participation of women, so due to this reason they could convince the in charges of the centers to relocate the centers in their areas, which initially caused contradictions amongst the elders. As we witnessed that, one of the elders transferred a registration center from his rival elder's site by force during the night

These issues from one hand, challenge the execution condition of the process, and on the other hand, create hostility and hate between the elders, as well as probably result in a critical future, which we don't aim.

The methodology of selection for registration centers used by employees was in a way that they had to estimate around 300 people per each field for registration, however, firstly, it was difficult to decide selecting the registration centers because most of the villages had this much population. Secondly, the other essential criteria, as access of the people particularly women, basic argument between elders, lack of attention to using the public properties, security issues and... were less considered in the implementation of this methodology.

There were also some problems in Kabul. For instance, at first stage the centers were announced at one place, but when the people went to that place, there were no center at all, which resulted in confusions for families, especially women and monitors. Besides that indicates lack of prior coordination and understanding of process in charges with the administration of school and generally with Ministry of Education. For example, a center was located in Bebi Mehroo School, but when the people referred to school, it was transferred to Qalai Khwaja Mosque.

There have been also problems with selecting mosques and Shiite mosques (Takya Khana) for registration centers. From one hand it prevented the entrance of the international monitors for overseeing the process and from the other hand it prevented the women, in accordance to the sharia sayings as well as consideration of Mullahs' as it is a prohibited action. We witnessed a dispute between the Mullah of Qala Khwaja mosque and the in charges of the center, while selecting the mosque for registration center, which resulted in transferring the center to Bebi Mehroo Public Bath.

In the list of registration centers, the Women Affair Directorate was also selected as a center, but when the people referred, there were no center at all and the in charges of centers considered it unnecessary due to some reasons there.

Selecting Shiite mosque (Takia Khana) as registration centers has also resulted in some problems. For example, in Husainia Shiite mosque of Qalai Fatullah, mostly whenever there were any religious events, there were specific time (from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm) for turning on the generator and entrance of women.

On the other hand, selecting Wazir Akbar Khan mosque as registration center for along time was not considered to be accessible for the people, because Wazir Akbar Khan area is a place, where most of the International organizations functions, and the number of local people living there were relatively fewer, nevertheless the centers mostly worked there for computerized registration.

Or it is witnessed in some of the areas that, some centers were selected to be located in some narrow and dark places, or in some places, located in free and wide environments, particularly in Bati Koot district, which were mostly postponed due to rains, or if there were storm, so the employees put their veils on the equipments and left the area.

It should be mentioned that, there were no already accepted method for transferring the centers. There was only a condition in the procedure, to get the approval of locating the center from the elders, or it was based on the registration of all residents in an area, but as it was seen in some of the points, the centers were transferred according to the aspiration of the in charges themselves or demands from a few number of the local people.

Second: Access of the Applicants to the Registration Centers:

As we also mentioned previously in our survey discussion, the condition of applicants' access, especially women to the registration centers was difficult. From one side, due to the considered reasons by the survey and from the other hand the number of few centers also caused these problems.

Preparations of applicants list for registration or repeated registration, particularly of women, resulted in the lack of interest from the applicants. This also caused the crowd of people, while waiting for a long time in the registration centers.

The distance between registration center and the applicants' location was very long and during the inter-person interviews with some of the applicants, they complained about this point. They said, "If it was to be done at once, so we wouldn't have any problem, but going to registration centers many times was in fact difficult for us (Sayed Nizam Mosque Center)."

But the local elders solved this problem in Yakw Lang district, as they had a schedule for each family, so that they come once by turn with all the members of their family and avoid from coming and going many times.

Internal Arrangements of the Registration Centers:

The Registration Centers also had some internal problems.

At first, some of the registration centers were located in very narrow and restricted places, e.g. Wazir Akbar Khan Mosque, which was meanwhile restricted for performance of employees and monitors while monitoring as well as the applicants had to register themselves individually.

Covering a part of center with veils and making it a special place for women registration, had been clearly mentioned in the procedures and is also part of our customs, but didn't exist in some of centers at all, and wherever it exist was not prepared by the centers but they had asked the people to do so. Although the people had brought different low quality curtains from their homes, they were not able to properly make a proposed and concealed place for women registration.

The line controllers, who had to arrange the applicants during the registration and provide a proper shape of procedures for receiving the families and individual people, was actually not seen in some of the registration centers, which resulted in disorders and disarrangement in these centers.

Lack of identification cards, was one of the other problems, that exist during the arrangement activities and was contradictory to the mentioned procedures, because it was necessary that lots of the employees should haven been known to the unemployed people.

Start and End of Daily Proceedings of the Registration Centers:

At first we should say that, the official start of process at 15 June in all fields was not actually well coordinated, because the reports received by Foundation at first day, showed that the process started in Yakaw Lang at 16th July, while in Bati Koot all centers didn't start their works meanwhile.

As far as the daily proceedings of the process is concerned, it was mentioned in procedures to start the process on 8:00am and finish it in accordance to the enforced method of previous election process, but as it was seen that, the process started later than 8:00 am due to transferring the equipments from a secure location to centers.

The end of the daily proceedings of the process was similar to the election procedures. The voting was for one day, so we should have provided the people, waiting for voting in the lines a chance in voting, while in registration method we should have followed the official timing till 4:00 pm, because this process was for a longer time and was exhausting for employees during the day as well as to the people, waiting in the lines. It should have been discussed with elders for a better resolution, or should have been implemented in accordance to the schedules, implemented in Yakaw Lang district.

It should be mentioned that, the people also expected for delay in the process, during the weekends and official holidays, while the process was normally kept on during the holiday of the Ahmad Shah Masood, Death day, which disappointed the people.

Recruitment and Awareness of the Employees:

A – Recruitment of the Center Employees:

Since, during the implementation of this program, two institutions (Independent Election Commission and Ministry of Interior) participated, therefore a part of the employees were consisted of the permanent staff of election commission and the other part was consisted of new recruited people. The new staff should have been recruited through a free competition, considering their working ability, commitment and background, while it was not considered to be accomplished so.

The gender issues were also not seriously considered during the recruitment of employees; however it had critical importance in accordance to the customs of Afghanistan. And this is one of the reasons for the non-participation of women in Bati Koot district of Nangarhar. Even in some areas it was seen that, when the women found that men take their pictures so they left the centers and warned that, they would not register, unless there are female centers for them.

B-Awareness of the Registration Centers' Employees:

Regarding the awareness and understanding of the employees we should say that, the employees should have completed a long training, so that they were well informed about all the relevant tasks within the process, and later, their performance should have been evaluated. In general, they should have completed a weak practical performance and then moved towards the centers, while it was seen during the program that, some of the employees, particularly those who have been recruited through Ministry of Interior complained about the complication and lack of training time. As, it was vividly noted during and at the start of the process that, the employees didn't know about their tasks. At the start of the process, they couldn't solve their problems, despite having an IT expert. At first, the employees registered an applicant from 15 to 16 minutes, while it decreased to 5 minutes later. But as far as registrations with pens are concerned, they didn't need much training, because they only filled pre made forms.

On the other hand, the employees were very slow with typing, and also made some mistakes, while taking the eye picture, which is also to be considered as main factors for delaying the registration process.

Some of the employees had lots spelling mistakes in writing, most of them made these mistakes even in writing the applicants names. The editors also didn't care to this issue, which resulted in coming of the applicants for the second time, after one or two days for criticize.

In some occasions the employees, left their tasks, and forced the applicants to send their ladies to the registration centers, while this issue should have been also explained to them as a need. This issue shows the weakness of employees' awareness, which was against the procedures, because in procedures, the employees had special responsibilities and this was not mentioned in any of employee's terms.

The participation of employees was also disarranged in some of the centers, in some occasions, it was seen that, the supervisor has left the center without selecting any other acting supervisor, or in some centers the line controller, or registration assistant were not present on the site. It should be mentioned that, in some of the centers, the non-existence of an employee has caused lots of people to not register themselves. For example in Bati Koot district, due to absent of a female employee who had gone to follow her private works, the female applicants, dissuaded from registration and returned to their homes.

Existence of Monitors:

As the mentioned process was a pilot process, therefore the existence of monitors particularly the international monitors was very essential, because their experiences, assessments and amendment suggestions were considered to be very vital for the start of the general process. But it was seen that there were no special attention paid in this regard. Only the Free and Fair Election Commission monitored the process in a systematic and permanent ways as an internal institution. The occasional presence of Youth Rights Support Association, AWIC and some of other institutions has been also occasionally observed, while monitoring.

From the International Monitors the IFS Institution is observed for occasional monitoring of the process.

Media participation and coverage has been also considered to be weak. Only Shamshad TV, National TV of Nangarhar in Bati Koot and Tamadun TV in Sayed Nizam Mosque were seen once, while preparing a news shot.

The participation of radios was also to be considered weak during the process.

Technical Problems of the Process:

1. Computer Process:

1.1 Database:

One of the factors delaying the registration of the applicants was a sequence of problems, faced by database. It means that:

- Using some Farsi (Irani) expressions in database.
- Issue of country selection
- Not including the districts list in database.
- Using English letters for abbreviations in some cases, e.g. letter F for family, which made the data entry officer to change its computer language from Dari to English and select the letter and then changed it back to Dari. The serial numbers were also noted to be in English.
- Not including the blood group in database.
- The other problems were the expectation of different documents for identification. These documents included the date and place of issue, but some of the documents didn't have date of issue, so the database did not accept them, thus it caused to ignore the recorded memory of the database and involve the employee in a confusion.

1.2 Computer:

- Using computers from the previous election processes till now, for 4 years.
- Load of database on the speed of computers
- Lack of cartridges for printers. In some occasions it also resulted in long delay of the process (Bamyan). Besides this the computers were out of work for some times, which caused to take the documents in a laptop and take it to market for print. There were also confusion, while purchasing and sending cartridges, e.g. a printer needed (cartridge No # 11), but the (cartridge No # 42) was sent.

1.3 Eye Cameras (used for shooting eyes):

- Were a new system and the employees, especially female employees were unaware and unable to use it.

- Lack of camera stands in some of the centers, which resulted in failure of the employees to observe the distance between eyes and camera properly, while considering the top and low limits of distance.
- The shortness of the cables, used for connecting the camera to computer. This was also one of the problems, which was felt while preparing a private center for women in Bati Koot district, as due to the shortness of the cable for connecting camera and computer, the responsible, had to register men and ladies at the same center. And that was the reason for the less participation of women in the mentioned district, until the provision of cable.
- Preparation of camera within 10 seconds or some time delaying for longer time also caused the applicants to move their eyes or eyelashes, while taking picture; therefore the employees had to take several pictures.
- Lack of camera chargers, which is considered to be vital equipment, keeping active the camera, was also a notable problem in this regard. Lack of a charger in Bati Koot districts, which was out of work due to generator shock, also delayed the process.

1.4

Electronic Generators:

- The disability of generators for supporting enough electricity was also a problem that occasionally or continuously caused delay in the process. In some cases due to the failure of power the equipments got out of work, which needed a long time to be set up.
- Using low quality oil. (According to the saying of the some center in charges), also caused generators to get out of work.
- Lack of the common spare parts of the generators has also resulted in long delay of process; even there were need for a small or a common part of generator. For example, in Bamyan due to the disorder of an electronic plug, the process was postponed for more than a week, which was ordered to purchase in Kabul.
- Most engagement of the IT Officer, assigned for repairing the equipments. As it was seen, he had the responsibility of repairing all technical equipments (computers, database, camera and...) in all three areas of pilot registration. As per the problems exist in the fields, the existence of only one IT is not considered to be enough, because he mostly wasted his time while going from one center to other, and some times instructing the non professional staff on the phone.

2. Pen Registration System:

The problems observed on this field were due to no being an electronic system and had relative difference with electronic system. Despite this, the problems that have been observed with this system are as following:

- As witnessed, there were some problems with preparations and sending of the registration forms e.g. in Bati Koot an area was had Pashtun people, the form sent were in Dari. The employees told them about their problems, but the people didn't believed. Or it is seen that, the first page of form was Dari and the second was in Pashto, this way continued till the last page.
- This system took a long time for registration. From one side due to the load of lots of forms and on the other hand registering people with pen. As it was assessed in one of the fields that, four employees were able to register 120 people in one day, while in computer system, particularly in the last days of the process, one employee registered more than 800 people.
- Limited recordings of identification documents in registration forms. Despite the stipulation of these provisions in 17 cases in both parts (A&B) of procedures, the forms still indicated them in only 8 cases, and the available documents of the people have been ignored, e.g. the governmental employees' card or vote card.
- There have been also some repeated errors or shortages in form.
- The lack of facilities to charge the cameras' batteries as well as lack of batteries with employees. There was also need to have bought calculators together with these equipments for identifying the ages of some applicants during the crowd, because the employees also faced problems in this regard.
- Week protection system of the CDs, which were used for copping the photos of the applicants. As it was seen that many days' photos were copied to the CDs. It should have been considered that, what could have been done if the photos of the applicants were out of use, due to a small defect or crush to CDs?

Problems of Employees of the Registration Centers:

It should be mentioned that, the employees also faced some problems while carrying out the program. They mostly complained about the following:

1. They were not convinced with the ability of electronic equipments (computer, camera, generator and...). The said, "it was the incapability of equipments, which resulted in complains of people and bothered them as well as caused delay in process." They claimed that, most of delay in the process was due to the improper works of electronic equipments and very much engagement of IT.
2. The employees also complained about the transportations. This issue specifically troubled the employees in Nangarhar province; even the employees used horse carts.
3. The employees also complained about their foods. They said, they didn't have enough financial ability to pay for food from their own money, besides that they didn't have enough time for it.

4. A number of employees also complained about the limited and improper condition of the registration centers.

Participation and Interest of the People in the Process:

We should say that, despite the facts of improper implementation of the process, selection of inappropriate locations for some of the centers, unsatisfactory security situation for proceeding of the process, limited possibilities of implementation condition being as a pilot process and...the participation of the people is considered to be very much positive. Even at the start there were no more people, but later there were a large number of people. The reasons for this could be as following:

- Awareness of people about the importance of the process.
- Residents' Encouragement by tribal and local elders for participation.
- Changes and transfer of registration centers.
- Awareness of the people about the female employees in the process.

We should say that, from the assessments accomplished by Foundation, the people were much interested in the computerized registration, because they thought that it was as the system, which prevent from fake and is an impressive factor for preventing the repeated votes. While in the fields where the pen system was used, the people were not convinced and considered it as a false system.

We should also say when the people referred for registration, they expected to get a new document as identification cards, but when they were distributed with forms, so they did not showed much interest and the forms did not worth to them.

As far as the participation of the people is concerned, we should say that, it could be extracted as, the Childs in first category; men in second, while the women come on third.

It should be mentioned that, there were considerable participation from women in tenth sector of Kabul and Yakaw Lang district of Bamyān province. But in Bati Koot district of Nangarhar, due to the reasons of regional and tribal restrictions on women and from the other hand lack of separate centers for females as well as female employees, who should have helped the females with their registrations, the women participated in smaller number.

But generally, the problems felt during both systems of the pilot registration process, were the mistakes made regarding age issues. It means that, all male and female applicants, who aged to 7 years, were registered in children category, and the elders were registered in the category of man and woman, while we have a specific age to differentiate the adults and non-adults, and it is better to use it. This way, the unqualified people (very young Childs and crazies) could also be properly distinguished.

A Glance on the Comments and Suggestions of People Regarding the Pilot Process of Birth and Death Registration

During the continuous monitoring of the Birth and Death Registration Process, Foundation also committed a series of inter-person interviews with the respondents and residents of these three areas, whose important comments could be précised as following:

1. The process responsible should have a serious and multi aspect study of the area, before selecting and locating their registration centers and should have focused more on the access of the people to the registration centers. The different seasons of the year has also got a vital role in the selection of the registration centers, while implementing it, because the people arrange their working programs according to the different seasons of the year. Even in some areas this issue results in commuting and living from one place to other (Yakw Lang), or in Bati Koot due to much hot.

The people also suggested that, the responsible should give more importance to consulting with the tribal elders in this regard, and should avoid from locating their centers in the personal properties of the people.

Regarding the registration centers for women, they suggested, to have separated centers for women or the procedures of taking photos should be optional for women, instead of taking their photos; their thumbs should be used for stumping wherever it is necessary.

The people also more insisted on establishing several registration centers and mobile teams, so that they are deployed in accordance to the prepared plan in different areas of the districts, with prior awareness to the people, which indeed will solve the proper access of the people to the registration centers.

2. Security establishment is one of the essential conditions for the proceeding of the process, therefore; there should be more serious efforts made in the future for establishing the security. Effort should be made, to firstly assign the security in charges; the local resident should be paid for their cooperation in establishing the security in centers' sites. In the meantime the people suggested selecting the

public and social areas as centers for solving these problems, because in (Bati Koot), the selected areas have experienced these problems.

3. There should be more efforts made regarding the implementation of the actual public awareness, which is one of the main issues for encouraging the people to participate in the process. It should have enough time to be completed. The people claimed that, the public awareness programs could not be properly completed, by selecting just two multipliers, but there should be some comprehensive campaigns in regard, whether they are through Medias or it is through the multipliers teams from both women and men.

The process should be introduced to the people in its actual nature, giving more importance to it. Finally the people should be encouraged for active participation.

In Bati Koot district the people suggested that, the general process should be implemented in each district in assistance to the local shuras, volunteer teams of people, including tribal elders, religious clerics and broad minded people as multipliers., this issue from one hand will accelerate the process and from the other hand, these people will have much impressive role in encouraging the people, especially women. A number of them also suggested that, while conducting the public awareness campaigns for the implementation of the program, small gifts should be considered for women, so that are more encouraged for participation. They claimed that, when the people pass the immigrants repatriation process, which also needs taking, photos of women; but they don't mind it due to the reason of their poverty.

4. The people also suggested that, the general official holidays should be respected during the implementation of the process. They mentioned of the holiday, allocated for the death of Ahmad Shah Masood, when, on one hand, the governmental and non-governmental institutions celebrated this day through official and non-official arrangements, and on the other hand, the process was kept on as it's usual and daily on goings. They said, "It could have resulted in serious reaction between the peoples."
5. There should be a great understanding between the local elders and registration in charges, so that they are jointly able to seek the proper ways of implementation the process and make more efforts in this regard.
6. Besides the logistical supports of the process, the in charges should also care to the preparation of the other requirements of their employees; avoid putting pressure on those people, whose personal properties or homes are selected as centers to make foods for employees. Because during the process they had to do so, due to their customs and culture. It is better to deal with this issue by the in charges themselves in the future.

7. The people also complained that, making database and email systems shouldn't have been assigned to a Pakistani, because there were lots of confidential data, which could be revealed by him for their own benefits. They suggested to have made the database by an Afghan citizen.

Suggestions:

In accordance to the findings of impartial monitoring, which was conducted for pilot process in all three areas (Bati Koot, Yakw Lang districts and tenth sector of Kabul), the Free and Fair Election Foundation consider that it necessary to make use of these learning during the implementation of the actual process. Therefore it suggests the following points:

1. Registration System:

Choosing the computerized system from the two systems (computerize and manual), because this system is considered to be credible and modern as well as prevents from fake.

2. Public Awareness:

One of the ways to increase in the participation of the people in the registration process is to properly implement the public awareness campaigns.

Therefore, the important things to implement public awareness is to have better implementing methods; such as, conducting public awareness through multi media, particularly sound multi media or radios while implementing the process, and it is necessary to pay more attention for selecting the radios, which is mostly accessible to the local people, because forecasting the public awareness through national radios would only cover those people, who lives in the cities. Conducting public awareness through mobile teams in rural areas is also one of the other effective methods, which would need for the ability of the trainers to inform the people in their own local languages. Conducting public awareness through local Mullahs and elders could also affect on the participation of the people, particularly the women in the mentioned areas.

Identification of Locations for Centers:

Identifying locations for centers in areas, especially rural areas, needs more considerations. As it is necessary to first of all, gain enough information about the areas, which are going to be selected for the establishment of centers or their transfer at later, through the local elders, religious clerics and local governmental officials.

Secondly, the specific criteria, which ensure the access of the people, especially women as well as don't cause hostility between the local people, should be anticipated and used as procedures for selecting the locations of the centers.

There is also need for great consideration, while locating the centers in rural areas. In addition to the accessibility of people to the centers, there should be also consideration about the local oppositions between the people. The registration

centers should be located in the places in public areas between the different villages and don't cause hostility among the people such as; clinics or health centers, schools or Madrasas, governmental institutions and general mosques, because there are different mosques in the villages, which are owned by the people of relevant village, while the other villagers don't accept them as public properties. As it was learnt, a center, which was established in a property of one village or a local elder, is not respected by the other villagers and local elders thus most of them don't come for registration. Similarly, transferring a center from one village to another also causes in arguments between the people. So it is better, to priory identify the transfer locations for the centers in the program, so that to have general agreement, while transferring the center and avoid causing any quarrel between the people.

The Equipments Used throughout the Program:

The quality and working ability of equipments particularly used in the computer system, was one of the factors, which had direct impacts on the program.

Most of delays caused in the program, were due to the quality and working capability of these equipments. Therefore if we are going to select the computer system in our general process, it is necessary to consider the quality and working capacity of the equipments.

Computer:

New computers would have considerable impacts on the working capability, speedy activities and fewer disorders, as well as could have handle properly the load of database.

Eye Cameras (used for shooting eyes):

This equipment could also be more useful, having its stand with, and having extra chargers, would secure them from the technical disorders, as failure in electronic systems of generators.

Printer:

The active and capable printers mostly depend on cartridges, while the lack of cartridges would not only delay the printers but it would generally delay the whole program. Therefore; every printer should have enough extra cartridges with, so that to support the program in its better way.

Generators:

Generators were the important equipments of this program, to which the other equipments depended. While inactiveness of this equipment put negative impacts on the program in some areas therefore; it is necessary to be more attentive in selection of this equipment and purchase new types of them, which have better capacity for creating electronic power. The existence of the essential spare parts in the centers could also ensure its activeness.

Besides attention to better working capacity of the equipments, it is also necessary to properly train the employees, who would have to use these equipments before starting the real program; particularly training of female employees would have positive impacts on the acceleration of the program.

The other important issue, which could help in proper working of the equipments, is the sustainable and active presence of the IT officer in the center, because his presence would prevent from wastage of time, while repairing and arranging the equipments.

Working Ability of the Executive Employees:

The another issue, which could ensure the proper and on time activities of the employees during the implementation of the process, is having enough working capacity of the employees for proceeding the program, which is much linked with the trainings given to the employees before the start of the program. As in the computer system, which depends mostly on use of the equipments, the success and acceleration of the program and on the other hand more participation, depends on the ability of employees, particularly (female employees using the equipments such as computers, cameras and etc).

Participation of Women in the Program:

The issues, which could increase the participation of women in the program, are related to the other parts of this program. First issue is the implementation of public awareness through effective methods and sources, in accordance with current values and customs of the local areas. The second concerned issue could be considered from three aspects, first aspect, establishing female registration centers beside male centers, second aspect, and existence of a mobile center in each district, which has enough speed in performance and transfer of a center from one area to another area. And third aspect is, the active presence and participation of female employees, specifically with camera and computer works, which could be shared within each center, because most of women have been prevented from registration due to the non-existence of female employees in these fields.

The other issue, which could strengthen the participation of women in the jointly established centers, is to establish proper and veiled places (covered with veils and other possible necessities) using it for the registration and waiting of women in the centers. As most of the rural areas, where the men are decision makers, believe in this and consider it necessary for women participation.

Besides these issues, another issue, which could effect on the participation of women, is way of identifying places for centers. The locations of the centers should be considered from both aspects its distance and avoid the factors, which could rise quarrel between the local people. And should be located in the places,

where it ensure the access of women, because the experiences from pilot process shows that, during such quarrels firstly the women are prevented from registration.

Introduction of Monitoring Program from Pilot Registration Process:

1. Recruitment of Monitors:

As the Free and Fair Election Foundation considers itself as a powerful supporter of democratic processes in Afghanistan, was keen interested to actively and impartially monitor the Pilot Process of Registration. Therefore, it repeatedly met the officials of the Council of Election Commission and asked them for cooperation. For active and impartial monitoring of the Pilot Process, Foundation asked the Election Commission to draft on time plan and enforced procedures of the process, so that to prepare it's on time plans and monitoring activities accordingly.

But unfortunately, Foundation received the information very closed to the start of the process, and fortunately, with having experiences in respect to monitoring the previous elections, especially the voter registration process and active force of volunteers, it was successful to assign its monitors on time, while considering their gender and working capability.

2. Training of Monitors:

However the Foundation was in a much-closed situation to the start of the process, it could prepare the training materials, which was very effective for a regular and sustainable reporting system of the process. Despite facing number of problems, it was still able to deploy its provincial trainees to the Independent Election Commission in order to participate in the workshops.

It also equipped and prepared its provincial trainers, using the approved procedures of the election office and the materials prepared by it.

These trainings were regarding to the following issues:

- General information about the importance and necessity of the process, its goal, practical plan, timeline, project implementation, implementation and the targeted areas.
- Necessary materials of the process, including the sensitive and indifferent materials.

- The number of employees in each center, together with the information about their terms of reference.
- Familiarize them about the problems and possible deficiencies.
- Responsibilities and rights of the monitors, together with their role in the process, as well as the way they should behave with employees, applicants and other.
- Report writing and sending of the process.
- Other necessary and relevant information.

It should be mentioned that, the monitors considered the following information during both systems (computerize and pen systems).

3. Recruitment of Monitors:

After the completion of the training, Foundation recruited about 16 volunteer male and female employees to monitor the process both (computerize and pen systems).

The monitoring started on 15th July and ended on 12 September.

A team from the central office has several times visited the centers and controlled the monitors. They also monitored the practical proceedings of the process, during their visits and discussed the problems with the center in charges.