



Inclusive Electoral Literacy Through Informal Educational Channels

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Afghanistan



Afghanistan

- **Afghanistan**, officially the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, is a landlocked country located within South Asia and Central Asia.
- **Population:** Afghanistan has a population of approximately 32 million.
- **Neighbors:** Afghanistan is bordered by Pakistan in the south and east; Iran in the west; Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan in the north; and China in the far northeast.
- **Literacy Rate:** Afghanistan has one of the most illiterate population of the world. Only 40% of population is literate.
- **Security:** Afghanistan has been engaged in civil war for about four decades and more than half of the population is living in unsecured areas.
- **Eligible voters:** about 12 million people are eligible to vote.



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Independent Election Commission (IEC)

The Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan was established in 2006 according to the article 156 of the Constitution of the country:

IEC shall be established to administer and supervise every kind of election as well as *refer to general public opinion of the people* in accordance with the provision of the law.

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Overview IEC Public Outreach Department

The Department of Public Outreach at the IEC is responsible for:

- Planning, implementing and monitoring of voter information campaigns;
- Preparation and development of the voter information and electoral procedural materials;
- Electoral education;
- Coordination of the voter information activities with government agencies and non-government organizations (national process);
- Monitoring of voter information activities.

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History of Elections in Afghanistan

However, Election has started in 1960s in Afghanistan, but due to civil war it became stopped till the end of the Taliban regime: During last 12 years, we had three elections with different turnouts as bellow:

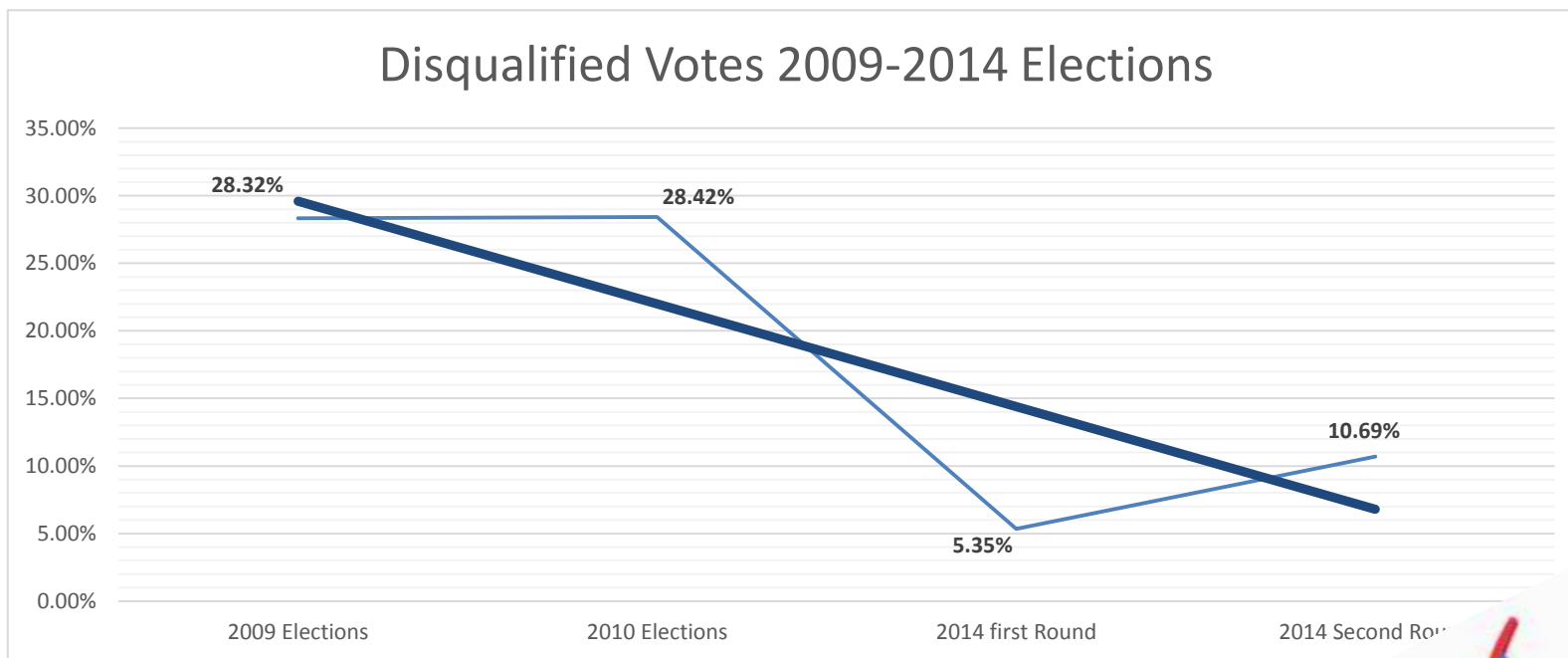
- In 2004, the final voter turnout was **7,364,000**
- In 2009 the final voter turnout was **4,059,069**
- In 2014 the final voter turnout was **6,443,155**

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Trends of disqualified votes

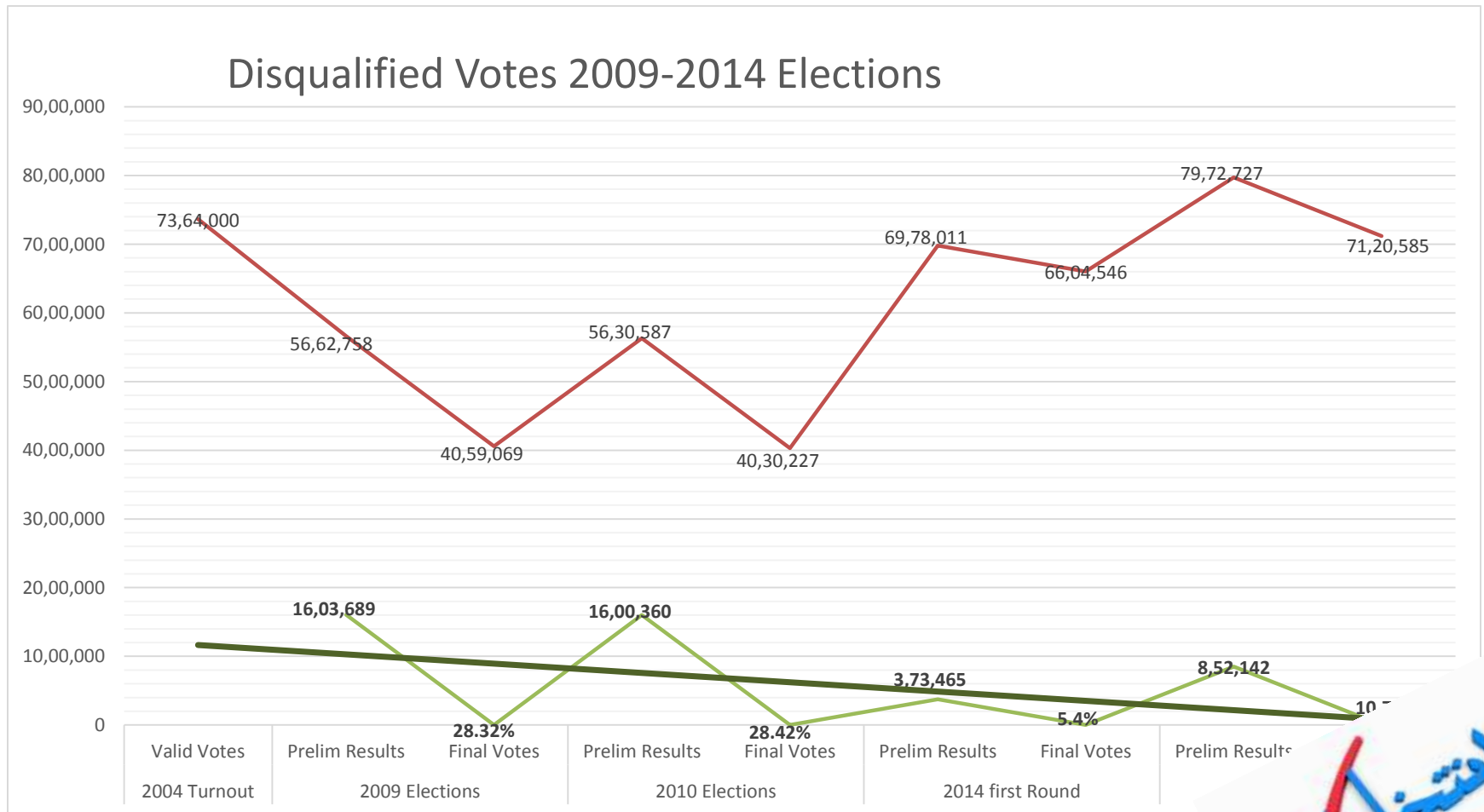
Fortunately, we had a good promotion in decreasing disqualified votes, as shown by following figures.



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Disqualified Votes 2009-2014





Background: Electoral Literacy Through Informal Education

Informal Education Remains the Preferred Method of Voter Education in Afghanistan, because of:

- security challenges;
- Strong tribal structure;
- Influential religious networks;
- Cultural limitations for reaching key target audiences.





Direct Methods(1): Elections

1,450 Civic/Voter Educators deployed (31 percent female), sharing printed communication materials

Distribution of:

- 2,200,000 leaflets;
- 1,100,000 brochures;
- 1,300,000 sample ballots ;
- 406,000 mock ballots;
- 2,200,000 posters;
- 2,200,000 stickers;
- 1,700 flip charts;
- 1,700 flip chart manuals;
- 350 banners;
- 200,000 pocket calendars;
- 2,200,000 fact sheets.



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Direct Methods (2): (continued)

برای دریافت معلومات راجع به ثبت
نام رأی دهنده گان به شماره رایگان
۱۹۰ تماس بگیرید!

۱۹۰
شماره معلوماتی رایگان

- mobile theatre performances conducted
- Elections Toll Free Call Centre (No 190)
Approximately 6,929 hours of toll-free access
to a voter information hotline





Direct Methods (3) (Continued)

- holding seminars in all provinces;
- coordination meetings with CSOs



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Indirect Methods

- 30 radio PSAs in Dari and Pashto, broadcast through 47 regional and 3 national stations



- 20 television PSAs in Dari and Pashto, broadcast through 23 national and 7 regional stations
- 10,000 pole signs (*elections*)
- 851 billboards (*elections*)





Outcomes

- IEC call centre operators responded to approximately 2 million calls, from 16 July 2013 to Dec. 2014
- Civic/Voter Educators reached an estimated 6.6 million people
- 68 mobile theatre performances – an estimated total reached 40,800 (8,030 women)
- Estimated 8.4 million reached through televised PSAs
- Estimated 16.7 million people reached through radio PSAs

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Outcome *(continued)*

- *increased* turnout;
- Increased female participation;
- *According to our survey, 82% of Afghans* continue to consider elections to be a “good thing”.

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Challenges

- Geography (mountains & cold weather)
- Ethnic and linguistic diversity
- Security
- Cultural barriers to reaching key target audiences (i.e., women)

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Thank You

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