

Annex G

(Public)

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Afghan Capacity Building Organization

Website

Not available

Description of Mandate and Work

Afghan Capacity Building Organization (“ACBO”) is an organization based in Afghanistan, was founded in 2007, and serves the provinces of Parwan, Jalalabad, and Kabul. ACBO works toward an Afghanistan where the men, women and children of Afghanistan have access to educational opportunities and are able to take an active role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. ABCO works on literacy and vocational advances in Afghanistan. ACBO achieves its mission by making available professional services to the Afghan people through transparent and equitable processes.

ACBO believes that the investigation into war crimes in Afghanistan by the ICC needs to be opened. Afghanistan is a nation ravaged by war, and needs closure. Afghans need to know what crimes were committed and by whom so that Afghan society can move forward.

The decision to not advance the investigation is a blow to civil society in Afghanistan and makes civil society weaker because the issues are not being addressed in Afghanistan and now civil society also appears to no longer have the support of the international community either.

An investigation would be good for justice in Afghanistan. An investigation would help shed light and make open and clear what has taken place in Afghanistan so that it cannot be hidden by those in power for their own purposes any longer.

Afghanistan Forensic Science Organization

Website <http://www.fso.org.af/>

Description of Mandate and Work

The Afghanistan Forensic Science Organization (“AFSO”) is an independent, non-governmental and non-profit organization founded in 2011 to promote the use of forensic science in Afghanistan. AFSO is a multidisciplinary team of 23 professionals including police, forensic medical doctors, prosecutors, archaeologists and human rights investigators, trained and mentored since its inception by Nobel Peace Laureate Physicians for Human Rights. AFSO is mainly working on mass graves in Afghanistan. AFSO works on prevention of torture, evaluating forensic departments, conducting forensic clinic at Gawharshad Institute of Higher Education, and on evaluation of forensic evidence in Kabul primary court.

AFSO is the only dedicated forensic science organization in Afghanistan and regularly conducts awareness raising workshops throughout Afghanistan’s provinces with a range of stakeholders including police, prosecutors, judges, lawyers, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (“AIHRC”), civil society activists and universities with a focus on forensic anthropology (mass grave documentation) including identification, registration, protection and exhumation. It’s also working on documentation of torture and the lack of science behind hymen and anal testing.

Highlights of AFSO’s work include the identification, documentation, registration and protection of twenty mass graves in several provinces of Afghanistan, developing and implementing Afghanistan’s first (and only) forensic science university curriculum, conducting forensic clinic in Gawharshad, one of the private University based in Kabul, implementing Afghanistan’s first Istanbul Protocol trainings on the medical documentation of torture and conducting training for human rights defenders, forensic staff, member of Detention Working Group. Furthermore, AFSO professionally and technically worked on drafting preventing torture law.

AFSO extensively worked on trial monitoring, providing independent expert opinion, training and guidance of victims on filling and submissions of representation forms (VRF), and advocating for an end to hymen testing in so-called moral crimes cases.

AFSO advocates for and supports war victims of Afghanistan in national and international fora. In relationship to outreach on the ICC matter, AFSO conducted capacity building programs on: manual development regarding ICC; conducted

workshop with the cooperation of Bar Association for defense lawyers in Kabul and provinces; conducted workshop for war victims with the cooperation of the Transitional Justice Coordination Group (“TJCG”) in Kabul and provinces, provided guidance and instructions for defense lawyers and victims’ families, trained them on how to submit their complains and how to fill out the complaint forms; advocated for war victims along with the TJCG in Kabul and Hague; and AFSO with the cooperation of Feminine Solidarity for Justice Organization and Peace Village organization has taken the responsibility of the TJCG’s secretariat since July 2018, developed a six month action plan, organized monthly meetings, and participated in different meetings with national and international organizations.

Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organization

Website <http://www.ahrdo.org>

Description of Mandate and Work

The Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organization (“AHRDO”) was founded in 2009. The Organization aims to improve the human rights of Afghan citizens, contribute to the country’s democratic development, promote understanding and compliance with international humanitarian law in situations of armed conflict, design cultural and artistic initiatives to foster inter-ethnic and inter-community peace and communication, and develop public memory and recollection of millions of war victims as an antidote to the deep-seated culture of impunity and the profoundly ingrained ethos of war and violence in the country.

AHRDO has implemented over 100 projects across the country with more than 100,000 direct and indirect beneficiaries. A handful of the projects are as follows.

AHRDO has focused its work on the protection of human rights of the most vulnerable groups in Afghan society: women, civilians in conflict situations and war victims. As such, AHRDO implemented a project with women in local communities complemented/supported by comprehensive archival research in 2012. The outcome of the project was as a policy report, “Afghan Women After the Taliban: Will History Repeat itself?”, which outlined the major fragility women’s rights could face in a post-security transition environment. Building on the outcome of this project, in 2014, AHRDO implemented another project, “Afghan women in the Eyes of Men: Tackling Structural Causes of Women’s Rights Problem in Afghanistan.” In 2016, AHRDO undertook the project of the “Scar of Wars: Images of the Afghan Anatomy”, documenting, photographing and visualizing the wounds and injuries of Afghan civilians in the wake of bombardment by the international and Afghan security forces and the increasing Taliban suicide attacks. The project revealed the unimagined scale of devastation and offered an opportunity to discuss the toll the war has imposed on Afghans. In 2017 AHRDO produced an Action Plan for Afghan Civil Society attempting to structure its collaboration with the International Criminal Court (“ICC”) in order to assist the ICC in investigating post-2003 crimes in Afghanistan.

In February 2019, AHRDO unveiled its initiative – the *Afghanistan Centre for Memory and Dialogue*. The project was launched in 2011 in order to collect, protect, and share memories and oral histories of Afghan war victims, and foster a policy of remembrance of Afghan war victims. Project participants created Memory Boxes. Through facilitated

workshops, the survivors—family members and relatives of the war victims—constructed metal and wooden boxes with the technical assistance of AHRDO, collected personal objects and stories of the war victims and deposited them in the Memory Boxes. This memorialization work, over the course of 8 years has led to the construction of hundreds of Memory Boxes with more than 4,000 personal objects and collection of hundreds of stories and thousands of Afghan war victims’ names and personal details. The New York Times profiled this project in April 2019. See David Zucchino & Fatima Faizi, *‘Memory Boxes’ Offer Poignant Reminders of Afghan Lives Lost to Violence*, New York Times, April 17, 2019, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/17/world/asia/kabul-afghanistan-memory-boxes.html>.

AHRDO organizes regular programs where Afghan victims of war can speak out publicly about their experiences. These programs called “Victims Public Hearing”. A video of the efforts around the Memory Boxes and speak out events can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMhShk4ROYo>. The Executive Director of AHRDO also did a TED talk on the subject, which can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLAX_R_cM4o.

In 2011, AHRDO introduced the “Legislative Theatre” methodology to Afghanistan to encourage and foster participation of local communities in legislative processes. The project involved informing local communities about post-Taliban legislative developments, canvassing local perspectives, understandings, and concerns on the legislative gaps and priorities as well as communicating them to Afghanistan’s National Assembly. Since then, the methodology has been used in several projects to help empower, mobilize and organize local communities to realize, exercise, and engage with their democratic rights.

In 2012, AHRDO established the War Victims Councils in different provinces to help war victims organize themselves into networks, voice their demands and deliver them to state and non-state actors.

In 2015-16, AHRDO undertook the initiative: “From I through We to Community”, to de-escalate tensions between ethnic communities and help build a more sustainable peace among ethnic groups at the grassroots levels. In 2012, AHRDO, initiated the project of Afghan Women Young Leaders, creating a network of Afghan girls and providing them with leadership training as part of its broader civil society development intervention.

In relationship to outreach on the ICC matter, AHRDO conducted a workshop for journalists from Kabul and provinces before the Article 15 process started. The objective was to educate and sensitize journalists to properly report on the ICC. AHRDO received a grant and provided financial support to Civil Society and Human Rights Network,

Afghanistan Civil Society Forum, Arman Shahr/Open Asia, and Feminine Solidarity for Justice Organization to travel to provinces to help victims to make representations to the ICC. As part of this effort, AHDRO brought 28 victims from Kandahar, Zabul, Helmand, Logar, Ghor, Bamyan and Maidan Wardak to Kabul and supported them to make representations. AHRDO played the leading role in the Article 15 process. AHRDO produced two documents for transitional justice groups in Afghanistan on guiding them through the Article 15 process.

Afghan Human Rights Organization

Website

Not available

Description of Mandate and Work

The Afghan Human Rights Organization (“AHRO”) is a non-governmental, non-political, independent humanitarian organization founded in May 1997 to promote and protect the human rights of citizens of Afghanistan, to raise awareness of human rights violations, and to promote an improved human rights situation in Afghanistan in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in accordance with the rule of law, and in accordance with good governance.

AHRO works to support human rights in Afghanistan by focusing on providing legal aid and direct services to victims and potential victims of abuse, increasing public awareness of legal rights, implementing advocacy campaigns on behalf of detainees and prisoners, and increasing access to justice of vulnerable and marginalized Afghans. AHRO serves communities across Afghanistan and provides legal aid and services in several provinces in Afghanistan.

In relationship to outreach on the ICC matter, as a leading human rights organization in Afghanistan, AHRO has been working with other Afghan civil society organizations to conduct public awareness and outreach to potential victims of war crimes in Afghanistan for the purposes of submitting representations to the ICC for the investigation into war crimes in Afghanistan. AHRO has engaged in social media campaigns to raise awareness about the ICC submission procedures and processes, increase knowledge about the benefits of reporting, and support victims and their families in the submission process.

Afghanistan Organization for Research and Advocacy

Website Not available

Description of Mandate and Work

Afghanistan Organization for Research and Advocacy (“AORA”) is an organization based in Afghanistan and founded in 2017 in Kabul. AORA seeks to keep the Afghan government accountable and responsive through research and advocacy. AORA accomplishes this goal of by advocating for rule of law and policy commitments, advocating for inclusiveness of all Afghans, and advocating for the Afghan government complying with Afghanistan’s international human rights commitments.

AORA works on human rights issues and has reported concerns regarding war crimes to the AIHRC. AORA does research and reporting regarding human rights abuses including war crimes.

AORA would be available to assist with future outreach to Afghan war victims and public awareness in relationship with any future ICC proceedings.

AORA believes that the ICC’s decision to not investigate war crimes in Afghanistan was wrong and is harmful for Afghanistan and Afghans. The ICC is an international independent body that could have uncovered truth regarding war crimes and potentially hold wrongful actors accountable. Even a true accounting of what has taken place and the validation of the crimes suffered would have helped stop future war crimes.

AORA’s goal is holding the government accountable to the people both in terms of its own committing of war crimes and also with regards to protecting victims, pursuing justice for victims, and holding those accountable for the war crimes they have committed. The ICC process is a good way to do that and to encourage justice in the future as the investigation and possible prosecutions would act as a deterrent to those who have committed such crimes with impunity. The Government of Afghanistan cannot address this issue and will not address this issue without pressure. Only an international body with independence and commitment to uncovering the truth behind the war crimes can make a difference.

AORA works towards sustainable peace and sustainable peace can only happen along with justice and an addressing of human rights abuses including war crimes that have been committed in Afghanistan.

Civil society must be part of the process of an investigation. AORA stands ready to assist Afghan war victims, and the ICC should the ICC re-open the investigation.

An investigation into war crimes in Afghanistan is crucial for justice in Afghanistan. There can be no justice without a true investigation and awareness of the crimes that have been committed, by whom, what their impact has been, and the victims and Afghan society have an opportunity to be heard. The ICC investigation would be particularly useful because they have the tools and ability to conduct thorough and complete technical research into the war crimes and related actions. They can provide Afghan society with a comprehensive record devoid of biases and prejudices.

Afghanistan Reconstruction and Civil Society Organization

Website

Not available

Description of Mandate and Work

Afghanistan Reconstruction and Civil Society Organization (“ARCSO”) is an organization based in Afghanistan and was founded in 2010 in Kabul, Afghanistan. ARCSO assists Afghans by empowering them through increasing skills and professional techniques, and helping to create jobs thereby positively affecting the economic realities of Afghan families.

ARCSO works on educating Afghan men, women and children around their legal rights and working on issues relating to child abuse. Many of the people ARCSO works with are victims of war or have family members who have suffered war crimes.

ARCSO believes that the decision of the ICC to not investigate war crimes in Afghanistan is wrong. Afghanistan needs this exact type of investigation by an independent international body with a strong reputation and resources to uncover the truth and then to let the world know about what Afghan people are going through and what crimes they have been subject to and are continually subject to due to the ongoing wars.

Afghanistan is a small, local civil society organization that is trying to do the best we can with the resources that we have. ARCSO constantly faces hurdles and roadblocks. The ICC could provide support to us and our work by opening an investigation, by using its resources and its power to actually get the voices of our people who have been so badly impacted by war and who suffer to this day. Without the assistance of international organs that are supposed to assist us, we cannot make real and lasting change.

An investigation by the ICC would be good for justice in Afghanistan. An investigation would not only be good but it is imperative that it is done if the international community actually cares to stop the suffering of Afghan war victims.

Afghan Victims' Families Association

Website <https://www.facebook.com/Afghanistan-Victims-Families-Association-365301696962072/>

Description of Mandate and Work

The Afghan Victims' Families Association ("AVFA") is a civil-legal, independent, non-political, non-affiliated, non-governmental, and a non-profit organization with its main offices in Kabul City. Every citizen of Afghanistan is entitled to join the Afghanistan Victims' Families Association without discrimination of any kind as to gender, ethnicity, language, religion, political opinion or ideology provided that the applicant is not implicated in committing the most serious international crimes. Observing the principles of the sacred religion of Islam and abiding by the established laws of the country, AVFA is committed to implementing the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international covenants ratified by Afghanistan.

The main objectives of AVFA are to:

- Raise awareness and mobilize public opinion to bring to justice those who have committed the most serious international crimes, namely crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide, torture, and rape in Afghanistan;
- Attempt to identify and reveal the identities of the persons who committed the most serious international crimes in Afghanistan after the 1357 Sawr Coup d'état;
- Collect and provide evidences and criminal records of those individuals implicated in gross violation of human rights in Afghanistan and present them to the justice and the judiciary system of Afghanistan in order to urge and assist them to file legal complaint against the accused;
- Implement transitional justice roadmap plan, prepared by AIHRC in Afghanistan;
- File legal complaints, on behalf of the victims, in national and international courts against person/s implicated in committing the most serious international crimes and gain support of the national and international organizations on this issue;
- Identify victims of the most serious international crimes;
- Compile a list of victims' names and present them to the public;
- Establish contacts and promote a common understanding among the families of the victims of the most serious international crimes in Afghanistan and develop a plan for the families to voice their shared call for justice;

- Coordinate and foster contacts among national and international human rights organizations to organize joint campaigns to call for justice in Afghanistan;
- Hold joint seminars and conferences with coordinating organizations to explore how to identify the perpetrators and bring them to justice;
- Try to establish a hybrid court, a judicial body composed of national and international judges and prosecutors, to prosecute individuals accused of committing the most serious international crimes in Afghanistan with support of the international community;
- Hold special ceremonies to commemorate the victims and individuals killed and executed in Afghanistan;
- Conduct a comprehensive tireless fight to revoke the “Amnesty Law” passed in Afghanistan;
- Obligate the government to identify mass graves throughout the country and preserve them as historic sites;
- Encourage the government to name streets, roads, schools, stadiums, and other public areas after the victims in various cities in the country and to build monuments to preserve their memories;
- Obligate the government to restore the dignity of the victims and pay reparation to their families;
- Urge the government to compile and release a complete list of disappeared prisoners during the pro-soviet Khalq and Parcham regime as soon as possible, with detailed information such as when they were arrested, what charges were brought against them, and where they were tried, executed and buried; and
- Work closely with civil society and victims to submit complaints to the ICC as part of the investigation into war crimes in Afghanistan.

Afghan Women Educational and Vocational Service Organization

Website <https://www.facebook.com/awevso.org/>

Description of Mandate and Work

Afghan Women Educational and Vocational Service Organization (“AWEVSO”) is an organization based in Afghanistan and was founded in 2010. AWEVSO is committed to reduction of poverty. AWEVSO seeks to support the most vulnerable members of Afghan society, in particular women, destitute children and poor households in Kabul, Kundoz, Samangan, Bamyan, Logar. AWEVSO works to help these communities build internal capacity thereby allowing them to take control of their lives. In an effort to pave way for a dignified and empowered community in Afghanistan, AWEVSO works to fight ignorance, illiteracy, disease and discrimination. AWEVSO seeks to advance child protection, and youth empowerment. AWEVSO is active in the following provinces of Afghanistan: Kabul, Badghis, Farah, Nemroz, Sar-e Pol, Jawzjan, Kunduz, Nooristan, Orozgan and Mazar.

At the local level, AWEVSO assists victims of war and advocates for protection of those victims and for the well-being of all Afghans from war and conflict. For example, AWEVSO housed 150 Afghans who were fleeing an attack from the Taliban at AWEVSO offices for 20 days.

AWEVSO believes that the ICC should revisit its decision to not investigate war crimes in Afghanistan. The decision does not take into account the needs and wants of the Afghan people.

It is the goal of civil society organizations like AWEVSO to ensure that the voices of the Afghan people are heard.

AWEVSO believes an investigation is important for many reasons, including that the investigation will shine light on who did what in Afghanistan and that wrongdoers will be exposed, including the parties currently advancing peace talks in Afghanistan.

Citizen Organization

Website Not available

Description of Mandate and Work

Citizen Organization (“CO”) is an organization based in Afghanistan and was founded in 2008. CO is active in the following provinces in Afghanistan: Kabul, Nangarhar, Mazer, Bamyan, Herat, and Khost. CO seeks to develop and enhance a democratic society in Afghanistan. CO works to increase cultural, social and economic participation of Afghan citizens in their democracy. CO gives advice to families that have suffered human rights abuses due to war. CO has connected war victims with the war crimes office of the Afghan Attorney General Office.

CO believes an investigation by the ICC is important because the Afghan government is not currently strong enough to hold perpetrators accountable, and some of the perpetrators are currently in positions of power in the Afghan government. An independent investigation by an international tribunal is necessary given the limitations in Afghanistan.

CO believes there needs to be an accounting for the war crimes that have been committed in Afghanistan. Ideally there would be arrests and perpetrators would be held accountable. However, even without arrests, an investigation is important because those who have suffered, and the entire Afghan society, needs know that what they have suffered matters and is important.

Darnika Development and Services Organization

Website

Not available

Description of Mandate and Work

Darnika Development and Services Organization (“DDSO”) is an organization based in Kabul, Afghanistan and was founded in 2015. DDSO is working to develop an Afghanistan where the Afghan people can live peacefully together in a democratic society, where there is respect for each other’s culture and religion, and where there is more equal access to social, economic and cultural rights for all Afghans. DDSO works to fight poverty and injustice in Afghanistan.

DDSO works on vocational training for war victims, providing assistance in job training, and income generation activities.

DDSO believes the ICC decision to close the investigation into war crimes in Afghanistan was wrong. The Afghan people have little information as to what has happened in their country and need to know.

It is important for Afghan society in general to know what has been done and by whom so that these crimes can be stopped. Also, civil society groups like DDSO are working locally and doing the best they can but groups like DDSO need to know they have international support and that the international community cares about what is happening in Afghanistan.

DDSO believes justice would be advanced in Afghanistan if war crimes were investigated. The Afghan people need to know the truth of what has happened during the years of war and to know that it matters what they went through.

Feminine Solidarity for Justice Organization

Website

Not available

Description of Mandate and Work

Registered with the Ministry of Justice since 2007, Feminine Solidarity for Justice Organization (also known as Foundation of Solidarity for Justice, and the “Foundation”) is the first victims network in Afghanistan which is committed to create a strong network of the victims of the conflict around the country and to raise human rights awareness, advocate, lobby and provide certain services for victims of human rights violations in Afghanistan. The Foundation is committed to raise the voices of victims of human rights violations through media, peaceful gatherings, peaceful demonstrations and meetings.

The Foundation is raising awareness of Afghan people on key human rights instruments and elements as well as transitional justice issues. The awareness raising programs are conducted at different levels and places from official workshops to home-based and community-based awareness raising particularly for those women who barely have the opportunity to go out and participate in a debate.

The Foundation is providing psychotherapy services for victims of human rights violations particularly women and children. Since 2007 when the psychotherapy services were provided more than 250 people have been assisted, with those services going 75 percent to women and 25 percent to men.

The Foundation established the first ever Victims Shuras in Afghanistan. Victims Shuras are bringing together members of the communities who are victims of human rights violations during the near four decades of Afghan conflict. Thus far, three Shuras were established in Kabul and it will expand soon in other provinces of Afghanistan. The total number of people participating in the shuras are around 240 individuals so far, with the majority of those participants being women and girls.

The Foundation seeks to raise the voices of the voiceless in Afghanistan, and is doing so by publishing a series of stories about Afghan war victims in well-known publications and two times a week through radio.

Afghan people are experiencing conflict and atrocities for the past near four decades. Different governments, armed groups and political groups were engaged in committing crimes against Afghan people at different stages. The national and international human rights actors are fully aware of the importance of the documenting war crimes and crimes

against humanity which have been committed in Afghanistan. The Foundation is actively engaged in documenting war crimes and crimes against humanity in line with the AIHRC since 2007.

The Foundation has undertaken different initiatives for advocating on behalf of the victims of the past human rights violations by holding peaceful and historic victims demonstration in Kabul, including on December 10, 2007.

The Foundation established a Human Rights Club where people from different aspects of life especially high school and university students, university professors as well as the interested individuals were coming together once a week to discuss issues related to human rights and transitional justice in Afghanistan.

The Foundation works in coordination with various human rights groups on issues related to Afghan war victims.

The Foundation supported Afghan war victims to submit complaints to the ICC relating to the investigation of war crimes in Afghanistan.

Mubtaker Women's Social Organization (*Anjuman e Eshtimae Zanan e Mubtaker*)

Website

Not available

Description of Mandate and Work

Mubtaker Women's Social Organization (*Anjuman e Eshtimae Zanan e Mubtaker*, "MWSO") is an organization based in Afghanistan, was founded in 2010, and serves the province of Kabul. MWSO works to safeguard basic human rights in Afghanistan and to advocate for good governance, free speech, anti-corruption, and advancing an Afghanistan that is child-friendly.

MWSO works on behalf of Afghan women who have been victims of war and who have lost family members to war. Women are some of the most vulnerable members of society and are even more impacted by war crimes because they are already vulnerable in society generally, and in Afghanistan in particular. MWSO assists these women in accessing their human rights and making their voices heard.

MWSO believes that the ICC decision to close the investigation into war crimes in Afghanistan was hurtful to the many Afghan women who have suffered and who will not be able to seek justice because the people responsible for committing these crimes will never be known or held accountable.

Killing has become a custom in Afghanistan. It is a form of expression here to make a political point. People do not value life. Just in the last week so many innocent people, including children in a school, were killed by a bomb attack. This has become customary and routine in Afghanistan and the fact that the ICC investigation is not happening reinforces that the crimes in Afghanistan are normal. Afghan society needs to know this is not okay, this culture of killing and maiming must stop but it will not stop until it is confronted.

Nawid Naw Council (Council for New Good Tidings)

Website Not available

Description of Mandate and Work

Nawid Naw Council (Council for New Good Tidings, “NNC”) is an organization based in Afghanistan, was founded in 2012, and serves the provinces of Ghazni, Herat, Bamyan and Kabul. NNC seeks a complete Afghan society that is free from corruption, that is peaceful and that provides a free and equal society for Afghans without dependence on ethnic, language or religious differences. NNC works to develop Afghan youth, to safeguard freedom of speech, and to work toward a democratic society.

NNC advocates on behalf of Afghan victims of war. Many of NNC’s clients are those who have suffered and been impacted by the war either through bombings or losing family members or being hurt themselves. NNC conducts research and advocacy into issues of concern for Afghans including impacts of the war.

NNC believes that the ICC’s decision to close the investigation into war crimes in Afghanistan was hurtful for the people of Afghanistan. It conveys that the Court does not care about the suffering of Afghan people and that Afghan people are not valued.

NNC believes that Afghan civil society needs to make our voices heard for ourselves and our clients, to ensure that the voices of Afghans are not made quiet.

NNC believes it is imperative to have a fair and accurate record of what has happened in Afghanistan over the past two decades. Unless an investigation happens, those who have committed war crimes in Afghanistan will continue to do so.

Noor (Light)

Website

Not available

Description of Mandate and Work

NOOR (meaning “light” in the language Dari) is an organization based in Afghanistan and was founded in 2016 in Kabul. NOOR is a volunteer run organization and works to build capacity, develop knowledge and talent in Afghan youth.

NOOR believe that the ICC’s decision not to investigate war crimes in Afghanistan is bad for justice in Afghanistan overall, and for victims of war crimes in Afghanistan in particular.

NOOR believes the decision to not investigate weakens the work of civil society in Afghanistan. It conveys that civil society does not have the support of international bodies in researching and documenting war crimes in Afghanistan. The majority of NOOR’s work and the work of other civil society organizations in Afghanistan is aimed at reaching justice and of helping Afghanistan get to a place of peace and justice. An investigation by the ICC would have strengthened NOOR’s cause and the cause of other CSOs tremendously.

Women's Capacity Building and Development Organization

Website

Not available

Description of Mandate and Work

Women's Capacity Building and Development Organization ("WCBDO") is an organization based in Afghanistan and was founded in 2010. WCBDO is active in the following provinces in Afghanistan: Kabul, Orozgan, Nemroz, Samangan, Zabul and Kunduz. WCBDO lobbies and advocates for gender equality in Afghanistan, provides women's empowerment services through capacity building, and generally addresses through awareness strategies human rights, children rights and women's rights.

WCBDO has advocated for the importance of addressing war crimes in Afghanistan and has advocated for the Afghan government to cooperate with the ICC in its investigation. WCBDO is part of the Secretariat of the Civil Society Coordinating Group. They work in remote provinces at the local level with very little resources to make sure the voices of Afghan women are heard.

WCBDO believes the ICC's decision not to investigate war crimes in Afghanistan is horrible for the country and the people of Afghanistan and believes that it will further the suffering and harm to Afghan victims of war.

WCBDO believes that investigation into war crimes must happen. The crimes committed in Afghanistan have been grave and have not been addressed. The ICC is one of the only mechanisms through which Afghans can seek truth about what war crimes were committed and by whom since 2003. Afghans have suffered through so much war and trauma and their voices need to be brought out to the world. Afghans need a proper historical record of the war crimes committed in Afghanistan.

Women for Justice Organisation Afghanisatan

Website <https://www.wjoafg.org/>

Description of Mandate and Relevant Work

Women for Justice Organisation ("WJO") is Afghanistan's first non-profit public interest law organisation, established in October 2018, to bring justice to survivors of systemic and widespread human rights violations and war, and to hold institutions accountable. WJO is independent, non-governmental, non-political and non-sectarian. It is headquartered in Kabul.

Founded by two award-winning women human rights lawyers, WJO is mandated to represent women, girls and other marginalized survivors (including marginalized men and boys) in cases of interest to the public before domestic and international courts, dispute-resolution committees, and before UN Special Procedures bodies. WJO selects its cases with the objective of securing broader social, policy and legal changes to fulfill people's rights and strengthen institutional accountability.

WJO specializes in civil and human rights litigation and the prosecution of crimes against women and marginalized groups under Afghan and international laws. As a specialist law organisation, WJO also trains and nurtures the next generation of Afghan public interest lawyers.

WJO is composed of a team of lawyers, a majority of whom are survivors of war. WJO's lawyers are licensed to practice law in Afghanistan (and abroad) and are registered with the Afghanistan Independent Bar Association. Specialised in litigating gender-based crimes, WJO lawyers have 10 - 15 years of experience in fact-finding, and, representing, servicing and counselling thousands of survivors of war and gender-violence in Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif, Herat and other provinces of Afghanistan. WJO lawyers have also:

- Led and assisted in high-level national advocacy and crisis response in acute cases of gender-based violence.
- Advised members of several networks such as the Gender Technical Working Group, Committee on the Prohibition of Virginity Testing, U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 Working Group, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women Report Working Group, government Law Reform Committees and Gender-Based Violence Sub-Cluster and Advocacy Committees.
- Trained and worked with hundreds of lawyers, prosecutors, judges, human rights officers, forensic doctors, healthcare professionals and civil society activists on

Police Reformation, State and Peace-Building, Stress and Trauma-Sensitive Approaches to Investigations of Crime, Stress Management and Trauma Counseling for Survivors and Women's Human Rights under Afghan and International laws.

- Led and contributed to several law reform initiatives to strengthen the legal protection of women's rights in Afghanistan namely: the Elimination of Violence against Women Law 2009, Mental Health Act 2014, Penal Code 2017, Criminal Procedure Code 2014, provisions on the prevention of Child and Forced marriage, and, the penalization of Virginity and Rectal Testing and Sexual Harassment between 2016 and 2018 (forthcoming).
- WJO's Lead Counsel was often appointed to provide expert commentary on crimes against women, state-building, transitional security, and the peace process at multilateral conferences and side events such as the Bonn Conference 2011, German Government Conference 2014, London Conference 2014, UN Commission on the Status of Women 2012, Brussels Conference 2016 and Geneva Conference 2018. In the earlier years of Afghanistan's peace process, WJO's Lead Counsel was involved in empowering women leaders to own and occupy a central role in the peace process, and, advocate for the "end of violence against women" as a central mandate of the political and peace process between 2011–2014. She also contributed to the development of a UN Security Council Resolution 1325 National Action Plan to strengthen Women, Peace and Security.
- A trauma specialist, WJO's Lead Counsel has counselled and led several teams to counsel tens of thousands of survivors of war who had survived rape, forced abortion, abduction and trafficking by state and non-state actors. She regularly assisted the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees to relocate survivors to shelters and safe houses during conflict crises, and, provided security training to women colleagues and survivors after the Fall of Kunduz in 2015.
- Trained in international criminal law, WJO's Legal Director has developed resources on ICL, and, trained and mentored legal professionals to: document injuries sustained as a result of violence based on the Istanbul Protocol 1999 and Gender-Based Violence Treatment Protocol 2014; interview survivors of rape to satisfy criminal elements; strategize investigations to meet criminal elements; prove non-consent in rape cases; prosecute on the basis of "command responsibility," prosecute on the basis of "joint criminal enterprise," assess and quantify damages for injuries suffered as a result of violence, report and present medico-legal findings in court and; draft petitions for reparation measures.
- WJO learned of the outreach for representation by the ICC and attempted to obtain additional time because of the harsh winter conditions, the specific experience of Afghan women and girls and the additional barriers they face in filing representations, the security situation, among other reasons. WJO attempted to

mobilize its legal team but a series of attacks occurred in Kabul that barred their ability to do so. WJO believes it is imperative that the investigation be re-opened and is ready to assist.

Women Participation Promotion Organization

Website Not available

Description of Mandate and Work

Women Participation Promotion Organization (“WPPO”) is an organization based in Afghanistan and founded in 2011. WPPO works in the following provinces of Afghanistan: Orozgan, Daykundi, Bamyan and Kabul. WPPO works toward a future for Afghanistan where all development activities are streamlined by a strong and sustainable socio-cultural and social and economic infrastructure. WPPO’s mission is to improve the life condition of poor and vulnerable Afghans by creating, providing and promoting opportunities to improve their livelihoods and access basic services, and to ensure that their fundamental rights irrespective of race, ethnicity, gender, religion or political belief are respected.

WPPO has worked with children of families where the parents were killed or who fled Afghanistan due to the war to assist them in obtaining higher education.

WPPO works with many families that have lost family members in different war crimes in Afghanistan. WPPO believes it is important for an investigation of war crimes in Afghanistan to take place. Victims of war in Afghanistan are generally the poorest and most vulnerable members of society.

An investigation is necessary for the truth to be made known and not swept under the rug. Refusing to investigate it tantamount to sweeping the truth under the rug and not acknowledging the reality of what happened to so many people.