



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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**LAUNCH OF  
WOMEN AND PUBLIC POLICY JOURNAL  
(Vol. I) 'Past, Present, and Future of Democratic Governance in Afghanistan: What are the challenges and how can we overcome them?'**

**On 22 October 2015 At**

**9:30 am – 11:30 am at the Inter-Continental Hotel**

**Kabul, Afghanistan**

On 22 October 2015, the **Organization for Policy Research and Development Studies (DROPS)**, supported by the **National Endowment for Democracy [NED]**, will launch the first volume of its **annual peer-reviewed journal**, titled '**Women and Public Policy (WPPJ)**'. The audiences identified for the contents of this publication are the members, organisations, and institutions of the policy community in Kabul, the South Asian region, and the international community; civil society members and think-tanks; and students and academic institutions.

The **WPPJ** is an extremely unique initiative, as illustrated below:

1. The WPPJ is the first peer-reviewed public policy journal to be authored by Afghan women in Afghanistan
2. The WPPJ carries analyses by Afghan women on a variety of issues, thus breaking the stereotype that women write only on gender-issues
3. The WPPJ has created the much-needed space for women to engage in the policy discourse via policy research in Afghanistan
4. The WPPJ strengthens democratic governance in Afghanistan by bridging the gap between policy research and policymakers

Each commentary in the journal explores the theme of this volume – '**Past, Present, and Future of Democratic Governance in Afghanistan: What are the challenges and how can we overcome them?**' – using different Millennium Development Goals as analytical lenses and parameters. Contents titles include:

1. A Decade of Democratic Governance in Afghanistan: Has it Been Responsive to the Afghan Citizens? By. Rahela Sidiqi
2. Outbound Health Tourism and its Impact on Healthcare in Afghanistan. By Freshta Karim
3. Women's Roles and Perspectives in the Security Sector in Afghanistan. By Fazila Rahimy
4. Afghanistan: The Looming Spectre of HIV? By Fatema Ahmadi
5. Policy Points for the Decade of Transformation: Afghanistan's Political, Security and Economic Future. By Mariam Safi



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6. Supporting Civil Society in Afghanistan Post -2014: How Can SAARC Fill the Vacuum? By Freshta Zarabi
7. The Role of Youth in Combating Corruption in Afghanistan. By Mariam Wardak
8. Security and Economic Concerns: Factors Impacting Migration Trends Amongst Afghanistan's Growing Young Adult population. By Maha Khalili Sartip
9. Higher Education for Afghan Women: The Road to Transformation. By Roya Ibrahimi
10. Book Review: The Wrong Enemy - America in Afghanistan (2001-2014) by Carlotta Gall. By Lailuma Nasiri

This journal took 12 months to develop. Initially, DROPS received 14 manuscripts, of which 10 authors were commissioned to contribute articles ranging from 1500 words to 6000 words. Two of the selected authors are graduates of the **DROPS Research Methodology and Gender Lens** training; three are former government officials and journalists now Afghan diaspora living abroad; and five were selected via the DROPS's 'Call for Papers'. The authors represent a diverse set of professional backgrounds, areas of expertise, age, and local and diaspora perspectives.

The publication of the first issue of the WPPJ is especially timely. It was conceptualised and created to coincide with the creation of **Afghanistan's National Unity Government (NUG)** and the country's transition into the '**Decade of Transformation**'. By identifying and assessing the challenges faced by the country in the last decade towards improving democratic governance, this journal will provide:

1. A comprehensive analysis on the challenges to consolidating democratic governance in Afghanistan
2. Offer recommendations for the NUG, the policymakers, and the international community to assist in strengthening democracy and related practices as Afghanistan transitions from **war-to-peace** in the Decade of Transformation;
3. A platform that works towards ensuring that **women's perspectives** are incorporated in policy debates and strategies in matters often neglected, such as security, health, education, anti-corruption, civil service reform, development of civil society, peace processes, economic development, and regional cooperation.

The impact of the WPPJ will be twofold:

1. It fills the glaring gap in Afghanistan's academic community by offering peer-reviewed literature that academics and students can refer to and use.
2. It will help policymakers make better-informed policy decisions.