

ABC News/BBC World Service Afghanistan Poll – Note on Methodology – 2006

This survey was conducted for ABC News and the BBC World Service by Charney Research of New York with field work by the Afghan Center for Social and Opinion Research based in Kabul. Interviews were conducted in person, in Dari or Pashto, among a random national sample of 1,036 Afghan adults Oct. 14-19, 2006.

The survey was conducted in 31 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, randomly selected with the exception of Zabul and Uruzgan, which were excluded for security reasons. Nuristan was not selected in the random sampling procedure. Zabul accounts for an estimated 1.2 percent of the country's population, Uruzgan 1.1 percent and Nuristan 0.5 percent.

A total of 118 sampling points were distributed proportional to population size in each province, stratified by urban/nonurban status. Sampling points were then distributed to randomly selected districts within provinces, also proportionate to population size; and lastly to randomly selected villages or neighborhoods within those districts, by simple random sampling. Sources for population parameters were United Nations population estimates and population projections from the Afghan Central Statistical Office.

Half the sampling points were designated for male interviews, half for female interviews. Male respondents were interviewed only by male interviewers, female respondents only by female interviewers. Residences were selected within each settlement by random route/random interval and respondents were selected within residence by Kish grid.

In order to reduce the design effect due to clustering, where randomly drawn male/female sampling points fell within close proximity to each other in districts with fewer than 20,000 residents, the number of sampling points was doubled, also by random selection, and the number of interviews per point was halved, from 10 to five. Of the total of 118 sampling points, 28 were assigned in this manner.

Interviews were conducted by 114 interviewers in 31 supervised teams. All interviewers were trained and had experience on previous ACSOR surveys. Ten percent of interviews were directly observed by field supervisors and an additional 14 percent were back-checked afterwards, with further logical controls conducted at ACSOR offices in Kabul.

The survey had a contact rate of 90 percent and a cooperation rate of 83 percent. The impact of clustering on the sample produces an estimated design effect of 1.26, for a total margin of sampling error of 3.5 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.