

Detailed Methodology

ATR consulting randomly called 2448 people across all 34 provinces of the country and asked the following question provided by Tolo News: “How satisfied are you with President Ashraf Ghani’s performance?” The respondents could select only one out of four possible answers: ‘Very satisfied’, ‘Moderately satisfied’, ‘Not satisfied at all’ or ‘I do not know / No opinion’.

The survey took place between 27th December 2014 and 3rd January 2015 in Kabul.

ATR utilized an algorithm to generate more than 20 million phone numbers at random. Mobile numbers were filtered on regional codes to filter and target regions. Surveyors then worked through the list to determine which numbers were attributed, interviewing those respondents who were willing to give their feedback. To ensure the highest possible degree of access to female respondents, all surveyors were women.

The delivery of questions was such as to be as impartial as possible, and negate any opportunities for surveyors to lead the respondent or have a bearing on results in any way. All respondents were read the question with the exact wording including the four possible answers. The confidence level is 95 percent. The margin of error for each category is shown in the chart below:

Demographic	Sample Size	Margin of Error (+/- %)
TOTAL	2448	1.98
Men	1720	2.36
Women	728	3.63
Rural	1035	3.04
Urban	1413	2.59
Below 29	1380	2.64
Above 30	1068	3
Kabul City	494	4.41
Central Region (incl. Kabul City)	711	3.67
Northern Region	492	4.42
Eastern Region	431	4.72
Southern Region	395	4.93
Western Region	419	4.79

Table 1: Sample size and margin of error by demographic

Given that it is more challenging to reach women through phone in Afghanistan rather than men, a quota was applied for men and women in each region (70% men and 30% women). Results were then weighted first within each region to ensure equal representation of male and female respondents (50% /

50%). Nationwide results were then reached by weighting results by region according to the national population distribution.¹

The survey was performed entirely by female surveyors in order to allow for better access to female respondents. Surveyors read a passage of introductory text to the respondent prior to beginning the questionnaire. In this introduction, surveyors explain that the survey is being performed by ATR Consulting and Tolo News. Some rural women are concerned that their voice could be recorded and broadcast on television. In such cases, the surveyor explains that the calls are confidential, and that recordings are taken only for monitoring purposes, and Tolo News will not receive a recording.

After the introduction, surveyors asked for authorization to proceed with the questionnaire. Respondents frequently asked two questions. Surveyors were trained to reply as follows:

- *What will you do with my response?*
Surveyors assured the respondent that the survey was confidential. They reminded the respondent that they did not ask for their name, because the survey was only for overall statistics from the general population, not to ask for data from individual people. The surveyors also told the respondents that their answers would only be shown on the TV as a graph, mixed with the responses of other people.
- *Why are you doing this survey? Why would my opinion change anything?*
Some respondents were skeptical that giving their opinion would be useful. Surveyors replied that the objective of the survey was to bring the voice of the Afghan people to the public, and that public opinion can influence the decisions made by politicians.

For the question “*In which province do you live?*” people sometimes responded that they live in different places depending on the time of year. The surveyor then asked which province they lived in at the present time, and used this as the response. Gender was usually identified from the voice of the respondent. For those respondents for whom the gender was not clear, the surveyor pretended that there were problems on the phone line and asked directed if the respondent was male or female.

Surveyors read the exact questions to the respondent, word for word. The surveyor then read all of the options related to the question (including ‘I don’t know / I don’t want to respond’). If the respondent had difficulty in understanding the question, the question was reformulated using very simple language.

If the respondent clearly selected one of the response options, it was recorded and the surveyor proceeded directly to the next question. If the respondent provided an answer which did not match any of the options (many respondents wished to express themselves at length on the topic of the question), the surveyor proceeded as follows:

¹ All population data is taken from the Afghan Central Statistics Office 2012 data

- If the response clearly referred to one of the option, the surveyor asked whether the respondent wished to select this specific option. Here is an example of such a situation:
 - The respondent says, in response to the second question: *"I think Dr. Ashraf Ghani and Dr. Abdullah will never get along. It is impossible they ever work together"*.
 - Surveyor: *"Sir, do you mean that you have no hope at all? Do you want to select the option: 'Not at all'?"*
 - Respondent: *"Yes"*.
- If the response provided a general idea of the respondent's opinion, but without sufficient clarity to identify which option should be selected, the surveyor proceeded as follows:
 - Respondent, in response to the final question: *"I think Pakistan and Afghanistan should cooperate. They don't have a choice"*.
 - Surveyor: *"Thank you sir. Which of the following options do you think best matches your opinion? 'Establishing joint economic and cultural activities' or 'Conducting joint military operations against insurgents'?"*
 - Respondent: *"No it is best to have cooperation to deal with the security"*.
 - Surveyor: *"So, you select the option: 'Conducting joint military operations against insurgents', is that correct?"*
 - Respondent: *"Yes"*.

Once the interview was concluded, the surveyor thanked the respondent for his or her time.

Inclusion of Women in the survey

In order to reach female respondents, surveyors used two strategies:

- When the surveyor reached a male respondent in a province in which the quota for male respondents had already been achieved, the surveyor asked for the phone to be passed to a female member of the household.
- When the surveyor reached a male respondent in a province in which the quota for male respondents had not already been achieved, the surveyor first performed an interview with the male respondent, and then asked to speak to a female member of the household.
 - If a female household member was available, she was interviewed. The responses of the male household member who had originally completed the questionnaire were therefore discarded. This is necessary in order to preserve the random sampling of the survey.
 - If no female household member was available, or refused to respond to the questionnaire, the original interview with the male household member was retained.

Women, especially in rural areas, were often very concerned when responding to a telephone call from an unknown person. Many said that they didn't have the right to speak to people they do not know. They often ended the call in the middle of the survey. In such cases, the surveyor deleted all of their responses, in order to avoid incomplete questionnaires being included in the final analysis, and move on to the next respondent.

In order to avoid such situations, surveyors were trained to do everything possible in order to reassure the respondent. Surveyors spent time talking to the respondent, building their trust, and encouraging them to share their opinion. This was challenging in some cases as rural women are generally unaccustomed to being directly asked for their opinion by someone they do not know.

Quality assurance

- All surveys were recorded for quality assurance and monitoring purposes.
- Two supervisors continuously monitored a selection of the calls.
- In order to reduce the risk of partisanship, an international member of staff (with sufficient understanding of Dari and Pashtu) listened to at least 10% of calls made by each surveyor.
- The international staff member then gave advice to the surveyors where weaknesses were identified. No major problems were found when monitoring this survey, but two weaknesses were identified:
 - Some respondents, especially in rural areas and females, had difficulty understanding some of the questions. At the beginning of data collection, not all surveyors would reformulate the questions, limiting themselves to re-reading the question and the options. After this weakness was identified (on Day 1), surveyors were advised to reformulate the question and the options using simple language.
 - A number of women in rural areas ended the calls at the beginning or in the middle of the interview. When listening to these recordings it was clear that this was because these respondents were not comfortable speaking to a stranger on the telephone. Surveyors were then advised on how to adapt their narrative to build trust. This included:
 - Making small talk at the beginning of the conversation
 - Adopting an empathic tone
 - Reassuring respondents about the purpose of the survey, and guaranteeing their confidentiality
 - Encouraging them through highlighting the importance of the voice of Afghan women in rural areas being heard.
 - Regularly asking them if they understood well and taking the time to explain any words that were not clear

Data cleaning

- When a response to one question was missing, the entire interview was discarded
- All surveys from Daykundi and Panjsher were checked for accurate responses to the question on whether the respondent lives in a rural or an urban area. While the respondent might feel that they live in an urban area in Nili (Daykundi) or Bazarak (Panjsher), both capitals are actually considered by the Central Statistics Office as rural areas. In such cases the respondents were counted as living in rural areas.