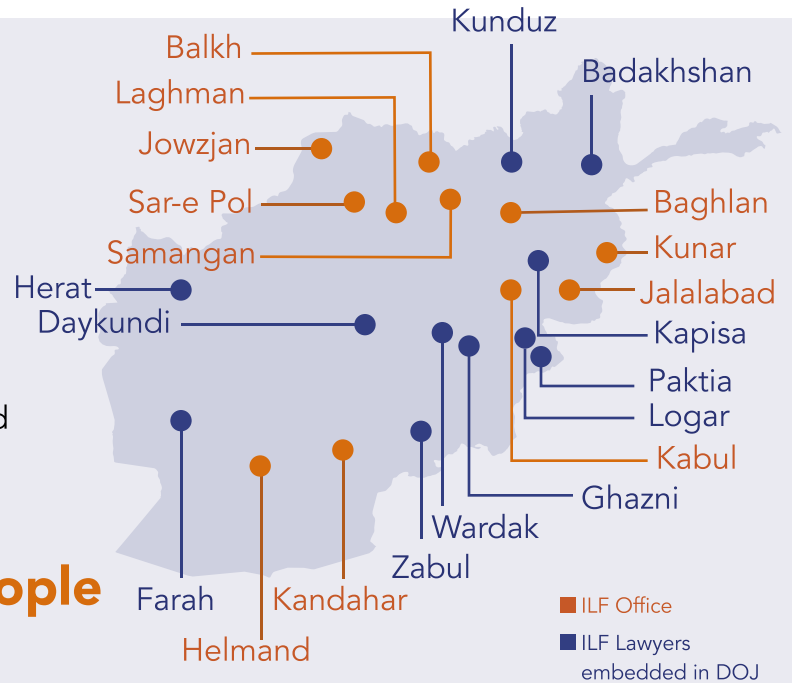


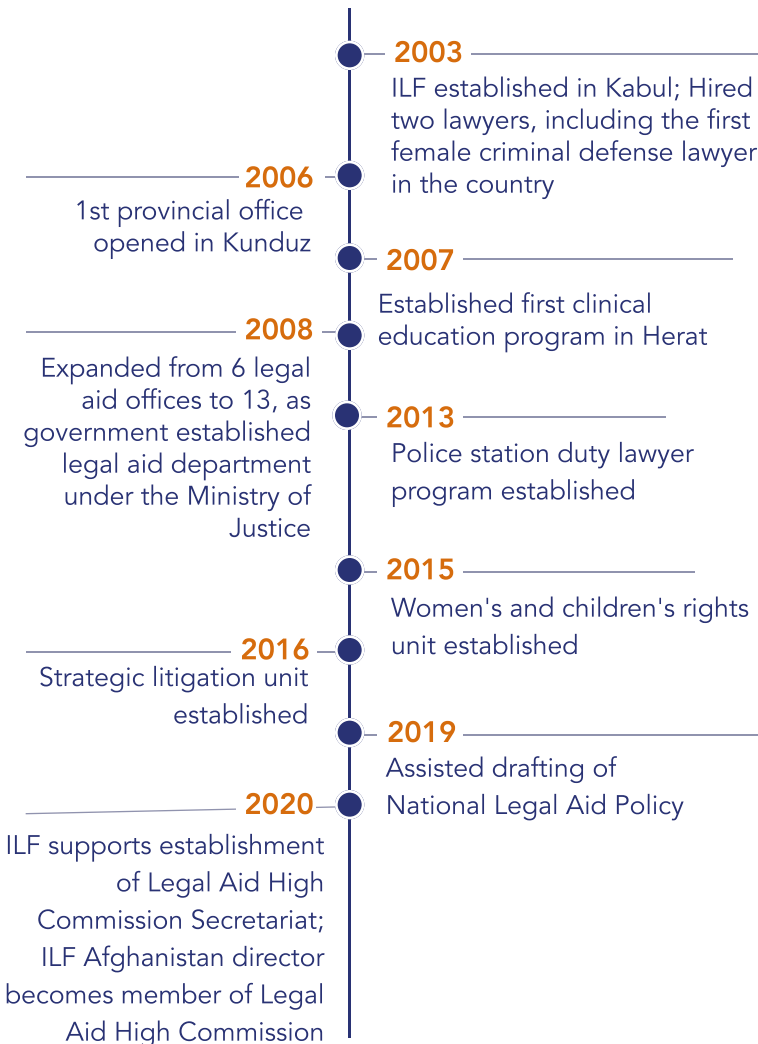
Afghanistan

We make justice a reality for poor people by fighting to guarantee high-quality legal representation for everyone arrested or detained. We are the largest criminal legal aid provider in Afghanistan and are building the capacity of the Legal Aid High Commission and Secretariat to ensure the provision of sustainable, effective legal aid services.



22 Provinces
currently served

65,000 People
represented to date



Our Approach

We are committed to meaningful, sustainable change. Every day, we fight in court to protect the rights of our clients. We also engage in impact litigation, winning precedent-setting cases that expand access to justice and strengthen rule of law. At the systems level, we collaborate with governments and other partners to transform justice systems and ensure sustainability.

Tackling the Crisis in Access to Justice

Nearly 30 years of civil war, insurgency, and Taliban rule decimated Afghanistan's justice system and created an urgent need for justice reform. As the country emerged from decades of conflict, people arrested and prosecuted had no access to a lawyer to defend their rights. This put them at high risk of torture, forced confessions, and wrongful convictions. The ILF was the first and remains the largest provider of legal aid for Afghans accused of crimes, offering services regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, or political affiliation.

Our Impact: Transforming Afghanistan's Justice System

Fighting For Gender Equity

Case by case, we combat discrimination against women in the criminal justice system and work in coalition to **end the unlawful practice of virginity testing.**

We founded the country's first legal clinics as a means to provide pathways into the legal profession for women. Since 2007, our **clinics have graduated more than 800 women law and Sharia students.**

Defending Rights Through Crisis

As a result of our advocacy, more than **20,000 people were released from unsafe, overcrowded detention centers** in Afghanistan. We also launched a reentry support program to provide formerly incarcerated women and girls with a safe transition home.

Early Access

To address police misconduct and ensure the rights of accused persons from the first moments of arrest, we founded a police station duty lawyer program in 2013 that has since expanded nationwide. **We now reach 1/3 of our clients in the critical early stages after arrest and before a client's first court appearance.**

Pioneering Pretrial Litigation

The ILF introduced the practice of pretrial litigation as a means to challenge persistent violations of people's rights. This practice has been critical in effectively challenging serious rights violations. **In 2020, we convinced courts to hear 2,000 motions on torture and illegal detention.**

Building Effective Legal Aid Institutions

We are advising the newly established Legal Aid High Commission on how to increase the independence, quality, and transparency of Afghanistan's legal aid system. We are supporting the nationwide expansion of services in line with the country's commitment to accelerate action on United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16 and guarantee justice for all.

Our Partners

OPEN SOCIETY
FOUNDATIONS



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

When we opened in 2001, there were less than 150 defense lawyers total in Afghanistan.

Today, there are over 3,000 practicing defense lawyers. We've trained 1 in 3.



“Our people are in dire need of inclusive and balanced justice and judicial services which should be provided to all needy people without prejudice or bias. The International Legal Foundation is one of the strongest Ministry of Justice partners...the cooperation between the Ministry of Justice and the ILF will strengthen and improve justice.”

Minister of Justice of the Islamic
Republic of Afghanistan
H.E. Dr. Abdul Baseer Anwar