

### **How did you personally learn filmmaking?**

During my childhood at the time of the Taleban, I was always thinking of becoming a journalist. It was my childhood dream. Fortunately, when my sister, Roya Sadat, made the film *Se Noqta* (Three Dots), she paved the way for me to start documentary filmmaking, and I managed to more or less make my dream come true. It is because my aim is to reflect the realities.

### **Where and how does one learn to make films?**

There is only one department of cinema in the Faculty of Fine Arts in Kabul with poor facilities. To learn filmmaking in the provinces of Afghanistan is almost impossible, and I was in the province of Herat. Fortunately, when I moved to Kabul, I managed to attend two short-term training courses.

### **What role do organisations such as the aid organisation AINA or the initiative of the Varan projects play in training?**

I am afraid I am not aware of their activities. At the beginning, AINA's work was good but now it does not do much eye-catching work.

### **What opportunities do women have?**

There are many problems in Afghanistan. And one of the problems that male and female filmmakers face is insecurity. It is problematic particularly for documentary filmmakers who do not have enough facilities. Apart from this, there are some family problems, as cinema has not found its deserved position in Afghanistan yet. Because of the situation caused by past and present wars, I always suffer from insecurity as a female filmmaker. I can hardly find work for recording in different centres.

### **How do you finance your films?**

My sister collaborated with me in several films I have made. At the beginning, she used to cover the costs of my films with the salary she gets from TV. The film I am making now is financed by an Italian organisation and the film belongs to them completely.

### **What role do international (aid) organisations play in production?**

As I mentioned earlier, we do not have producers. It means the organisations do not collaborate with filmmakers. Perhaps there are very few organisations that make some documentaries and these organisations have their own special rules that make the film completely theirs. And if their aim is something else, they may give a small amount of money to the filmmaker or give them almost no rights.

### **Who do you address in your film? For whom do you make your films?**

In the films that I made, I tried to depict the problems of women. I want most laws to be changed in favour of women. My aim in some of my documentaries is to help women deal with the laws. When I walk through the corridors of municipal authorities or hospitals, I can see that it is not only men who oppress women, but that there are a number of laws that support these men. For instance, most cases of torture against women are rejected by civil laws, but the perpetrators are not punished. When you watch my film, you will find out what rights women have.

**What is the relationship between the national and international market for you?**

There is no guarantee in Afghanistan in terms of marketing and selling the film. When a filmmaker makes a film with so many difficulties, he or she is worried about how to sell the film in order to cover the costs of film production.

The profits of the documentary film productions facilitated by state organisations go back to the organisation itself and not to the filmmaker or main producer. Therefore, the process of marketing in Afghanistan is not comparable with the international markets; filmmaking goes through an unusual process.

Alka Sadat