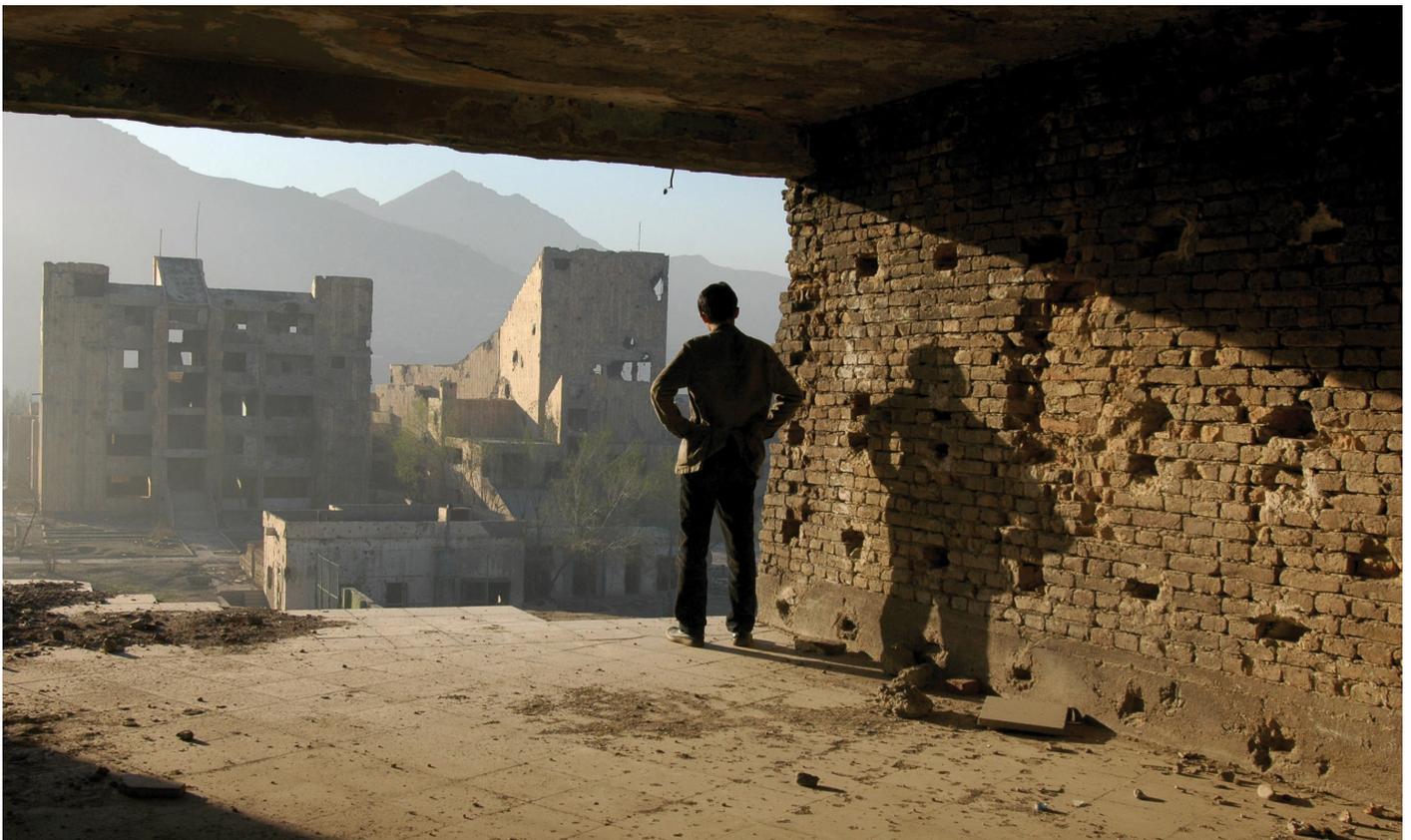




Losing the Ability to Dream

Afghan Perceptions of UK Aid

Dr Edwina Thompson



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We have failed to reach the publics of those countries, like British taxpayers. If they found out what is really happening, then they would not be satisfied.

We've been shouting at politicians for years - do they hear us? They seem to know facts, but then act completely against that knowledge. They continue to focus on an area they know won't show results. This is a problem between the bureaucrats and the politicians if they really care for their taxpayers' money.

You're not getting your Value for Money! The aid is not reaching the people because of corruption.

People of Afghanistan are happy by existence of the international community beside the government; the international community considering the situation of Afghanistan must not leave this country in unstable situation. We believe that developments of Afghanistan today are because of existense of international community.

Halve the inflow of the aid and spend what is supposed to come Afghanistan for longer term - at least the process of wastage of resources is a little reduced. ...I think the best player of the game in this structure is the one able to waste the least resources. End the concert please!

What is an Afghan's vision? I gave an honest response - I don't know. If that 2014 timeline is affecting me, how can I think beyond this? America has put this date in calendar which is limiting our visioning.

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Executive Summary

Huge sums of aid money have been channelled into Afghanistan – more than USD60 billion since 2001. As Afghanistan's second largest bilateral donor, the UK is providing more than GBP710 million in the four years to 2015 and has a significant role in shaping the future of millions of Afghan men, women and children. Yet despite a decade of substantial international intervention and investment, Afghanistan remains one of the world's poorest countries with some of the worst development indicators on the planet. Government institutions remain weak and more than 90% of public spending relies on foreign aid.

So, how effective is this aid, and what needs to change to make it more effective? This is a critical issue not only for Afghans themselves, but also for the governments and taxpayers of donor countries, including those of the UK, to ensure that the aid achieves an optimal return on investment towards building a more stable, just, prosperous and ultimately self-reliant country. BAAG agencies commissioned a snapshot of UK aid effectiveness in Afghanistan in advance of the 10-year anniversary of the military intervention that followed the 9/11 attacks. Over 100 people were either interviewed or invited to participate in small workshops during August-September 2011 to gauge the way Afghans currently think and feel about the past, present and future prospects in their country, and about the specific contribution of UK aid to Afghanistan.

Assessing the performance of donor aid – and UK aid specifically – has proved extremely challenging for a variety of reasons. In order to provide a snapshot of UK aid effectiveness, and the challenges surrounding it, this paper combines a review of available statistics with informed observations from Afghans, aid workers, and serving military personnel. Collectively, they paint a picture of a country where UK aid has on the one hand helped to make a positive difference, and where the UK approach is often welcomed as better than others. Yet there are also numerous perceived challenges and weaknesses that have limited the impact of that aid, and contributed to much disillusionment and frustration among Afghans.

Because of the inherent limitations of such a snapshot, the following analysis should not be treated as a comprehensive representation of the definitive Afghan voice, NGOs working on Afghanistan, or UK aid effectiveness. The following is a summary of the key observations.

THE STATISTICS INDICATE THAT...

- » **Some positive progress has been made in Afghanistan as a result of official development assistance (ODA)** (e.g. in the areas of education and health), but the cost appears inordinately high in relation to the results.
- » **There is a large body of data on aid, but it is difficult to pull together a coherent and meaningful set of statistics.** Its usefulness and accessibility are limited by many factors, including reliability of original data, security constraints and classification of material.

THE STORIES INDICATE THAT...

- » Many Afghans have lost the ability to dream, lack hope, and are frightened by the future.
- » They feel trapped by severe external constraints and cannot see a way to create their own 'Arab Spring'.
- » They are immensely uncertain about the imposed deadline of 2014, and project their feelings of frustration on the international community, which includes Britain.
- » Afghans do not necessarily want more aid, but better aid, so advocacy on increasing the volume of aid should shift to calls for improved quality of aid.
- » There are six main factors constraining the potential return on investment in aid: conflict and criminality; corruption; capacity challenges; complexity; competing interests; and lack of common sense.
- » There are many issues impacting the effectiveness of aid in Afghanistan that cannot be addressed within the official framework of the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*.
- » Most UK aid is indistinguishable from other aid, particularly the much greater US contribution.
- » Afghans perceive that UK aid is politicised, and focused on Helmand at the detriment of the rest of the country.
- » There is still enormous pressure from donors and international media for demonstrable results, promoting a focus on quick impact projects rather than sustainable long-term development outcomes.
- » The Afghan Government is attempting to improve budget execution capabilities, particularly implementing capacities of line ministries, but progress remains slow.

Executive Summary

- » Funds dispersed directly to NGOs have a better chance of generating relevant projects that are accountable, participatory, and making good use of Afghan human and material resources.
- » Afghans would prefer the international aid community to take a supporting, rather than lead, role in coordination.
- » Some programme activities are universally perceived to be counterproductive – past counter-narcotics initiatives and current cash-for-work programmes are seen to be a ‘blunt tool’.
- » While corruption is recognised as an Afghan problem, its severity is often attributed to international aid and cash flows emanating from military commanders.
- » It is hard to live and work in Afghanistan, and the international community does not fully appreciate this.
- » There is a fear of being quoted. This apprehension also extends to members of the international community.

Underlying the frustration with the international community is a clear impression that, while much has “been said before” in the profusion of reports and evaluations on aid in Afghanistan, little has been learned in practice: “Among the international community, there are many tongues, but not many ears”. This is mirrored in the increasingly common refrain amongst UK military officers involved in Afghanistan: “We are getting better at ‘lessons identified’, but these have not yet translated into ‘lessons learned’”.

‘Transition’ is the latest buzz word to circulate amongst the Afghan Government, international military, donors, United Nations, and NGO community in the current context. Afghans warn, however, that many of the same issues of the past 10 years will endure. The vision of the security handover also seems to have given rise to considerable fear, rumour and more unreasonable expectations.

Building on its relatively positive performance as a donor in Afghanistan, the UK Government must lead in demonstrating that, alongside the drawdown of international troops, support will be ongoing with a view to the reality that the order of change deemed necessary to improve security, governance, and the advancement of people’s rights to education and civil protection will take at least a generation.

Approach

“The conflict in Afghanistan is often described as a war of ideas and perceptions; this is true and demands important consideration. However, perceptions are generally derived from actions and real conditions, for example by the provision or a lack of security, governance, and economic opportunity.”

– General McChrystal, *COMISAF Initial Assessment*

To inform how UK aid money is spent in Afghanistan, and gauge a sense of how well Afghans perceive it is being spent, this snapshot combined reviews of official statistics on aid flows and quantitative and qualitative survey results with personal perceptions of respected informants.

The **official aid flow statistics** selected include the ODA pledged, committed and disbursed from the international community to Afghanistan; the relative scale of UK aid; its sources; and its allocation to on-budget support, province, and sector (past, present and projected).

The three most reliable sources of statistical data were: the Afghan Ministry of Finance, the UK Department for International Development (DfID), and the OECD DAC database. However, for consistency, the preference was to use data from DfID and the Afghan Government wherever possible.¹

A combination of factors makes it extremely difficult to build a meaningful, coherent and up-to-date set of statistics with a reasonable degree of confidence. Examples of the limitations include:

- » uncertainty about the reliability of original data
- » uncertainty about whether and when databases have been updated
- » time lag between latest available information and today's spend
- » distinction between 'pledge', 'commitment', 'disbursement', and the key missing part – what is delivered on the ground (there is no systematic feedback at this level)
- » anomalies in reporting between bilateral and multilateral allocations
- » notional allocations (donors to multilateral organisations use the proportions the latter report to impute their own contributions by sector, country)²

1. Direct consultations with the Afghan Ministry of Finance produced clearer and more reliable results than those available through the Afghan Government's Development Assistance Database (DAD).

2. The Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) identifies 'determining attribution' as a major issue for measuring effectiveness and value for money. See ICAI (2011) 'ICAI's Approach to Effectiveness and Value for Money - Report 1' (November).

- » distinction between donor 'preferences' and actual disbursement of their contributions to pooled funds
- » different sources using different reporting periods, currencies, exchange rates, categories and calculations. For example, the UK's official *Statistics on International Development* report provides two aggregations – UK GPEX/DfID Programme and UK ODA data³
- » distinction between DfID assistance delivered through its Country Programmes and International Policy Programmes
- » distinction between aid as defined by ODA and aid that supports security.

When asked for estimates of the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)'s expenditure in real terms on counter-narcotics, rule of law programmes, human rights, and democracy work in Afghanistan for the period 2000-12, British Foreign Secretary William Hague provided figures from 2008-11, and claimed that expenditure prior to this period is unable to be disaggregated or comparisons made 'without incurring disproportionate cost' due to the change in funding arrangements.⁴

Others encountering these difficulties include an ex-partner of one of the 'Big Four' accounting firms in London, who observed that "there is a myriad of figures, and it's impossible to reconcile most of them". In relation to humanitarian aid specifically, the GHA programme, funded by the governments of Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK, notes that arriving at a global aid figure 'from all humanitarian actors is currently not possible'.⁵

3. GPEX is reported by financial year and ODA by calendar year. GPEX shows gross flows and ODA figures are net after loans repaid and grants recovered; GPEX covers development aid to all countries and ODA only to recipients defined as eligible by the OECD DAC. DfID (2010) *Statistics on International Development 2005/6 - 2009/10* (October)

4. Hansard source: House of Commons Written Answers (17 February, 2011)

5. Global Humanitarian Assistance (2010) 'Use case on humanitarian aid information' (June), p.3. The goals of the GHA programme are two-fold: 'to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and coherence of humanitarian response by further increasing access to reliable, transparent and understandable data on humanitarian assistance and to contribute to an authoritative, comparable shared evidence base for people and institutions involved in humanitarian policy and programming'.

Approach

Numerous **quantitative surveys** provide another prolific source of statistics. Those selected for this snapshot appear in Annex 1, and alone provide data from samples totalling around 23,000 Afghans. Again the results are frequently heavily qualified because of the difficulties in obtaining reliable first-hand information at the local level.

For the above reasons, the statistics selected during the research were complemented by the **stories** and personal perspectives of those who participated in the sample. None were willing to have any quotes attributed to them, or to be identified and have pictures taken – this includes the Afghans and members of the international community that were consulted. The reasons included fear of being fired, marginalised, kidnapped or killed.

In-depth interviews were conducted with a diverse sample including: a Provincial Governor, high-level public servants and interns within the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development (MRRD) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), experienced INGO country directors and programme managers, local NGO directors and staff, leading business people, researchers and academics, young educated women, US contractors, NATO-ISAF personnel, and officials from the US Agency for International Development (USAID), US Treasury, DfID-Afghanistan, and the Helmand Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT).

Over 100 people were either interviewed or invited to participate in **small workshops** during August-September 2011. Notably, an appeal for many Afghans was the approach taken, including the cross-section of people involved and the way the dialogue was conducted and recorded at the individual and group level.

Three workshops were conducted. For one, the sample included a representative cross-section of people working within Government departments (8), including senior advisors, directors and (3) recent university graduates, international and local NGOs (8), donor

organisations (2), think tank representatives (2), and independent Afghans consulting to Government (3). There were 8 women and 16 men. (See Annex 2.)

The participants, however, were selected because of who they are as individuals, rather than because of which constituency or organisation they represent. Through the researcher's local network, they were identified based on their rare combination of integrity, passion for their country, desire to make things happen, and their ability to think through extremely difficult problems, represent the local Afghan voice due to strong connections back to their villages, relate to the international community, and reflect on aid effectiveness.

The other two workshops involved a cross-section of owners and employees of small to medium-sized enterprises from the business community. One was for businessmen only and the other involved mostly businesswomen. All participants had experience of UK-funded support, and spanned construction, logistics, oil, handicrafts, and transport. The companies were invited by the UK- and Canadian-funded Peace Dividend Trust, and are all listed on the Peace Dividend Marketplace Afghanistan database.

The researchers facilitated the workshops through a series of questions to guide a free-flowing conversation. In particular, people were encouraged to characterise the status quo, envision the longer term and then identify the major obstacles ahead. The discussion was mostly conducted in English by the mixed group and Dari or Pashto by the other two. Participants directly recorded the gist of the conversation in English as it progressed, using an innovative collaborative technology, supported by a set of wirelessly connected netbooks. This tool was deployed to enhance the face-to-face conversation, rather than substitute it, and break down barriers that often prevent an open and honest exchange. Importantly, the inputs were anonymous. The approach also helped the groups to capture, categorise and prioritise many ideas in a short period of time.



Approach

Most respondents appeared motivated by the opportunity to contribute constructively to an 'Afghan voice', without compromise, and deliver messages directly to those who they believe need to hear – in this case, the British Government, and ultimately 'the ordinary taxpayers', whose hard-earned incomes have cumulatively contributed to the second largest contribution of bilateral aid to Afghanistan since the military intervention in 2001. The result was a highly energetic exchange, which grappled with the complexity of the topic at hand, and produced an accurate record of people's views due to their direct inputs.

This document is based on these inputs and the one-on-one interviews primarily with other Afghans – all indicated in italics in the main text, or green boxes. The full workshop transcripts are available at the back of the document. The document also draws from data gleaned from existing reports and feedback received from donor, military and INGO staff consulted as part of this process.

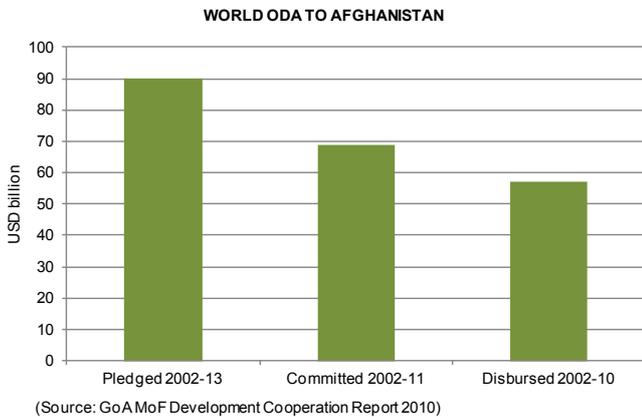
The ensuing analysis should not be treated as a comprehensive representation of either a definitive Afghan voice or UK aid effectiveness – it is rather a **snapshot of stories and statistics** that together paint an indicative picture of the situation at the 10-year anniversary. Interestingly, a Professor of Mathematics once said of another space: "The focus of stories is on individual people rather than averages, on motives rather than movements, on point of view rather than the view from nowhere, context rather than raw data. Moreover, stories are open-ended and metaphorical rather than determinate and literal."⁶

6. Paulos, John Allen (2010) 'Stories vs. Statistics,' Opinionator, <<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/10/24/stories-vs-statistics/>>

1 Counting the cost

The sheer volume of aid that has been invested in Afghanistan since 2001 has entirely reshaped the economy. Just two US Government agencies – the State Department and USAID – spend USD320 million per month on development in Afghanistan.¹ With aid estimated at USD15.4 billion in 2010/11 and international military spend exceeding USD100 billion, the World Bank Afghanistan Country Team argues that massive inflows of external aid and military spending are responsible for driving growth and fiscal performance in the country, and predicts that the current growth path is unsustainable.²

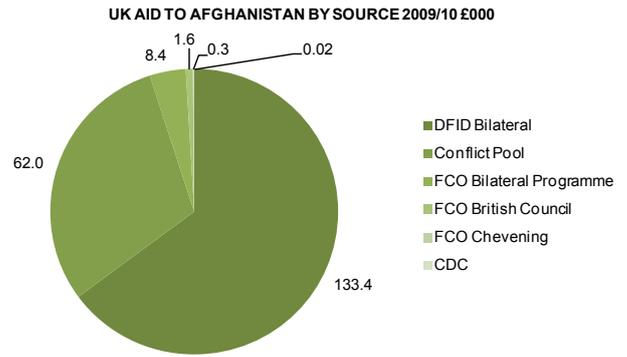
Total aid to Afghanistan represents 40-50% of GDP, and contributes 91% of the Afghan Government's public spending. A further 15% of Afghanistan's GDP now comes from drug-related exports, with the trade having a net worth of over USD2 billion. Private sector investment is reportedly very low at 4.3%, on-budget support finances public consumption and investment (at 25% of GDP), and private consumption is strongly correlated with aid. As such, Afghanistan's economy is anything but the picture of long-term stability, and is at yet another crossroads with the impending draw-down of NATO-ISAF troops in 2014.



- The world has pledged \$90 billion to Afghanistan, of which \$57 billion has been disbursed over the period 2002-2010
- The UK has fully disbursed its commitment

Britain has made a considerable investment – both human and financial – in the effort to support Afghanistan since the attacks of 9/11. The rate at which British soldiers have been killed in the war is almost four times

that of their US counterparts, and double the rate which is officially classified as 'major combat'.³ In financial terms, the UK Government invested GBP205 million in Afghanistan in 2010 alone – DfID is the primary source, followed by the CP, which has grown six-fold since FY 2007/8.



(Source: DFID)

The CP aims to increase the effectiveness of HMG's engagement by bringing together the FCO, MoD and DfID to conduct joint analysis, establish shared priorities and design and implement joint conflict prevention and management programmes on the ground. Around 80% of the funds channelled through the CP are spent through the Helmand PRT in aid of 'stabilisation', and a large majority of the funding is ODA tracked from DfID's budget.⁴ Aid agencies have consistently raised concerns that, by deploying UK aid money in support of short term foreign policy and security objectives in Afghanistan, it runs the risk of being perceived as politicised.

In 2001, DfID set up an office in Afghanistan to support a limited humanitarian effort with the understanding that it would commit to a longer-term plan. Its subsequent programme, designed in 2003 and developed further in 2005-6 through the Interim Strategy for Afghanistan, explicitly adopted a 'state-building' approach, in which the majority of bilateral funding is tracked through projects administered by the Afghan Government from the centre.

3. Townsend, Mark (2010) 'Death rate of UK soldiers in Afghanistan 'four times higher' than US,' *The Observer* (20 June, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/jun/20/death-rate-uk-soldiers-afghanistan-higher-us> - citing analysis by the Medical Research Council's biostatistics unit.

4. ODA is defined as 'grants or loans to developing countries which are: a) undertaken by the official sector; b) with promotion of economic development and welfare as the main objective; and c) at concessional financial terms. In addition to financial flows, technical cooperation is included in aid. Grants, loans and credits for military purposes are excluded'. (OECD)

1. United States Senate (2011) Evaluating US Foreign Assistance to Afghanistan: Report for the Committee on Foreign Relations (8 June)

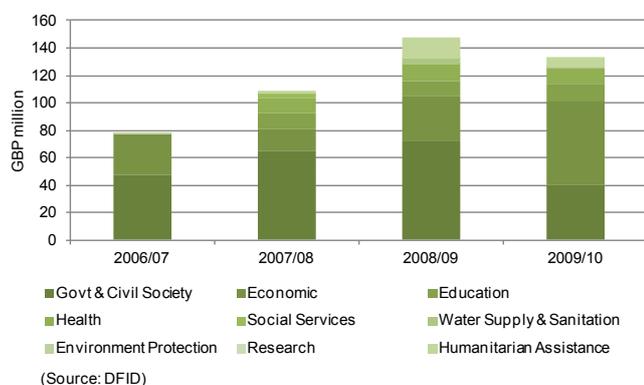
2. World Bank Afghanistan Country Team (2011) 'Issues and Challenges for Transition and Sustainable Growth in Afghanistan: DRAFT' (26 July)

Counting the cost

As a result, from 2006, DfID began to fund technical assistance (TA) and 'capacity building' within line ministries. The 2009 DfID Country Programme Evaluation observed that the strategy was predicated upon several ambitious assumptions: that the formal political transition process would result in a stable political settlement; that conferring legitimacy on the state means building it from the centre first; and that formal institutions (judicial, banking etc) are the pillars of growth.

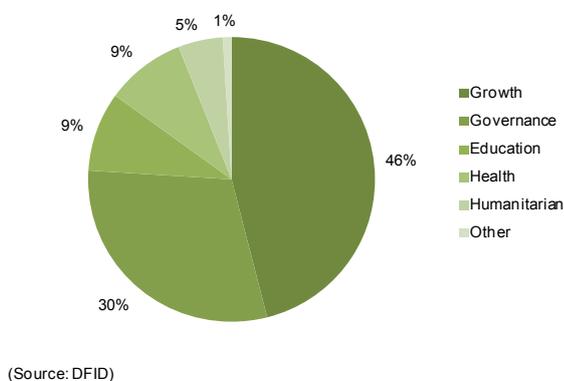
For FY 2007/08, the difference between 'Growth' and 'Governance' reflected this emphasis, with funding allocations to the former at approximately a quarter of spending on Governance. From FY 2008/09, spending on Growth then almost doubled (from GBP32 million to 61 million) while spending on Governance almost halved (from GBP72 million to 40 million).

DFID AID TO AFGHANISTAN BY SECTOR 2006/7-2009/10



By 2009/10, UK spending on Growth outranked spending on Governance and Civil Society. In Helmand, however, there was a sharp rise in funding (from GBP328,000 to 5.5 million in 2009/10) for Governance work supported by the CP and FCO's Strategic Programme Fund. This was sustained in 2010/11.

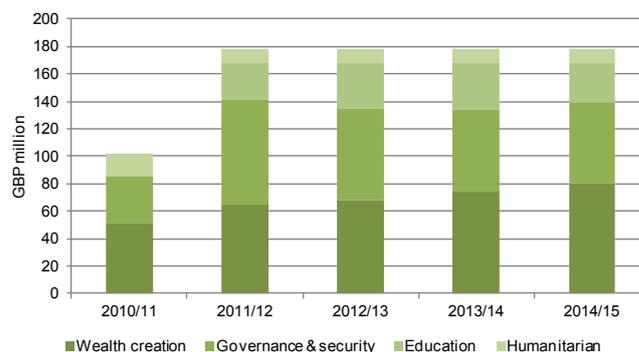
DFID AID TO AFGHANISTAN BY SECTOR 2009/10



The two charts above demonstrate the difficulties in comparing data, even from the same source, given the different categorisations of sector spending.

DfID now has an average budget of GBP178 million to spend in Afghanistan each year until 2015. Following

DFID PROJECTED SPEND IN AFGHANISTAN 2011/12-2014/15



(Source: DFID)

- In 2010/11 DFID delayed a payment of £85m to the ARTF as the IMF programme lapsed in the country, reducing the expected spend from £176m to £102m. Payments to the ARTF are expected to resume when a new IMF programme is agreed, but timing cannot be confirmed.
- DFID plans to disperse 50% of its total aid to Afghanistan through the ARTF.
- As DFID supports education through the ARTF the above figures are estimates based on the proportion of ARTF allocated to education.

from the *Bilateral Aid Review*, which was released in March 2011, the *Operational Plan for Afghanistan* was drawn up to decide on what could realistically be achieved over the next four years (April 2011 – March 2015). The plan outlines commitments in four areas: Wealth Creation (or 'Growth'); Governance and Security; Education; and Humanitarian Assistance.

The emphasis on state-building and supporting formal institutions explains why one UK public servant characterises the two largest sector contributions – Governance and Growth – as entirely interlinked with the Government rather than civil society options:

"Basically, the Governance component contributes to state-building by putting a system in place, whereas the work on Growth and Livelihoods is about working with line ministries to deliver services."

As with other large donors in Afghanistan, the UK Government has to strike a delicate balance between competing demands in its allocation of aid money. Various trade-offs relate to issues such as cultural sensitivities, sustainability, monitoring, inclusion of Afghan voices, engagement with the Afghan Government, and approach to informal systems. Key dilemmas the UK Government must weigh up include:

- » Prioritise security or poverty reduction? What about human rights?
- » Focus on the poorest or on the ones who will indirectly support the poor?
- » Focus on business or the Government?
- » Fund projects that are able to be monitored?
- » Who do you listen to?
- » How do you listen?

Counting the cost

- » More aid money on-budget, or off-budget?
- » Aim for short-term results or invest in the long-term?
- » Build on what's there or start with a blank slate?
- » Centralise governance and impose systems or build from the bottom-up?
- » More or less money on aid in the future?

Transparency, results and value for money are three of the latest watchwords to dominate UK strategy in Afghanistan and engagement in other fragile states. DfID's *Bilateral Aid Review*⁵ was designed to 'improve the allocation of UK aid to ensure that [UK] objectives are achieved in the most cost-effective manner possible, maximising value for money, and based on a solid understanding of what works and what does not.'⁶ Meanwhile the tri-departmental *Building Stability Overseas Strategy* (BSOS), mandated by the *Strategic Defence and Security Review* (SDSR) and published in July 2011, expresses a commitment to ensuring that the UK's 'investments deliver real results on the ground, are transparent and provide value for money for the UK taxpayer.'⁷

The UK Government should be applauded for its new focus because it is now increasingly well known that donors have been realising a poor return on their investments through aid to Afghanistan. The establishment of the Helmand Monitoring and Evaluation Programme (HMEP), funded jointly by the Helmand PRT and DfID, is a positive move towards measuring impact in the province which has received over a third of British aid to Afghanistan. Helmand is one of 32 provinces where roughly 5% of Afghanistan's population lives, and the main British military base is located.

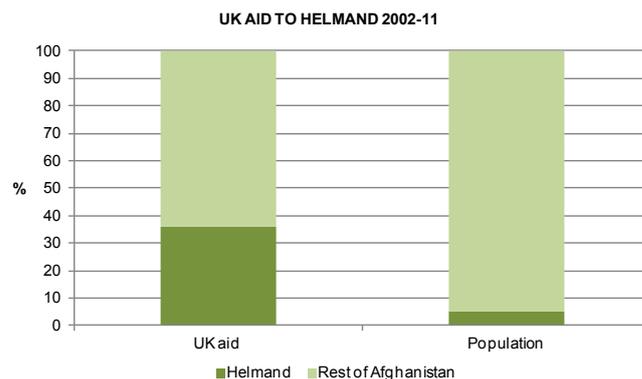
The costs of not effectively capturing and learning lessons earlier is being felt by those at the helm of the UK-led PRT, who are focusing more of their effort in the transition on building the capacity of governance structures in Helmand through training district staff in development co-ordination and implementation. Current officials suggest that the direct delivery model that was deployed in the first few years of the UK's presence in Helmand encouraged a dependence which has resulted in a sense of apathy among Afghan public servants who show a lack of interest in taking on more responsibility.

The Afghans who were interviewed for this study are highly conscious of these challenges, and wish to share their views with the British Government and public on

5. DfID also conducted a Multilateral Aid Review at the same time that assessed how effective UK-funded multilateral organisations were at tackling poverty. The findings from that review, however, are beyond the scope of this report.

6. DfID, *Bilateral Aid Review Technical Report*, http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/MAR/FINAL_BAR%20TECHNICAL%20REPORT.pdf, p.3

7. DfID, *Building Stability Overseas Strategy*, www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/.../Building-stability-overseas-strategy.pdf, p.33



(Source: GoA MoF)

the UK's contribution to aid in Afghanistan at the 10-year anniversary.

In conjunction with their interest in doing this, they expressed a universal frustration that their voices have simply not been heard, in spite of the 'noise'. One elderly man from Helmand commented: "Among the international community, there are many tongues, but not many ears". This is mirrored in the increasingly common refrain amongst UK military officers involved in Afghanistan: "We are getting better at 'lessons identified', but these have not yet translated into 'lessons learned'".

This section is not complete without bringing further to the fore a major cost with both financial and human dimensions – the under-utilisation and suppression of Afghan women. The workshop conducted mostly with women dramatically illustrated the courage, resilience and business nous required of the increasing number of women setting up and running their own enterprises.

Much of the discussion in the workshop convened for female business-owners was dominated by a very lively and angry exchange about the missed opportunities to help them find their own voice after the years of abuse and oppression. Several women lamented that the international community was too quick to introduce 'gender' programmes and women's rights initiatives, without allowing the women of Afghanistan to lead their own charge.

Counting the cost

Some invitees delegated the responsibility to attend the workshop to male colleagues, which in itself was a sign of the fatigue of these women in sharing their valuable time and suggestions. Afghans have been the subject of so much polling and surveying that this was the exacerbated response of one female business owner:

“It is difficult to be in this meeting because we all have work to do and, as a business person, I believe time is money. I feel like I’m wasting time because the impact of these reports has never been felt by any of us and we have attended over 10000000 conferences and meetings and provided information to the internationals for their reports.”

These women are particularly concerned about their fate post-transition. The main disagreement between male and female business owners occurred over the question of whether it is any less safe for men or women

to do business in Afghanistan – it was useful to compare the inputs of the businessmen from the previous day, who underscored insecurity as one of their main issues. After the discussion in the women’s workshop, participants were encouraged to provide direct inputs on the differences between being a businessman and businesswoman in Afghanistan. The full transcript is available in the annex, but the box below shows a sample of comments.

The question that emerges from this snapshot so far is whether the cost of not tuning in well enough to the voices of Afghans over the past decade has led to a place of no return: is there space within the period of ‘transition’ to reverse this sense and harness the energy of Afghans to optimise the investment of donors in the country? A broader discussion of UK aid effectiveness since the intervention may help inform this quandary.

AFGHAN PERCEPTIONS

DOING BUSINESS AS A WOMAN IN AFGHANISTAN

- » *Being a businessman in Afghanistan is very easy to go around the country and implement the project but for women it’s never that easy going around the remote areas in the country and do business – it always causes them to lose projects and contracts*
- » *Businessman in Afghanistan means lion and rule the jungle, while businesswomen mean walk in jungle with millions of dangers without any support. And we notice they are hunted by different ways some time fall from mountain sometimes drown in river and eaten by animal*
- » *Economic conditions also differentiate the women businesses from businessmen*
- » *Good news for women because in Afghanistan there are lots of NGOs for women’s rights – give lots of project for them but they are not giving for men – but there are also some places where you have to pay money before they will give the project to you*
- » *With the NATO and ISAF troops leaving the Afghan Army and Afghan Police have the capacity and capability to keep the situation in peace – there will be ever more and better opportunities to operate and expand our business in other sectors and work and provide Afghan jobs, mostly and specifically to the Afghan women – most of the business had already developed they are able to operate*
- » *Woman in business in Afghanistan is not that educated, and while dealing for business, they find it difficult to deal in international languages or to write proposals – this is a major issue in getting contracts*
- » *Women sometimes get asked for bribes, like men, but also other things which are not acceptable*
- » *Women are always seen in small businesses because they haven’t approach on big capitals and they never go to the local markets and haven’t had much knowledge about marketing*

2 Assessing UK aid effectiveness

Most commentaries and reports on aid effectiveness in Afghanistan are organised around the five key principles outlined in the 2005 *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* (the 'Paris Declaration'): ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results, and mutual accountability. While the Paris Declaration was designed to manage aid effectively and maximise the benefits to the population, it operates at a high level through mechanisms agreed between the donors and recipient government, rather than focus on its implementation and impact. This has become the default measurement of 'aid effectiveness' in the sector.

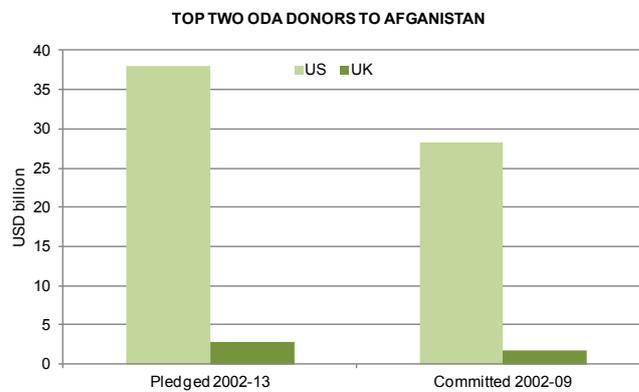
By account of the Paris principles, the UK rates as a 'good donor' – particularly in relation to the US, which contributes the largest proportion of aid to Afghanistan. DfID and the Afghan Ministry of Finance have both published figures that indicate a 100% disbursement rate of UK aid in Afghanistan. In this regard, the UK has set a positive example for other donors, especially given the significant variation of individual donor governments' delivery against pledges.¹

The UK has also been a quiet champion of donor alignment and harmonisation, taking opportunities to encourage better coordination, including outreach to the INGO community in important discussions on transition. The 2009 DfID Country Programme Evaluation credits DfID as having played a critical leadership role in encouraging more foreign assistance to flow through the Afghan Government using mechanisms such as the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF).²

While commendable, DfID's practice of channelling its aid funds through common systems makes it near-impossible to attribute results to specific inputs. Some commentators argue that the difficulty in tracing contributions reinforces the skewed focus of aid effectiveness principles at the donor-recipient country level, rather than at the level of developmental impact.

1. GHA reports that at the end of 2009, the US and India had yet to deliver 60% of the amounts that they pledged for the whole period up to 2013. Poole, Lydia (2011) 'Afghanistan: Tracking major resource flows 2002-2010,' GHA, p.4

2. DfID (2009) 'Country Programme Evaluation Afghanistan,' Evaluation Report EV696, p.59



(Source: OECD)

- The US is the biggest donor with the UK coming a distant second
- The US and UK provided 40% and 7% of disbursed aid for the period 2002-8

Certainly up until recently, DfID has dedicated much less attention to the demand side of governance, including the role of civil society and other accountability mechanisms, and instead championed approaches to public administration and bureaucratic or system reforms.

Results have been particularly slow to emerge in the area of Governance in light of the investment made. It is argued, however, that it is very difficult to 'see' results in this sector. Elections may be one measure, but their past record is far from encouraging. One educated Afghan living in Kabul said:

"A vote in Afghanistan is just a piece of paper in a box – it doesn't mean anything. I have never voted, neither has my wife, and we will not while the system continues as it is."

Such a comment may serve to indicate how important local perceptions are as a measure of aid effectiveness, apart from the fulfilment of technical commitments. Parallel sentiments expressed by others in the research also reinforce the need for greater investment in, and more effective, monitoring and accountability mechanisms for aid and 'good governance'. The concentration of investment at 'the centre' without such meaningful mechanisms has led to a lack of scrutiny of attempts made to date.

Assessing UK aid effectiveness

Several excellent reports draw attention to the limitations of applying the Paris Declaration framework within the Afghan context, where accountability should flow downwards if development inputs are to succeed over the long-term. In relation to mutual accountability, one researcher explains that this:

... is a multi-way process between numerous actors; it is more complicated than establishing vertical and horizontal reporting structures. For all actors to participate in the accountability process, including civil society and the general public, information has to be available. However, simply providing access to information does not achieve mutual accountability because that information has to be understood and analysed in context to determine whether development processes are appropriate and effective and that actors' attempts to be accountable are genuine.³

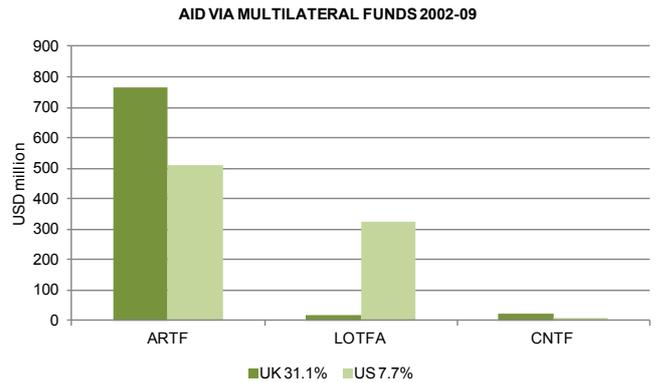
Another report written in 2009 also appears valid in today's situation. It takes a critical look at the key mechanism introduced by donors to support greater mutual accountability - the 'Afghanistan Compact', which was in turn intended to be monitored by the 'Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board' (JCMB). Both have become increasingly recognised as dysfunctional due to factors including the tokenistic participation of civil society, unrealistic aspirations, conflict context, corruption in the bureaucracy, and shortfalls in the formal process itself:

[The Afghanistan Compact] should provide an instrument to assess progress towards goals and explain why they have or have not been achieved. So far this has not happened; no satisfying justifications are given and no sanctions are applied. Regarding the JCMB, some government representatives and donors interviewed for this study said that it is one example of progress on mutual accountability. However, NGO representatives, members of Parliament and informed observers do not really know about the JCMB or how it functions, so who can they hold accountable for fulfilling the Afghanistan Compact's goals, and how?⁴

The research also raises the question as to whether it is in fact possible to have true mutual accountability between multiple actors when the most important accountability relationship is between the donor government and its own taxpayer.

3. AREU (2009) 'Discussion Paper: Reflections on the Paris Declaration and Aid Effectiveness in Afghanistan' (April) (Author: Rebecca Roberts), p.10. The UK Government's admirable support to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) should be viewed in this light.

4. AREU (2009) 'Mutual Accountability in Afghanistan: Promoting Partnerships in Development Aid?' (April) (author: Marieke Denissen), p.13



(Source: OECD)

- The UK has allocated nearly a third of its ODA through pooled funds aligned with the Government of Afghanistan, compared with 7.7% for the US

In the UK context, the average British citizen's exposure to Afghanistan is limited mainly to media reports about the troop's effort in Helmand – there is little available research into how the British taxpayer evaluates UK aid effectiveness and understands the complexities involved.

Returning to Afghanistan, discussions revealed that it is at the project level that people can begin to comprehend how the money is disbursed. Research participants were therefore asked to identify examples of UK aid that they have personally experienced, or at least know about. They listed a wide range of known initiatives, and several stood out as particularly worthy of mention in the workshops and one-on-one interviews with Afghans – namely, the demining work implemented by the HALO Trust; the National Solidarity Programme (with important caveats) implemented by INGOs under the ARTF; and the general approach taken in Helmand, when compared with the US footprint.

The next three pages show an array of the inputs provided from the workshops and one-on-one interviews, along with information about specific projects which (a) more than three people referred to as 'good news' stories, and (b) attracted no negative feedback.

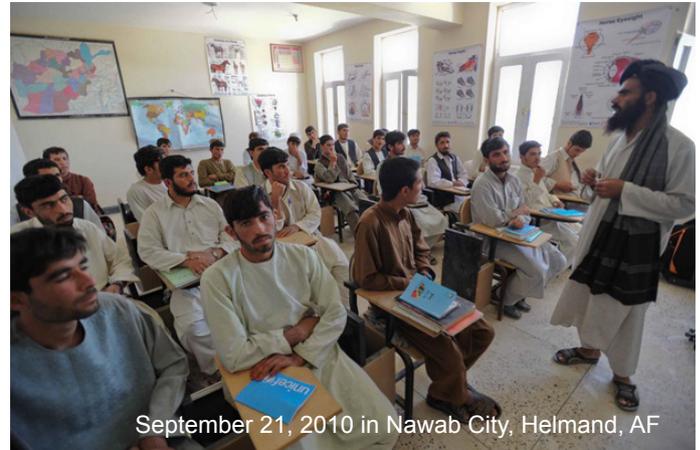
These projects also shared key features that relate to alternative discussions of good practice and principles of aid effectiveness, namely:

- » Engagement of the people
- » Response to actual needs
- » Realistic goals
- » Long term investment and focus on generational change

AGRICULTURE

Learning modern farming techniques

Young Afghan farmers are learning modern farming techniques at the new Helmand Agriculture High School in Lashkar Gah. The purpose is to support the cultivation of legal crops that can provide an alternative income to opium.



September 21, 2010 in Nawab City, Helmand, AF

AFGHAN PERCEPTIONS

- *Ownership of the beneficiary is quite an important issue in achieving good results – every program that has involved the community in the design and implementation has had good results because the community supported it.*
- *In case of NSP we confirm the successfulness of programme and significant achievement, but still there is need to focus on sustainability, quality and efficiency for betterment – the engagement should not be based on black and white approach.*
- *Reason for NSP being successful is that it gives power to people to decide upon their own priorities and needs and they then implement the project by themselves.*
- *One example of good result achieved was in a volatile part of the country where the programme achievements were directly felt by the community and as a result they shared an enormous amount of sympathy with the implementing organization. The community provided security and space for the organisation's implementing team in the district.*

DfID claims that poppy cultivation in Helmand is falling as farmers start to grow new crops. Yet the challenge is formidable. UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon told delegates at a conference in February 2012 that 'Time is not on our side ... We cannot speak of sustainable development when opium production is the only viable economic activity in the country.' (SG/SM/14110)



CLEARING MINES

A large-scale demining programme is a precursor to any development activities, according to the Director of HALO Trust Afghanistan.

Afghanistan is afflicted by the presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO). HALO's teams work with communities to locate and destroy ammunition caches before they are found by those who may use them to cause further destruction.

UK aid from DfID is helping the HALO Trust transform rural parts of the country, allowing thousands of families to return and rebuild houses, schools and businesses. A 5-year, GBP10 million programme in Herat began in 2008, employing 550 national staff. Already it has changed the lives of people in three districts bordering Iran.



AFGHAN PERCEPTIONS

- » *A plus for the UK was the successful demining intervention throughout the country*
- » *Demining excellent results and assisted communities to re-establish their livelihoods*
- » *DfID are very flexible in their approach to funding programmes within their parameters set by the UK Government*



Afghan de-mining expert

Afghan men are being trained by the HALO Trust and employed in mine clearance teams across the country. These de-miners cross ethnic and regional boundaries to carry out their life-saving work.

David Gill/Development Pictures All rights reserved by DfID
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/dfid/5733271348/in/set-72157626748396868>

EMPLOYMENT

INVEST Programme

In mid-June 2011, the Helmand Vocational Training Centre opened in Lashkar Gah. Student registration opened and within two days, 1,600 students had signed up for courses. One month later, 96% of students continued to study each day, while 4% had dropped out. Over 2,000 students are now part of the programme, 600 of whom are girls; the plan is to train 15,000 people over three years, including 1/3 female students.

A wide range of courses are available from English language, IT, metalwork, carpentry, tractor repair, mobile repair, tailoring, embroidery, motorcycle repair, wiring, plumbing, refrigerator maintenance and air conditioning to pre-university coaching, calligraphy and Islamic classes. Community engagement is a key aspect of the INVEST Programme – in this photo, INVEST staff are working closely with a local community to discuss training requirements.



Mercy Corps, INVEST Quarterly Report March-May 2011

AFGHAN PERCEPTIONS

- » *Providing vocational training for Afghans where literacy rate is low is useful*
- » *Supportive to new ideas*
- » *The flexibility and support of UK agencies in capacity building of partners is important*
- » *UK aid within 12 years is appreciable as by sound financial support of UK through [our INGO partner] we have been able to implement numerous emergency and development programmes which resulted in most major marginalised peoples accessing safe drinking water, protecting their homes by construction of protection wall, providing irrigation water through construction of dams and rehabilitation of karizee*
- » *I have been working in the Community Rights Mobilization and Response project, which is a useful project. Through this project we have solved a lot of problems of women regarding their rights – the majority of our project women were illiterate and they did not know about their rights or how to submit their legally complaints to justice's office. Through this project, women became organised, literate and brave – many of them returned their legal difficulty to justice offices, issues like marriage by force, and marriage of children (under 18 age), obstacles against a widow's second marriage. This project is appreciated by Faryab province residents*

3 Helmand

Given the significance of Helmand to the UK Government's strategy and effort in Afghanistan, and the fact that it is one province where it is easier to attribute aid to the UK, the researchers endeavoured to gather perspectives from Afghans through both the in-depth interviews and workshops regarding UK aid and Helmand, specifically.

Perceptions of UK aid and Helmand

Despite the wide-ranging number of projects and initiatives that were listed by people involved in the study, the general feeling among every person interviewed was that the majority of UK aid is dedicated to Helmand province.¹ The Governor of one province noted:

"We think the British focus is on Helmand. But you mustn't just see the problem in the eyes of the Pashtun belt. The UK's influence would be broader if it invested more outside of Helmand. We don't have much information on the Helmand efforts, other than the bad news we hear about more soldiers dying. But then we ask, why can't they control Helmand? They're shedding blood, but man is dying for what? People become suspicious. What are they doing just in this province?"

A snapshot of examples was presented by four further constituents in the country. An Afghan public servant, who recently received pressure to channel a UK-funded contribution to a multi-lateral fund outside of the intended province and into Helmand; a farmer explaining his experience of having to 'fit' his UK-funded programmes into the format of "Kips" (or rather 'QIPS'); a national NGO director who claimed that if the UK Government really had supported 40,000 farmers in Helmand and Kandahar, "you would not hear one more shot in Afghanistan – you would have peace"; and a previous UK Stabilisation Advisor who reflected on the pressure to spend and to create opportunities for "announcables" in the PRT.

As already mentioned in Chapter 1, it is worth noting that the UK PRT has shifted away from a service delivery and QIPs-driven approach towards 'governance-led stabilisation' that relies more on strengthening political outreach by the provincial authorities, and the reform of sub-national governance structures.²

1. A third of UK aid is allocated in Helmand Province.

2. See Gordon, Stuart (2010) 'The United Kingdom's stabilisation model and Afghanistan: the impact on humanitarian actors,' *Disasters*, p.375

This also presents dilemmas and risks, albeit different ones to the prior approach, but is a helpful return to the original PRT concept³, initially designed to play a supporting role in the: 'promotion' of security; 'extension' of the Afghan central government's reach; and 'facilitation' of humanitarian relief and reconstruction operations.

While promising progress is certainly being made in Helmand, some are asking whether it has arrived too late. The baseline data and perceptions surveys that have been gathered as part of the HMEP are a case in point – the team is beginning to build useful trends, but the data needs to be much more accessible and shared with the implementing partners who will ultimately take over service delivery in the years following 2014.

HMEP also provides an example of the difficulty of conducting surveys in insecure areas. It uses a 32-page questionnaire and respondents reportedly take on average only 45 minutes to complete it – villagers are invariably illiterate, so the actual forms tend also to be filled out by the intermediaries. An experienced researcher in Helmand was asked about his view on the matter:

"... there are significant problems with bias in the kind of quantitative surveys and polling that have been undertaken in the south. The bias is largely a function of the security situation. For example, if you review the latest HMEP Q1 report on attitudes to the Afghan National Police (ANP) you will find 89% 'believe the ANP serve the interest of the Afghan people' (and this is consistent across tier 1 districts). This is incongruous even in more stable districts in other provinces. Similar results are achieved when respondents are asked questions about elders, the District Governor, etc etc. This kind of quantitative approach using closed questions and focusing on coverage (under the guise of representativeness) fails to capture the diversity in the security situation and the assets and capabilities of the population within districts. Much is lost; even more is obfuscated."⁴

3. See descriptions of the early concept which preceded PRTs in Stapleton, Barbara (2003) 'BAAG Briefing Paper on the Development of Joint Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan' (January).

4. Conversation with David Mansfield, August 2011. Mansfield advocates for a case study approach, preferably over time and that draws on both fieldwork and remote sensing. A recent example is the FCO-funded study investigating the reasons behind the recent reductions in opium poppy cultivation in central Helmand. <http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=558&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>

AFGHAN PERCEPTIONS

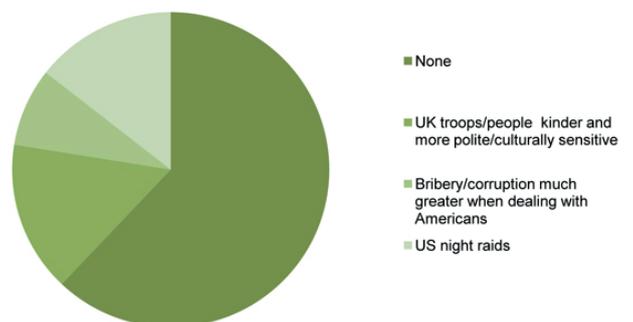
- » *Aid distribution largely based on politics rather than needs (i.e. Helmand)*
- » *UK is only focusing on few provinces of their interest, such as Helmand and few other provinces – short-term projects at the cost of long-term projects*
- » *External aid to Helmand alone according to WB was \$350 per person, more than anywhere in the country and in a province which already has a lot of resources compared with others*
- » *Geographical focus on Helmand has led to national imbalance*
- » *Procurement is rigged; people pay a percentage to win contracts, and they are given advance notice of the cost of tenders*
- » *Most of the surveys and evaluations done by DfID in Helmand can be challenged on quality, and thus most of the policies has been made on inaccurate information*
- » *One of the least poor provinces in the country, but receiving massive injection of aid – over \$300 per person*
- » *Some good programmes starting*
- » *Some of the Helmand projects funded by DfID have had huge corruption issues like bribes, commission, etc even to the PRT staff*
- » *When the PRT talks about Helmand, it's as if there are two completely different places. They use 'tools' such as WHAM and economic development. But they talk of democracy and justice, etc. They don't understand that in Helmand people are not interested in these things*
- » *Earmarking districts and provinces not considering other areas that are equally poor*
- » *Focus on winning hearts and minds over development priorities*
- » *Negative impacts of single province selection on UK reputation and community confidence and support*
- » *UK has failed to understand the tribal politics in Helmand and thus has been played by the local power holders against each other*
- » *Money has been spent. Needs were not properly identified, and aid was distributed in centres, not reaching the villages. Those who claim they receive the aid fake their land ownership documents.*

Some Afghans consulted during the research who are located in Kabul also shared stories of themselves participating in the filling out of hundreds of donor surveys that were intended for Helmand – “it is a known practice”, said one man.

While NGOs are likely to experience similar issues with surveying, they have the advantage of regularly interacting with the recipients of aid and the broader communities in which they are operating – they are often also from the same community, so the data may have less risk of being distorted if the staff member has a genuine interest in conveying their community's perceptions.

An opportunity was taken to add some questions to a regular perceptions survey that the national staff of the INVEST programme facilitate among its students, partly in order to qualify some of the anecdotal information gathered during the research about the different perceptions of the US and UK approaches to delivering aid in Helmand. Of the 1,000 questionnaires distributed, 859 people responded across 9 districts of Helmand. 60% claimed not to perceive any difference; the remaining 40% were asked to nominate one of three categories that describe the perceived differences – these categories were gleaned from earlier focus groups (see the chart below).

PERCEIVED DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE UK AND US PRESENCE IN HELMAND



Source: INVEST perceptions data, August 2011

Several workshop participants believed that neither the US nor UK Governments welcomed criticism, which makes it very difficult to deliver “bad news”. This is reflected in official reporting on improvements in the security conditions and civilian casualties. For example, the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD) noted ‘astronomical’ progress in developing the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) at the same time as the head of NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTMA) viewed its efforts as having ‘yielded a policeman who was poorly equipped, largely untrained, unable to successfully conduct his duties without significant coalition force

assistance, and illiterate'.¹ The implication is that the British taxpayer and others may not be receiving balanced accounts of the situation in Afghanistan.

An interesting parallel can be drawn by the commentary of a number of British journalists who have been embedded with UK forces. In 2010, one such journalist reports on the 'British defensiveness about the story they want the media to tell', and the special procedures imposed on UK journalists: 'no journalist can travel with the British in Helmand if he or she has not given signed agreement to an annex to the MoD 'Green Book' which sets out the procedures for coverage, including the requirement for pre-publication approval of all text, audio, and pictures. A soldier even sits in on my interviews. ... [The US] government makes no such demands of the embedded press'.

The MoD has subsequently explained that the Green Book is guided by the core principle that the safety and security of British Service personnel should not intentionally, directly or indirectly, be jeopardised by any media activity or engagement. Therefore the purpose of security checking material is to prevent information from inadvertently being made public which might either be of benefit to an enemy, or would endanger an operation, or the lives of British or allied Service personnel or civilians - it is not to constrain journalistic freedom or expression.

The UK Government's support to local media, which has an entirely different audience than the foreign press, appears to be appreciated by Afghan journalists in Helmand. DfID funding has provided mentoring support for members of the Lashkar Gah Journalists' Association, the core of the Afghan free press in the province. Journalists are encouraged to bring more transparency to activities in the region by reporting on injustices, such as institutional corruption and land property disputes.

Sifatullah Zahidi, a member of the Association, reportedly shared this assessment of the 10-year anniversary of 9/11 with a British journalist in Lashkar Gar:

*"The years after the attacks on the Twin Towers have brought some good changes for us in Helmand – foreign troops and a lot foreign help. But there are problems, too. Looking to the future, we are worried."*²

General conclusions

The discussions on Helmand revealed a strong sense among the Afghans consulted for this snapshot that aid should be distributed more equitably across the country, with a focus on some of the poorest areas, and the business community, through whom others can be helped out of poverty. In addition, people felt prompted to share stories about the negative consequences that flow from what they see as a short-sighted 'project mentality'.

One of the most recent pieces of work to support the argument for a more equitable distribution of aid is part of a case study series led by Tufts University that challenges whether humanitarian or reconstruction assistance delivers 'security benefits' to insecure areas of Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Horn of Africa. This strikes at the heart of the trade-offs involved when decisions must balance the twin objectives of poverty reduction and stabilisation. In the context of counter-insurgency doctrine and operations in Afghanistan, the study researched the widespread assumption that aid projects can help promote stability and security by helping to 'win hearts and minds'. One of the main findings, now influencing US policy, is that: 'Spending too much too quickly with too little oversight in insecure environments is a recipe for fuelling corruption, delegitimizing the Afghan government, and undermining the credibility of international actors'.³ There is some concern that this will lead policymakers to reduce the amount of aid, rather than create 'smarter' policies guided by a poverty reduction agenda.

In its first *Development Cooperation Report*, the Afghan Ministry of Finance has welcomed the findings, claiming that: 'billions of dollars worth [of] assistance have been provided through military agencies in Afghanistan, where most of these agencies have no or very less [sic] information on the principles of aid effectiveness', and 'PRTs' impacts on both security and reconstruction have been rather disappointing'.⁴ While it will take some time for the significance of these findings and reflections to percolate through donor organisations, presumably the above has informed the recently announced strategies for UK aid in Afghanistan.

1. LT General William Caldwell IV, Commander of NTMA & Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (2011) 'Remarks at the International Afghan National Police Symposium,' Joint Force Command, Brussels, 26 January.
2. Fox, Robert (2011) 'Afghans 'fear civil war and resurgence of the hated Taliban,' *The Evening Standard* (12 September)

3. Wilder, Andrew & Stuart Gordon (2009) 'Money Can't Buy American Love', *Foreign Policy*
4. Afghan Ministry of Finance (2010) *Development Cooperation Report*, p.43

4 Constraints

Irrespective of how robust a strategy might be, or how much a donor government spends, certain constraints will continue to limit the impact of aid in Afghanistan. Six interrelated constraints that impede the UK's current strategy and dilute its spend emerged from the research: **Conflict and criminality; Corruption; Capacity; Competing interests; Complexity; Common sense.**

Before turning in more detail to each of these headings, it is important to take note of three direct constraints imposed by major donors themselves, either inadvertently or purposefully, in Afghanistan today. These must be taken as 'givens' that define the space for future engagement.

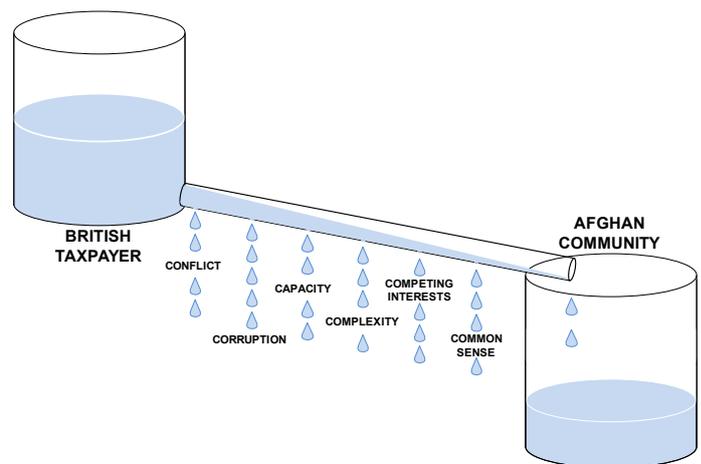
First, NATO-ISAF's timeline for 'transition', involving the handover of responsibility for security to national forces and the draw-down of international military forces, has been set for 2014. This transition period has major implications across all forms of international engagement in the country; notably for aid policy, peace and reconciliation agendas and governance. People are predicting that certain compromises will have to be made on the constitution, civil liberties, and women's rights. Afghan women, in particular, are concerned about their future.¹

Second, the war economy that has resulted from huge injections of aid and reconstruction money in a compressed period of time is here to stay for the foreseeable future. Unemployment stands at 36-40%, there is an overreliance on service-sector jobs based around the presence of international actors (e.g. guards, drivers, the property letting market), and a property bubble exists in the main cities. One report suggests that rents in an upscale neighbourhood in Kabul have increased over the past decade from approximately USD300 to 4,500 per month.² Related to broader aspects of the war economy, such as the opium trade, are the geopolitical dynamics of surrounding countries – also out of the control of the average Afghan.³

1. When questioned, a senior official who spoke on the condition of anonymity, told a journalist with *The Guardian* that, 'gender issues are going to have to take a back seat to other priorities ... There's no way we can be successful if we maintain every special interest and pet project. All those pet rocks in our rucksack were taking us down.' Tax, Meredith (2011) 'Can Afghan women count on Hillary Clinton?' *The Guardian* (4 July)

2. London Review of Books (2011) Vol. 33 No. 8 (14 April), <<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v33/n08/christopher-de-bellaigue/money-as-weapon>>.

3. For a fuller discussion of Afghanistan's war economy, see Goodhand, Jonathan (2004) 'Afghanistan in Central Asia' in *War Economies in a Regional Context: Challenges for Transformation* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers), pp. 45-91.



Third, there is the **Paris Declaration** and corresponding commitments made at the Kabul Conference in July 2011. One research paper highlights four of the main limitations with applying the Paris Declaration to the Afghan context as the primary measure of aid effectiveness:

- » it is technically-oriented
- » it does not take into account the political elements of aid or contextual challenges
- » it is designed to guide development assistance, rather than relief and stabilisation efforts
- » the focus is on process rather than impact, which encourages an emphasis on how governments and donors do things rather than on what they achieve through aid.⁴

The Afghan Government's current draft Aid Management Policy Position, which outlines its strategy for 'effective' development – suffers from some of these issues. A member of the Working Group on Aid Effectiveness chaired by the Ministry of Finance characterised the draft as good "conceptually", but not truly reflective of the realities in Afghanistan.⁵

At the Kabul Conference, the UK Government joined other donors in pledging to channel up to 50% of their funding through the core budget of the Afghan

4. AREU, 'Discussion Paper: Reflections on the Paris Declaration and Aid Effectiveness in Afghanistan'

5. The Afghan Ministry of Finance's *Joint Evaluation of the Paris Declaration Phase 2: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan* (2010) reveals some interesting differences in perceptions of donors, PRTs, Central Government, Provincial Government, Parliament and Women regarding how the principles apply in Afghanistan.

Government by 2012, thus aligning their spending with national priorities. Alignment is a key tenant of the Paris Declaration, which provides the framework for aid effectiveness in Afghanistan, having informed agreements between the GoA and donor governments, including the Afghanistan Compact and the *Afghanistan National Development Strategy* (ANDS). Unfortunately, however, there is doubt about the ownership and alignment with the Afghan people of strategies such as the ANDS, as demonstrated by the Afghan Ministry of Finance's Joint Evaluation of the Paris Declaration, published in 2010. Its consultations with civil society, private sector and Parliament reveal this perception:

ANDS is believed to be a foreign, not an indigenous document, influenced, written and designed by foreigners and now symbolically led by the government but influenced by international advisors. No adequate consultations at the national level were undertaken during ANDS preparation, with the people's representatives in the parliament, civil society organizations or the private sector. ANDS has not been translated into any Afghan language for consumption by Afghans who are non-English speaking although capable of understanding and analyzing the country's needs. That the Afghan government does not have the capacity to implement ANDS is clearly reflected in the fact that with the exception of the programs already ongoing during the ANDS development, very few new programs to translate ANDS sector strategies into action have been developed. NPPs are in their nascent stages, continuing to focus on activities since the Kabul conference; and NPPs do not cover the poverty oriented ANDS sectors and projects, which have earned best results for the people.⁶

Despite the inherent value in some of these strategies, the future contributions have to operate within an environment where there have been low levels of ownership among the people upon whom the success of the initiatives will depend.

6. Ibid., p.54.

The starkest 'on-the-ground' reality for Afghans is the unstable security situation, which stems from a mix of changing conflict dynamics and opportunistic criminality. The Afghan Government highlights the cost of conflict in its *Development Cooperation Report* as one of the primary challenges to aid effectiveness in Afghanistan, listing the negative consequences as delays and increased costs of implementing aid activities, limited access to volatile areas, and a reduction in confidence in the potential for peace.

At the macro level, many Afghans fear an all-out civil war. This became apparent when workshop participants were asked to provide a picture of what it is like for them to live in Afghanistan today, and what it might look like around December 2014. The responses of one group are listed in the box below.

AFGHAN PERCEPTIONS

What is it like for you to live in Afghanistan today?

- » *Afghanistan is full of fear with no guarantee for the next few years*
- » *Afghans are angry about the way things are*
- » *I can no longer go back to my village because I am seen to have gone to the other side by working with an INGO and might be killed*
- » *Insecure, dangerous, uncertain and politically unstable – very little hope of any positive change*
- » *Life was better in the 'good old days' – access to communities, roads, freedom of movement was possible, but today concrete walls, guns and security dominate the areas where I used to walk and enjoy the freedom of talking to Afghans without suspicion and worry*
- » *Uncertain situation and not optimistic for my future in particular about security of my children and family*
- » *We don't have any other option except to live in Afghanistan with our relatives, that is why we live here*

What does Afghanistan look like around December 2014?

- » *Almost instant, long term and catastrophic conflict*
- » *Civil war*
- » *More than civil war in country and Pakistan, Iran and other countries' troops will fight face to face here and clear their counts*
- » *No big change can be expected – there is so much regional politics around Afghanistan – it is even hard to predict what will happen the next day*
- » *People are learning from their past so things might get better if there is not interference from their neighbouring countries on their political issues*
- » *Situation may be worse than before 2001*
- » *Could be some optimism if the right decision is made. What is the right decision?*
- » *War economy will end by that time and lot of unemployment will be created*
- » *Uncertainty*
- » *We are uncertain, 2014 is unpredictable – looking to our past experience it looks like security will deteriorate and civil war will start*

The general mood regarding conflict trends is therefore one of extreme pessimism. Particular risks of deteriorating conflict exist in provinces and districts that are especially ethnically and politically mixed. Some cite examples such as Kunduz and Takhar in which 79 districts have 52 separate militias operating. The least secure provinces will also continue to be plagued with the effects of insurgency.⁷ One indication of this reality is the current position that the HALO Trust is taking regarding entry to the South. The national director explains that “IED fields” are “the new type of mine field that now litters the area – this is a big problem, and we don’t feel confident that we could contribute adequately due to insecurity, so we work on areas where we can gain robust access”.

For others, their physical safety is already at jeopardy through kidnapping threats, or even successful attempts – a place where the conflict and criminality often converge. After a 28-day ordeal, where a man was tortured and deprived of food and water while the kidnappers waited for his ransom, the victim claims: “I now travel in an armoured vehicle with protection. It’s sometimes better to be a hard target than a soft target”. These types of reports are prolific and yet remain under the radar for fear of reprisal.

AFGHAN PERCEPTIONS

- *When I am in London, the only thing I am worried about when I go out for dinner is the quality of the food. In Afghanistan, all educated Afghans who don’t belong to politicised or criminal groups worry about their safety – whether their status will attract attention that will bring harm. We do not go out for dinner.*
- *Unfortunately in Afghanistan there is not any positive competition [in business], because if a company wants to compete with another company he will use force.*

The psychology of people operating in a warzone also affects the impact of aid – people need regular RnR and often only stay in the country for 6 months to a year – which proves disruptive to the flow of programmes, their movement is restricted, and many are reliant on a system of drivers, cooks, and security personnel for their subsistence. An embedded British journalist observed the reality of PRT personnel operating in Helmand as follows: they ‘live inside a heavily fortified compound of watchtowers, tents and air-conditioned trailers that also houses Task Force Helmand, the UK military headquarters. Overland travel for civilians is confined to armed convoys ... and [t]ravel to any of Helmand’s district centres is by helicopter only.’ Further detail is provided in the box overleaf, along with a photograph of Afghan women police officers undergoing training at Lashkar Gar under British supervision.⁸

Donor governments have a duty of care for all of their staff deployed to unstable countries. The need for duty of care in Helmand has been graphically illustrated by violent attacks on the PRT vehicles. The UK Government’s security arrangements are in constant review in order to strike a balance between staff safety and effective delivery of its work.

While the above reflects the reality for the majority of expats working in Afghanistan, there are notable exceptions of people that do manage to achieve a lot with less stringent, or ‘hardened’, security management systems. NGO workers, for example, operate differently to foreign government and UN personnel due to the nature of their work implementing projects. Their design, delivery and monitoring procedures require regular interaction with the community, which in turn grants them greater legitimacy and consent for being in the villages concerned. One expat research participant explained that even in Lashkar Gar, the same area where the main PRT is operating:

“We’ve never had any serious security issues. We drive in normal cars, work and live in the community. There is Taliban everywhere, but we don’t feel threatened. It’s down to how you operate, which is encouraged by DfID.”

7. CARE International UK (forthcoming) ‘Afghanistan: Transition policy paper’

8. Steele, Jonathan (2010) ‘Afghanistan: Can aid make a difference?’ *The Guardian* (21 November)

Constraints - Conflict and criminality

There is certainly no magic bullet for keeping safe in Afghanistan – whether by living behind Hesco barriers or inside guesthouses and travelling more incognito, the reality is that there is still danger for both Afghans and aid workers operating in the country.

While the international military forces in Afghanistan have achieved some success in reducing civilian casualties caused by pro-government forces (14 percent of civilians deaths were caused by such forces in the first half of 2011 compared with 23 percent in the same period in 2010), the focus of the international community in developing the ANSF has until recently been on quantity rather than quality. Consequently, despite recent positive changes, concerns for the safety of Afghan civilians have grown with responsibility for security now being transferred to the ANSF.

- » *“Lashkar Gah has 16 policewomen but only three are willing to wear their uniforms to work,” Roshan Zakia, the senior officer, explains*
- » *“[PRT personnel] sit in a series of security bubbles labelled “main bases”, “forward operating bases” and “patrol bases”, each of diminishing size, with the patrol bases home to anything from a dozen to 100 troops.”*
- » *FOB Shawqat in Nad Ali, 9 miles from Lashkar Gar, is now “a rectangular fortress of three tiers of Hesco barriers (wired sacks full of loose stones and other ballast), freight containers, tents, and camouflaged watchtowers”*

Extracts from Steele (2010) ‘Afghanistan: Can aid make a difference?’ The Guardian



© Sean Smith/The Guardian

In Transparency International's 2010 *Corruption Perceptions Index* (CPI), Afghanistan shares second place with Myanmar in the measure of domestic, public sector corruption. The current level of USD158 per bribe is equivalent to 37% of the average annual Afghan income.⁹ The recent *National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment* (NRVA) has identified four main causes of Afghanistan's vulnerability to corruption: weak state institutions and rule of law, due to prolonged conflict; the illicit drug market; vertical layers of contracting and sub-contracting; and the huge inflow of foreign funds.

The UK, together with other donors, is providing support to the *Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation*

Committee (MEC), which is monitoring the performance of the Afghan Government and international community's efforts in tackling corruption. The UK is also working with key ministries and civil society organisations to address corruption.

The interviews for this research revealed two very different levels of corruption. The first involves petty bribes – one man gave the example of having to pay 200 Afs every month just to make sure his electricity bill is paid. The second involves a more sinister level of corruption, with government officials, verging on warlords, literally ripping billions off the foreign money entering the country, siphoning it into banks and property

AFGHAN PERCEPTIONS

- » *We have many divisions in Afghan society, and differences. But we now all have one thing in common – we are all fed up with corruption.*
- » *Corruption and security is a problem for both male and female but we encourage it because we do not raise voice and we are always looking for short cuts – let's stop giving money*
- » *It's common place for people to pay bribes to win contracts with the PRT. For example, in a 280,000 contract to build police checkpoints, the company was told to pay 100,000, and he would win. Commission is covered twice through the procurement and subcontracting. It began with 180,000; the original contractor took a 50k cut and subcontracted the job for 70k. The final contractor then took 30k for the job, plus 40k to pay for building materials and infrastructure. This is not an extreme example – very common*
- » *Cash for Work programmes are very counter-productive. I know someone who has been employed for 9 years on the PRT payroll, and his father collects his pay packet – he hasn't done a day's work. The donors have laudable ambitions, in wanting to show an immediate effect, and that the Government is worth investing faith in. But the people see it more as a bribe if delivered by the PRT. These people come from very proud tribes, and there is status involved. They know they're being fobbed off with cash, so they take advantage of the system*
- » *In our team security meeting in Lashkar Gar, staff revealed that they are not concerned about the handover of security to the Afghan security forces; instead, they are concerned about the checkpoints. The Government is so corrupt that they will call the Taliban in advance if they know you're taking a particular route and have you kidnapped, only so that you can be sold back to them. People have very little confidence in the Government*
- » *In the ARTF, part of the problem is that we don't track the bidding process properly, so there is little healthy competition. The same implementing partners win the bids over and over again*
- » *There is a genuine frustration within the Government regarding how much money has been wasted*
- » *We have a corrupted, not committed, and not unified Government. They act like shareholders of political parties. A Minister from overseas asked me, is there anyone you know who's not corrupt? I said, the system is corrupt*

9. Gili, Maria (2011) 'Corruption in Afghanistan: The status quo is not an option,' *Transparency International* blog (11 May)
<http://blog.transparency.org/2011/05/11/corruption-in-afghanistan-the-status-quo-is-not-an-option/>

- » *The Government is really “Ali Baba and his 40 thieves”*
- » *One MP spent 1 million dollars on his political campaign, which he earned through abductions, bribery, and robbery*
- » *Last year, my relative was killed in a traffic incident as he crossed the street. The driver was the son of a high-ranking government official. Instead of the police bringing justice and facilitating compensation to his family, the security forces intimidated the man’s brother by going to where he works (also in the government) and making him sign a form to deny any involvement of the son in the incident – the message from the security forces: if you kill a man, pay the forces off, and it goes away*

within Afghanistan and outside the country. The result is that UK money indirectly ends up in bank accounts in Dubai and property development schemes that inflate Kabul property prices beyond the reach of most Afghans. They are then leased to foreign organisations at very high rates.

The Afghan Government insists that it should not be blamed for corruption, alone: “This is an epidemic disease which is mainly associated with the inflow of high influx of aid and can be spread everywhere and can suffer anyone if the aid is not provided in an effective and transparent manner”.¹⁰ The following is the suggestion of one research participant:

“Currently, if 50% of the aid is getting to the people, it would be possible to aim for 80% to get there if you tie it to projects. That would be progress. Zero tolerance doesn’t make sense here. You can minimise corruption, but you can never get rid of it.”

A further dimension of corruption that emerged across all the consultations is the perceived double standards of donors, or at least contradictions in their strategy and how it is put into practice. It is well known among Afghans operating in the donor system that the UK and other major donors are aware of the incompetence, fraud and corruption of certain directors, such as one running a key multilateral development organisation. A consultant within one government ministry proclaimed:

“You need to stop punishing the Minister if the head of ... is known to be guilty of even greater corruption.”

One national staff member’s experience, documented in an email to the author, is worth recounting in full because it is reflective of much of the verbal feedback received during the research:

“During my experience with [...], I was shamefully disappointed about their outcome as an international agency. Finally I came to a conclusion that for them it is only important just to be present as a matter of political importance, symbolic. I was disappointed by the level of their capacity, lack of effectiveness, bureaucracy, lack of coordination and inter-agency trust. They pay \$\$\$\$\$ people for doing nothing. At the last I asked what is the one thing that [the entity] has done as the most visible in the past decade just to find trust in it, and I found nothing. Believe me, with such a HUGE operation, it hasn’t been able to do the least of negotiations with small groups disturbing aid delivery to almost any of the areas the aid agencies wanted to ship food.”

This puts the spotlight on the donor and the changes that some Afghans demand of the development sector, in conjunction with those that their own Government must make to beat corruption.

The historical memory of Afghans also leads many to see double standards in how the international community approaches issues like corruption and human rights. The following claim of a man from Helmand betrays the lack of trust that has resulted in the mixed agendas of donor country engagement in Afghanistan:

“We won’t trust the West about things like women’s rights because the US did nothing to Hekmatyar and others when they openly killed girls going to school.”

Contracting procedures and business practices involving the international community is another fertile area for stories about blatant disregard for proper standards (refer to Annex 3 and 4). Examples set by the international community are having a strong impact on Afghans’ motivation to strive for excellence and fight for a cleaner system.

10. Afghan Ministry of Finance, *Development Cooperation Report*, p.47

According to the Afghan Ministry of Finance, more than half of total assistance disbursed since 2001 has been spent on the Afghan National Army (ANA) and ANP – a recent International Crisis Group (ICG) report concludes that this considerable international aid has not translated to significantly better capacity and hence more security for the Afghan citizen.¹¹ The Afghan Minister of Interior, General Besmellah Mohammadi, certainly put into doubt the readiness of Afghan institutions and national security forces to maintain security after international forces withdraw at an address to the House of Representatives in April this year: “Unfortunately I have to say that neither the Afghan National Army nor the Police have the ability to undertake security responsibilities if NATO leaves now. I think the transition should start in three years.”¹²

In other government ministries, the record shows that only a third – on average – of all on-budget contributions is spent due to the low absorptive capacity and related

budget execution problems. Factors such as the huge amount of money that exists outside the core national budget has not helped the Government grasp the full extent of the aid money coming into the country, let alone monitor its impact. The Afghan Ministry of Finance and World Bank calculations suggest that the Government’s core budget for Helmand in 2010/11 is at USD49.3 million, which is dwarfed by the external off-budget flows that amount to over USD350 million (excluding ANSF costs).

Progress is being made in the sense that the Afghan Government is asserting more public ownership over their own development budget, but the question remains whether the donor commitments at the Kabul Conference will in fact have the unintended consequence of further burdening the ministries and stretching their capacity to disburse the funds to keep projects alive.

AFGHAN PERCEPTIONS

- » *It’s a big mistake to do on-budget support. It’s not just the corruption, but also the lack of the ministries’ ability to implement*
- » *As an INGO, we help local NGOs to shame the Government when they make unreasonable requests, such as demand computers etc. They very effectively pick up the tools we given them to safeguard against corruption, and adapt those tools well to their context*
- » *The Government people in Helmand are not competent – they’ve just learned how to deal with DfID. And DfID has no way of ‘ground-truthing’ what they’re told. In reality, there is non-existent capacity at the district level. From 8-11am, people turn up for to work, and then leave to do their proper job – like as a driver at a US contractor. They have no incentive whatsoever to do the job well if there’s not the right level of patronage involved*
- » *In our INGO, our baseline shows that economic development and empowerment plus capacity/skills development are the two areas that will unlock the most potential for women to break the vicious circle in Afghanistan*
- » *The Government can’t manage any more money !!! At the provincial level, the Government is pleading not to receive more of a burden. Example of community-based education project, which USAID moved from direct funding to five implementing partners to on-budget support in Dec-Jan 11. The classrooms scrambled for alternative resources, but because of the gap in funding, a huge number of the 2,000 community classrooms had to be closed as a result of the Ministry of Education not having the capacity to manage the project. Girls stopped going to so many schools because people transferred their children, where possible, to Government-funded schools*
- » *My colleagues in the Ministry have high practical intelligence, but low analytical skills. And there are varying ‘degrees’ of literacy that our current surveys seem to miss*

11. International Crisis Group (2011) ‘Aid and Conflict in Afghanistan,’ Asia Report No.210 (4 August)

12. TOLONews (2011) ‘Afghan Forces Not Ready for Security Transition’ (6 April)

<<http://www.tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/2350-afghan-forces-not-ready-for-security-transitions>>

Looking back, one of the main criticisms of Afghans in regard to the UK and other donors' support of capacity-building in the Afghan Government is in their supply of inappropriate or overly expensive Technical Assistance. Senior Afghans within the Government express disillusionment with the 'support' they have been provided, claiming instead that they have been 'substituted' for a time, until a break comes and a different consultant arrives. The enormous cost of this assistance has been well documented.¹³ The UK is supporting the most recent attempt to help the Government control, drive and monitor the supply of consultants through the Civilian Technical Assistance Program (CTAP).

Looking forward, critical government capacity is also located in the 'second' civil service. The World Bank figures indicate that 7,000 Afghans are funded by donors outside the civil service while 1,500 Afghans in the 'regular' civil service receive donor top-ups. Their future is uncertain in the transition, as it is unclear whether priority programmes will be maintained if wage levels drop or there is an exodus of talented staff.

13. See, for example, Waldman, Matt (2008) 'Falling Short: Aid Effectiveness in Afghanistan,' *ACBAR Advocacy Series* (March).

Constraints - Complexity

The majority of Afghanistan's population of 30 million people is poor, living in thousands of small villages spread across a territory the size of Texas. They are reliant mostly on basic agriculture and isolated by mountains and river valleys. Local communities defer to local leaders who have earned their position over time or taken control by force. Afghans are traders, where transactions are conducted informally and on trust. It is the home of the *hawala* system, where money is transferred or invested via a network of money-men with ease, speed and at low cost anywhere in the world. This simplistic picture, however, belies many complicating factors.

Afghans are fiercely loyal to large families, local tribes and different ethnic groups. At the same time these groups can be the source of fierce disagreements and in-fighting. Warlords have amassed enormous wealth and power in different parts of the country. 'The Taliban' can be indistinguishable from the rest of the community, is known to 'shadow' the existing government system, and is also often in open conflict. It comprises locals, fanatics, and mercenaries from Pakistan to Saudi Arabia, Iran and further afield.

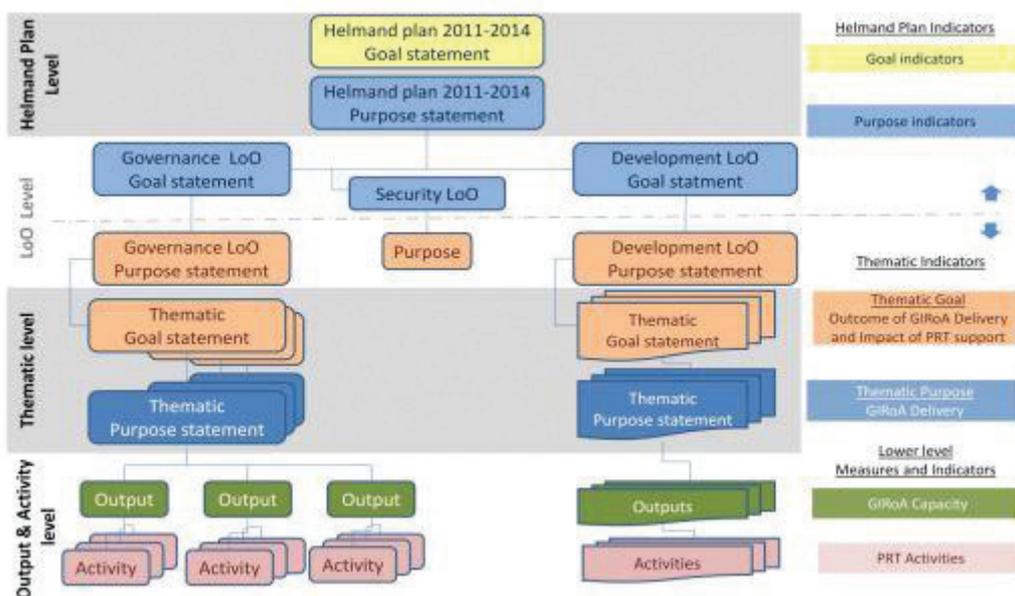
In view of the paucity of functional national structures in Afghanistan, it is not surprising that there was a clash between the top-heavy systems that the Soviets tried to impose. In a sense history is now repeating itself through the more recent imposition of a government hierarchy that is meant to devolve power from the national to provincial, district and local levels.

This top-down approach collides with long-established embedded trusted local systems of governance, and provides an avenue for potential abuse among the select few at the top.

There is a similar disconnect with Western methods used to plan, monitor and manage projects. Even some well educated Afghans are bemused and amused as they witness the international community's reaction to disappearing dollars and apparent failure of their sophisticated processes and systems – the imposition of yet more structures, systems, controls and procedures. To them, it seems a distant dream to imagine Afghans assuming ownership of key programmes like those following the Helmand Plan, which has been designed to frame the UK and other partners' strategy in the province.

Incidentally, on attempting to obtain a copy of this plan from contacts at Whitehall, one senior public servant said that gaining access is even limited among their own staff on the ground. Given that most programme objectives in the Helmand PRT are measured against the Plan, this seems like an unnecessary blockage to prevent British implementers from accessing the actual document.

Furthermore, thousands of projects and programmes have been run, are in progress or are in the pipeline across Afghanistan. The resultant plethora of unconnected databases, statistics and reports makes the evaluation of aid effectiveness in Afghanistan extraordinarily complex. In September 2008, DfID was



Constraints - Complexity

among a group of bilateral and multilateral donors which launched the IATI to make information about aid spending easier to find, use and compare. DfID states that it is demonstrating commitment to the IATI's aims by publishing its data in line with the IATI standard, including much more detailed information about project spending.

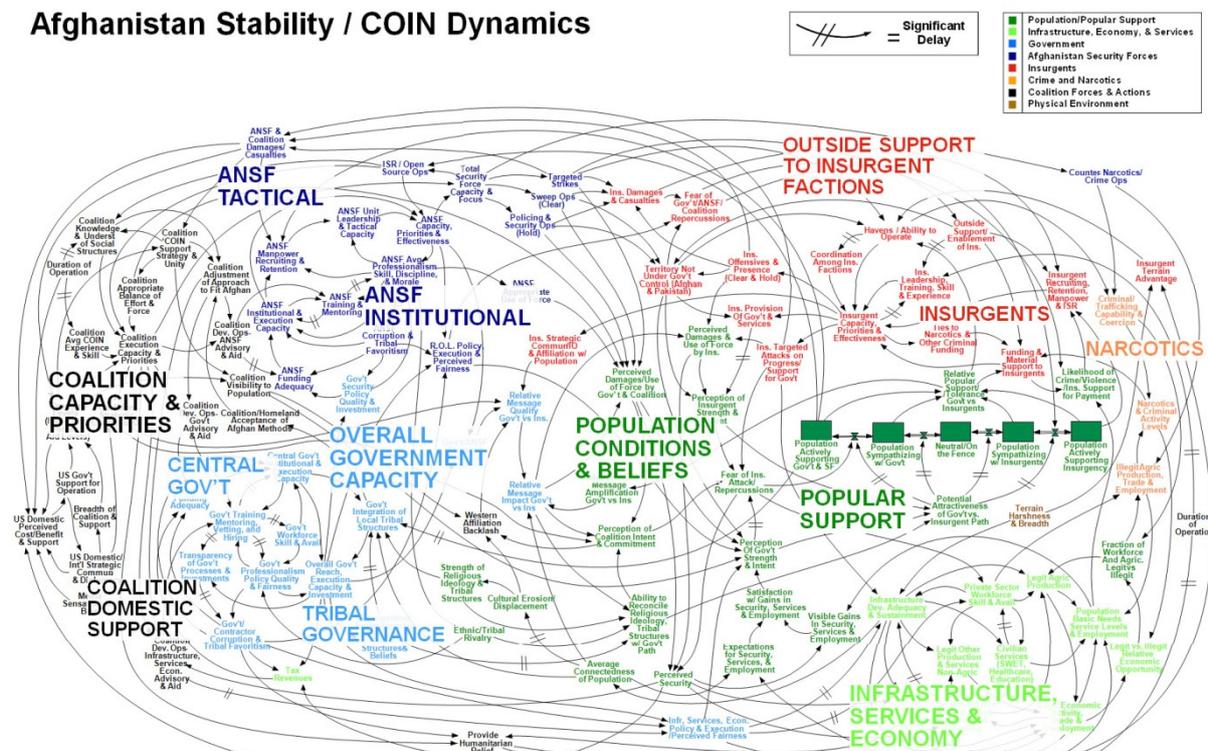
DfID's projects database contains summaries of each project that DfID funds, including its purpose, what it aims to achieve, and budget so that the taxpayers who provide the money, and those in developing countries who benefit from aid spending, can better track what UK aid is being used for and what it is achieving. The research revealed, however, that the list is not up-to-date, and so needs verification, and the aid effectiveness indicators applied to all projects are not particularly useful, especially as some are not even completed. As an example, the following table appears on the website for the design phase of the ARTF, the single largest destination for UK aid money. This does not appear to be a useful measure of the effectiveness of the money invested in this phase.

Aid Effectiveness

AID TO GOVERNMENT SECTOR	
Is this contribution aid to the government sector?	No
USE OF PARTNER COUNTRY PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	
Are partner country budget systems used?	No
Are partner country financial reporting systems used?	No
Are partner country audit systems used?	No
Are all 3 partner country public financial management systems used?	No
Are partner country procurement systems used?	No
USE OF PROGRAMME BASED APPROACHES	
Does the contribution fit within a single programme/budget framework?	No
Is the contribution led by the host country/organisation?	No
Is there a process for co-ordinating donors?	No
Are at least 2 partner country systems being used?	No
Is this a Programme Based Approach?	No

Participants in this study repeatedly criticised the involvement of expensive external consultants who only added further complexity because of their lack of understanding of Afghanistan and the way Afghans see things. The following diagram was shared by one participant to illustrate the point:

Afghanistan Stability / COIN Dynamics



WORKING DRAFT - V3

Constraints - Competing Interests

A clear concern to emerge is that “everyone is competing with everyone for control, influence, and a share of the money”. There are signs of ‘every man for himself’ at every level, and those consulted in the research expressed deep concern that the social fabric of Afghanistan is breaking down, admitting that it is understandable for people caught up in such a war-ravaged environment to allow survival instincts to take over. It is of particular concern that disillusioned educated Afghans are preparing to leave the country, often against their heart’s desire.

Involvement of the international community has exacerbated the anxiety and fear of individuals and the ongoing battles between tribes and between powerbrokers, and added further unhealthy ‘competition’.

For example, UN departments, donors, contractors and INGOs compete amongst themselves and with their own kind. Formalised structures intended to facilitate collaboration are mostly treated as a waste of time or platforms for their own agendas. Furthermore, by favouring certain provinces like Helmand, province is being turned against province.

AFGHAN PERCEPTIONS

- » *High politics define our engagement in Afghanistan. This meeting has reminded me that people are at the centre of all this – women, girls, boys are at the heart of what we’re talking about. Nevertheless, it’s the politics in DC which will shape how the international community engages over the next four years. – Senior DfID official in meeting with NGOs*
- » *At Bonn 1, I met privately with the US Special Envoy to explain that the negotiations must include Taliban representatives. I explained a lot of the issues that have since unfolded. His response was, “My dear, you are looking at Afghanistan through an Afghan’s eyes. We are looking at Afghanistan through the eyes of the international community”. And apparently, the two don’t meet.*
- » *I understand everyone knows this from the top planning authorities releasing the funds to the bottom, but I am not sure why the bulk of the international funding is still wasted on short-term programs with less impact towards change.*

At the global level, one of the interviewees for this research, the author of *The Battle for Khorasan: The Rise of a New Regional Order*, describes Afghanistan in the wake of 9/11 as a ‘linchpin state’, central to the “new geostrategic dynamics between regional and international players ... the USA, Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey and the Central Asian Republics”.¹⁴ Another comment made during the research was that “it is in the interests of most of the neighbouring countries to keep America distracted and haemorrhaging” in the war and aid effort in Afghanistan.

14. Olomi, Abdul Nafi and Joelle Rizk (2010) *The Battle for Khorasan: The Rise of a New Regional Order* (Pub: Joelle Rizk)

When most of the Afghans in this research were asked a question, they replied with: “let me tell you something”. There is no other option but to pause, take the time to sit down, drink tea and listen. Story follows story in relation to aid effectiveness in Afghanistan, and many have one common theme: common sense. The four following examples were told with great relish during this study.

Two inexperienced expat engineers inspected a damaged bridge and recommended that the damage be repaired, despite an Afghan engineer diagnosing the cause as a problem with the foundations and taking the time to locate the original American designer to propose a permanent solution.

A considerable number of tractors were donated to farmers without taking into account a holistic view of their needs. Most either ended up for sale in bazaars as far away as Pakistan or on blocks because there was no funding for repairs and maintenance.

A Chinese generator was supplied by a Pakistani company to a village for power although the power line was 500 metres away. The generator failed after a year. The provision of a generator was the third, and imposed, option presented to a Community Development Council (CDC) after the village representatives had suggested two other options (first, road construction to connect the villages; second, a community hall or mosque for the villagers to meet). Several similar stories of the National Solidarity Programme (NSP), labelled the “Chinese generator syndrome”, were told by people in two provinces.¹⁵

After gaining some project funding a local NGO introduced a new farming technique. He recruited seven farmers, and in return for his educational and material support they were asked to recruit a further ten farmers each. This process was repeated until 700 farmers were involved. He then asked for more funding to support the next stage where 7,000 farmers would take the programme past its tipping point. The response was that he had already surpassed expectations, the project was deemed a success, and there were now other calls on the money. The initiative died ... and as he told the story he merely shook his head.

Projects abound in Afghanistan, but only certain initiatives are suited to being treated as a project; others requiring fundamental change need a longer-term approach to build and embed adoption.

15. While there is much deserved ‘hype’ around the NSP programme due to its reach to thousands of Afghan communities, more balanced reviews also point to the challenges that can limit outcomes for people on the ground. See, for example, SIGAR Audit-11-8 ‘Economic and Social Development/NSP’ (22 March 2011).

Afghans who have ‘seen it all before’ have an earthy wisdom and long memory which is often discounted or ignored by those passing through ‘on tour’ or on a mission. They complain that the latest thinking is pushed upon them – and yet high-powered notions, such as ‘theories of change’ do not always sit easily with an intensely practical view of life, honed through generations of disempowerment and hard times.

Many academics, commentators and policymakers gravitate to each other because they share similar backgrounds, which bear little resemblance to the valleys of Afghanistan. As they talk amongst themselves, Afghans feel that the body of conventional wisdom inexorably grows and drowns any dissenting voice. In fact the messenger risks being marginalised to the rank of activist, zealot or crank, or summarily shot. An influential Helmandi, and director of a leading local NGO, told of his retired friend Dick Scott, a seasoned Helmand expert – once prized by USAID, who started work in the province in 1971, but now appears to have suffered this fate. Scott says he will “never give up”, and wrote the following memorandum in May 2011:

“We need to begin doing the right things in our strategy or program in Helmand and stop living with the results of our past and continuing mistakes. But with the relatively rapid turnover of staff, both civilian and military, there is a problem of institutional memory ... there is an over-abundance of experts from several countries, including representatives of several military forces and numerous US and British agencies and departments. Add to this the various contractors and sub-contractors from various countries. And virtually all are on short-term assignments ... Too many people trying to do too many, some times irrelevant, things, trying to spend too much money in too short of time. Irrelevant to most of the people, the farmers...”

‘Project mentality’ accounts for much of the perceived ineffectiveness or failures of UK aid. This is in some way linked to the sense of complacency that some Afghans tend to have in relation to aid. A long-term adviser within a government ministry laments:

“With all this aid money, we have created a distorted expectation of what life should be like in Afghanistan, in the Government ministries. There are so many office luxuries, that it stretches the limit of what is reasonable, and people lost their ability to see the value of money. When I visit our offices in the provinces, the public servants tell some of the donors, I am hot, I need an air conditioner, so the donor provides it. These people do not need air conditioners right now – it may be hot for a month or two in these places, but by receiving these luxuries their relation with money is skewed.”

One British NGO worker in Helmand further lamented that one of the main budget lines in projects is for “repairs”. Care is simply not taken to look after the precious aid in the first place, because it has been devalued by the abundance of it in some areas. Several Afghan implementers in the area have become accustomed to applying for funding to “fix” things rather than ensuring that they are maintained within operational budgets.

AFGHAN PERCEPTIONS

- » *The results always look impressive – built this number of schools, clinics, built capacity, etc. But in the area I know very well – agriculture – I have challenged DfID about their real progress in their Food Zones. I told them that, if you have really supported 40,000 in Helmand and Kandahar, you would not hear one more shot in Afghanistan – you would have peace*
- » *In Helmand, we can grow cotton, cumin, peanuts. Dried apricots are also a key crop in Uruzgan. But the donors ask us to grow strawberries – we don't these because we don't have ice cream for our dessert and need the strawberries as toppings!*
- » *We had four very productive women's groups operating in Helmand, and after 6 months we needed more funding to keep them going, at low cost. There was a lot of interest among women to expand these groups. But we couldn't find any money, so the projects died. Meanwhile, a private contractor was given a multi-million dollar grant which was meant to cover women's issues in Helmand – their consultant couldn't leave the compound to see our projects*
- » *We have become experts at fitting all projects into a Russian size 10 shoe – if it costs more in reality, we make it cost less, and if it doesn't cost enough, we accommodate but enlarging it*
- » *In a fantastic vocational training programme, the People's Work Initiative in Helmand, where we trained people in trades – painters, plumbers, builders – 60% of the people turned out well, but 40% needed more training to make the investment worthwhile. The donor would not provide more funding because the project had 'finished'*
- » *In our NGO projects, before when a need assessment carried out in a specific village, they had three priorities: one – water supply, two – irrigation water, three – animal husbandry, but the donor only funded the first priority which is water supply. Our lesson learnt is to design the three priorities under a project/program ranked by the people during the need assessment. Only then can such programs bring changes in a village level*

5 Conclusion

When asked about their aspirations, many participants in this study said they have lost the ability to dream, are frightened, and frustrated with the international community. In a discussion about the international community's understanding of what it is like to live in Afghanistan today, three comments captured on the netbooks summed up the impression of many:

- » They have no idea what it is to live in a place like Afghanistan
- » See everything through their security prism
- » See things through their 'prison'

Workshop participants explained that the perspective through this 'prism' or indeed 'prison' (due to being physically confined to living and working within the walls of a compound or strict security parameters) is short-sighted and does not allow for the reality that the order of change deemed necessary in Afghanistan will take at least a generation. Some pointed out that the international community is further hamstrung by not seeing the future through the lens of history. One man who remained in Afghanistan during the different wars over the past thirty years commented that:

"Culturally, socially and economically, the Soviets crushed the fabric of our society. The wounds were so deep, they needed treatment. Instead, the international community has deepened the wounds by leaving the Mujahideen without treatment. They created commanders, not bound by any rules or regulations. This is the main reason why the wounds deepened. The enormity of the conflict led to massive suffering of the people, and then we were suddenly expected to 'vote', rally to their cries, and submit to those people who had built small empires for themselves out of our national treasure."

Notably, in 2008, the UK Government initiated an 'Understanding Afghanistan' project, which aimed to deepen the UK's appreciation for the context.¹ The 2009 DfID Country Programme Evaluation was still critical, however, of the apparent over-emphasis on technical support at the expense of a greater contextual understanding of the political economy and engagement with local civil society, thereby reducing its impact.

1. An update of this is 'overdue', according to DfID-Afghanistan staff. A DfID advisor within the humanitarian programme does, however, conduct a conflict analysis of each programme that is over GBP10 million.

Underlying the frustration with the international community is a clear impression that these investments in analysis have not been realised, and "it's all been said before". Certainly, over the ten years of military engagement in Afghanistan, there has been no shortage of research, reports, evaluations, and commentary on aid allocation, delivery and impact in the country. By way of example, there are currently 13,000 titles listed in the library of the *Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit* (AREU), an independent research institute in Kabul, established in 2002.²

At times, the sheer volume and diversity of sources has added to the complexity and even caused confusion, rather than brought clarity. It is virtually impossible for practitioners to keep pace with the amount of material being produced, and the universal tendency to skim rather than digest information exacerbates this problem, thus impeding change to the situation on the ground. Nonetheless, for those prepared to take the time to review the literature, a set of common themes has emerged and is gaining traction with those operating within today's policy circles.

Headline 'lessons' for the international community can be summarised colloquially as follows:

- » **We have been over-ambitious** about our expectations for progress given the constraints and time required to effect systemic change
- » **We often appear not to listen** to the people properly, or take on board what they say
- » **We do not learn** (e.g. due to rotations and short deployments, we have not been in Afghanistan for 10 years – we have been there 1 year, 10 times)
- » Too much aid has been provided in ways that are **ineffective or inefficient, such as for 'quick wins'**
- » **An emphasis on quantity over quality** has expanded numbers (of schools, police, clinics) but undercut operational effectiveness, professionalism, institutional loyalty, and public confidence
- » **PRTs have undermined Afghan Government legitimacy**, rather than strengthened it, over ten years

2. The UK currently provides core funds to the AREU in support of its mission to inform and influence policy and practice through conducting high-quality, policy-relevant research and actively disseminating the results, and to promote a culture of research and learning.

Conclusion

- » **Political negotiations are questioned** because of who is included at the table
- » **Aid is politicised** due to it being an instrument of 'westernisation', 'stabilisation', and military objectives, while space for humanitarians to operate has diminished due to the expanded remit of PRTs and commission of CERP projects
- » **Existing informal systems have been ignored or maligned** to the detriment of social capital
- » **Many challenges still remain for women**, despite some improvements in their legal, political and cultural position since 2001
- » **Donor support for services delivered by NGOs has diminished, with negative consequences**
- » **Agriculture is key, but rural livelihoods should also be encouraged to diversify**

Reflecting on lessons gleaned from its own research, the AREU released a statement in 2010 containing 'four strategic issues' pointing to a fundamental problem with past aid practice – international engagement to date has failed to be 'grounded' in 'Afghan realities'. These realities should provide the filtration system through which all decisions are made about where aid money is spent, how much is spent, and who spends it.

The report explains how the international intervention has often assumed Afghanistan to be a 'blank slate', and at times wilfully ignored many of the existing informal or de facto practices that have carried Afghan society through the last few decades of war and instability.³ Connected to this, it argues that policy has often been driven by ideology or assumption, rather than evidence, and that it has imported terms into Afghanistan without giving enough consideration to how the concepts might translate to Afghanistan. The statement ends by outlining how pressure for fast and visible improvements in governance, development and security has led to unrealistic national-level goals, without adequate means of implementing them.

The most consistent point made by all workshop participants in relation to the mismatch between assistance and realities on the ground is that the UK and other donors do not appear to strive to respond to the real needs of its people. National NGOs, on whom the international community in large part relies for the implementation of its programmes, underscored that responding to needs is not simply a matter of ethics – their safety also depends on whether they can deliver appropriately:

"Donors need to give freedom to national workers [to allocate aid]. They will be unsafe if they are not allowed to respond to needs."

SMART DEVELOPMENT

Afghan Driven: Smart Development uses NGO national staff knowledge and acceptance, complemented by community driven programming methods, to design and deliver development efficiently. It ensures resources are targeted at projects that are appropriate, feasible and sustainable, with close oversight to mitigate the ever-present risk of corruption.

Accountable: Smart Development is accountable to donors and communities. By working in partnership with Afghan communities NGOs jointly maintain mechanisms to ensure that program funds are spent transparently, resulting in projects that meet real needs and are valued by communities.

Impartial: Smart Development in Afghanistan is independent of stabilisation efforts and impartial, providing assistance based on genuine need to all populations. It translates development dollars into assistance that is accepted and makes a meaningful difference to the lives of Afghans.

Sustainability: Smart Development measures success on the basis of how resilient Afghan communities become, and the increased ability of Afghan institutions to deliver over the longer-term.

Aga Khan Foundation, CARE, CRD, IRC, MercyCorps, Save the Children (2011) 'White Paper'

3. For a detailed case study of one of these institutions which is being overlooked in current economic/growth interventions, see Thompson, Edwina (2011) *Trust is the Coin of the Realm: Lessons from the Money Men in Afghanistan* (Oxford University Press).

These lessons and perspectives resonate with the four principles of 'smart development' that the agencies supporting this research outlined in their 'White Paper on Being Smart about Development in Afghanistan', published in early 2011.

From all the available research and anecdotes captured through this study, it is striking to note the contrast between their emphasis on 'downward accountability' to the recipients and the official focus on 'mutual accountability' of the donor and recipient governments espoused by the aid effectiveness discourse. This raises the spectre of nothing less than a recalibration of the Paris Declaration.

In what may be a refreshing stroke of simplicity, a recent US Senate Report on aid in Afghanistan offered the following alternative to the predominantly technocratic language used, bringing people's needs more to the centre:

*"U.S. assistance should meet three basic conditions before money is spent: our projects should be necessary, achievable, and sustainable."*⁴

A statement which points to the crux of the challenge ahead: much more concerted collaboration is required, often between unlikely bedfellows with starkly differing vested interests, to define the criteria of these conditions. An ACBAR Briefing Paper on aid effectiveness in Afghanistan released in November 2006 summarised what must be done to address the intractable problems of Afghanistan in these terms:

*"Despite differing principles and approaches, to increase effectiveness at national, provincial and district levels, donors need to support aid actors (international and local), private sector and government to work together more deliberately, for joint planning, to share information, and to create partnerships where appropriate. ... A culture of strategic relationships with key development actors in-country needs also to be fostered to sustain long-term development progress and to maximise different strengths. For example, NGO/private sector linkages at provincial/district levels should be supported with connections to government where appropriate."*⁵

In such a culture, different actors must collectively clarify the tough calls and decisively act against a common framework, which is ultimately illuminated by the vision and insights of the local Afghan community and the interests of the UK taxpayer in this case. In 2011, there is little evidence that this level of collaboration exists. Hence Afghanistan is, yet again, at a cross-roads and many fear that it will slip back into the critical state that prevailed before September 11, 2001, despite the immense investment in human, financial and political capital over the past decade, and glimmer of a better future.

There is still, however, a quiet minority determined to persist against the overwhelming odds, as demonstrated by the national staff member pictured overleaf. The verdict of these people is that if the international community's tongues are willing to stop, and their ears begin to listen to what ordinary Afghans have to say, there is hope to change the situation, gradually.

Patience will be required, particularly as there are growing signs that major Western donors are weary of Afghanistan and are shifting their focus to one of 'let's get out of here' and beyond to other theatres. But they owe it to the Afghans, and to their taxpayers, to listen to what the Afghans say are the future priorities and why the support must continue.

4. United States Senate, *Evaluating US Foreign Assistance to Afghanistan*

5. ACBAR (2006) 'Aid Effectiveness in Afghanistan: At a Crossroads,' Briefing Paper (November), p.4



Afghanaid staff member in March 2011

AFGHAN PERCEPTIONS

If you had 5 minutes with Andrew Mitchell or PM David Cameron, what is your most important request?

- » *Understand Afghans and Afghanistan*
- » *Secure the country, fight corruption, poverty and social and gender inequality*
- » *Don't abuse the orphan (intim), just take away the bread from him. This is the way to get rid of the Government Ministers who live on others' support.*
- » *Afghanistan needs an effective government, which cannot be built with the current people in power*
- » *Success looks different in Afghanistan – it needs a set of milestones along the way of a long path*
- » *Try to identify the right Afghans and work with them. Start work on helping democratic institutions grow so that they can slowly replace the old problematic Afghan politicians.*
- » *Define who are the right people*
- » *Listen to the right people – work out who they are*
- » *Create sustainable sources of livelihood*
- » *I'm sure that if we cut the development budget by half, and become smart, we'll do very well.*
- » *As long as the Government stays the way it is, there is no hope. The West can provide an 'enforced hope' – but it has to get tough.*
- » *The surest way to get tough is to stop the money flowing. In fact, the West came too soon; if it had waited, the Taliban would have killed them all off, and then we would just have to deal with the Taleban, instead of both them and the warlords.*
- » *The West should also be focusing on the poorest part of the cities and give the money to the municipalities to build their capacity – come up with some good projects and deploy Afghan civil society, rather than funnelling it through a corrupt central government system*
- » *Invest and help develop Afghan-owned factories*
- » *Focus on bringing in investment and supporting business enterprises*
- » *Stay the course*
- » *Long term commitment to Afghanistan beyond 2014 and make sure Afghans trust the international community will help them regardless of their political objectives*
- » *Read the beautiful reports*

»

... and why should they help?

- » *For their own sake*
- » *If not, negative consequences – global risk, the virus will spread, human rights violations, and more importantly, all international help will go in vain/be lost*
- » *International obligations, UN mandate, human rights, global responsibility, helping the vulnerable*
- » *Long-term commitment to development*
- » *Terrorism doesn't just occur in insecure provinces*
- » *To avoid incidents such as 9/11 and making the world less insecure*
- » *To bring democracy and peace as democracies do not go to war against democracies ... so it would be a benefit to all (world)*
- » *To secure Afghanistan so that it would bring security to the region and world*
- » *Why not????????????????*

The three D's – defence, diplomacy and development -- and Comprehensive Approach are all well and good in theory, but the devil as ever is in the detail. And, that 'detail' is Afghan. It is time to listen to Afghans. After all, they are the people who know.

Hekmat Karzai and Julian Lindley, Afghanistan Times, 2007

Glossary

ACBAR	Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
AREU	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
ARTF	Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund
BAAG	British and Irish Agencies Afghanistan Group
BSOS	UK Building Stability Overseas Strategy
CDC	Community Development Council
COMISAF	Commander of ISAF
CP	UK Conflict Pool
CPI	Corruption Perceptions Index
CTAP	Civilian Technical Assistance Program
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (within the OECD)
DAD	Afghan Government Development Assistance Database
DASA	Defence Analytical Services and Advice
DfID	UK Department for International Development
FCO	UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office
GHA	Global Humanitarian Assistance programme
GPEX	UK Gross Public Expenditure on Development
HMEP	Helmand Monitoring and Evaluation Programme
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
IWA	Integrity Watch Afghanistan

Glossary

MAIL	Afghan Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
MoD	UK Ministry of Defence
NPP	National Priority Programs
NSP	National Solidarity Program
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
QIPs	Quick Impact Projects
RnR	Rest and Recuperation
SDSR	UK Strategic Defence and Security Review
TA	Technical Assistance
TFH	Task Force Helmand
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WB	World Bank
WHAM	Winning Hearts and Minds

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Annexes

Annex 1: Surveys

Annex 2: Sample (example of workshop participant profiles)

Annex 3: Conversations with Afghan professionals

Annex 4: Conversations with Afghan business people

Annex 5: Conversations with National NGO workers

Annex 1: Surveys

SOME RECENT SURVEYS COVERING AT LEAST 23,000 RESPONDENTS

SURVEY	DATE	LOCATION	SAMPLE SIZE	SAMPLE PROFILE	METHODOLOGY	SELECTED FINDINGS
HMEP Periodic Review: DFID/PRT (Coffey)	APR 2011	Helmand	4,030 79/80	Heads of household Men/women	Face-to-face quantitative Face-to-face qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security, governance, water, roads, bazaars – upward trend Education and health – patchy Electricity – poor
Helmand Business Attitudes Survey: DFID (Coffey)	NOV 2010 FEB 2011	Helmand	1,198 415	Business owners/managers	One-on-one	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistics by sector, location, function, income, employees, markets Business environment improving Most expecting growth Impediments – electricity, sewage/waste, transport, water Most transactions in cash, don't borrow from banks About half believe most businesses don't pay bribes
Afghan Hearts, Afghan Minds Exploring Afghan Perceptions of Civ-Mil Relations: BAAG/ENNA	2008	Europe, Nth America, Paktia, Uruzgan	140	NGOs, Afghan govt, business, military, donors	Individuals and groups of 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security increasingly unpredictable and deadly Cynicism, opportunism Afghans don't believe they are listened to Lower quality services NGOs compromised Taliban regrouping
Winning Hearts and Minds? Examining the Relationship between Aid and Security in Afghanistan's Helmand Province: TUFTS	FEB 2008	Helmand	2,500 (est)	15 focus groups (ea 8-12 members) Analysis of polling data collected NOV 2007 by Regional Command-South from 6 areas (ea 300-500) Interviews with key Task Force Helmand members, PRT, Afghan govt, power brokers	Focus groups, analysis of earlier polling, individual interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community perceptions negative to IDA and PRT (incl corrupt practices) Lack of community involvement re priorities Marked differences in perception of ISAF, incl benefits of ISAF presence outweighed by effect on inter-communal conflict and with Taliban Marked differences in confidence in govt by area
Introducing New Vocational Education and Skills Training in Helmand programme (INVEST): Mercy Corps	AUG 2011	Helmand	859	Current students, most unemployed	1000 questionnaires 859 responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most joined course because 'good opportunity and free' Mullahs are main advocates of the course 37% can tell difference between UK and US forces British are perceived as 'kinder, more polite/culturally sensitive' Bribery/corruption greater when dealing with Americans
National Solidarity Program Phase II	2009	Balkh, Baghlan, Daykundi, Ghor, Herat, Nangarhar	250 treatment villages v 250 control villages		Same villages benchmarked in 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving access to drinking water and electricity New avenues for women to participate in local governance Men more open to women participation Improved perception of various govt representatives
Corruption in Afghanistan: Bribery as Reported by Victims: UNODC	2008/09	People in 12 provincial capitals and 1,600 villages around Afghanistan	7,600	Cross-section		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corruption is the biggest concern and part of everyday life Average bribe is USD160 Police and local officials are most guilty of violating the law 54% believe international organisations and NGOs are corrupt
Afghan Perceptions and Experiences of Corruption: Integrity Watch Afghanistan	2009	32 Provinces	6,500	Cross-section	Randomisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bribery today represents a burden of 1 billion USD on the Afghan GDP One adult in seven experienced direct bribery in Afghanistan in 2009 28% of Afghan households paid a bribe to obtain at least one public service

Annex 2: Sample

UK AID EFFECTIVENESS IN AFGHANISTAN – MIXED WORKSHOP 6 SEPTEMBER

	POSITION	SECTOR	NATIONALITY	GENDER
1	Director	Civil society network	Afghan	M
2	Programme Manager	Civil society network	Afghan	F
3	Consultant	Govt – Afghan	Afghan	M
4	Deputy Minister	Govt – Afghan	Afghan	F
5	Director of Operations	Govt – Afghan	Afghan	M
6	Executive Director	Govt – Afghan	Afghan	M
7	Intern	Govt – Afghan	Afghan	F
8	Senior Advisor	Govt – Afghan	International	F
9	Intern	Govt – Afghan	Afghan	M
10	Intern	Govt – Afghan	Afghan	M
11	Evaluation expert	Govt – Bilateral donor	International	M
12	Senior Advisor	Govt – Multilateral donor	Afghan	M
13	Director	Independent	Afghan	M
14	Finance Advisor	Independent	Afghan	M
15	Gender specialist	Independent	Afghan	F
16	Advocacy Officer	INGO	International	M
17	Country Director	INGO	International	F
18	Manager, Civil Society Programme	INGO	Afghan	F
19	Programme Manager	INGO	Afghan	M
20	Programme Manager, Helmand	INGO	International	M
21	Senior Business Development Manager	INGO	Afghan	M
22	Community Based Monitoring Manager	Think tank	Afghan	M
23	Director	Think tank	Afghan	M

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- Afghan Connection
- Afghanaid
- CAFOD
- CARE International UK
- Children in Crisis
- Christian Aid
- Concern Worldwide (UK)
- Glenree Centre for Peace & Reconciliation
- Global Witness
- Hope Worldwide
- International Medical Corps
- Islamic Relief Worldwide
- Khorasan
- Marie Stopes International
- Mercy Corps
- Minority Rights Group International
- Muslim Hands
- Oxfam
- Refugee Action
- Relief International
- SAFE
- Save the Children UK
- Tearfund
- War Child UK
- Womankind Worldwide
- World Vision UK



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