



In it for the long haul?

Delivering Australian aid to Afghanistan

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Author's note



This paper is intended to help the reader understand what has been achieved by Australian Government and non-government actors in Afghanistan in the years since 2001, and what some of the ongoing issues may be.

This paper was commissioned by the Afghanistan Working Group (AWG) of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID). The views of the author do not necessarily represent the views of the AWG or ACFID.

Phil Sparrow, July 2010

The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) is the peak council for Australian non-government organisations (NGOs) working in the field of international aid and development.

ACFID has more than 70 members operating in over 100 developing countries. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are central to our activities and goals. ACFID administers a rigorous Code of Conduct. The Code represents the active commitment of 118 overseas aid and development agencies to conduct their activities with integrity and accountability.

The aid and development sector has a combined regular supporter base of 1.7 million households, jointly donating upwards of \$800 million in 2007/08. With AusAID and other donor funding added, total expenditure by ACFID members was \$1.063 billion in 2007/08.

ACFID member organisations (as at 9 April 2010):

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ActionAid Australia (formerly Austcare)
Adventist Development and Relief Agency
Afghan Australian Development Organisation
Anglican Board of Mission – Australia Limited
AngliCORD
Archbishop of Sydney's Overseas Relief and Aid Fund
Assisi Aid Projects
Australasian Society for HIV Medicine
Australia for UNHCR
Australian Business Volunteers
Australian Conservation Foundation
Australian Doctors International
Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations
Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific
Australian Lutheran World Service
Australian Marist Solidarity Ltd
Australian Medical Aid Foundation
Australian Reproductive Health Alliance
Australian Respiratory Council

Australian Volunteers International
Baptist World Aid Australia
Burnet Institute
CARE Australia
Caritas Australia
CBM Australia
ChildFund Australia
Credit Union Foundation Australia
Foresight (Overseas Aid and Prevention of Blindness)
Fred Hollows Foundation, The
Friends of the Earth (Australia)
Habitat for Humanity Australia
HealthServe Australia
Global Development Group
Hunger Project Australia, The
International Centre for Eyecare Education
International Christian Aid Relief Enterprises Limited
International Help Fund Australia
International Nepal Fellowship (Aust) Ltd
International Women's Development Agency
Interplast Australia, Royal
Australasian College of Surgeons
Lasallian Foundation
Leprosy Mission Australia, The
Live & Learn Environmental Education

Mercy Works Inc.
Mission World Aid Inc.
Muslim Aid Australia
Nusatenggara Association Inc.
Opportunity International Australia
Oxfam Australia
Oz GREEN – Global Rivers
Environmental Education Network Australia Inc.
Partners in Aid (formerly Action Aid Australia)
Plan International Australia
Project Vietnam
Quaker Service Australia
RedR Australia
RESULTS Australia
Salesian Society Incorporated
Save the Children Australia
Sexual Health & Family Planning Australia
TEAR Australia
Transparency International Australia
Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA
Uniting World
WaterAid Australia
World Education Australia Limited
World Vision Australia
WWF – Australia

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Executive Summary

This study was commissioned by the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Afghanistan Working Group (AWG) to provide a clearer overview of the key aid modalities used by the Australian Government in Afghanistan. Particular attention was paid to aid delivered by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), and the Australian Defence Force (ADF) as part of its counterinsurgency efforts in Uruzgan Province. The study was carried out from May – July 2010.

Australia's engagement in Afghanistan dates largely from 11 September 2001. Prior to this and dating back to 1994, the Australian aid portfolio was minimal and ADF involvement was limited to mine clearance activities through the United Nations. After 9/11, and due to its role as a major non-North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) ally and an ally of the US through the ANZUS Treaty, Australia supported US and NATO led interventions in Afghanistan. Aid and defence spending increased significantly in 2006 with the deployment of ADF personnel to Uruzgan Province to support both military and stabilisation/reconstruction efforts.

Currently Australia supports the revised Obama Administration's strategy for Afghanistan that has seen a strategic shift in military command of NATO-International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), with a changed emphasis and direction of military operations towards a counter-insurgency (COIN) 'clear, hold and build' campaign. The central principle in COIN strategy is to protect the population, reverse the Taliban's momentum and create the space to develop security and governance capacity in Afghanistan.

Australia is currently the largest non-NATO contributor of military support to Afghanistan and the 11th largest overall ISAF contributor. The Defence budget, at approximately AUD\$1.2 billion, is estimated to be ten times that of the Australian aid budget. A key objective of the ADF is to train and mentor the Afghan National Army's 4th Brigade as part of the broader international effort to build Afghan Army capacity.

The ADF, alongside the Dutch¹, have engaged in a wide range of reconstruction projects since 2006 through their Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), the Australian led Reconstruction Task Force (RTF), the Mentoring Reconstruction Task Force (MRTF) and more recently the Mentoring Task Force (MTF). Australia also allocates a significant contribution to the Afghan National Army Trust Fund to help raise, train and sustain Afghan forces to address their country's own security challenges.

The Australian Government has also enlarged its diplomatic and development footprint in Afghanistan. A new Australian Embassy has been established in Kabul and the Australian civilian presence has grown. This is an important step in instituting new leadership structures that better represent a whole-of-government approach to Afghanistan.

In the 2010-11 Federal Budget, Afghanistan is the fourth largest recipient of Australian Official Development Assistance (ODA) (\$123 million) and the AusAID Afghanistan country program receives \$106 million. This is up from around \$70 million in 2009-10. Australia allocates a significant portion of its aid assistance to the World Bank administered Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF).

In 2009, nine per cent of Australia's ODA funding was allocated to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and its affiliates, and 14 per cent to Australian and international non-government organisation (NGO) efforts. Less than one per cent of ODA funding was allocated directly to Afghan NGOs. While the proportion of funding channelled through NGOs has increased in the last two years, a majority of funding continues to be allocated largely through the World Bank, the United Nations and other multilaterals.

Key findings from the study are:

- The ARTF, which receives a large percentage of Australian funding, is recognised by independent evaluations as performing highly and is well regarded.
- In 2009-10 AusAID estimates that around 10 per cent of the AusAID country program was spent in Uruzgan Province. Following the Dutch withdrawal from the Uruzgan PRT, this proportion is expected to increase to between 14 and 20 per cent of the AusAID country program in 2010-11. This suggests that, unlike some donors, the Australian aid portfolio is not significantly weighted towards Australia's military presence. While the proportion is expected to increase, it is unlikely that it will represent a majority of the aid portfolio in Afghanistan. This is encouraging and suggests that AusAID has a more balanced approach than a number of other donors to supporting comprehensive aid programming across Afghanistan.
- In 2010-11 AusAID will enlarge its footprint in Afghanistan, in part by increasing its civilian presence in Uruzgan. This, as part of an enhanced Australian Government presence in Afghanistan, provides opportunity to institute new leadership

¹ The Dutch have since been replaced by a new multinational command structure, led by the US.

structures that marry military, political and aid priorities, and better represents a whole-of-government approach. Elevating the visibility of Australia's civilian leadership roles may also lead to greater Australian NGO engagement in Afghanistan.

- Since the commencement of ADF operations in Uruzgan Province in 2006 some have reported that the Province has experienced improved security, the establishment of basic services and economic lift, and these improvements are in large part attributed to the work of the ADF and the PRT. The most noticeable improvements are in the more populous parts of Uruzgan, specifically Tirin Kowt, Chora and Deh Rawud. In other areas of the Province, improvements are more modest or less visible. Further, although not formally evaluated, ADF operations through the RTF, the MRTF and MRT in Uruzgan have received positive feedback from local communities and reportedly achieved substantial reconstruction results.
- The ADF does not appear to disaggregate its aid operations from military operations in Afghanistan. Furthermore, ADF-supported development projects have not been evaluated for cost effectiveness, impact or outcome. The ISAF COIN strategy focuses on an integrated civilian-military approach in order to achieve more effective overall campaign objectives. Nevertheless, a clearer disaggregation of Australian military aid, the total amount spent by the ADF in reconstruction and development efforts, and evaluation of Australian military led aid projects in Afghanistan is still required. While appreciating national security issues, the lead taken by other countries in releasing information related to military development activities should serve as a model for Australia. This would provide a stronger evidence base to contribute to public discussion as to whether military led aid efforts increase peace dividends, improve security and are achieving sustainable development outcomes in Afghanistan.
- In Afghanistan, there are significant issues surrounding aid saturation, corruption, institutional absorptive capacity and delivery of increased aid at current rates. For example, some have perceived Uruzgan Province as being aid saturated and now highly reliant on foreign aid and actors. In a context of high corruption and lack of support for the central Afghan Government, issues around absorptive capacity can directly impact on stability. This can be further compounded in the context of a young and fast growing population, low levels of education, high levels of unemployment and illiteracy, the low status of women and limited economic opportunities.
- If negative perceptions of the Central Government persist within the local population, stabilisation efforts aimed at strengthening its reach and legitimacy will continue to be difficult. In this light, it may be useful to consider investment in alternative and longer term efforts to gain the trust and confidence of the people. This includes strengthening efficient, equitable and quality delivery of services via local sources and mechanisms. Further, mechanisms to promote greater accountability and transparency at the grassroots level are urgently required.
- Military-led aid activities are occurring throughout Afghanistan formally, and as part of the execution of ISAF's COIN strategy. However, few PRT supported aid projects have been subjected to either internal or external reviews. As a result, their cost effectiveness, impact and sustainability are difficult to assess and verify.
- Although a central principle in COIN strategy, and an objective of the PRT, claims that military-led aid and development efforts improve stability, secure a peace dividend and extend the authority of the Central Government are uncontested and are yet to be adequately demonstrated. Furthermore, independent evidence is needed to support this premise.
- The civil-military relationship continues to be uneasy and complicated in Afghanistan despite the development of UN, international organisation (IO), NGO and ISAF supported guidelines to enhance interaction and coordination of humanitarian and military actors in the country.
- High volumes of aid are being coupled with military activity to 'follow the fighting' to the most insecure parts of the country while other parts of the country considered more secure are receiving substantially less development assistance. Emerging evidence suggests this is having a destabilising effect and penalises the more secure parts of Afghanistan. The potential for unrest and dissension created by ongoing provincial aid inequalities should not be underestimated. However, further research is needed, as the body of literature on this subject is still relatively new.
- Overall, NGOs are increasingly marginalised in Afghanistan although they continue to be highly regarded by both donors and Afghans for their close relationships with communities and their cost effectiveness. Nevertheless and due in part to the militarisation of aid in Afghanistan, aid agencies perceive their role and status as increasingly fragile. The 'independent and impartial' space in which NGOs formerly operated in Afghanistan has been degraded and the ability of NGOs to operate is severely constrained by security and safety issues. Increased funds to NGOs linked to political and military objectives is decreasing the opportunities for sustainable and comprehensive community-based, needs-driven aid and development outcomes to be achieved across Afghanistan. This undermines stabilisation objectives.

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Acronyms

ACBAR	Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief
ACC	Australian Civilian Corps
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADF	Australia Defence Force
ADTF	Afghan Development Trust Fund
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AIHRC	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANCP	AusAID — NGO Cooperation Program
ANDS	Afghan National Development Strategy
ANF	Afghan National Forces
ANP	Afghan National Police
ARTF	Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund
BPHS	Basic Package of Health Services
CA	Comprehensive Approach
COIN	Counterinsurgency Strategy
CERP	Commander's Emergency Response Fund
DAFA	Development Assistance Facility Afghanistan
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DfID	Department for International Development (UK)
DIAC	Department of Immigration And Citizenship
EQUIP	Education Quality Improvement Program
IACSC	Independent Afghan Civil Service Commission

IMF	International Military Forces
IO	International Organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOPH	Ministry of Public Health
MRRD	Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development
MTF	Mentoring Task Force
NGO	Non-Government(al) Organisation
NSP	National Solidarity Program
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
RTF	Reconstruction Task Force
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TA	Technical Advisor
TFU	Task Force Uruzgan
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan
UNDP	UN Development Program
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNMACCA	UN Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan
WB	World Bank

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to clarify Australia's whole-of-government financial, programmatic and human resource aid contributions to Afghanistan. Aid strategies, programs and activities of relevance of other key organisations and actors are also briefly reviewed. The intent is to summarise the different ways in which Australian aid agencies — both government and non-government — have performed in Afghanistan, to assess their outcomes and to comment on the effectiveness of the Australian led aid programs. As part of this, the study presents a summary of arguments from recent literature on the problems or successes of aid delivered as part of a counter-insurgency strategy or PRT delivery mechanisms, and identifies implications for Australian aid as a result. The Terms of Reference for the study are found in Appendix 1.

Methodology

In preparing this study, an extensive literature review was carried out, with over 80 studies, reports and evaluations drawn from various sources and core issues extracted. These documents are listed in the Bibliography. For an extensive and updated bibliography on military, political and development issues in Afghanistan, the reader is also referred to The Afghanistan Analyst Bibliography.¹

Additionally, 31 face-to-face and telephone interviews were carried out in May and June 2010 with people who had either recent experience in Afghanistan or in managing part of Australia's engagement in Afghanistan. Those interviewed were drawn from Australian and foreign civil services and military staff, NGOs², academics and private consultants. Interviews were largely open ended. Respondents to the study are listed in Appendix 2.³ In addition, the author has drawn on his own experience of more than six years living and working in Afghanistan since 1999.

The time frame for the report largely covers the period 2005-06 to the present, reflecting the deployment of Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)⁴ and consequently an increase in aid funding by Australia to Afghanistan. Earlier periods are referred to where relevant.

To assist in this research, AusAID, the Departments of Defence and Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Dutch Embassy in Canberra, and various individuals and NGOs in Afghanistan and Australia made available many documents and reports which contributed enormously to the final report.

1 See Bleuer, C., The Afghanistan Analyst Bibliography: 5th Edition, January 2010, <http://afghanistan-analyst.org>.

2 For the purposes of this paper, aid and development NGOs are grouped under the generic NGO title. Though this conjoins the different roles NGOs play, distinction is made in the text when needed. It is also the case that in a complex environment such as Afghanistan, few NGOs maintain a strict distinction between these roles.

3 One respondent asked not to be identified and provided background information only.

4 Set up under UN charter, and operating under NATO auspices, ISAF is charged with assisting the Government of Afghanistan to establish security and control throughout Afghanistan.

Introduction

Historical Summary

Australia's engagement in Afghanistan dates largely from 11 September, 2001. From 1994-2001, the AusAID yearly budget to Afghanistan was \$5 million or less and military involvement was limited to mine clearance through the United Nations. After the 11 September 2001 attacks on the US, and due to its role as a major non-NATO ally and an ally of the US through the ANZUS Treaty, Australia supported the US and NATO led interventions into Afghanistan through the deployment of ADF personnel from as early as October 2001. However, after this initial deployment, ADF engagement in Afghanistan was limited until 2006 when Australian troops were deployed to Uruzgan Province as part of ISAF.

Australia's engagement in Afghanistan is, in part, predicated on the country's long-standing relationship with the US. It was further cemented when 88 Australians lost their lives in the 2002 bombing attacks in Bali. The terrorists responsible were believed to have been trained and supported by Al Qaeda when it was operating from safe havens in and around Afghanistan. Additionally, Afghans have sought asylum in Australia and regularly arrive to this country by boat. One solution to this form of uncontrolled migration is to stabilise the society and to build the economy of Afghanistan — something that both Coalition and Labor Governments have sought to do.

Australia's involvement in Afghanistan operates on a number of levels: the domestic political, foreign political, humanitarian and defence in a bid to eradicate terrorism. This is the position formally articulated this year by Minister for Foreign Affairs Stephen Smith and others.⁵

Australian Government Strategy

The Australian Government describes its overall mission in Afghanistan as one to stop Afghanistan *from again becoming a breeding ground for terrorism*.⁶ It also seeks to help strengthen the ability, capacity and stability of Afghan institutions in order for them to govern effectively and provide basic services and economic development.

In March 2010, Defence Minister John Faulkner described Australia's mission in Afghanistan as "...to fight insurgency and deny sanctuary to international terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda; to assist in stabilising Afghanistan; and to stand firmly by our alliance commitment to the United States."⁷

In a conversation with DFAT staff, the mission was described as one "...to prevent safe haven for terrorism, to support the transition to a stable Government, and to contribute to international efforts." A Defence official put it as: "Afghans managing their own affairs, and not having terrorists train there." These positions reflect the focus of the respective departments. The establishment of a 'credible government' was also mentioned, although respondents agreed that the metrics for assessing 'credible' were not clear.

Australia has supported the revised Obama Administration's strategy for Afghanistan that has seen a strategic shift in military command of NATO-ISAF, with a changed emphasis and direction of military operations towards a counter-insurgency (COIN) "shape, clear, hold and build" campaign. The central principle in COIN strategy is to protect the population, reverse the Taliban's momentum and create the space for the development of security and governance in Afghanistan.⁸

In Uruzgan Province, Australia's focus has been on developing the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces so that these forces can take a lead role in the security of the province. The strategy continues to be to secure and stabilise the area; extend the authority of the Central and Provincial Government; contain and eliminate insurgency activity; and to create an environment conducive to development. This strategy is intended to help the Provincial Government operate with a measure of confidence which, in turn, is intended to help create an environment conducive to governance processes and to encourage economic and social development.

The ADF and AFP (Australian Federal Police) objectives focus on stabilisation and include the following efforts:

- ADF mentoring and training of the Afghanistan National Army (ANA) 4th Brigade in Uruzgan, to be completed within the next two to four years
- ADF reconstruction and infrastructure activities that contribute to stabilisation
- For the ADF to provide protection so that civilian aid officials can deliver assistance in Uruzgan Province
- Mentoring and training to the Afghan National Police (ANP) via the AFP.

5 Smith, S. Statement on Afghanistan, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, February 2010. See also AusAID, Afghanistan: Approach to Humanitarian and Development Assistance, 2007-2010

6 See, for example, statements made by PM Gillard, Defence Minister Faulkner and Foreign Minister Smith.

7 Faulkner, J., Ministerial Statement on Afghanistan, 18 March 2010.

8 Faulkner, J., 18 March 2010.

Australian support to Afghanistan: Overview

AusAID's country program priorities are listed as follows:

1. Support basic service delivery in education and health by providing assistance to effective national government programs and targeted health and education activities in Uruzgan Province.
2. Build service delivery capacity of the Afghan education, health, agriculture and rural development ministries through the provision of teacher training programs, development awards and technical assistance.
3. Build the capacity of the Afghan state at both the national and provincial level through the provision of experts to key ministries in Kabul and support for national programs in health, education, agriculture and rural development. In Uruzgan Province, support will drive the economic development of Afghanistan, build the capacity of the provincial government and deliver services to the local population and improve governance.
4. Improve agriculture and rural development through programs supporting improved agricultural production, food security, rural livelihoods and microfinance that create jobs and economic opportunities for rural workers.
5. Assist vulnerable populations by supporting delivery of emergency relief and humanitarian assistance to vulnerable communities. The program will also support human rights and mine action programs.

Official Australian Military Engagement with Afghanistan

Australia is currently the largest non-NATO contributor of military support to Afghanistan and the 11th largest overall ISAF contributor. The ADF has operated in Afghanistan since October 2001. Australian Special Forces participated in the US-led invasion, were withdrawn by December 2002 but were then redeployed in September 2005.

Internationally, military engagement in aid and reconstruction was formalised early through the establishment of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in 2002. The mandate of PRTs was to improve security, extend the authority of the Afghan Central Government and to facilitate the country's reconstruction. The number of PRTs has grown over the last eight years, and PRTs are now found in 26 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces.

The Australian Government deployed the first Reconstruction Task Force (RTF) to Uruzgan Province in September 2006, joining with the Dutch-led Task Force (TFU) as they took over control from US troops.⁹ The RTF was comprised exclusively of engineers to focus on reconstruction. There was a security element attached to the RTF but it was purely for the protection of the RTF contingent. When the RTF assumed a mentoring role, it changed its name to the Mentoring Reconstruction Task Force (MRTF) and more recently it evolved into the Mentoring Task Force (MTF). There was also a separate ADF element deployed known as the Special Operations Task Group. This group had no direct relationship with the RTF and was instead deployed as part of the TFU.

In June 2010, there were 2000 Dutch troops as part of the TFU as well as the PRT and a civilian advisory group. There have been additional Australian deployments to Afghanistan and at the time of writing, Australia has some 1550 troops in Afghanistan, most of which are in Uruzgan positioned within the Australian RTF as part of the TFU.

The PRT has around 100 staff, both military and civilian, and acts as a provincial liaison office. Australia has had one to two AusAID staff placed within the PRT for some years, and this number is expected to increase to 6 by September 2010.¹⁰ The Dutch ceased military and civilian operations in Uruzgan as of August 2010, although the Netherlands Government will continue to help fund the Government of Afghanistan until 2014. The new structure planned for Uruzgan involves a US-led multinational effort under an ISAF flag known as the Combined Team Uruzgan. However, the details of the operations were not available during the timeframe of the study. It is expected that Australia will provide civilian leadership to the PRT in Uruzgan, with a more substantial civilian presence generally.¹¹ Australian troop deployments are not expected to increase.

Under the Dutch leadership, the PRT has sought to assess the needs of the local population, to have an outreach function, and to act as a platform for meetings and discussions between the various political, military and other actors and organisations involved in the Province.

AFP Support to Afghanistan

AFP engagement in Afghanistan began in October 2007 with an initial deployment of four AFP Officers to provide expertise in counter-narcotics and policy capacity development. By the end of 2008, the number of AFP deployed had increased to 12. Additional AFP officers were added to the Afghanistan contingent in 2009 to mentor Afghan and international training staff involved in rebuilding and retraining the Afghan National Police. They are attached to ISAF-led training activities in Uruzgan Province and undertake other support activities where appropriate.¹²

Since 2009, the AFP has helped train more than 500 Afghan National Police officers in Uruzgan Province, and additional members deployed in 2010 further helped with the development of the Provincial Training Centre in Tarin Kowt.

As well as police training and mentoring in Uruzgan, the AFP in Afghanistan have taken on an active role in developing the capacity of the Afghan National Police and in reinforcing the rule of law through placements in Kabul and Kandahar. The AFP has received funding of \$32.1 million over two years to undertake this role.

Additionally, an AFP commander was appointed as Senior Police Advisor position to the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) in 2010. The advisor position involves the coordination of law enforcement programs and activities on behalf of UNAMA in partnership with the Afghan National Police and the coalition law enforcement bodies.

9 US forces have remained active in Uruzgan as part of the Coalition Forces Operation Enduring Freedom.

10 See further AusAID, 'Australia's strategic approach to aid in Afghanistan 2010-2012', December 2010, available at <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/publications/pdf/101216%20Afghanistan%20Strategic%20Approach%202010%20FINAL.pdf>, p. 3.

11 Faulkner, J. and Smith, S. Joint Press Conference, 23 June 2010

12 Australian Federal Police, www.afp.gov.au

Australian Operational Engagement

Australian Aid Programs

The goal of Australia's development assistance program is to strengthen the ability and capacity of Afghan institutions to govern effectively. The program also aims to provide basic services, support economic development and assist with capacity building of the Uruzgan administration. AusAID has provided humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan for many years and has had a country program since 2006. In 2008, it began deploying officers to Afghanistan. As well as multilateral and humanitarian assistance, AusAID has also funded a Development Assistance Facility for Afghanistan (DAFA) based in Kabul, which is overseen by the managing contractor, GRM. The DAFA has managed Australia's bilateral aid program to Afghanistan, working with the Government of Afghanistan in the Ministries of Agriculture and Livestock, Health, Education, and Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD). The key activities of DAFA are listed as:

- to support harmonization of effort by filling gaps in long term capacity building programs of Government of Afghanistan / donors
- to provide responsive short and medium term assistance to key Ministries as needs arise
- to provide capacity development opportunities for provincial government staff from Uruzgan province
- to respond to long term capacity development needs through scholarships and targeted training.¹³

A key strategy of the Australian Government as well as other donors has been the placement of Technical Advisors (TA) in key ministries. Australia, through the DAFA, provides technical advisors to the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), the Ministry of Education, the MRRD and the Ministry of Health.

As part of stabilisation efforts, a growing number of countries including Australia have deployed, or are considering the deployment, of public service personnel to further support capacity development of key ministries, via mechanisms similar to the recently announced Australian Civilian Corps (ACC).¹⁴

Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (World Bank)

Australia's principle delivery mechanism of assistance to Afghanistan is through the World Bank to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF). AusAID places a high priority on the ARTF as it is seen as a vehicle for delivering funds both on budget and in support of key national programs. This is in line with the Kabul Conference Commitment where an agreement was made to channel 50 per cent of funds through Afghan systems. In 2009-10 alone, Australia committed \$25 million to the ARTF. Many of the Government of Afghanistan's major development programs draw their funding from the ARTF, including the National Solidarity Program (NSP), the Education Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP) and the Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS).

The ARTF is the primary financing vehicle for donors wanting to support Afghan development priorities and systems, such as the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS)¹⁵ and recurrent budget and investment needs. It is regarded by the Afghan Government as on-budget and uses Afghan systems in the delivery of many of its programs. The Australian Government has directed 38 per cent of its Afghanistan ODA to the ARTF in recent years (see section on AusAID spending).

The investment projects that are funded are in keeping with ANDS. These priorities include agriculture and rural development, justice, private sector development, capacity development, education, urban development, transport and energy. In 2008, US\$1.9 billion was disbursed to the Government of Afghanistan to help cover recurrent costs such as civil servants' salaries and over US\$1.2 billion was made available for investment projects. Most recently, the Australian Government committed \$25 million over five years to support the Peace and Reintegration Fund. Australia will fund a component of the reintegration program delivered through the ARTF.

¹³ As noted on GRM and AusAID websites.

¹⁴ See, for example, AusAID, What is the Australian Civilian Corps?, last updated: December 2010, www.ausaid.gov.au/acc

¹⁵ The Afghan National Development Strategy is the primary document guiding development in Afghanistan. The ANDS was completed in 2008, having been developed from an interim plan, and runs through till 2013.

Australian NGOs in Afghanistan

NGOs in general have been operating in Afghanistan since the 1950s, though many reduced or ceased operations during the Soviet occupation and subsequent civil war. Currently, there are Australian NGOs and international NGOs operating within international consortia in Afghanistan, with many of these funded by AusAID. Both Australian and international NGOs (INGOs) deploy staff and contribute financial support to their Afghanistan programs either directly or via their consortia partners. For example, CARE Australia supports CARE Afghanistan programmes and until recently, Australians were on staff. World Vision Australia, through World Vision International, has also placed staff and supports many projects in Afghanistan. OXFAM Australia and Oxfam Novib support Afghan development partner organisations across Afghanistan. Accredited Australian NGOs can receive AusAID's ANCP (Australian-NGO Cooperative Program) funding, and some Australian NGOs are using ANCP funds in Afghanistan. Further, Australian funds flow indirectly to implementing NGOs under the ARTF programs, for example, the BHPS and the NSP.

Australian Contribution to the United Nations

The vast majority of Australian ODA funding to the UN (96 per cent) goes to UNDP, UNHCR, WFP and UNMACCA (UN Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan). Australia supports UNAMA's¹⁶ priority areas identified by the Mission, such as electoral assistance. Additionally, an AFP commander has been selected as the Senior Police Advisor in the Mission.

UNICEF, IOM (International Organization for Migration), and FAO shared the remaining four per cent of ODA. Australia, through the Department of Immigration And Citizenship (DIAC) works with IOM and UNHCR in refugee return and resettlement and in stabilising refugee outflows, but this represents a very small part of Australia's ODA (see section on AusAID spending). The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has been funded in the past; the current Australian contribution to the counter narcotics effort is through support to the agricultural sector to provide alternative livelihoods to poppy production. In addition, further funding has been provided for AFP deployments to Afghanistan in support of the counter-narcotics efforts.

Although earmarked assistance is consistent with good donor practice, it is still not clear how Australian contributions to UN agencies have been spent or the overall impact of these UN funded programs and projects.

¹⁶ UNAMA is mandated to lead international civilian efforts in areas including rule of law, transitional justice and anti-corruption as well as to promote the country's development and governance priorities.

Official aid and defence spending in Afghanistan

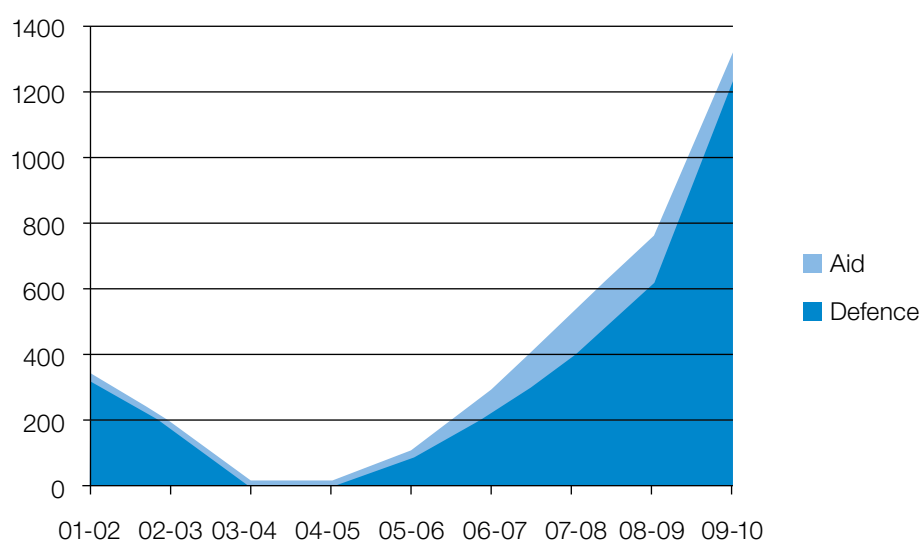
Total Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) from 2001–2006 to Afghanistan was approximately \$116,219,926¹⁷ and increased significantly from 2006 onwards. As noted previously, Australia is also the largest non-NATO contributor and 11th largest overall in relation to its defence contributions to Afghanistan. In terms of its own aid budget and troop deployments, the commitment to Afghanistan is still increasing. In the 2010–11 Federal Budget, Afghanistan is the fourth largest recipient of Australian ODA (\$123 million) and the AusAID Afghanistan country program receives \$106 million. This is up from around \$70 million in AusAID funding in 2009–10.¹⁸

The following tables show Australian Government spending in Afghanistan since 2001. These amounts include funding to programs and activities administered by AusAID, the AFP, DIAC, DFAT, and the ADF.¹⁹

Table 1: Overall Spending in Afghanistan 2001–2010²⁰

	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
ADF 'Operation Slipper' (AUD\$ m)	320.0	176.0	-	-	91.0	223.3	394.9	618.9	1232.7
Overseas Development Aid (AUD\$ m)	26.5	21.5	23.7	22.8	20.9	77.1	139.9	144.2	88.7
Afghanistan Total (AUD\$ m)	346.5	197.5	18.7	22.8	111.9	300.4	534.8	763.1	1320.4

Table 2: Aid and Military Spending in Afghanistan, 2001- 2010



The percentage breakdown of ODA eligible expenditure in Afghanistan, by agency, from 2007–2010 is presented below. The defence-delivered ODA includes only additional costs of military personnel delivering humanitarian assistance or performing development services. It excludes their regular salaries and expenses.²¹

¹⁷ See, for example: AusAID, Official Australian Aid to Afghanistan 2001–2006, 18 January 2006, <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/country/afghan.cfm>

¹⁸ McMullan, B. and Smith, S. Australia's International Development Assistance Budget Statement, May 2010

¹⁹ A disaggregation of ODA is not possible as this information was unavailable during the timeframe of the study.

²⁰ Extract from Cawthray, T. The evolution of Australian Government policy towards the conflict in Afghanistan and the spill over effects into neighbouring Pakistan, DFAT, 2009

²¹ Table provided in response to questions taken on notice by Senator Brown. Senate Estimates Hearing. October, 2010.

Table 3. Breakdown of ODA Eligible Expenditure in Afghanistan

Agency/Department	2007-08(actual) %	2008-09 (actual) %	2009-10 (estimate) \$%
AusAID	48.00	44.70	52.90
Immigration	0.10	0.05	0.30
ACIAR	0.10	0.20	0.10
AFP	0.60	0.90	1.90
Defence	51.20	54.10	44.70
Education, Employment and Workplace Relations	0.00	0.05	0.10

In addition to Australian whole-of-government financial support, Australian NGOs and international organisations (IOs) have also raised money from the public and private sectors for Afghanistan. However the overall ratio of non-military aid to military funding²² is about 1:10. Similar figures are found in other countries. For example, using 2008 figures, the US military alone was spending nearly US\$100 million per day in Afghanistan. This compares with the average volume of international aid provided by all donors since 2001 of approximately US\$7 million per day.²³

Australian Defence Force Spending

In 2010–11 Australian Defence spending will be nearly seven times what is spent by AusAID and DFAT combined, specifically \$1118.7 million as compared with \$106 million and \$51 million respectively. In 2009–10, the Australian Government provided \$1,232.7 million for the cost of Australia's military personnel and equipment, which was largely focused in Uruzgan province. At least \$618 million was provided in 2008–09.²⁴

In addition to these figures, in 2009–10, the Australian Government agreed to provide an annual contribution of \$59.3 million (US\$60 million) for five years to the ANA Trust Fund. The Trust Fund is used to develop and sustain the ANA which the ADF is training and mentoring in Uruzgan.

The RTF has undertaken significant reconstruction and development projects in Uruzgan. However, it is not clear what percentage of the Defence budget is allocated to development and reconstruction, partly because these projects form part of ISAF's COIN strategy, to which ADF efforts are aligned.²⁵ That is, stabilisation efforts, as they tend to be regarded, are integrally entwined with the military strategy and not considered a separate development strategy. If Defence does disaggregate spending on aid and reconstruction activities, security sector reform (SSR) and general operational costs, this information is either closed to the public or was not made available to the author during the time of the study.

However, the cost of a range of individual projects is known.²⁶ For example, the recently opened Tarin Kowt Boy's Primary School Redevelopment cost USD\$1.98 million.²⁷ This is one of the largest projects undertaken by Australian Army engineers. The 32-room school has capacity for 1200 students. The new Provincial Ministry of Energy and Water Offices cost USD\$ 1.6 million and was due for completion in mid-2010. USD\$1.8 million was spent on the Tarin Kowt Waste Management project, and USD\$800,000 was spent on the Sorkh Morghab Mosque Madrassa (religious training school). Construction of a mosque will follow, although estimated project costs are not available.

Military-led aid projects are comparatively expensive in relation to non-military led aid projects in part because of the high number of expatriate personnel involved in construction activities and the cost of oversight, security and infrastructure needed to support the personnel. Costs in insecure areas such as Uruzgan are also higher because of the additional security infrastructure required to safeguard projects and personnel. However without disaggregated budgets, the real costs of military-led aid—the totals spent on the specific project, associated security operations, related personnel and infrastructure costs—cannot be assessed.

A clearer breakdown of Australian military aid—in particular, how much is being spent by the ADF in reconstruction and development projects—would be useful to determine the cost effectiveness and efficiency of aid delivery by the military. It would also help clarify the degree to which funding comes from Defence or from Australia's ODA (or how

22 Military spending would in this instance include combat activities and stabilisation/reconstruction efforts.

23 Waldman, M/ACBAR, *Falling Short: Aid Effectiveness in Afghanistan*, 2008

24 Department of Defence website, Budgets section: <http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/>

25 ISAF strategy has moved from being centred on targeting opposition and insurgent forces, to winning the population over, and through that, denying insurgent/opposition forces support and protection. This is the 'population-centric' strategy known also as Counter Insurgency Strategy.

26 It is not clear if these projects have contributed to Australia's ODA expenditure.

27 Aid spending in Afghanistan is calculated in USD. ADF projects are described in USD.

much Defence contributes to, or accesses ODA). An answer to a recent Parliamentary question on notice puts Defence as a percentage of all ODA at 44.70% in 2009–10 (with AusAID at 52.90% and AFP at 1.90%), down from 54.10% in 2008–09.²⁸ Based on the literature review, few countries actually provide expenditure breakdowns, although there are exceptions, including several European PRTs and the Canadians, who publish project costs on websites and in reports to their respective Governments.

AFP Funding

As noted earlier, in support of stabilisation efforts, the AFP has been deployed to Afghanistan since 2007 and been engaged in a range of activities, including counter-narcotics efforts and the strengthening of the Afghanistan National Police Force. Funds allocated to these efforts include \$32.1 million over two years to contribute to the development of the Afghan National Police capacity and reinforcing the rule of law through placements in Kabul and Kandahar.²⁹

AusAID Spending

From 2001–2006 for example, over \$116,219,926 was allocated to programs carried out by UN agencies, Afghanistan Government ministries, Australian and non-Australian NGOs, IOs and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).³⁰ From 200–2007, \$125 million in humanitarian and development assistance was contributed. In 2008–09 AusAID had a budget of \$69.8 million (inclusive of funding for the country program and humanitarian assistance); in 2009–10, the figure was \$68.8 million. The 2010–11 budget is over \$107 million (See Table 4). AusAID's funding is drawn from Australia's ODA.

Table 4. Australian Aid Funding to Afghanistan 200–2011 (Country Program and Humanitarian Assistance)

All figures in AUD (millions)	2008-09 Actual	2009-10 Estimated Actual	2010-11 Budgeted
AusAID Afghanistan	69.8	68.8	107.38
Total ODA Afghanistan (including AusAID)	155.9	130.1	123.1
Balance	86.1	61.3	15.7

As noted in Table 3, the remaining ODA is spent through other operations in Afghanistan, including those supported by the ADF, AFP, and Department of Immigration.

AusAID expenditures for programs in Afghanistan, both nationally and in Uruzgan Province, are provided in Table 5.

Table 5. Breakdown of AusAID expenditures in Afghanistan 2007–08 to 2009–10.³¹

All figures in AUD (millions)	2007-08 (actual)	2008-09 (actual)	2009-10 (estimate)
National programs	\$55.69	46.92	56.19
Uruzgan-specific programs	0.007	0.836	1.60
Activities funded through national programs and particularly earmarked for Uruzgan	10.25	22.00	11.00
Total AusAID Expenditure (approx)	65.95	69.76	68.79

²⁸ Senator Bob Brown, Answer to Question on Notice No. 16, October, 2010.

²⁹ Detail provided in www.afp.gov.au.

³⁰ Figure represents confirmed ODA as available at AusAID, Official Australian Aid to Afghanistan 2001–2006, 18 January 2006, <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/country/afghan.cfm>.

³¹ Table based on response to questions taken on notice by Senator Brown, Senate Estimates Hearing, October, 2010.

Recipients of AusAID Funding

From 2005–06 to 2008–09, AusAID contributed a total of \$183 million to Afghanistan through implementing agencies and organisations, although this figure does not include monies disbursed through the ANCP. Forty five per cent went to UN agencies. Nine per cent went to the ICRC and seven per cent to Australian based and international NGOs. One per cent of funding was allocated to Afghan NGOs. According to AusAID, approximately \$87 million has been channelled through the WB to the ARTF since 2003. Support to Australian-based NGOs was approximately \$12 million over the period 2005–06 to 2008–09, out of a total of more than \$30 million. Almost half of monies allocated went to the ICRC. (See Appendix 3 for a breakdown of funding to IOs and NGOs during this period).

AusAID reports that since 2008–09, aid allocated directly to Uruzgan Province is around 10 per cent of Australia's total aid program in Afghanistan. Parts of the multilateral funding also flow to Uruzgan although the total amount is unknown due to the untied nature of multilateral funding. For 2010–11, this figure is expected to rise to between \$15 million and \$20 million.

A comparison of funding patterns between 2005–06 to 2008–09 and 2009–10 suggest an increase in funding to multilaterals, a decrease to bilateral organisations and an increase to NGOs. Specifically, AusAID reported that in the last two financial years, funding to NGOs has increased to 15 per cent; multilaterals received 55 per cent of total funding and bilateral organisations received 25 per cent.

Aid delivery in Afghanistan: issues and challenges

This section looks at a number of the issues and challenges faced in aid delivery in Afghanistan generally, and in Uruzgan Province, specifically.

Disparities in Aid Spending

Aid tends to be distributed unevenly in Afghanistan, leading to marked differences in the levels of funding available to provinces. There is a growing body of literature that suggests this disparity is skewing provincial economies and effectively penalising those areas that are more secure.

Donors have very different approaches to where they target their funding. Some donors channel a majority of their funding through the Government of Afghanistan—DfID for example has provided up to 80 per cent of its funding directly to the Government, largely through the World Bank managed ARTF. This is the approach strongly preferred by the Government of Afghanistan and is considered best practice. However, other donors prefer to direct their funding to specific provinces, sectors and projects of their choosing. USAID, for example, is highly visible at a provincial level in part because it directs the majority of its funds outside of the Afghan Government's core budget.

Australia compares favourably with other donors in relation to the channelling of funds through Afghan systems. Australia will meet the commitment made at the Kabul Conference to channel 50 per cent of funds through Afghan systems in 2010–11, compared to 46 per cent in 2009–10. Australian priorities are consistent with the ANDS. Australia's financial support is directed primarily in areas determined to be of strategic importance to Australia, namely the four Ministries of Rural Reconstruction and Development, Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, Education and Public Health. However within these Ministries, Australia does not preference spending. As noted in the previous section, only 10 per cent of Australian funding is directed to Uruzgan with additional funding filtered through multilaterals. These figures are set to rise as Australia's engagement increases in subsequent years, although actual amounts of funding to Uruzgan are difficult to discern, given that funding is not earmarked. While AusAID estimates an increase of 15–20 per cent, this increase does not include stabilisation activities supported by the ADF.

Aid and the Peace Penalty

USAID allocates 50 per cent of its monies directly to the four most insecure provinces where its military forces are most active. Canada has recently decided to tie more than 50 per cent of its aid to Kandahar Province, where the Canadian PRT operates. When aid money is placed where national militaries are active, this is usually part of an overall COIN strategy that uses development to help shore up military gains. As part of the 'Shape, Clear, Hold and Build' strategy, the premise is that while an area can be cleared of insurgents and opposition forces, a sustainable peace can only be held if the area is 'built'. Aid and reconstruction projects are then the means by which this occurs. This approach is a key platform of current COIN strategy, through which the loyalty and support of local leaders and communities is in principle won.

The argument has been made that in support of COIN strategy, donor funding has followed military operations to support the 'clear' and 'hold' stages of stabilisation and development efforts ('build').

By definition, this is occurring in the most unstable parts of the country. Conversely, the argument has also been made that those parts of the country that are relatively more stable have been largely bypassed by the Government and the aid community in relation to aid and development funding.

Taking a snapshot view of planned and committed donor and government spending per capita per province from 2007–08, there is some evidence to support this proposition (see figure 5). For example, Uruzgan has a population of only 300,000, yet is considered one of the most insecure and neglected provinces. It receives US\$150/person in PRT funding. The Province also receives over US\$200/person in Government and donor spending. Helmand and Kandahar—considered to be insecure provinces—received approximately US\$400/person and US\$225/person respectively. Conversely, Ghor Province, which is relatively stable, receives only USD\$50/person.

At the same time, Jawzjan and Balkh—two provinces considered relatively secure—received US\$250/person and US\$150/person respectively.

Nevertheless, Waldman (2008) argues that PRT spending per province depends essentially on both the nation providing the PRT and the proximity to insecure areas. Essentially, the wealthier the lead nation in the PRT and the closer to insecurity, the more money is spent.

The disparities in relation to provincial aid allocations do not necessarily reflect local need. For example, Panjshir, where the US PRT is active, was receiving USD \$685/capita in 2007–08. Neighbouring Nuristan, also with a US PRT and

as one of the most remote and marginalised provinces, received less than US\$50 per capita. Baghlan, which also neighbours Panjshir but with a Hungarian-led PRT, received less than US\$50/capita. Takhar, a relatively secure province in the North, receives only US\$30/capita, and has no resident PRT.

While disparities in aid provision might have a legitimate basis, the potential for unrest and dissension created by such inequalities should not be underestimated and should be further researched. The divisive results of this 'peace penalty' are beginning to be recognised, though funding practices have yet to change.

In an evaluation of the Central Hazarajat in 2008, the comment was made by an Afghani that 'this area is peaceful. It always was. There are no landmines, no fighting, no Taliban. So where is the development?'

This sentiment has also been expressed by many others—from provincial governors to aid workers. As one aid worker noted:

"We have no problems getting funds for conflict areas. But it is a struggle to continue excellent work in the non-conflict areas. The interest of the donors is quite often in the areas where they have troops. It is understandable for them as a country but it is not a division of resources based on humanitarian aid needs."

It has also been observed that in biasing development funds towards insecure and poppy-cultivating areas in an effort to create alternative legitimate livelihoods and garner support for the government, donors and aid actors are actually creating incentives for continued poppy growing and increased insecurity.

Afghanistan is a country familiar with the concept of purchased loyalty—warlords, Mujahedeen commanders and Taliban leaders all bought local armies, who were then bought back and then traded a few more times. While COIN strategy and its relationship to garnering loyalty is more nuanced, the notion of using loyalty as a means of reigning in support and strengthening stability and security may be more tenuous in an Afghanistan context.

Strengthening Governance and Accountability

Increasingly, good governance is viewed as key to stabilisation and development in Afghanistan and, in most interviews conducted for this study, governance was viewed as the single most important area to work on in order for Afghanistan to become a functional state. Australian Government officials described governance priorities as strengthening financial management and targeting corruption, increasing capacity of the Central Government and building linkages between central and provincial governments. Officials agreed, however, that improving governance was a long-term process and one that was difficult to directly influence.

At the Central Government level, Australian efforts to build capacity and improve governance have been largely limited to TA placements in key ministries and the provision of training opportunities. The military, the Dutch PRT, the Australian RTF and AusAID all confirmed that rigorous efforts have been made to link provincial reconstruction efforts to national and provincial development plans such as the ANDS or MRRD strategic plans in order to improve accountability. It has however been difficult to get Kabul-based ministers and officials to engage in Uruzgan. It has been almost as difficult to get provincial officials into districts. The Dutch PRT described a successful provincial tactic—that of 'Government on Tour'—where they facilitated taking provincial government leaders out to the districts to meet with local groups. They also facilitated several trips of central government officials to Uruzgan. The PRT reported that these trips resulted in extensive dialogues opening up between communities and officials and increased the 'ownership' of local people of their Government.

Given the high levels of corruption in Afghanistan perceived by Afghans and the international community, efforts made to improve accountability and have the government appear to be more open to public scrutiny are a positive step forward. It is unclear if the momentum created by, for example, the Dutch 'Government on Tour' effort will continue with the departure of the Dutch contingency from Uruzgan.

The provincial administration in Uruzgan is developing. In particular, the Provincial Departments of the MRRD, MAIL, and the Ministry of Water and Power are all building in capacity and performance. However, improvements are uneven with several sources reporting unresponsiveness and ongoing corruption in at least one department. The 2009 Liaison Office (TLO) Report on Government capacity in Uruzgan is less positive and describes widespread incompetence and corruption, weak capacity and significant lack of reach.

The same report gives a mixed assessment on the outcomes of training provincial police and Afghan forces. Specifically, the number of police and military trained has risen substantially since 2006 and skills levels have also improved. The primary problems are to do with corruption within the ANA and ANP, provincial coverage and lack of data on how many personnel there really are in the ANA or ANP. For example, the official number of police in Uruzgan is 1,319, but approximately 1,650 are paid. Further, ethnic conflict has also contaminated working relationships between Hazara and Pashtun police offices in some districts, leading to widespread desertions. For example, of the 60 trained

ANP in Khas Uruzgan, only 10 are left. Additionally, parts of Uruzgan are still under militia control and the loyalty of the militia to the Government is poor or non-existent.

There are also issues with current efforts to increase the perception of the legitimacy of the Afghan Government. Donors correctly see their role as assisting in increasing the legitimacy of the Afghan Government and this is the primary reason most governments, including Australia, have channelled a large percentage of their funds through the Government directly or via multilateral support (e.g. ARTF). This is despite its weak capacity, poor capability and corruption. Yet, to do otherwise would be tantamount to agreeing the Government was illegitimate or at least incapable. Creating the perception of a legitimate and capable Government is seen as key to gaining grassroots support or, at least, in providing a genuine alternative to opposition forces. Strategies such as COIN are premised on this supposition—specifically, that the more development or improvement people experience at the hands of Government agents or people working on behalf of the Government, the more loyalty they will feel.

The challenge, however, is that the general population perceives the Government as fundamentally corrupt, and to a lesser degree, as illegitimate. Foreign governments and donors supporting the Government are therefore increasingly being viewed negatively as they are, by association, seen to be supporting and funding a corrupt and compromised regime and one out of touch with the Afghan people.

If negative perceptions of the Central Government persist, efforts to strengthen its reach and legitimacy will continue to be an uphill battle. It might, in fact, be useful to consider alternative efforts at gaining the trust and confidence of the people, such as strengthening efficient, equitable and quality delivery of services to the people via sources close to them. Whether this occurs through NGOs, provincial governments, private contractors or international entities such as the UN, the key is to identify and institutionalise mechanisms that promote accountability and transparency at the grassroots level.

The Use of Military Aid to Increase Stability

Using the military to deliver aid may be viewed by some (often political and/or defence arms of government) as legitimate if it is shown to be effective in reaching the objectives of improving stability and increased public support for Afghan authority. However, it is yet to be demonstrated that military-led aid does this. Research tends to suggest that poverty and lack of resources leads to instability and vulnerability to insurgent recruitment. Yet this assumption does not necessarily hold true in a context of chronic underdevelopment. There are many factors that lead to instability, of which poverty can be but one.

This point was made forcefully by a number of participants at the 2010 Wilton Park Conference, 'Winning Hearts and Minds in Afghanistan', which brought together a range of people, many of whom had direct, long-term experience in Afghanistan. A recurrent theme in the Conference was that the link between aid and stability had not been proven in Afghanistan. Instead, evidence suggests that sudden impoverishment or shock can lead to instability but chronic poverty—such as has characterised much of Afghanistan—can actually be relatively stable and resilient to outside influence. Poor people are not necessarily prone to insurgency and violence and poverty alone may not necessarily create conflict.

There is some evidence to suggest that rapidly executed efforts to modernise and develop society are in fact correlated with increased instability. Wilder notes:

'During the 1950s–1970s, Afghanistan was one of the largest per capita recipients of foreign aid due to the Cold War competition to gain influence. The new social forces that were unleashed during this period of relatively rapid modernization (at least in urban areas), most notably the Islamist and Communist movements at Kabul University, proved to be tremendously destabilizing. This is not to suggest that past development and modernization efforts have not had some very positive development benefits, but to highlight that it is unwise to assume that they will contribute to stability and security.'

As a more current example, Pakistan is substantially more developed than Afghanistan at urban and rural levels, with a Government that provides more resources for its people, and has at least some elements of a democracy. Yet sympathy towards Taliban movements is high in many parts, support for the Government variable and large parts of the country only nominally under Government control.

Recent research by Wilder showed that 'at a time when more development dollars are being spent in Afghanistan than ever before, Afghan perceptions of aid and aid actors are overwhelmingly negative. The overriding criticism of aid efforts is the perception of corruption that is fuelled by, and undermines aid programs ... not only was corruption contributing to aid projects losing hearts and minds, it was also fuelling instability by eroding the legitimacy of Government officials

and institutions, as well as the credibility of international actors ... aid projects [are having] a destabilising effect by consolidating power of one tribe.'

Wilder's research found that aid does not contribute to improved security, and may actually fuel conflict. 'In the zero-sum nature of Afghan society and politics, where the gain of one individual, village, tribe, or ethnic group is often perceived as a loss for others, aid projects can often be destabilizing by creating perceived winners and losers.'

During the field research that was carried out in Uruzgan for the same study, a government official commented, 'The problem of foreign aid exacerbated the [conflict] situation because Durrani [a major Pashtun tribe to which President Karzai belongs] not only got all the power in government, but some also controlled and benefited from all the aid programs.'

Military-led aid does open doors, and 'buys entrance' to communities. However, emerging evidence suggests that the recipient parties do not have any delusions about what is going on and underlying motives of the aid. They understand it is aid as a transaction, not a developmental right. As such, the terms of the transaction are finite and little obligation, loyalty or duty is felt at its conclusion.

Multilateral Efforts in Aid and Development: Outcomes

The ARTF, and within the ARTF, the NSP, EQUIP and BPHS are highlighted in this section for review as they are the primary mechanisms for the delivery of major aid programs across Afghanistan. These program areas are supported by AusAID and align with Australia's bilateral focus on health, education and rural development. Other programs under the ARTF that are supported include the National Rural Access Programme (NRAP) and the Microfinance Investment Support Facility for Afghanistan (MISFA).

A comprehensive evaluation by Scanteam was conducted in 2008 covering the framework in which the ARTF operates its funding structures, as well as its community development and capacity and infrastructure projects. Separately, programs funded through the ARTF have also been evaluated, such as the NSP. The evaluation concluded that the Ministry of Finance, which oversees the ARTF, is seen as a highly competent and transparent body; that the ARTF itself was a transparent operation; and that the ARTF was flexible and responsive to funding requests.

The main concerns about the ARTF revolved around the increased use of donor funding preferencing. Preferenced allocation makes the ARTF more rigid and limited and in turn reduces the amount of untied funds available. Limits on the Fund's role and mandate were perceived, and the need for a 'development' fund separate to the ARTF expressed. A Development Fund, it was proposed, would be longer term in structure with less operational restrictions.

Though some ministries were seen to be managing aspects of ARTF-funded programs well, the actual capacity of the public sector was deemed to be weak in the areas of monitoring, implementation, training and self-development. The review also found that insecurity was threatening the ongoing implementation of ARTF funded projects in some districts. The review did not describe program outcomes by province.

Rural Development - The NSP

The NSP is intended to bring basic development and services to all community across Afghanistan. Specifically, it is intended '... to develop the ability of Afghan communities to identify, plan, manage and monitor their own development projects ... and it is expected to lay the foundations for a long-term strengthening of local governance to make it more inclusive (e.g. for women, internally displaced persons, returnees and ethnic minorities).'

The NSP is the most well-known and highly regarded of the official development programs and the MRRD, which manages the program, is similarly well regarded. Both the Ministry and the NSP are seen as having high delivery capacity and are perceived as relatively transparent and free from corruption. As a consequence, more and more donors, including Australia, have preferenced funding to the NSP when supporting the ARTF. Operationally, the NSP is implemented entirely through local and international NGOs, some taking on implementation at a subdistrict or district level, others entire provinces.

Both the Harvard and Scanteam evaluations noted that the NSP was a good vehicle for delivery of development projects to rural areas, although 'good' was relative to how some of the other ARTF-funded programs were performing. Criticisms included a lack of data on the number of actual communities assisted by the NSP throughout Afghanistan (although the NSP website indicates that 22,000 villages in Afghanistan have been reached) and the lack of any valid baseline data from which to assess community improvements and changes.

The evaluations also showed that insecurity has hampered implementation in 40 of Afghanistan's 364 districts in 11 (out of 34) provinces, particularly in the provinces of Helmand, Zabul and Uruzgan. It has only been recently that innovations

have been introduced to extend NSP activities to these areas. These innovations include the use of local implementing partners and the use of smaller project funds in order to reduce financial risks and enable quicker implementation.

The NSP has been praised for engaging on gender issues and raising the profile and public role of women. Actual sustained poverty reduction and improved local governance—key targets of the NSP—have not been evidenced. Finally, while the evaluation found links with central ministries had been formed as a part of NSP, the strength and function of these linkages were unclear.

Education—The EQUIP Project

EQUIP is intended to improve the quality of Afghanistan's educational infrastructure, personnel and resources. It has had a particular focus on provincial and district education and on the promotion of girls' education with an emphasis on providing female teachers. It is overseen by the Ministry of Education (MOE); AusAID has also supported the MOE through its country programs in Afghanistan and has assisted in the training of teachers through placements in Malaysia and scholarships in Australia funded through the DAFA.

EQUIP started in 2005 and ran to 2008 at which point EQUIP II was formed with the intention of building on the gains of the first project. It is generally seen as a project that has performed well in the face of considerable personnel, infrastructure and cultural adversities.

By 2008, the project was active in all 34 provinces of Afghanistan, providing grants to improve the quality of education and identify ways to increase the attendance rate of girls, build schools, provide teacher training, and to build the Ministry of Education's monitoring and quality assurance capacities. EQUIP produced a menu of cost effective school building designs that use appropriate local technologies and promote local construction and maintenance labour. As a consequence, donors are increasingly redirecting their resources to EQUIP. This has increased the funding available to the Ministry and allowed for greater control and coherence in implementing the Ministry's strategic plan. Australia's contribution to EQUIP has been \$10.5 million since its inception.

Health—The BPHS Project

The BPHS is the key instrument of health delivery across Afghanistan. It specifies the services that should be available at community, district and provincial levels and describes the resources required to fill these services. Through the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), the 'basic package' has been rolled out across Afghanistan. Forty non-government agencies are covering 31 provinces and the remaining three provinces are covered by the Ministry itself. The WB, USAID and other major donors including Australia support the MoPH in its implementation of the BPHS.

The BPHS was evaluated by a joint WB/EC/USAID review in 2008. Many other evaluations of parts of the Package have been undertaken at provincial and agency levels. The MoPH is known to have quite exacting standards in ensuring compliance with the terms of the BPHS and contractual arrangements with several NGOs have been terminated for non-performance. The BPHS is viewed as very successful, with 77 per cent of the population having access to BPHS services in 2005 rising to 85 per cent in 2008. Surveys conducted in a WB 2006 study showed a 20–30 per cent decline in infant mortality rates and under-five mortality rates since 2001. While most ministries struggle to produce reliable baseline data from which to measure progress, the MoPH is recognised as having good data, in part due to the efforts of UNICEF, WHO and others. Further, vaccination levels and access to ante and post-natal care have increased under the program and the general quality of care is considered to have increased.

The WB review of the BPHS raised concerns over administration and management and less over programmatic issues. Over the last few years, funding to the MoPH for the BPHS has declined. The WB report suggests that this is in part due to declining donor confidence in the MoPH. Concerns were also raised about the capacity of the BPHS to expand further with current structures perceived as being overloaded and inefficient.

NGO Aid and Development Efforts

Prior to 9/11, NGOs—both international and local—were the major vehicle for aid and reconstruction activities in Afghanistan. In fact, the sector was at times described as a 'parallel Government in Afghanistan'. In the Taliban years, and in previous years when there was no effective Government, this description was not without basis. NGO 'parallel operations' were appropriate in the context of the State's failure or inability to deliver social and humanitarian services. One Taliban official went as far as to say in 2001: '... your job is saving lives and helping people. We have a war to win.'

Post 9/11, NGOs have been sharply criticised for operating programs outside the Government purview, just as bilateral donors have been criticised for channelling funding outside of Government mechanisms. Partly as a result of this, NGOs have sought to work much more closely with the objectives and structures of the Government of Afghanistan. Simultaneously, aid funding flows in general have changed radically, with now only 10–15 per cent of all aid delivered via NGOs. This aid is far more tightly controlled than in earlier times. NGOs now have fewer funds at their disposal at a time when more is being expected of them in relation to project implementation and accountability to Government ministries and departments. For example, NGOs are required by law, prior to the commencement of work and after examination and assessment by the line department, to submit committed project documents to the Ministry of Economy for verification and registration. In addition, NGOs are required to submit biannual reports, with a separate reporting form required for each project undertaken.

Nevertheless, even in this new environment, NGOs provide a broad array of services in Afghanistan. As an independent review noted, NGO activities are:

‘... spanning the continuum between relief and development, focusing on health, education, food security, school reconstruction and educational programming, livelihoods and economic development, agriculture and capacity building and the government’s community development effort, the National Solidarity Programme. Some NGOs are active in governance programs, mine action, peace building efforts, and elements of security sector reform as well. Given the acknowledged lack of implementing capacity in the Afghan government, NGOs are deemed to be indispensable to the implementing of aid efforts by both donors and the Afghan government alike.’

The report also noted that projects undertaken by NGOs tended to include more community consultation and were more sensitive to community issues and cultural differences than projects undertaken by the military. NGOs, in general, have long-standing relationships with the communities in which they are working. Even though individual staff rotations occur, deployments tend to be longer than those of military personnel. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) for example, has been working in Logar Province for seven years; CARE has had projects in the same locations since 1989 and Oxfam has supported programming and partners in Afghanistan since 1982. Longevity of service is perceived favourably by Afghans. PRT staff recognise that the timeframes for seeing through developmental changes are too short, noting, for example, that ‘... our PRT commanders have usually come to understand something about local politics at about five months and three weeks. Unfortunately, they are only deployed for six months.’

Through their efforts, NGOs are recognised as essential in the delivery of aid and development programs in Afghanistan. Several studies have also recognised the essential role played by NGOs in delivery of ARTF programs. NGOs are noted as having the stability, long term operational presence and strong community links essential for complex development efforts. They are also perceived as being effective representatives of the Government in implementing these programs, which in turn adds credibility to the Government. The ARTF evaluation commends the financial flexibility of NGOs, citing them for having funded NSP and other programs from their own resources while awaiting ARTF funds.

NGOs are also seen as a more cost effective and administratively lean form of aid delivery. Australian Government officials made this comment as well, wishing privately that more funding be directed through, in particular, high capacity Afghan NGOs. Unfortunately, and as noted earlier, AusAID also highlighted the lack of critical mass of capable local NGOs.

Research has also suggested that community preference is for NGO delivery of assistance over other channels. For example, a joint GlobeScan/Mercy Corps assessment was carried out in 2009 to examine community attitudes towards aid delivery mechanisms in Afghanistan. The research was conducted in communities in six provinces across Afghanistan ranging from relatively stable to insecure. Researchers explored community members’ preferences for aid delivery mechanisms, the effectiveness of aid actors, the trustworthiness of actors, the capability of aid actors and preferences for the nature of armed assistance when it was necessary (See Appendix 5).

In every province surveyed, INGOs rated the most favourably while aid delivered by the military rated the least. Afghan NGOs and Government delivery mechanisms were rated as second and third preferences, respectively. INGOs were seen to engage the whole community more so than other actors and to get communities to contribute time and labour to projects. Additionally, they were viewed as more transparent in information sharing and more inclusive in engaging women in management and project design. They were seen as having better systems in place for ensuring sustainability and maintenance of interventions. Overall, INGOs were seen to be more effective and to deliver better project outcomes.

In more secure provinces, community members did not support armed forces accompanying the delivering of aid. In the most insecure provinces surveyed, armed forces were seen to attract the attention of insurgent/opposition groups. When armed assistance was considered necessary, the preference was for the ANF to provide security rather than the IMF.

Challenges of NGOs Working in Insecure Environments

Before 9/11, security was still an issue in many parts of Afghanistan, particularly during the Mujahedeen years and later in front lines contested by the advancing Taliban and the Northern Alliance. In that time, aid groups frequently needed to withdraw from areas that became insecure, but generally re-entered following agreements reached with the various parties. The humanitarian and development gap left by the retreating aid groups were in some cases a stimulus to the warring factions to work out ceasefires and safe areas where humanitarian space was to be honoured and where aid groups could safely work.

In the past, aid agencies negotiated access to contested areas on the basis of the population's right to aid, the value of development services and their own impartial position. They did not mediate ceasefires on behalf of warring parties because of the inherently politicised nature of such actions. Today, military actors are doing this as a matter of course, and are necessarily political, representing both their own governments and acting in support of the Government of Afghanistan.

In the context of persistent and substantial insecurity and active military operations, some NGOs are unable to operate because of the threats they face (though some NGOs argue that they are only threatened because they are now being seen as co-equal with belligerent forces). In many areas, however, NGOs are still operating using security protocols that allow them to maintain low profiles. Nevertheless, in areas that are still insecure but perhaps still operable, NGOs face two options: to refuse to operate in areas proximal to military forces or to try and continue working in a reduced-security environment, relying on community acceptance (a strategy of decreasing value in Afghanistan), operating through local NGOs, or using some form of military or security for protection in the delivery of assistance.

This does not, however, answer the question of how NGOs are to operate while security is being established and the needs of the population continue to be unmet. NGOs who want to meet these needs would presumably require protection. But as is currently the case in Afghanistan, the NGOs who accept such protection are more likely to become associated with those who can provide that protection. NGO respondents for the study were also pessimistic that NGOs could regain their former status in the short to medium term even if military-led aid efforts decreased or ceased.

Added to these concerns, and as highlighted by AusAID, has been the proliferation of organisations/individuals that have presented themselves as NGOs and entered into competition for the same sources of funding as legitimate NGOs. These organisations not only take funding away from certified NGOs but impact on the credibility and reputation of NGOs working in Afghanistan.

Non-government aid activity in Uruzgan

It is only fairly recently that INGOs have been willing to commence activities directly in Uruzgan and to date only one Australian NGO is present in the Province via its international consortium members. Uruzgan is still unstable, at least in parts, and while a consortium of Dutch and other INGOs are operational, the projects—capacity building and water supply—are being done almost entirely through local partners.

This suggests the international community does not feel that stability is at a level that would allow for a long term INGO presence. Yet working through local partners does have its limitations as local capacity is often not sufficient. In Uruzgan, while there are a few local NGOs highly regarded by the ADF and Dutch TFU, they have been operating beyond capacity which has compromised quality. And while Australian NGOs have not ruled out operating in Uruzgan via local contractors or NGOs, issues of quality control, financial management and communication limit such an approach. Projects implemented remotely are also harder to evaluate.

NGOs interviewed emphasised that without a more secure environment and a significant reduction in military operations, an expansion of NGO activity in Uruzgan is unlikely. Additionally, staff commented that to commence operations in Uruzgan on the basis of political imperatives was problematic, given the level of need elsewhere in the country.

'... and why risk undermining good development practices in the efforts to suit Australia's national interests in its attempt to rapidly achieve development outcomes within completely unrealistic development timeframes? Particularly when this is at the expense of other needy provinces? If I was the Australian government I would increase expenditure to NGOs across Afghanistan (without strings attached for specific operations in Uruzgan) and consider supporting the Dutch NGOs already working in Uruzgan.'

Military-led Aid Efforts

For many of the Mujahedeen years (Soviet occupation up until their withdrawal in 1989 and the ensuing internecine conflict until 1995–96) and the Taliban years (taken roughly from when the Taliban gained control of Kabul in September 1996 through to 9/11), NGOs and the UN were operative even in the most insecure parts of Afghanistan, working out tenuous but carefully managed balances between domestic belligerents. During this time, aid and development efforts were spread relatively evenly across the country and on the basis of the needs of the populations. This is not to say that all needs were met, but that aid followed need as a general principle.

In the current context, the sheer size of the IMF (120,000 troops as at June 2010) and access to resources mean NGOs have a far greater potential aid reach and presence than they and other international aid actors have ever had in Afghanistan. With the overlay of COIN strategy, many tasks historically implemented by aid agencies are instead being executed by military actors.

The literature also reflects the theme that many types of aid and development activities are considered to be increasingly valid and core undertakings for the military. This theme was also echoed by the Dutch PRT and the ADF.

The validity of military-led aid and development in Afghanistan is articulated, for example, in the report to the Canadian Parliament on Canada's role in Afghanistan (2009) and in the evaluation of the Dutch Task Force Uruzgan (2009):

In 'Commanders' Guide to Money as a Weapons System,' a US army manual for troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, aid is defined as 'a nonlethal weapon' that is utilized to 'win the hearts and minds of the indigenous populations'.

Additionally,

Commander's Emergency Response Program or CERP funds are a relatively small piece of the war-related budgets. But because they can be dispensed quickly and applied directly to local needs, they have had a tremendous impact—far beyond the dollar value—on the ability of our troops to succeed in Iraq and Afghanistan. By building trust and confidence in coalition forces, these CERP projects increase the flow of intelligence to commanders in the field and help turn local Iraqis and Afghans against insurgents and terrorists.

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of using aid as part of COIN strategy has yet to be demonstrated. In fact, the body of literature developing in this area, as noted above, suggests that hearts and minds projects or aid in the service of military or political objectives does not necessarily result in the anticipated political or military end states.

PRT Activities in Relation to Government of Afghanistan Priorities

Aside from the issues of potential corruption and questions over government legitimacy, the mandate of PRTs to use aid in support of government priorities and extend the reach of the Afghan authority becomes additionally problematic with their access to CERP funds. PRTs—regardless of the nationality of the leadership—can access CERP funds of up to US\$1 million per project (even higher in some cases) in addition to their own PRT funds. Therefore PRTs have significant amounts of funds available to them that are not been channelled through government sources. There have been claims that in some areas PRT efforts have inadvertently undermined their own objectives of extending state authority and creating an enabling environment for reconstruction:

With greater funding and technical capabilities PRTs have often overshadowed and in some cases assumed the responsibilities of local government. Thus, they have slowed the emergence and development of state institutions at local level, which jeopardises the broader prospects for medium to long term state building. It also hinders efforts to increase Afghan ownership of the development process.

The point has also been made that there are PRTs who fail to coordinate with Government structures or do not follow Government development strategies such as the ANDS, or the provincial development plans.

The extent to which PRT and Defence spending aligns with Government initiatives varies across provinces. Dutch PRT, Australian Government and ADF personnel stated that many projects they funded or developed were coordinated closely with relevant Central Government ministries and were listed on Provincial Development Plans. Australian Government personnel stated they have encouraged this coordination. Unfortunately, there are no evaluations or project documents available linking central or provincial government plans and ADF/PRT activities.

Many projects are undertaken independently of central or provincial plans. The strategic value of a 'hearts and minds' project is that it seeks to meet the discrete, often temporal need of those who are implementing the project:

CERP enables [Coalition] commanders in Afghanistan to respond with a nonlethal weapon to urgent, small-scale, humanitarian relief and reconstruction projects and services that immediately assist the indigenous population and that can be sustained by the local population or government. The [US] Department of Defense defines urgent as any chronic or acute inadequacy of an essential good or service that, in the judgment of the local commander, calls for immediate action. Prior coordination with the community leaders bodes for good will. CERP is a quick and effective method that provides an immediate, positive impact on the local population while other larger reconstruction projects are still getting off the ground.

In Uruzgan, Dutch officials from the TFU confirmed they had used some CERP funds. At the same time, they added that when any aid/reconstruction activities occurred separate to Government planning, there was Embassy pressure to assume responsibility for the project's ongoing management. ADF field staff commented that, 'whatever the rhetoric, the areas chosen for interventions were those that were high value to the military—areas where water was accessed, and where traffic congregated.'

Lack of Capacity to Disburse or Absorb Aid

The point has been made in the literature that aid beyond what a country or region can absorb and use in legitimate, effective ways can be destabilising. Specifically, when aid volume exceeds delivery capacity, there is likely to be a spill. Where the State is weak, the spill will be captured by groups operating outside the State. While not only relevant to PRT activities, it is worth noting as the military can quickly access large amounts of aid because of the use of aid within the construct of COIN and general PRT strategic objectives.

The Dutch PRT did express the opinion that an aid saturation point may have already been reached in Uruzgan, further stating that Uruzgan in particular and Afghanistan in general was already 'saturated with aid money ... unable to absorb more money at the current rate.' In spite of this, the Dutch have committed further aid funding of USD\$280 million over the next four years nationally for justice, health, governance, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP) and the ARTF. At least US\$71 million of this is committed for Uruzgan in order to continue to support reconstruction efforts after the departure of their troops. Australia has likewise increased both its aid and defence budgets in the coming year. In 2010–11, CERP funds will nearly double to US\$1.2 billion. Interestingly, as it is, many Government ministries have been unable to spend their full budgets because of a lack of implementation and oversight capacity as well as insecurity.

Without a substantial increase in the delivery capacity of Afghan institutions, pressure to disburse aid money within short, donor-limited timeframes will continue to be challenging and could result in more leakage and corruption. One solution to this is for donors to allow greater flexibility in funding timeframes.

The ADF in Uruzgan

It has been reported that ADF operations through the RTF and MTF in Uruzgan have achieved substantial reconstruction results. At the same time, aid projects do not appear to be independently budgeted or evaluated to determine value for money or long term sustainability. For example, the Tarin Kowt Trade School is considered an ADF success story yet no evaluation has been carried out to assess whether vocational and trade schools are meeting market demand or need, are sustainable or are producing competent graduates. ADF staff admitted there was a lack of knowledge as to how to assess their aid and reconstruction operations. A similar observation of military-led aid work was also made in the Finnish review, 'PRT Models in Afghanistan'.

The Dutch have also engaged in a broad range of activities. These included: the paving of roads; the construction of bridges, government buildings and police headquarters; and the supply of garbage trucks and water tanks. Additionally, the Dutch undertook rural development projects such as water supply, hydro-power and canal cleaning, and the provision of hens and eggs as well as vegetable seeds and gardening materials as part of their income generating programs for women and girls. As part of their income generating projects, micro-credit schemes were also initiated.

The TLO review of in Uruzgan from 2006–09 found, in summary, improvements in security and basic services as well as economic lift. The most noticeable improvements were in the more populous parts of Uruzgan, Tirin Kowt, Chora and Deh Rawud, where more than 50 per cent of the people live. In less secure areas, the Dutch approach has been one of 'reconstruction where possible, military action where necessary', and improvements are more modest or not visible. The study also found that the perceptions of the Dutch were generally positive, the Australians were perceived mostly positively, and the US forces perceived negatively. While the TLO study found that the presence of the PRT was resulting in increased development options, this had not led to an increase in the reach and authority of the Provincial Government.

NGO-Military Relations

The assumption of development activities in support of stabilisation by military actors is now a clearly articulated stage in ISAFs 'shape, clear, hold and build' strategy. NGOs have often been associated with this process, being referred to as 'force multipliers' even as aid is increasingly being seen as a means to stabilise failed States and safeguard Western interests, not as a right. NGOs have largely been unwilling to associate themselves with this philosophy and have looked to disengage from military action or the perception of identification with military action.

In response, NGOs might reduce their presence in an area where security is deteriorating. Insecurity simultaneously attracts the attention of IMF, which further accelerates the NGO withdrawal. Aid activities might then be picked up either by PRTs, or by private contractors who are often less hesitant about using security forces, whether private or otherwise. In this process, NGOs run the risk of marginalisation in these complex environments. This was recently played out in the northern province of Faryab which was considered relatively stable until about a year ago. Moderate insecurity temporarily reduced the activities of one NGO in some of its operational areas. But, as IMF attention to the area grew to the point where drone aircraft and patrols operated frequently, the NGO withdrew from the area completely.

As early as 2002, aid agencies, the UN and international organisations in Afghanistan were expressing concern over the use of humanitarian assistance by the military to win over the hearts and minds of the local population. At this time, no guidelines were in place for civil-military interactions or 'best practice' regarding the implementation of these often quick impact projects. In response, the civil-military working group, co-chaired by the UNAMA Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General/Humanitarian Coordinator and ACBAR, worked with the military, NGOs, IOs and UN agencies to develop guidelines to better manage civil-military relations in humanitarian response and to promote principles for interacting and operating in the field. In May 2008, and under the auspices of UNAMA and ACBAR, the 'Guidelines for Interactions and Coordination of Humanitarian Actors and Military Actors in Afghanistan' were released. However, these Guidelines have been met with limited uptake, enforcement and success from all parties.

The aid community has an uneasy relationship with the military over military engagement in aid delivery in non-lifesaving situations or when civilian actors are available to provide such assistance. In emergency contexts, militaries are obliged to protect and care for non-combatants, in accordance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL), with an expectation that this role be ceded to civilian bodies as soon as possible. There is a general consensus that these circumstances rarely exist in Afghanistan.

Particularly in relation to the use of humanitarian assistance by the military to promote political and military agendas, aid agencies have become concerned that the distinction between civil and military action has become blurred, potentially placing the aid community and its beneficiaries at risk. The execution of MSF and IRC staff in 2004 and 2008 respectively, and the statements by hostile/opposition groups giving reasons for the killings, illustrates the potential ramification of aid agencies being linked to military and political agendas:

'... after the killings, a Taliban spokesperson claimed responsibility for the murders and later stated that organizations like MSF work for US interests and are therefore targets for future attacks.'

NGO staff interviewed as part of this research suggested some possible solutions to the issue of aid delivery by the military. They include the strict adherence to security sector reform (SSR) by military actors; that PRTs follow the recommendations of the World Bank by pulling out of 'safer'/secured areas thus enabling NGOs to operate in a non (or 'less')-militarised context; and that NGOs cease using PRT/CERP funds. However, the practical reality is that current military and political strategies in Afghanistan call for military actors to undertake humanitarian and development efforts in the name of stabilisation. These suggestions do not deal with the issue of how to address humanitarian needs in insecure areas where NGOs are essentially unable to operate. Finally, in an era of reduced funding and increased competition for funding, there are NGOs who find it difficult to refuse PRT money and others that simply do not see such cooperation as problematic.

To add another level of complexity to the issue, some donors are coupling their aid programming with political and military strategic and operational objectives. For example, in 2008:

... USAID requested applications for a five-year, \$150 million project. The request contained several alarming objectives for any independent aid organization. Among other things, USAID asked for organizations to demonstrate programmatic flexibility to implement "post-battlefield cleanup" operations, essentially requesting that they work with communities in the aftermath of a battle, operate alongside PRT officials, and communicate to the general public a U.S. government story regarding alternative development.

Untied funding or funding based purely on consideration of need is more difficult to come by. NGOs are then caught

between wishing to avoid politicised actions and military proximity, but being funded to do precisely this. In such an environment, it is increasingly difficult for aid agencies to distance themselves from political agendas, regardless of the 'depoliticised' nature of implementation.

In principle, humanitarian action is different from development in that the former is—or should be—based on need rather than ulterior agendas. Development is ultimately political, although undertaking development programming can still be done in an apolitical fashion. At a basic level, assisting military actors understand the difference between humanitarian and development activities, promoting best practice and holding all parties accountable for their programs in terms of sustainability might assist in decreasing tensions between civil and military actors in the aid and development space. Additionally, more research into the supposition that military aid as part of the COIN Strategy enhances stability and security should be carried out.

Setting Agendas

Closer to home, despite the official Australian Government position of co-equality, Defence agendas have tended to dominate policy. This point is reinforced in the literature, for example:

Donor governments increasingly adopt so-called 'whole of government' or '3-D' approaches to promote integration across diplomacy, defence and development strategies. Most recently, this has taken the form of ministry of defence-led initiatives termed the 'Comprehensive Approach (CA). Although CA policy often stresses the importance of civilian expertise, capacity and leadership in post-conflict situations, the CA remains a military-dominated discourse and the overriding objectives are military. International forces continue to assert a military pre-eminence in hostile environments in which they are conducting combat operations. This reflects both the level of authority delegated to senior military personnel in the field and the imbalanced spread of resources which favours military over civilian actors.

Australian DFAT officials acknowledge that Defence set the agenda in the early stages of Australia's reengagement with Afghanistan in 2006 and onwards. As noted, Australia's initial focus in Afghanistan was a military one. However, DFAT and Government staff describe the policy in Afghanistan as now much more a 'Team Australia' approach, recognising within COIN strategy the need for an integrated and comprehensive policy and approach to Afghanistan. Defence staff agree that the whole-of-government approach is now operational, although this perception was less evident in officers in the field. The impression of Defence still dominating the whole-of-government approach also persists to some degree in Canberra.

The Australian Government has enlarged its diplomatic and development footprint in Afghanistan. A new Australian Embassy has been established in Kabul and the Australian civilian presence has grown. This is an important step in instituting new leadership structures that better represent a whole-of-government approach to Afghanistan. As Australian civilian presence in Afghanistan continues to increase over the coming months, the whole-of-government approach should gain more traction.

The Dutch-led TFU, while military in shape and style, gave equal status to the military and civilian commanders and had a well-articulated civilian structure. It is perceived as highly accessible and was recognised as such by residents of Uruzgan in the 2009 TLO review. Australia's civilian presence is low profile and this makes it vulnerable to criticisms of being military dominated. Elevating the visibility of Australia's civilian leadership and their roles would probably leverage greater NGO engagement in Afghanistan as well.

Information Sharing

During the timeframe of the study, accessing information from government sources about the aid portfolio in Afghanistan was a challenge. This was also true in relation to gaining access to information regarding budgets, disbursements and evaluations, particularly in relation to Defence spending. Some countries operating in areas of equal or greater risk than Australia are relatively open in their reporting. To illustrate, the Canadian Parliament requires open quarterly reports describing specific development, security, and defence targets and progress towards these. There have been similar open evaluations done of the Dutch work, and at least one comprehensive evaluation done of British development activity. Also available on the DfID website are current and past listings of funded partners, specifically NGO, multilateral and bilateral. Even USAID has complete lists of its implementing partners and details of the projects they have been contracted for. As suggested in other parts of this study, greater information sharing not only adds to transparency, it ultimately allows for greater scrutiny in relation to accountability, cost effectiveness, impact and efficiencies.

Conclusion

Australia's official aid program in Afghanistan operates from a principled position—that of supporting the Government of Afghanistan and directing only a minimum of funding to where its military activities are located. The programs and projects that Australia supports through UN entities, the WB and the ARTF are, in general, performing well although there are still improvements needed and challenges ahead. Australia also supports priorities identified by UNAMA and has provided limited deployments of personnel (e.g. Police Advisor).

The aid activities undertaken in Afghanistan through the ADF and as part of stabilisation efforts are difficult to assess, particularly in relation to meeting expected outcomes. There have been reports that indicate they are of high quality and, along with the Dutch-led efforts, have been of benefit in improving security and governance in some parts of Uruzgan. However, a clearer breakdown of Australian Defence spending in relation to military aid—and in particular how much is being spent by the ADF in reconstruction and development projects versus combat operations—would be useful. It would help determine cost effectiveness, impact and efficiency of aid delivery by defence forces and most importantly determine the impact of this work on Afghans, their security and long-term wellbeing.

A lack of detail on the allocation of ODA monies and how funding is disbursed in relation to Afghanistan was problematic. In general, a much greater effort needs to be given to the assessment and evaluation of Australia's aid and reconstruction activities.

In relation to the questions posed for the study, there was little evidence to support the supposition that military-led aid brings a peace dividend, has strengthened the reach of the Central Government or enhanced security. At the same time, more research needs to be conducted in the complex area of aid being used as a means to extend state authority and bring peace dividends. The general assumption that chronic poverty and lack of resources automatically leads to instability and a vulnerability to insurgent recruitment is not necessarily true. There are many factors that lead to instability, of which poverty can be one.

The study highlighted the fact that if negative perceptions of the Central Government persist, efforts to strengthen the reach and legitimacy of that government will continue to be an uphill battle. It might, in fact, be useful to consider alternative efforts to gain the trust and confidence of Afghans, such as strengthening the delivery of efficient, equitable and quality services to the people through sources closer to them. Whether this occurs through NGOs, Provincial Government actors, international entities or private contractors, the key is to identify and put in place delivery mechanisms to promote accountability and transparency at the grassroots level.

Official Australian financial support to NGOs in general—not simply Australian NGOs—appears to be limited in comparison with other key aid and development stakeholders, particularly the WB and UN agencies. Although NGOs are also funded through World Bank programs (some of which have been independently assessed) a more intentioned strategy to evaluate the use of Australia's ODA funds in Afghanistan would help determine the appropriateness of current funding levels and what outcomes, positive or negative, have resulted. Evaluations would also help identify whether aid and development objectives are being met and determine if and how Australians capacities could be better utilised in support of a stable Afghanistan. As part of this evaluation, it may be useful to compare and contrast different aid modalities in relation to impact and sustainability.

While the expansion of the Australian aid program in Afghanistan is appropriate to the needs of the country, issues of aid saturation, inadequate delivery capacity, corruption and poor community support for the Government of Afghanistan are of concern. Also of concern is the increasing pessimism of those working in Afghanistan about possible outcomes if there is a continuation of the status quo.

Many respondents for this study, in addition to colleagues known to the author with years of experience in working in Afghanistan, expressed significant levels of frustration at what they see as 'official policy' and 'dominant trends' in Afghanistan. There is the belief that lessons are not being learned or are being learned too slowly and that those with experience of what does work are unable to see their approaches mainstreamed. There is also concern that those in power over decision-making are disconnected to those with experience and knowledge. The ultimate victims as a result are the Afghan people.

Additionally, many Afghans believe that were it not for the events of 9/11, Afghanistan would still be a forgotten nation. That is, the trigger for engagement with Afghanistan was the attack on American soil and the loss of American lives. Intervening in Afghanistan was not initially a humanitarian operation, but a military one. Afghans know this, or suspect it, and many fear that within the next few years, Afghanistan will recede to its former 'forgotten' status. There is no easy way to undo this enduring impression, but it does explain some of the Afghan ambivalence to the various efforts of other nations.

There still remain large gaps in the understanding of government and the public about the impact of Australia's interventions in Afghanistan. While this research has aimed to fill some of these gaps, the Australian Government needs to invest more in evaluating and reporting on its whole-of-government work in Afghanistan and the work it funds through its bilateral, multilateral and NGO partners. This is necessary to ensure Australia's policy approach to Afghanistan is evidence based and capable of achieving its stated policy goals. Greater rigour and accountability is also required of the Australian Government under commitments it made to aid effectiveness and good humanitarian donorship principles. Given the unprecedented level of international influence in Afghanistan, the future of the country and its people will depend on the willingness of donor governments and international armed forces to accept and live up to these commitments and ensure that interventions are driven by evidence based strategy and enhance the security and wellbeing of the Afghan people in the long-term.

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Appendix 1: Terms of Reference for Research

About ACFID and the Afghanistan Working Group

The Australian Council for International Development is the peak body for Australian aid and development NGOs. In 2009 ACFID established an Afghanistan Working Group (AWG) comprising the following agencies: TEAR Australia, Caritas, ACT for Peace, World Vision Australia, CARE Australia, Oxfam Australia, Afghan Australia Development Organisation, and The Fred Hollows Foundation.

Desired Outcome

A 20–30 page report, with additional attachments, setting out the nature of Australian aid to Afghanistan, and a summary of arguments from recent literature on problems or successes of aid delivered as part of a counter-insurgency strategy or PRT delivery mechanisms, and identification of any implications for Australian aid as a result.

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to develop an empirical evidence base for the AWG to examine the successes and shortcomings of militarised development assistance to Afghanistan as part of counter-insurgency strategy or PRTs. This will include government and civil society humanitarian and development efforts.

Methodology

The AWG seeks to clarify Australia's whole of government financial, programmatic and human resource contribution to Afghanistan. The research will look to compare and contrast this with recent literature on international aid delivery to Afghanistan as a part of counter insurgency strategies or PRT delivery modes.

The research is expected to draw on publicly available documents on the effectiveness of military led development efforts in Afghanistan, including aid delivery by PRTs, responses to senate estimates questions, face-to-face and phone interviews and a review of existing literature/evaluations on Australian-funded projects in Afghanistan. Depending on the quantity of empirical evidence available on Australian funded projects the researcher may also be required to review reports on development efforts funded by other donors in order to draw conclusions on predominant trends.

Targets for interviews to complement information available in reports will be: Australian government officials in Canberra; where possible, Australian government officials in Afghanistan, NGO and civil-society representatives based in Afghanistan including Australian, British, Irish and Dutch representatives; and Australian based non-governmental representatives with programmatic experience in Afghanistan. The Working Group will also draw on its networks in Afghanistan to provide additional input where required. The researcher should also look to conduct interviews with relevant academics specialising in aid effectiveness in Afghanistan.

It is expected that the researcher will meet with the working group either face to face or via teleconference twice, at the outset of the project, and reporting back on an interim draft report for comments from the working group. In addition, the consultant will be in regular contact with the working group focal point(s) as the research progresses. The information gathered from the research will be consolidated into a report to be made available to the AWG and ACFID. It is expected that the report will then be circulated widely to individuals and agencies, governmental and non-governmental representatives interested in aid and development in Afghanistan.

Appendix 2: Study Respondents

ACFID/ NGOs in Australia

Marc Purcell, ACFID
Nick Ireland, CARE
Steph Cousins, OXFAM
Nell Kennon, World Vision
Deborah Storie, TEAR Australia

IO and NGOs in Afghanistan

Reto Stocker Head of Mission ICRC
Ewan MacLeod, UNHCR Afghanistan.
Johan Mooij CEO, ZOA
Joop Teeuwen, Director ZOA and former Director, ORA
Dirk Frans Executive Director IAM
Nigel Pont, former Head of Mission, Mercy Corps 2007-2009
Lex Kassenberg, former Country Director, CARE 2005-2010

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Jon Merrill, Assistant Secretary, Pakistan and Afghanistan Branch
Sharon Smith, Acting Director, Afghanistan Domestic and Bilateral

AusAID

Peter Izzard, Health and Education Program Manager, MEWA Branch — Afghanistan
Sonja Litz, Director Afghanistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan Taskforce
Stefan Knollmayer, Development Advisor
Natasha Smith, Assistant Director General MEWA Branch

Department of Defence

Simeon Gilding, IPD, Department of Defence, Deputy Secretary Strategy
Capt Mike Noonan, RAN, Director Military Strategic Commitments
Col. Stuart Yeaman, Former RTF Commander, Uruzgan
Captain Clare O'Neil, Former RTF Uruzgan
Captain Mick Scott, Former RTF, Uruzgan

Dutch PRT and Embassy

Brig General Van Uhm, Military Commander Dutch PRT to Afghanistan, 2009-2010
Michel Rentenaar, Civilian Commander, Dutch PRT to Afghanistan, 2009-2010
Eric Strating, Counsellor/ Head of Mission, Embassy of the Netherlands, Canberra
Deciana Speckman, Embassy of the Netherlands, Canberra

Media

Virginia Haussegger, News presenter, ABC Canberra.

Private Consultants

Dr Egon Westerndorf
Zaac Alpern

Appendix 3: Breakdown of Australian Government Support for IOs and NGOs

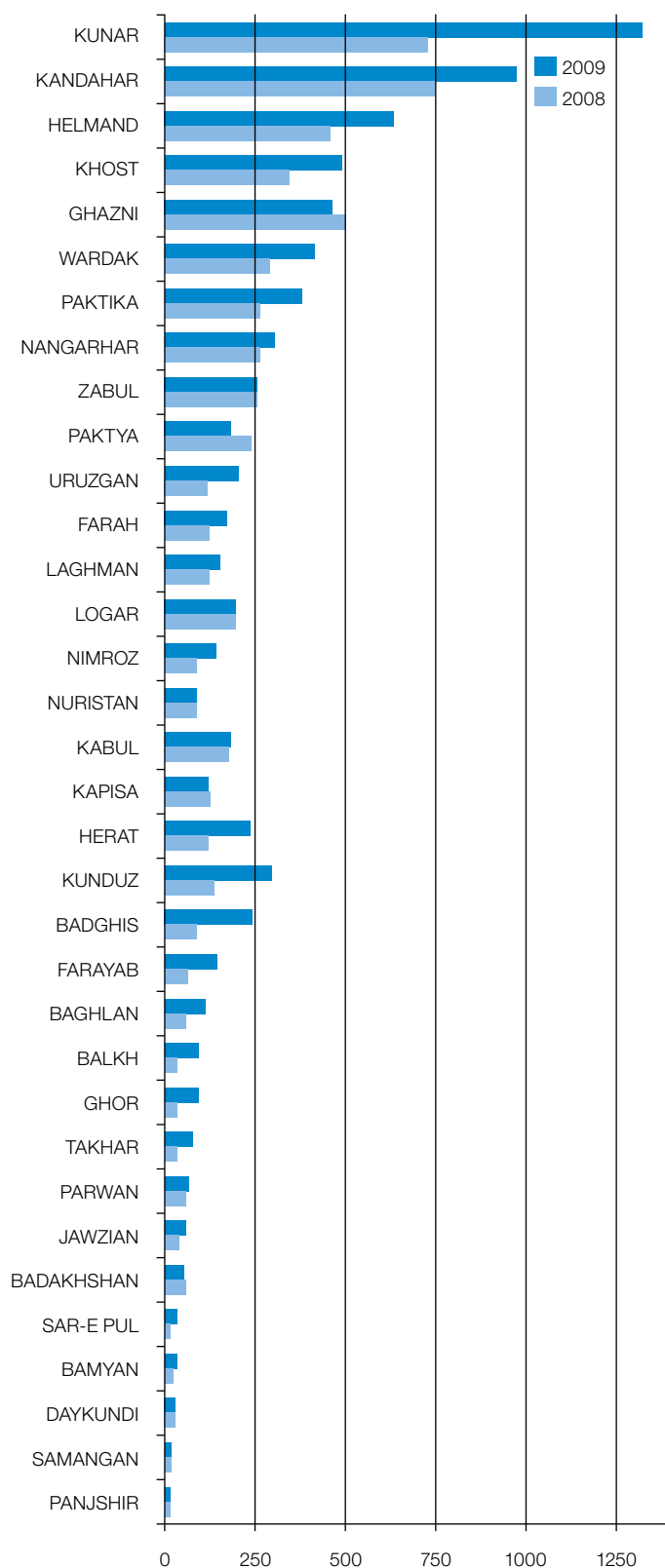
Breakdown of Spending to IOs and NGOs 2005 - 2009

Support to NGOs and other agencies in Afghanistan 2005/06 – 2008/09	
Organisation Name	Total amount Disbursed (AUD)
Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission	1,500,000
Afghan Interim Authority	16,761
Aga Khan Foundation Afghanistan	915,049
Australia Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific	10,500
Austcare	150,000
Australian Red Cross Society (Afghanistan Red Crescent Society)	1,750,912
Australians Care for Refugees	175,000
Birthing Kit Foundation (Australia)	2,126
CARE Australia	2,655,904
Caritas Australia	50,000
Christian Blind Mission International (Australia)	1,000,000
IDP Education Pty Ltd	341,639
International Committee of the Red Cross	14,700,000
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	25,000
ISAF Post Operations Fund (NATO Rapid Response Fund)	500,000
Norwegian Refugee Council	300,000
Overseas Development Institute	60,000
Oxfam Australia T/A Community Aid Abroad	50,000
Save the Children UK	282,852
Serving Emergency Relief and Vocational Enterprise	48,090
Tear Australia Inc	363,075
The Asia Foundation	4,182,778
World Vision Australia	1,385,668
	\$30,465,354

Table extracted from AusAID response to Senate Estimates question on notice from Senator Payne, question number 27, 2009

Appendix 4: AOG Attacks, Afghanistan

AOG attacks, Afghanistan 2008, 2009



Total AOG attacks by province (2008-2009)			
Province	2008	2009	Change%
KANDAHAR	740	970	31.08
KUNAR	723	1318	82.30
GHAZNI	502	461	-8.17
HELMAND	448	621	38.62
KHOST	338	478	41.42
WARDAK	285	414	45.26
NANGARHAR	260	295	13.46
PAKTIKA	253	379	49.80
ZABUL	249	247	-0.80
PAKTYA	230	180	-21.74
LOGAR	191	188	-1.57
KABUL	174	177	1.72
KUNDUZ	125	292	133.60
LAGHMAN	119	149	25.21
KAPISA	118	115	-2.54
HERAT	114	229	100.88
FARAH	114	162	42.11
URUZGAN	108	196	81.48
NURISTAN	90	85	-5.56
BADGHIS	79	239	202.53
NIMROZ	77	135	75.32
FARAYAB	56	137	144.64
PARWAN	48	52	8.33
BADAKHSHAN	45	43	-4.44
BAGHLAN	45	100	122.22
JAWZIAN	28	48	71.43
GHOR	27	83	207.41
TAKHAR	25	65	160.00
BALKH	22	87	295.45
DAYKUNDI	20	19	-5.00
BAMYAN	15	22	46.67
SAMANGAN	5	10	100.00
PANJSHIR	2	2	0.00
SAR-E PUL	2	23	1050.00

SOURCE: ANSO QUARTERLY DATA REPORT, Q4 2009.

Appendix 5: Community Preferences for Development Actors

Ratings of different actors on methods used

Total sample, mean scores

Method	International NGOs	National and district government	Afghan/ local NGOs	PRTs	INGO percentage gain over other actors*
Open shares information about costs and budget of the project	3.35	2.61	3.03	2.16	+29
Gets community leaders/members to continue carrying out the projects themselves after the organisation leaves the community	3.32	2.75	3.00	2.19	+25
Encourages people to work together to improve their community	3.30	2.79	2.97	2.63	+18
Actively involves people in the community in project management and supervision	3.35	2.86	2.96	2.62	+19
Promotes participation of community members	3.33	2.75	2.97	2.16	+27
Teaches people in the community new skills	3.31	2.62	3.05	2.60	+20
Gets community leaders to contribute to costs	3.33	2.84	3.03	2.53	+19
Actively involves ethnic minorities in project management and implementation	3.36	2.72	2.85	2.86	+20
Gets community members to contribute labour time	3.31	2.85	2.73	2.22	+27
Promotes respect between people with different views	3.27	2.73	2.87	2.56	+20
Actively involves women in project management and implementation	3.18	2.62	2.60	2.26	+28
Increases communication between community leaders and government officials in the community	3.31	2.74	2.95	2.63	+19
Consults with people in the community to determine needs	3.32	2.86	2.95	2.66	+18
Involves community leaders in decision making	3.29	2.76	2.91	2.64	+19

Highest score

*Mean scores for INGOs on each characteristic expressed as percentage gain over the average scores of National & District Government, Afghan/local NGOs, and PRTs (other actor average score = 100)

Extracted from Community-led Programming and its Contribution to Stability and Development in Afghanistan: Mercy Corps/ GlobeScan 2010

Appendix 6: Different Models of PRTs in Afghanistan

Generic PRT models

	American	German	British	Nordic	Turkish
Partnering nations	0-1	4-5, Continental European	2, North European	1, North-European	0
Size (MIL)	40-120	400-500	150	150-200	70
Size (CIV)	3-5	10-20	20-30	8-15	15
Leadership	Military Commander supported by embedded civilian representatives	Dual: Military Commander and Civilian Head, leading respective components	Joint between military, political and development representative	Military Commander in consultation with joint (CIV-MIL) Command Group	Civilian Coordinator
Security activities (MIL;CIV)	Force protection; police training and infrastructure support	Force protection, modest patrols, police infrastructure and training; police mentoring, training and infrastructure support	Extensive patrols; police training and infrastructure support	Extensive patrols, operations, force protection; police training and infrastructure support	Protection to the civilian component; police training and infrastructure support
Governance activities	Regular liaison with key leaders, infrastructure support to local administration	Regular liaison with key leaders, support to justice system	Regular liaison with key leaders, support to justice system	Regular liaison with key leaders, direct support left to the UN and others	Regular liaison with key officials, training & infrastructure support to local administration
Reconstruction & development activities	PRT projects through various DoD and USAID flexible funds (infrastructure in education, health and water), other USAID projects external to the PRTs (roads, water infrastructure, local administration training)	PRT support to local planning, PRTCIMIC projects (education, water), PRT external funding to a vivid NGO community (economic development, education, water, energy)	PRT & external support to local planning, PRT refrained to facilitation though modest CIMIC projects (water, roads), PRT external DAD aid through NGOs and national programmes (village development, governance, water, education)	PRT & external support to local planning, PRT refrained to facilitation, occasional QIPs by both MIL and CIV, PRT external aid through NGOs and national programmes (village development, governance, water, education)	Development aid and technical support through the PRT (education, health, agriculture)

Extracted from Eronen, O. PRT Models in Afghanistan: Approaches to Civil-Military Integration. Crisis Management Centre, Finland, Volume 1, 5/ 2008.



Map No. 3958.1 Rev. 2 UNITED NATIONS
July 2009

Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section

Australian NGOs supporting projects & operations in Afghanistan

ActionAid Australia

Project to integrate mine survivors and other people with disabilities into mainstream economic activities

Afghan Australian Development Organisation

Science Teacher Training for years 11 and 12 students

Community based education and vocational training

Health Education in Villages in Qarabagh

CARE Australia

Community Based Education (primary and lower secondary)

Empowerment of Widows in Afghanistan

Social and Economic Reintegration of Displaced Afghan Women (SERDAW)

Caritas Australia

Afghanistan Education Program

Afghanistan Winter Emergency

CBM Australia

NOOR Eye Hospital c/o Intern. Assistance Mission

NOOR Eye Hospital. The hospital provides preventive and curative services; ophthalmologists and o

NOOR Provincial Ophthalmic Care. This a community based programme for the prevention of blindness

National Coordination for Comprehensive Eye Work.

NOOR Herat Ophthalmic Center c/o International Assistance

NOOR Provincial Ophthalmic Care (POC)

Noor Mazar Ophthalmic Centre c/o International Assistance Mission

National Coordination for Comprehensive Eye Work Afghanistan

The Fred Hollows Foundation

Partnership with the Ministry for Public Health and other local partners to provide eye care service

Habitat for Humanity Australia

Turabi Village School Development Project

Muslim Aid Australia

Roof extension to current building to provide better access and double as a fire escape

Oxfam Australia

Badakhshan Rural Livelihoods Program-Afghanistan

Save the Children Australia

School Health and Education phase I and phase II – Uruzgan Province

Quality Primary Education Programme – Uruzgan Province

Community Management of Acute Malnutrition – Bamyan Province

Capacity Building for Disaster Risk Reduction – Bamyan Province

Street Patrol – supporting and protecting working and street children

TEAR Australia

ORA Nutrition Education Program

Zender Nutrition Education Project

ORA International HIV Mitigation

Shelter Now International Nomad Livelihoods

ORA International Women's Self Help Group Development

SERVE Afghanistan Development Program

SERVE Afghanistan Eastern Region Community Development Project

SERVE Afghanistan Guldara Community Development Project

SERVE Afghanistan Kandahar

Community Development Project

SERVE Afghanistan Northern Region Community Development Project

International Assistance Mission Community Development Program North Main Program

International Assistance Mission Koh Band Program

International Assistance Mission Herat Community Development Program

International Assistance Mission Faryab Community Development Program

SERVE Afghanistan North Program Relief

Associate Fieldworker Support Fieldworker Support

World Vision Australia

Well project - Bounceback

Winter Emergency Disaster

STI/HIV AIDS Prevention & Education

STI HIV/AIDS Prevention

Support To Plant Nurseries

Improve Sustainable Livelihoods Badghis

Cash Crop Production Qala-I-Naw



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To promote conditions of sustainable human development in which people are able to enjoy a full range of human rights, fulfil their needs free from poverty, and live in dignity