State and Nation-building, stabilization, and development in Afghanistan

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State and Nation-building, stabilization, and development in Afghanistan

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ABSTRACT

Afghanistan is emerging from more than two decades of conflict, capped by a severe nationwide drought in 1999-2001, and faces a complex, interrelated set of political, administrative, economic, and social challenges. The objective of this study was to analyze Afghanistan’s human development based on specific criteria such as economic inequality and poverty, corruption, public health and most specifically children and women’s health. This thesis identifies Afghanistan’s challenges and impediments to development and state-building in the past nine years. I further argue that Afghanistan was successful in economic and public health matters due to the institutions that were built at the national, regional and local levels with a somewhat structured cooperation. International organizations, NGOs and Western states who are involvement in the development of Afghanistan each want to dominate and lead the reconstruction and this creates an even more chaotic and un-manageable situation. This paper starts with a background description of Afghanistan followed by specific reasons as to why the international sphere should focus on rebuilding and securing Afghanistan. Finally, I discuss on how to address the existing challenges facing Afghanistan by incorporating the lessons learned from the past 9 years of development.
Afghanistan has been in the news for the past couple of years; its issues have become a centripetal theme to the presidency of two American presidents, and the headlines of the first decade of the 21st century. The main issues of Afghanistan that affects the entire international community are: Terrorism, narcotics and its geopolitical map in the near east. Much work has been done to develop Afghanistan after the 2001 U.S led invasion, however, today Afghanistan still faces many of the same challenges it faced almost a decade ago. In this research, I will try to identify the impediments to development and state-building in the past nine years in Afghanistan and identify a methodology to overcome the development and stability roadblocks that Afghanistan faces today. I will analyze the success and failures of Afghanistan’s economic and public health development. For my hypothesis I will argue that institutions must be developed at the national, regional, and local levels and a structured cooperation among them will advance the development process in Afghanistan. I anticipate to find why is it what are the factors that improved Afghanistan’s economy and its public health and why is that other field do not prosper as well. I will base my arguments on the following theories: Complex Interdependence Theory, Constructivism and Dependency Theory. In the thesis, I will delve into more detail as to: 1) why Afghanistan and its development are crucial to the international community, 2) what has been an imperative to its development in the last decade, 3) what can be done to fix this problem 4) how to applying various international relation theories combined with the past experiences and the views of Afghanistan experts to solving these problems.

Afghanistan is emerging from more than two decades of conflict, capped by a severe nation-wide drought in 1999-2001, and faces a complex, interrelated set of
political, administrative, economic, and social challenges. The government leadership is politically, financially and militarily supported by the international community. This support has borne fruit in the form of rapid economic growth, rising incomes, initial revival of public administration, and other improvements.¹ Despite these gains, Afghanistan remains among the poorest countries in the world (average yearly per capita GDP of around US$300 including opium), and it is a highly fragmented society where the authority of the government is contested.²

Continuation of recent positive development is subject to serious risks: political, security, drug-related, macroeconomic, institutional, and climatic. More than 20 years of conflict in Afghanistan resulted in the collapse of the national state as a legitimate political entity with monopoly over the legitimate use of force. After the US-led invasion of Afghanistan, the international community had no other choice than to start a state-building agenda including: creating political organizations, improvements in security, administrative capacity-building, and other key components. What we mean by building a state is one that can protect rights, provide services, and promote security; it requires a number of interdependent processes. At a minimum these includes:

i. Demobilizing and dissolving all armed forces not controlled by the state.
ii. Forming and training armed forces and police to protect international and domestic security in accordance with law.
iii. Forming and training all components of a legal system, from legislators to judges and prosecutors, to provide a legal framework for the functioning of the state and other social relations.³
iv. Raising revenue in accordance with law to pay for the functioning of the state.

² Ibid. p.xi
v. Creating and training an administration capable of raising revenue and providing services to citizens and other inhabitants.

vi. State-building and nation building after a post conflict recovery is the most challenging concern for Afghanistan, multiple requirement need to occur in order to keep itself together as a state.⁴

Just like those living in any other poor country, the Afghan people want their state, economy and society to function and they know that the current dysfunctional state stands between them and a better life. In order to understand the struggle of the Afghan people it is important to recapitulate the early years of the Taliban regime because of the events that occurred then, which effectively shaped the difficulties that the Afghans have to face today. In the 1990s, especially in the last years of the Taliban Regime, little humanitarian aid flew to Afghanistan, which was problematic. The U.N, Red Cross and a handful of NGO relief agencies kept millions of Afghans alive with food supplies and ran the few hospitals and schools that still functioned. Nearly one million Afghans were displaced inside the country, and a new flow of refugees was arriving in Pakistan and Iran. The Taliban had no concern for the public, nor any sense of responsibility toward them, rather, they created roadblocks for the UN, determined to make it as difficult as possible for international agencies to operate there.⁵ Just before the attack of 9/11 the entire international aid program for keeping millions of Afghans alive was on the verge of collapse and a humanitarian and political crisis was clearly brewing. After the American invasion, the Afghan people’s living situation deteriorated and the international community’s job to help stabilize the country became more difficult.


⁵ Rashid. Ahmad, Descent into chaos: The U.S and the disaster in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia. New York, p, 172
Why Afghanistan matters?

The issue of nation-building in Afghanistan is important because the failure to maintain basic order not only makes fear a constant part of daily life for Afghans, but also provides a breeding ground for a small minority to perpetuate criminality and terror. As 9/11 and subsequent attacks showed, people in prosperous countries can no longer take the security of their daily lives for granted. This problem, failed states, is at the heart of a worldwide systemic crisis that constitutes the most serious challenges to global stability in the new millennium. Slowly but surely, politicians, generals and business leaders are beginning to realize that we must arrest and reverse state failure. Politicians now understand that issues such as refugee flows and humanitarian action have their roots in the failure of states to provide basic opportunities for their citizens. Security organizations recognize that crumbling states are at the root of ongoing conflicts, terrorism, and expanding networks of criminality that traffic in drugs, arms and people. Development institutions are beginning to discover that an effective state is the necessary condition for eradicating poverty. And corporations have come to comprehend that market stability and growth stem from strong institutions everywhere, not just in the countries where they do business. A consensus is now emerging that only a sovereign state, by which we mean a state that actually performs the functions that make them sovereign will allow human progress to continue.

If we want to stop international terrorism, we need to pay more attention to failed states, because groups involved with terrorism, criminality, arms and narcotics thrive and

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7 Ibid. p.4
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
fester in areas of misrule. Some of the international responses to Afghanistan’s insecurity problems have been counterproductive because often the issues surrounding the problems are complex, and quick impact tasks do not address the nature of the problems; using atavistic, haphazard, fragmented, and short-term responses that sometimes exacerbate the collection of problems we set out to fix. The first impulse has been on use force. But we have reached the limits to the use of force, since the war in Afghanistan has not been successful. This insight was articulated in the 18th century by thinkers as diverse as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Edmund Burke.

In 1762 in the Social Contract, Rousseau wrote that “the strongest is never strong enough to be always master, unless he transforms strength into right, and obedience into duty.” Similarly, Burke in his 1775 Speech of Moving Resolutions for Conciliation with the Colonies argues, “the use of force alone is but temporary. It may subdue for a moment, but it does not remove the necessity of subduing again: and a nation is not governed, which is perpetually to be conquered.” Despite the presence of NATO and coalition forces, as well as massive infusions of aid, Afghanistan has become the largest producer of heroin in the world and a perpetual nightmare of violence, and a bedrock for terrorism and criminal activity. Henceforth, it is of the essence to properly address this problem and also gain from these lessons so that they could be applied to other failed state scenarios.

10 Ghani, p. 5
12 Ibid. p. 17
Research questions will touch upon

The following are a set of questions I would like to concentrate on in my research. What does nation-building mean for Afghanistan, and what needs to be done after 9 years of trying? What are the lessons learned in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and how is it possible to repair the failure of these previous reconstruction strategies? What should the United States do in order to promote a sustainable nation-building plan? Is it the United States’ or NATO’s responsibility to rebuild a post-conflict nation regardless of what their role was in the 2001 invasion?

Would the nation-building lessons learned in Afghanistan be helpful in other failed states in the world such as Somalia? What strategic theory can tell us about the “successes” and “failures” of NATO and the U.S? Are the failures seen in Afghanistan due to the Iraq invasion?

What needs to be done by different organizations in Afghanistan, UN, Red Cross, NGO, and NATO? What do different scholars say about how to operate in nation building in Afghanistan? What are some of the best resolutions to the problem that Afghanistan is presently facing? How could we overcome poverty and instability in Afghanistan? And how can we apply various international relations theories to answering such questions and formulating a proper solution to the development issues in Afghanistan?
Identifying the problem and Approaches to solving it:

As the nation-building experiment in Afghanistan approaches its ninth year, progress remains with very mixed results. Until recently, the lessons to be learned have been mostly negative, but important policy adjustments along the way, especially those made by the United States reveal a picture that is more positive. Although serious challenges remain, tremendous successes have been achieved across the whole spectrum of nation-building efforts, from security and humanitarian relief to physical and economic reconstruction and state building. Both the successes and the failures merit careful analysis. But success is far from certain. Serious challenges remain, that if inequitably met, could cause the whole project of Afghan nation-building to founder.

We all agree that global poverty is intolerable; we attempt to deal with it by using mechanisms developed fifty years ago that result only in disenchantment and mutual recrimination without many significant breakthroughs in wealth creation. In addition, there are very few Afghan specialists within the U.S government after the American disengagement from the region following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989. How can an effective political strategy, be developed in the absence of country expertise?

Nevertheless, some dedicated NGOs remained on the ground after the US withdrawal in 1989. New strategic mechanisms that have been developed by these different dedicated NGOs need to be taken more seriously and given a chance to be applied. On the other hand some business NGOs were often required to cater to the

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desires of local commanders, who used them for support within their patronage network. These practices often led to poor resource distribution and outright corruption.\textsuperscript{14} Many NGOs were not accountable, which resulted in subterfuge by some widespread distrust by many. In the coming years the arrival of new and inexperienced organizations led to violent incidents and wasted resources. Their operations contradicted either national or local strategies for political reconstruction, they needed to be less biased and needed to include the local people in their procedures. Registering NGOs is a first step; fostering a code of conduct for operations in Afghanistan can also help.\textsuperscript{15} But there are dangers in actually requiring NGOs to be licensed for their activities, which can either unnecessarily limit good works or turn licensing into a new form of corruption for authorizing officers.\textsuperscript{16} There is a balance to be struck between the need for operational space for effectiveness and accountability to ensure legitimacy of action.\textsuperscript{17}

I believe that in order for Afghanistan to undergo successful nation-building, several significant challenges would need to be met. These would be the provision of security, relief of displaced populations, rehabilitation of the economy and accompanying reconstruction of infrastructure, and state-building. Another major impediment to Afghanistan’s developmental and reconstruction program is related to its imposed politics and a lack of preparation and understanding of both Afghanistan and international actors, mostly the United States. The United States had no clear strategy for long-term stabilization, state building and development, which caused tremendous delays and are now pressing challenges to recapture the wasted time and resources. Also, Afghanistan

\textsuperscript{14} Their, Alexander. Chopra, Jarat. The Road Ahead, Political and institutional reconstruction of Afghanistan, Third World Quarterly, Vol 23, No 5, p. 897
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid. p. 897
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid. p. 897
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid. p. 899
was a target and concern within the context of counterterrorism, not humanitarianism.\textsuperscript{18}

It is commonly known that security and reconstruction are two sides of the same coin. Mutually reinforcing progress on one front is necessary on the other and therefore the first priority should be to bring security to the everyday lives of Afghans. Afghan people cannot put their lives on hold until the U.S is done capturing Al-Qaeda group leaders according to its counterterrorism program. This creates impatience and problems, because some desperate farmers or young unemployed civilians are being tempted to join the Taliban who pay them. Since they are not presented with another alternative, and they have to make ends meet, they are inclined to join. Therefore, it is of imperative importance to have reconstruction and security work in unison.

Early strategic mistakes shaped Afghanistan on the ground and constrained later choices. Deep flaws in U.S strategy also occurred due to institutional incapacity within the U.S government for nation-building, and the George Bush administration’s initial reluctance to make nation-building in Afghanistan a priority. The United States think tank RAND calculated that a minimum investment of $100 per capita is needed to stabilize a country coming out of conflict. Bosnia received $679 per capita, Kosovo $576, and East Timor $233, Afghanistan received only $57 per capita in the first two years after 2001.\textsuperscript{19}

There is also a need to work on persuading other countries to assume more significant roles despite continued rifts between them, mostly by the Chinese government who neighbors Afghanistan to its north. There is a lot of developmental opportunity that

\begin{flushleft}\textsuperscript{18} Ayub, Fatima. Kouvo, Sari, Righting the course? Humanitarian intervention, the war on terror and the future of Afghanistan, International Affairs, 84:4, p. 641. \\
\textsuperscript{19} Report of the High-level panel set up by UN secretary-general, “Threats, Challenges and Changes,” December 2004, p. 183 \end{flushleft}
both sides could take advantage of, e.g. Afghanistan hosts a profitable network of international trade routes. The legendary Karakoram highway that links China and Pakistan could pierce through the mighty Hindu Kush. There is an urgent need to rebuild key roads between the major cities and link them to neighboring countries so that aid would flow. Roads and railways of Afghanistan could greatly facilitate trade among the countries of central, west and south Asia, and far beyond and they can promote ancillary industries. Upon the foundation of a sound economy will arise a superstructure of polity and society.

The Afghan economy is based on its agriculture; therefore, it is understandable that a good crop cycle would revive public morale in the countryside and convince people of the worthlessness of the Taliban. Millions of returning refugees would be encouraged to return to their villages rather than gravitate to the cities looking for work. Agriculture would provide jobs to the militiamen who would soon be demobilized and offer farmers alternatives to growing opium poppies, a business that was certain to boom again.

Another setback to combat poverty is the tardiness in financial support by the international community; since the Afghanistan economy is fragile it needs a steady injection of money. However, many countries have failing aid bureaucracies that took months to identify projects, more months to disburse the money, and then had nobody on the ground to monitor implementation. The United States was blighted with the same problems, where at the end of the war the CIA, U.S Department of Defense (DOD), U.S Special Operation Force, the State Department, and USAID, were carrying out quick-

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20 Sau, Ranjit, Reconstruction of Afghanistan into a Modern Nation, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 37, No.2 (Jan.12-18, 2002), p. 120.
21 Ibid. p. 120
22 Rashid. p. 190
impact projects and humanitarian relief all with their separate budgets and staff. There was no central aid coordinator for the U.S government’s efforts and zero coordination with the U.N, European allies, or the Afghan government. Quick-impact projects were swift and cheap, such as digging a well, rebuilding a small bridge, or repairing a broken-down school building and were supposed to convince the population that reconstruction was moving ahead. All Western donors speak of “building capacity” in the weak Afghan government.  

In a failed state such as Afghanistan, capacity would take years of patience and hard work to build. In the meantime, donors undermined their own efforts by funding programs that would benefit the population without consulting the relevant ministry for their aid. It was tempting to do it yourself rather than spend years training Afghan officials.  

As we have observed, this will lead to more complicated problems as many Afghans get armed (police) or equipped without knowing how to operate as an institution, allowing other institutions, such as the Taliban, to take advantage and control the lack of proper governmental institutions.

The issue of funding was addressed in a major donor’s conference for Afghanistan that took place in Tokyo. The donors concluded that it would take $ 12.2 billion over five years to “rebuild” Afghanistan. A trust fund was established, but donors did not give any money. In the next two years most of the funds pledged at Tokyo were to be spent on humanitarian relief rather then real reconstruction projects. 

The United States said it would take the lead in building the new army; Britain would take charge of counter-narcotics; Italy would rebuild the justice system; Japan would

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23 Rashid, p. 177
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid. p. 180
26 Ibid.
disarm the militias; while Germany would rebuild the police force.27 Their plans floundered due to lack of coordination, overlapping projects, and resulted in a waste of funds.

Also the U.S and U.N needed to settle ground on who is going to do what and keep to their pledges. Due to the fact that important programs needed to be delicately dealt with through coordination, it was key to maintain proper coordination, however that failed. For example, in a program called Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR), UNAMA (United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan) was responsible for collecting heavy weapons from the warlords, such as tanks and artillery and prepared for disarming some one hundred thousand militias.28 DDR programs have become an essential part of peacemaking and nation building around the world, but the United States put up major obstacles, refusing to fund or support DDR or allow U.S troops to help the UN carry out disarmament.29 On the other hand, Lakhdar Brahimi (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General) stressed that training the Afghan National Army (ANA) had to run parallel to disarming the militias but the pentagon refused to help in this task.30 The United States however was recruiting militiamen to protect its bases, thereby increasing militia numbers even as the UN was trying to disarm them, henceforth, leading to an obstruction in achieving disarmament.31

The United States and a few other countries did take serious responsibility towards the new Afghan army, with expenditures on the ANA for 2004 at $797 million which rose to $830 million in 2005-2006. ANA then numbered 37,000 men and with the

27 Rashid. p. 179
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid. p. 205
30 Ibid. p. 202
31 Ibid. p. 205
help of NATO was able to deploy counter insurgencies in major Taliban areas. Today the major issue is how to sustain the army, which at full strength will have a recurrent cost of $1 billion a year.\footnote{Rashid. p. 205}

Training a police force proved to be far more cumbersome. The UN had determined that rebuilding the police force in a failed states is even more important that rebuilding an army.\footnote{Ibid. p. 206} The police are on the front line of public security, law and order and extending the writ of government.\footnote{Ibid. p. 206} The Afghan national police was not rebuilt from scratch as the army was and the government recruited corrupt police officers from the warlords.\footnote{Reforming the Afghan National Police, A joint report of the Royal United Services Institute for Defense and Security Studies (London) and the Foreign Policy Research Institute (Philadelphia), 2005, p. 36} The Germans who were tasked with training a new Afghan police force were unwilling to provide sufficient resources and training at which point Washington decided to take over police training in 2003, with interminable delays. The State Department had given DynCorp $24 million to set up seven regional training centers across Afghanistan. DynCorp was training the police to fight an insurgency rather than win hearts and minds in their localities.\footnote{Rashid. p. 205}

In short, my policy proposals are: 1) attention must be made to the proposals and plans of NGOs who were present in Afghanistan prior to the US invasion. 2) Focus needs to be on re-building Afghanistan’s economy, security forces and the reconstruction of its infrastructure. Of key importance is to rebuild its roads and rail infrastructure so that trade could be facilitated between neighboring countries. 3) Encouragement of other neighboring countries, in particular, China to invest in Afghanistan’s development.
4) Facilitation of farmers and Afghani agriculture with the needs to produce viable products instead of opium. 5) Investment by the broader international community should include more resources and money into Afghan development projects. 6) Most importantly, the creation of a coordination center where Afghan officials, the United Nations and all other multinational organizations and NGOs could supervise, coordinate and decide on important development projects that will affect the country on both the national and local level.

**Methodology for solving the development issue:**

The primary objective of this research is to identify and better understand key issues affecting state-building interventions and their implications for current and future governance programming. The objective is to learn how governance works in Afghanistan’s fragmented society, as well as how it is changing in response to programmatic interventions supported by the international community. The design of this research is aimed to identifying key issues in Afghanistan development program with particular focus on changes taking place in relation to state-building intervention such as the establishment of Provincial Development Committees (PDCs), the Priority Reform and Restructuring (PRR) including the Afghanistan Stabilization Program (ASP) and other United Nation and Red Cross Development process. The research objectives of exploring key issues in Afghanistan development program context called for a primarily qualitative methodology. I will use a combination of methods but most specifically the qualitative tools used in this research include semi-structured interviews, focus groups, oral histories, subject biographies, and journalists accounts (media monitoring). I will
primarily rely on what is already written and analyze it according to my hypothesis, and
fill the gap of different research studies. The research will mainly focus on secondary
sources, however efforts will be put into use primary sources. My research focuses on the
rural but also urban society of Afghanistan, the intention is to compare and contrast the
insecure and poorest areas of Afghanistan with the newly developed areas.
Chapter 1: Review of the Relevant Literature

The topic of development in Afghanistan has drawn a wealth of critique and debate over what should be done in order to rejuvenate the economy, eliminate poverty, and how to improve progress to its full potential. In order to properly assess the development of Afghanistan, I will use the UNDP’s human development indices that analyze a country’s development base on a specific set of criteria. I won’t be focusing on all of the aspects but the ones, which have affected and plagued the afghan people. I will focus on the following criteria: 1) Economy, inequality and poverty. 2) Public health. The articles, books, UN organization developmental programs that will be covered in this literature review are in the order of:

The two major sources of primary statistical data for this analysis are the World Bank’s World Development Reports from the years relevant to this study and the United Nations’ Human Development Reports from analogous years. The World Bank’s annual World Development Report assesses the current economic, social and environmental state of all countries. Each yearly report focuses on a different aspect of development that is explored in depth. Each report also tracks common key economic indicators, such as Gross National Product, External Debt, Official Development Assistance and Average Annual Growth that are common to all reports. These numbers will provide the basis for the quantitative analysis of economic development in Afghanistan. The most recent report, includes figures that indicate how wealth is distributed within Afghanistan and illustrates what part of the population is the beneficiary of development. The report observes the equity of opportunity for all members within a society. A more human focus is equally important to this thesis and so some additional figures, like the percent of the population living on less than one dollar a day, which is considered below the global poverty level, are used from this report but are not always available for all years.

When it comes to the economy, the World Bank country study holds a good grasp of the situation in Afghanistan’s economy. In its 2004 report of the countries economic situation, it explains the progression of Afghanistan’s economy since the fall of the Taliban. It provides a description and analysis of the Afghan economy and recent performance based on available quantitative data and qualitative information. It also reviews the state of the economy at the end of the conflict and, it discusses Afghanistan’s strong growth performance. Two-thirds came from agriculture, thanks mainly to better
precipitation, and better availability of seeds and fertilizers. Other drivers behind it are that cereal output has strongly recovered, but opium production also has rebounded. Services are booming, mainly in major cities, in construction, and in the public sector, linked to the reconstruction effort. A strong sign of improved confidence, 2.4 million refugees have come back to Afghanistan, and 600,000 internally displaced people have returned to their homes.\textsuperscript{37} The World Bank also outlines the structures of the Afghan economy, with an emphasis on the informal economy and its linkages with conflict and insecurity. It is inherently difficult to estimate the size of the informal economy, except in sectors where it is dominant like agriculture and narcotics. Nevertheless, it is clear that some 80-90 percent of economic activity in Afghanistan occurs in the informal sector, which has been largely responsible for the recent economic recovery and dynamism.\textsuperscript{38} The World Bank report shows the prospects for growth and areas of growth potential for Afghanistan regarding sustained long-term economic growth, ranging from agricultural production and processing to mining, construction, trade, and other services.\textsuperscript{39}

The Human Development Report, an annual report published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), also includes key economic developmental indicators, however, it puts a greater emphasis on human and social criteria like access to safe water sources, health services, life expectancy and maternal mortality rates. This data complements the World Development Report data as it focuses more precisely on improvements in the human sector. The development of human and social criteria like level of education, access to sanitation and infant mortality rates will be analyzed along

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
with economic data to determine what type of development took place and if it will be lasting, superficial, or nationwide. The concept of human development focuses on human opportunity and human freedom. The goal of human development is that all humans be afforded the same conditions that allow them to lead productive and prosperous lives. Scholars and practitioners who study human development assess long-term development issues rather than only immediate economic income-related development. The Human Development Index, formulated by the UN and outlined in the Human Development Report, rates the expectancy, education as measured by literacy, and a decent standard of living as represented by level of per capita income. Although the report highlights the importance of human development it concedes that human development does not necessarily affect economic growth.\textsuperscript{40} A rise in human development does not necessarily imply economic growth, and similarly, a rise in economic growth as indicated by macroeconomic indicators, does not necessarily mean improvement in the human and social domains.\textsuperscript{41}

The UNDP Afghanistan program, is guided by the requirements set forth in the National Development Framework (NDP), UNDP Afghanistan focuses its activities on the following UNDP global practice areas: poverty reduction, democratic governance and crisis prevention and recovery. All of UNDP’s activities take place under the leadership of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan and in close collaboration with ministries, agencies, and donors leading programs within the consultative group equality in Afghanistan, ensuring that gender issues are consistently mainstreamed and carefully

\textsuperscript{40} The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, p. 372
\textsuperscript{41} UNDP Afghanistan State-Building & Government Support Program, Afghanistan Country Office December 2008 p. 110
paced. All UNDP program activities aim to consolidate peace, enhance security and promote respect for the rule of law. In addition to direct support to the national security sector, UNDP projects enhance the government institutional capacity to provide public services and to create an enabling environment for legitimate livelihoods.

The Afghanistan National Development Strategy (2008-2013, A Strategy for Security, Governance, Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction) has conducted a wide range of research and survey on this important link between Security, Governance, Economic Growth and Poverty that all effect in a certain way the degree of progress it could have in the development process of Afghanistan. The Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) represents the combined efforts of the Afghan people and the Afghan Government with the support of the international community to address the major challenges facing the country. To comprehensively address the security, governance, and development needs of Afghanistan, the government has developed the ANDS. The ANDS reflects the government’s vision, principles and goals for Afghanistan, which builds on its commitment to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2020 and the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact benchmarks. The Strategy is based upon an assessment of current social and economic conditions; offers clear intermediate objectives; and identifies the actions that must be taken to achieve these national goals. The ANDS largely focuses on five years (2008-2013), but reflects Afghanistan’s long-term goals, which include the elimination of poverty through the emergence of a vibrant middle class, an efficient and stable democratic political environment and security throughout the country. A comprehensive “bottom up”

43 Ibid. p. 3
approach was used in the development of the ANDS that has taken into account all aspects of social and economic life as well as aspects of social and economic life as well as fully reflecting the diversity of people in all parts of the country.\textsuperscript{44} Considerable efforts were made to ensure that sub national consultations (i.e., outside of central government in the capital Kabul) identified the priorities of the Afghan people living in each of the 34 provinces.\textsuperscript{45} The ANDS is the product of extensive consultations and the national, provincial and local levels. Most of my interviewee data will derive from this study. In order to take on the challenge of poverty reduction and underpin the development of the Government’s poverty reduction strategy, it is essential to understand poverty, its dimensions, characteristics, and determinants. According to ANDS 2008 survey data, while far from perfect, permits a preliminary analysis of urban and rural poverty in Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{46}

Information on the specific nature of poverty in Afghanistan is restricted by the considerable quality and quantity limitations, with National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) comprising the majority of information available. These have been based on limited household surveys. The 2005 NRVA covered approximately 31,000 households, allowing national and provincial poverty rates to be assessed. While the 2005 NRVA survey was a substantial improvement on previous studies, it also has several weaknesses with only one season being covered. To overcome this, separate survey conducted in spring 2007. Ongoing data collection includes the planned 2007/2008

\textsuperscript{44} Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), A strategy for security, governance, economic growth and poverty reduction, 2008, p. 110
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid. p. 115
NRVA survey (predominantly funded by the European Commission). This study will cover all seasons and the consumption module includes assessment of more food items and non-food items. Moreover, stronger emphasis has been placed on survey design and the collection and computation of high quality of data.

Much of the literature that addresses the progress of development in Afghanistan touches upon the major advances of the health system is availability to its people and the progress this system has made in this specific field. In Building on Early Gains in Afghanistan’s Health, Nutrition, and population Sector: Challenges and Options, Tekabe A. Belay describes Afghanistan’s health system as functioning quite poorly until late 2001.87 There was little coverage of preventive and curative health services for a number of reasons. The prolonged civil war, the shortage of staff in rural areas, and the absence of explicitly articulated national priorities all resulted in limited availability and quality of services. Coverage of services such as skilled birth attendance, antenatal care, and vaccination was very low, with severe consequences for health outcomes.88 In 2001, the infant mortality rate (IMR) was estimated at 165 per 1,000 live births, and the under-five mortality rate (U5MR) was estimated at 257 per 1,000 live births.89 The maternal mortality ratio was as high as 6,507 per 100,000 in some parts of the country. Afghanistan’s health sector has come a long way since 2002.50 A number of development partners, especially the World Bank, the European Union, and the U.S Agency for International Development (USAID), have been key supporters of the government of

89 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
Afghanistan’s effort to rebuild and strengthen the health sector. Together the three donors invested more than $820 million between 2003/04 and 2008/09 and played key roles in helping the government reshape the health sector. This support continues, with all partners starting new projects aimed at further strengthening the sector and building on the successes that have been achieved. In the book Building on Early Gains in Afghanistan’s health, Nutrition and Population sector it aims to document the achievements in rebuilding Afghanistan’s health system over the period 2002-08; contribute to the development of a set of practical policy options that will further increase the quality, availability and use of health services by the poor and other vulnerable groups, provide policy options for the MOPH as it defines its future role in the sector; and suggest how the development partners can best support the efforts of the government. It focuses on practical issues and examines a number of policies that are feasible to implement.

WHO, Country Cooperation strategy for WHO and Afghanistan addresses the current challenges in trying to develop health system policy in Afghanistan. Since the beginning of 2002 the ministry of Public Health has made significant progress in charting the direction of the health sector for the medium term. It has formulated a clear and well-defined national health policy for 2005-2009 and a national health strategy for 2005-2006. The three broad elements of health policy aim at: implementing health services (BPHS), the essential package of hospital services (EPHS) and the establishment of prevention and promotion programs; reducing morbidity and mortality by improving the quality of maternal and reproductive health and the quality of child health initiatives; and building institutional capacities through the promotion of institutional and management

51 Ibid.
development, strengthening human resources, especially of female staff, and strengthening health planning, monitoring and evaluation at all levels of health care.\textsuperscript{52}

Some of the major health development challenges include: abysmally high maternal, infant and under-five mortality rates; widespread nutritional deficiency associated with food insecurity, made worst by the recent drought; high incidence of communicable disease, notably malaria and tuberculosis; poorly developed health infrastructure; security concerns and lack of communication infrastructure which further limits access to health care, and extreme shortage of trained health human resources, especially at mid level, and female health workers of all categories.\textsuperscript{53}

The WHO Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS) is a reference framework at the country level for WHO's cooperation with Afghanistan for the next four years for use to improve the country’s health sector performance. In developing the CCS, the country’s needs and expectations are considered within the regional and global priorities of WHO. The key principles governing WHO’s quest for a new strategic agenda at the country level are\textsuperscript{54}:

- Greater focus on those programs where WHO has the greatest relative advantage
- More emphasis on WHO’s role as policy adviser
- Wider partnerships and greater attention to partners’ strategies and activities
- Maintenance of the visibility and credibility of WHO and differentiation of WHO’s

\textsuperscript{52} Country Cooperation Strategy, For WHO and Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Distribution limited to CCS Team Members and PME, WHO EMRO, 2005 to 2009, p. 110

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{54} Shams, David, Democracy's dilemma: the challenges to state legitimacy in Afghanistan, Lulu.com, 2008, p. 50
- Guidance for achieving the health sector-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

David Sham’s paper “Democracy’s Dilemma, The challenges to State Legitimacy in Afghanistan” notes that there are three main elements to hinder the process of reconstruction and reform, as well as the formation of a legitimate state in Afghanistan: human rights violations, institutional corruption, and drug cultivation and trade.\(^{55}\) All three elements have stemmed from the methods and the policies that the state has assumed in an effort to succeed in the reconciliatory process with the warring factions. The state has taken these measures to prevent the recurrence of another armed conflict between the state and the warlords, which could easily lead to chaos and political destabilization throughout the country. Analysis and assessment by political scientists are not only sources that point to the obscurity of issues that the Afghan state has to face in order to achieve legitimacy among the Afghans, and to protect its territorial and political sovereignty.\(^{56}\) David shams brings helpful data in assessing the gravity and comprehending the intricacy of various social, political and economic matters in Afghanistan.\(^{57}\) In 2006, when President Karzai openly admitted to its institutional corruption, he also said that many state officials benefit from the well-developed illegal drug industry. The public’s perception matches President Karzai’s observation. The involvement of civil servants in drug trade has created serious impediments on the path of the Afghan state and the international community’s war against drugs. Drugs and corruption are two different, and yet intertwined issues that have posed great challenges.

\(^{55}\) Ibid.
\(^{56}\) Ibid. p. 51
\(^{57}\) Ibid.
to the creation of a sovereign and legitimate state in Afghanistan. The problem of a complex unlawful drug economy and the deep penetration of those who play crucial role in its cultivation and trade within the state’s various institutional structures collaboratively reinforce each other.\textsuperscript{58} This reality threatens to transform Afghanistan from a democratic to narco-state, and weaken the institutional organization of the government. Therefore, the public is unhappy and suspicious of a government perceived as under the control and in service of the corrupt officials/warlords. The lack of capacity on part of the state in implementing law, and in providing sufficient security and other social services has also spoiled the perception of the state as a sovereign entity in the eyes of the Afghans.

Clearly, utilizing a combination of granted political power and large sums of drug-dollar, corrupt state officials have skillfully placed themselves in a position above the law, which in turn, has severely damaged the legitimacy and sovereignty of the state. This is evident in numerous media stories from Afghanistan, in which the participation of warlords in drug trade (as prominent state employees) is the central theme. These reports mainly focus on the involvement of chiefs of police, governors, and even ministers in drug trade and other illegal activities.\textsuperscript{59} The accused officials have failed to serve the public giving priority to their own self-interest at the expense of the public’s social, political, and economic welfare. Largely, this reality is the result of a joint policy embraced by the Afghan and the U.S decision makers. They have chosen to reward warlords in return for their collaboration in the war on terror.\textsuperscript{60}

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid. p. 52
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
warlords comes in direct clash with the state and the international community’s objectives of eradicating drugs and corruption in Afghanistan.

Offering a qualitative critique of development and state-building in the aftermath of the Afghanistan invasion, Ahmed Rashid warns of an inefficient and lack of cooperation among international organization, NGOs and the U.S as its predominant actor in its development of Afghanistan. In the third and ninth chapter of his book, Descent into Chaos, the U.S and the Disaster in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia, and the Failure of National Building, Rashid divulges a series of assembled verified failure incidents that have not only deteriorated Afghanistan development but have increased the corruption and insecurity in Afghanistan. This book shows how the United States ignored consolidating South and Central Asia – the homeland of global terrorism—in favor of invading Iraq. American resources and military manpower that Afghanistan should have received went to Iraq. “Iraq was more than just a major distraction to Afghanistan,” says Kofi Annan in retrospect. “Huge resources were devoted to Iraq, which focused away from nation building in Afghanistan. The billions spend in Iraq were the billions that were not spend in Afghanistan.” Moreover, the U.S attack on Iraq was critical to convincing Musharraf that the United States was not serious about stabilizing the region, and that it was safer for Pakistan to preserve its own national interest by clandestinely giving the Taliban refuge. First Afghanistan and then in Iraq, not enough U.S troops were deployed, nor were enough planning and resources devoted to the immediate postwar resuscitation of people’s lives. There was no coherence to U.S

61 Rashid. p. XLI
tactics and strategy, which led to vitally wrong decisions being taken at critical moments—whether it was reviving the warlords in Afghanistan or dismantling the army and bureaucracy in Iraq. This book is about American failure to secure the region after 9/11, to carry out nation building on a scale that could have reversed the appeal of terrorism and Islamic extremism and averted state collapse on a more calamitous scale than could ever have happened before 9/11. Bank estimates that there are now twenty-six failing states in the world that could breed terrorism, as opposed to seventeen such states in 2003. Clearly, we have gotten a great deal wrong about the post—9/11 world.\textsuperscript{62} This book is an attempt to frame events and their consequences across the largest landmass in the world, and to show what went wrong on the ground and why, while describing how such poor decisions were made in Washington. It tries to answer the question of why the world is less secure seven nine years after 9/11.

Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, through an analysis of state-building efforts in failed states, critique the way the West strategy to help develop the country of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} world isn’t working and new personalized strategies need to be implemented. In their book, \textit{the Fixing Failed States, A framework for rebuilding a fractured world}, they argue for a reorientation in the international response to create capable states. The key to state building is first to agree on a goal and functions of the state to support this objective and then to follow up with a pragmatic search for means of implementation.\textsuperscript{63} Therefore, the book proposes a strategic framework for defining the functions of the state, designing the organizational structure necessary for the performance of those functions, and aligning

\textsuperscript{63} Ghani, p. 132
actors to the goal of state building. It presents ideas for recognizing international security so that political and economic organizations can serve the purpose of creating and sustaining effective states. When applied to a specific context, our framework translates into a strategic map for understanding the strengths and weakness of individual functions. On this basis, specific strategies can then be devised that are tailored to context and deal with the issue of sequencing in a systemic way. Strategies would be cemented through “double compacts: between country leadership and the international community on the one hand and the citizenry on the other”.64 Finally the book purposes methods for comparative reporting on state capacity in the form of a “sovereignty index” that would be presented each year to the General Assembly of the United Nations and to the annual meetings of the World Bank.65 This framework argues for a citizen-based approach to state building: a new legal compact between citizen, state and the market, not a top-down imposition of the state. The forty-sixty states now in crisis cannot follow Europe’s path to state formation from the sixteenth to the twentieth century.66 While the legitimate use of force is an important criterion in defining states, it is no longer the sole criterion. Our task is to establish legitimate states at a time when the use of force has reached its limit. States now derive their legitimacy from performing specific functions in the economic, social and political domains. Even if it were desirable, it is neither credible nor feasible to impose order from the top down. Rather, the solution must come through establishing legitimacy in the eyes of the international community and a country’s citizens. It does not make sense to conceive of sovereignty as an untrammeled right, divorced from obligations both to the population governed and to the international community of states.

64 Ibid. p. 133
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid. p. 140
This principle—that the rights of sovereignty also entail obligations—is fundamental to the legitimacy of states and therefore to their ability to close the de facto gap in their sovereign capacities.  

John Montgomery and Rondinelli also provide qualitative support in favor of changing the way developmental strategies have been structured. They unfold lessons of experience on which donors can draw in implementing plan for reconstruction and development in Afghanistan. Some reveal successful policies that can be modified and adapted to Afghanistan’s condition and needs, and others are derived from less successful programs and mistakes that donors can avoid. None of the successful programs of the past can be extended to Afghanistan without considering the condition of success, and some may not be replicable at all. It is certain, however that policies that are informed by knowledge and understanding of the past offer better prospects of success than those who merely respond to immediate needs, however urgent.

The issue of consent, which Francis Fukuyama, describes as “Nation-building, Reconstruction versus development” challenges the UN developmental programs today. Nation-building may be examined from two different types of activities, reconstruction and development. Although the distinction between the two is often blurred, it was always present to nation-builders of earlier generations dealing with post-conflict situations. Reconstruction refers to the restoration of war-torn or damaged societies to their preconflict situation. Development, however, refers to the creation of new institutions and the promotion of sustained economic growth, events that transform the

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67 Ibid.
society open-endedly into something that it has not been previously. There is a huge conceptual difference between reconstruction and development. Reconstruction is something that outside powers have shown themselves historically able to bring about. Reconstruction is possible when the underlying political and social infrastructure has survived conflict or crisis or crisis: the problem is then the relatively simple matter of injecting sufficient resources to jumpstart the process, in the form of supplying food, roads, buildings, infrastructure, and the like. Development however, is much more problematic, both conceptually and as a matter of pragmatic policy.

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69 Ibid.
Chapter 2: Mission Mandates and Descriptions

UNAMA—United Nation Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

The UN intervention in Afghanistan was designed to assist the Afghan people in laying the foundations for sustainable peace and development but also to help end the violent conflict, insurgency and terrorism. UNAMA’s program, mandates and description, has the lead role in coordinating the operational activities of UN institutions, including their support to consultative group and national activities budget processes. UNDP helped the interim Government of Afghanistan to establish an Aid Coordination Unit and Public information Unit within the Afghan Assistance Coordination Agency. The Aid Coordination Unit created a donor assistance database to respond to the need for a donor tracking system, identified in the NDF.\(^{70}\) UNAMA has special responsibilities in the areas of national reconciliation (supporting the work of the Special Commission on the Emergency Loya Jirga, recently completed); human rights (monitoring, reporting, investigating violations and recommending corrective action); rule of law (supporting the Judicial Commission established by the Bonn Agreement); the role of women (supporting women’s rights and participation in society); and humanitarian affairs (coordinating U.N. relief, recovery, and reconstruction efforts within the U.N. system and with the Afghan Interim – and now the Transitional – Authority).\(^{71}\) In Resolution 1401, the Security Council requested that ISAF work in close consultation with the Secretary General and SRSG Brahimi, and urged bilateral and multilateral donors to coordinate their activities.

\(^{70}\) UNDP Afghanistan Promotion of Sustainable Livelihoods Program, Team consists of five country office staff and four programme managers. The head of the program is Mr. Shafiq Qarizada, Assistant Country Director. Kabul Afghanistan, 2004, Report p. 4

\(^{71}\) http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1742
closely with SRSG Brahimi and the Afghan Interim Administration and its successors, through the Afghanistan Support Group (a development aid and assistance coordinating body created in 1997 by the fifteen largest donors to Afghanistan and the European Union)\(^{72}\) and the Implementation Group (the reconstruction aid and implementation group co-chaired by the Afghan Interim and now Transitional Authority and World Bank, which meets regularly to coordinate reconstruction efforts, bringing together representatives of the international community and bilateral donors).\(^{73}\) The Council likewise called on all Afghan parties to cooperate with UNAMA in the implementation of its mandate and to ensure the security and freedom of movement of its staff throughout the country.

**Tasks of UNAMA’s Two Pillars**

**Political Affairs\(^{74}\)**

- a. Monitor, analyze and report on overall political and human rights situation and status of Bonn Agreement implementation, especially regarding environment for emergency *loya jirga*;
- b. Support the work of the Special Independent Commission of the emergency *loya jirga*;
- c. Maintain contact with Afghan leaders, political parties, civil society groups, institutions and representatives of central authorities;
- d. Maintain contact with representatives of international community;
- e. Perform good offices as necessary on behalf of SRSG and in support of efforts of the Afghan authorities (especially in the areas of conflict control, confidence-building and reconciliation);
- f. Provide information and guidance on political issues for the benefit of other UNAMA activities;
- g. Investigate human rights violations and, where necessary, recommend corrective action.

**Relief, Recovery and Reconstruction\(^{75}\)**

- a. Articulate strategic vision for U.N. assistance role in Afghanistan that responds to immediate needs of most vulnerable populations, supports national recovery and reconstruction priorities, and is rights-based and gender-sensitive;
- b. Develop an integrated U.N. assistance program that builds on the comparative advantages, capacities, experience and mandates of the U.N. assistance community to monitor performance and to ensure accountability against established standards of performance, with special attention to measures promoting women’s rights and the achievement of rights of the most disadvantaged and underserved populations and ethnic groups;


\(^{73}\) Ibid.


c. Ensure that U.N. assistance supports capacity-building in counterpart Afghan administrations and organizations at the national and sub-national levels to develop policy-making, planning, management, assessment and coordination abilities through technical, material and financial support to counterpart administrative departments;
d. Create, with the Interim Administration and other partners, an effective program information and data management system that builds on the Afghanistan Information Management Service to provide necessary information, in a user-friendly form, on program coverage, performance and financing, through a range of communications channels, to actors at the national and sub-national levels and to donors and partners in the international community. This facility would be a semi-autonomous U.N.-funded facility, managed by a client board (Interim Authority, U.N., NGO and donor representation) co-located with the Afghanistan Assistance Coordination Authority;
e. Ensure that national and sub-national activities of the U.N. offices, agencies, funds and programs are conducted efficiently, cost-effectively, in a coordinated manner and in cooperation with other actors – governmental, non-governmental, private sector and international – as appropriate;
f. Assign, in agreement with the national administration, thematic and sectoral lead coordination responsibilities to the U.N. agencies, funds and programs, as appropriate to support counterpart departments to oversee and coordinate all actors – national and international – and activities in each sector, to ensure actions are coherent and responsive to needs;
g. Oversee, guide and support regional relief, recovery and reconstruction coordinators in the regional UNAMA offices, enabling them to ensure coherent U.N. agency capacity-development support to local counterpart authorities and other partners to ensure cross-sectoral coordination;
h. Represent U.N. assistance community to the international and donor communities, to ensure appropriate integrated reporting on the overall performance of the U.N. assistance community, to ensure timely reporting to the U.N. bodies as necessary, to mobilize resources for relief,

UNODC: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime &

UNDCP: United Nation International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)

Both these programs are committed to the elimination of illicit crop cultivation in Afghanistan. A key component of these programs are the Afghanistan Annual Opium Poppy Survey published every year. These surveys are primarily a monitoring tool, which allows to: aim to provide information on the location and extent of poppy cultivation, and the key production and pricing statistics for raw opium gum. The information gathered by the survey leads to an understanding of the outcome of the past season, and the identification of trends in poppy cultivation. This information contributes to planning and resource allocation within UNDCP and UNODC, and other multilateral, bilateral, and
non-government agencies. National authorities are also increasingly using the survey to monitor domestic cultivation and production.76

These surveys are a ground-based census that visits all villages that are known to have cultivated poppy in the past, or that have recently commenced poppy cultivation. The survey employs a large, well-trained team of Afghan nationals. Each team member completes a survey form with data concerning the village poppy area, yield and growing conditions. The survey also contributes to UNDCP’s Global Illicit Crops Monitoring Program.77 The objectives of this program are to define international core indicators on illicit crop cultivation, to establish uniform methodologies for data collection and analysis, to increase host government’s capacity to monitor and develop replacements to these illicit crops and to assist the international community in monitoring the extent and evolution of illicit crops in the context of the elimination strategy adopted by the member-states at the Special Session of the General Assembly in June 1998. 78

**AIHRC: Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission**

Because of the need to build a new, democratic Afghan society, that respects human rights, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) was written into the Bonn Agreement in December 2001. AIHRC was given the responsibility for developing a national plan of action for human rights in Afghanistan, including human rights monitoring and implementing of a national program of human rights education, undertaking national human right consultation and the development of domestic human rights institutions. The commission is required to submit opinions, recommendations,
proposals, and reports to local, regional, and national authorities. It is also mandated to promote the harmonization of Afghan laws and practices with international human rights instruments to which Afghanistan is a party. AIHRC is mandated to monitor the situation of human rights, where the liberty of people have been denied, restricted or violated in police custody detention centers, prisons, juvenile prisons, and other situations where human rights are vulnerable. The commission also monitors freedom of speech and the status of women and children. The AIHRC investigates specific complaints of human rights violations, involving abuses of authority and seeks remedies to end the abuses. Where violations and abuses of human rights are identified, the Commission has a mandate to take steps to protect and to promote human rights, including through advocacy and submission of reports to the Government.

AIHRC also have a economic and Social Rights that I will be a concentrating on. The role of national human rights institutions in monitoring economic and social rights has been recognized by the United Nations Economic and Social Council, in particular in conducting research to assess the extend to which these rights are being realized, either within the country as whole or for specific vulnerable group. The AIHR Social and economic rights emphasizes the role of national human rights institutions in ensuring that economic, social, and cultural rights are enforced and protected and to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals is consistent with state obligations under international human rights instruments. The main issues covered in this analysis will focus on:

- The right to an adequate standard of living—household vulnerability;
- The right to property and the right to adequate housing;
- The right to water;
- The right to health;
- The right to education;
- The right to participate in development; The right to an effective remedy;
Chapter 3: Analysis

3.1 The Economic and Public Health context of Afghanistan

Almost a decade of civil war following the military conflict and intervention of the Soviet Union has left Afghanistan significantly destroyed. Since Afghanistan had no growth or negative growth, according to the Guimbert report the average growth was 1960-1970 of 2 percent, and 3.6 percent for 1970-1978. From 1978-1990 Afghanistan’s real income level decreased 1.8 percent (i.e., negative GDP growth)\(^\text{79}\). With the Taliban dominating the political landscape from 1996 onwards, Afghanistan had been moving backwards in all aspects. The result of war, the destruction of core institutions of state and a heavily war ridden economy led to unrivaled levels of absolute poverty, large scale illiteracy, high human rights violations with no sense of security and rule of law and the almost complete disintegration of gender equality. Based on Maddison (2001) and Penn, GDP growth was negative until mid-90s with a small recovery to then plummet again with further reductions until 2001\(^\text{80}\). The 1998-2001 period also included a severe drought with a large impact on agriculture, the main economic activity until very recently.

Afghanistan’s post-2001 economic conditions and post conflict recovery has been severely damaged or completely destroyed. The ravages of conflict have bestowed upon Afghan citizens and the Karzai administration the inheritance of debt and not much wealth.


3.2.1. Economy and Reconstruction

Afghanistan’s economic recovery from the fall of Taliban (2002-2003):

In 2002, the official (non-opium) GDP, starting from a very low base, grew dramatically by 29 percent in 2002 and by 16 percent in 2003. Economic activity has expanded rapidly as a consequence both of the post conflict recovery, a demand impulse based on donor financed spending (especially since 2004/2005) and drug money. Two-third’s of this growth came from agriculture, thanks mainly to better precipitation and better availability of seeds and fertilizers.\(^81\) Cereal output strongly recovered, but opium production also rebounded.\(^82\) Services are booming, mainly in major cities, in construction, and in the public sector, linked to the reconstruction effort. A strong sign of improved confidence, 2.4 million refugees have come back to Afghanistan, and 600,000 internally displaced people have returned to their homes.\(^83\) The end of a major conflict, with associated revival of economic activity, and the end of the drought in many parts of the country, which brought sharp increase in agricultural production, is two key drivers of this dramatic economic recovery. Sound government policies, as well as structural reforms in certain areas, have supported the recovery.\(^84\)

In 2003, Afghanistan’s GPD is estimated at around $7 billion (including $2.3 billion of illicit opiate receipts)\(^85\). From 2003 to 2006 a catch-up effect is fading out, growth in the

\(^{82}\) Ibid.
\(^{83}\) Ibid. p. 3
\(^{84}\) Ibid. p. 4
medium and long term depends to an ever greater extent upon improvements in
governance and a successful integration into the world economy, while foreign aid will
remain a key contributor. Private investment had consistently grown since 2002 and
reached a peak in 2005/2006, reflecting untapped economic opportunities of the country
and an improved macroeconomic stance.\textsuperscript{86}

Legal economic activity has been stimulated by the large influx of international
aid, accompanied by the return of many skilled people and businesspeople from the
Afghan Diaspora, crowded in by the large reconstruction budget. A limited number of
large foreign direct investments for example in the telecoms sector and other services
have also contributed to growth and productivity. Exports (official) have been growing
rapidly, more so than the real GDP (see Table 1), even if the country has developed no
new export sectors outside the traditional sectors of carpets, minerals and horticultural
products.\textsuperscript{87} Vulnerability to drought was responsible for lower GDP growth in 2006/07,
although growth is expected to rise based on a post-drought rebound in agricultural
production (see Table 1). Moreover, a large proportion of GDP is accounted for by
foreign aid and assistance. Large inflows of aid, coupled with inflows of hard currency
from the opium economy has led to a relative appreciation of the Afghani, and higher
costs of labor and other inputs for Afghan producers, undermining the competitiveness of
the manufacturing sector. However, the manufacturing sector has been able to keep up
with the rest of the licit economy in terms of growth. Non tradable sectors in general have
been growing more than the rest of the economy.

\textsuperscript{86} Afghanistan, State Building, Sustaining Growth, and Reducing Poverty, p.3
Table 1 shows the GDP growth and per capita evolution since 2001. Except for
the 2004/2005 and 2006/2007 drought-induced slowdown in agriculture the transitional
economy has grown rapidly posting double-digit growth rates. The ADB reports growth
in the 2007/2008 reached 13.9 percent (ADB, 2008). Assuming the externally financed
development efforts are sustained and that climatic factors do not affect agricultural
production, the economy is expected to grow between 8.4 and 9 percent during
2008/2009 period (IMF, 2008a and ADB, 2008). But given the size of the informal
economy these numbers appear to underestimate real economic performance (World
Bank, 2005c). Accurate data is lacking but estimates of Afghanistan’s GDP per capita is
$335 (IMF, 2008a) with an estimated 70% of the population living below the $2 a day
poverty line (DFID, 2006).

| Table 1. Afghanistan, Real GDP (annual percentage change), Official exports
(annual percentage change) and GDP per capita (US dollars) | Estimates | Projections |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Real GDP</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official exports</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Capita GDP</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IMF (2008a, 2008c) and WEO (2008)

3.2.2 Investment:

According to Afghanistan’s Investment Support Agency (AISA), the licit
investment peaked in 2006/07 driven by donor-funded government investment. However
private investment declined in the same period, with 2005 marking the inflexion point.
Also, the AISA reported a decline in the number of new business registrations in
Similarly, the IMF (2008c) reports foreign direct investment reaching in 2005 a peak at 4.2 percent of GDP, reduced to 3.4 percent in 2006/07 and projected at 3.3 percent until 2009. Based on AISA registrations, only services and construction seem to be attracting more investments, especially from within the country and by 2007, most sectors have not yet reached the 2005 level.

Table 2. Total Number of companies registered with AISA (as of December 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of companies</td>
<td>3.243</td>
<td>1.386</td>
<td>2.503</td>
<td>2.046</td>
<td>2.096</td>
<td>11.274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>1.474</td>
<td>1.137</td>
<td>2.123</td>
<td>1.746</td>
<td>1.925</td>
<td>8.405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>1.309</td>
<td>1.048</td>
<td>1.249</td>
<td>4.756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>2.271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
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<td>118</td>
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<td>157</td>
<td>79</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: AISA

3.2.3 Macroeconomic Policies *(fiscal, monetary, and exchange rate management)*

Another important economic recovery has been macroeconomic stability—a remarkable achievement by the government after more than a decade of high inflation. Considerable success has been achieved in mobilizing domestic revenues, which from negligible levels in 2001 reached more than 4 percent of official GDP in 2003.\(^{88}\) The

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government is following a prudent debt policy, under which most external assistance is sought in the form of grants and credits are taken only at highly concessional rates.\textsuperscript{89}

### 3.2.4 Finance and Private Sector Development:

The Afghan government has also made progress in reviving the financial system and supporting private sector development. New financial sector legislation (the Central Bank Law and Banking Law) was adopted in the summer of 2003 to grant the Central Bank independence and establish a modern legal framework for the banking system.\textsuperscript{90} Significant foreign private investment has been attracted into the telecommunication sector, with very good results in terms of expansion of private mobile telephone services across a number of cities on a competitive, cost efficient basis.\textsuperscript{91}

### 3.3 Trade Reform:

Since 2001, IMF reported that trade has been a very active sector in Afghanistan. Total trade in 2007 (exports plus imports) was estimated over $8.5 billion (excluding opium), comprised of $6.7 billion in imports and $1.8 billion in exports, of which $1.2 billion were re-exports and $150 million were smuggling (IMF, 2008a). In five years, licit trade (official exports) has grown over 300 percent, with volume increasing four-fold. Official imports are equally impressive, growing by a factor of three during the same period; mostly due to reconstruction efforts (see Table 3). All these improvements have to do with the fact that the government has implemented a number of reforms to

\textsuperscript{89} In 2004 the Government has verified close to US$200 million of debt incurred by previous administrations. The main uncertainty relates to claims from Russia. Since 2001, the Government has taken credits in the order of US$600 million (13 percent of GDP), all on concessional terms typically involving zero interest and a long grace period.

\textsuperscript{90} WHO, State Building, Sustaining Growth, and Poverty, A Country Economic Report September 9, 2004

\textsuperscript{91} Ibid. p. 6
foster trade. Custom tariffs have been rationalized (elimination of export duties, use of market exchange rate for imports valuation; streamlined tariff structure—moving from 25 tariff rates of 0-150 percent to six rates between 2.5 percent and 16 percent; new, more effective broker processes).92 Existing trade agreements have been renewed and new agreements signed with neighboring countries. At the Cancun trade meeting, government representatives pledged to build a foreign trade regime that will allow Afghanistan to easily pass the standards for World Trade Organization accession over the next few years.93 Quantitative restrictions are extremely few and not imposed for reasons of protection. Customs administration reforms are underway.

| Table 3. Afghanistan: Balance of Payment, 2002/03-2006/07 (In millions of U.S. dollars) |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Current account (including grants)             | -149.8          | -456.2          | -265            | -182.5          | -444            |
| Current account (excluding grants)              | -1371.6         | -2932.1         | -3894           | -4880.3         | -5435.5         |
| Trade balance                                  | -1217.6         | -2485.7         | -3443.3         | -4335.3         | -4941.6         |
| Exports of goods (f.o.b.)**                    | 1290.6          | 1893.6          | 1643            | 1794.8          | 1801.3          |
| Official exports                               | 100.1           | 143.7           | 305.3           | 385.9           | 416.5           |
| Unofficial exports                             | 1190.5          | 1749.9          | 1337.7          | 1408.9          | 1384.8          |
| Smuggling                                      | 176.6           | 232.8           | 152.7           | 173.7           | 149.9           |
| Transit trade                                  | 1013.9          | 1517.1          | 1185.1          | 1235.2          | 1234.9          |
| Imports of goods (f.o.b.)                      | -2508.2         | -4379.3         | -5086.3         | -6130.1         | -6742.9         |
| Official imports                               | -1983.1         | -3282.9         | -4415.8         | -5481.7         | -6049.2         |
| Of which: Duty free                            | -840.8          | -1594.4         | -2416.2         | -3258.3         | -3579.4         |
| Smuggling                                      | -525.1          | -1096.4         | -670.5          | -648.4          | -693.7          |

Source: IMF (2008a)
*Preliminary estimate
** Excludes opium exports and, due to limited data availability, flows associated with U.S. Army and most ISAF activities.

93 Ibid.
3.4 The Reconstruction process:

Since Afghanistan is perceived to be of importance in military and political security among Western industrial countries at the beginning of the 2001, donors drafted a detailed and comprehensive needs assessment for the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan with which to solicit external financial aid and launch international assistance programs in 2002. Some $1.1 billion of external assistance was disbursed in late 2001 and 2002, mainly for humanitarian purposes and not through government channels.\(^{94}\) The government presented its National Development Framework (NDF) in April 2002, which formed the basis of the National Development Budget. Subsequently the Security Afghanistan’s Future (SAF) reported detailed medium-term investment and recurrent expenditure requirements and external financing needs and was presented at a major donor conference in Berlin in March 2004.\(^{95}\) The composition of external assistance, which increased to $2.5 billion in the 2003/04 financial year, has shifted in favor of reconstruction, with increasing government leadership.\(^{96}\)

3.5 Stimulated economy by foreign aid

**Agriculture:**

In the agricultural sector performance has not been so successful, but mostly due to exogenous factors like the recent drought that affected cereal production and also the

\(^{94}\) National Development Framework (NDF), the Security Afghanistan’s Future (SAF)

\(^{95}\) Ibid

\(^{96}\) Ibid
interaction between legal agriculture and opium production. Agriculture’s share of GDP has been diminishing since the mid-90s, but even after a period of drought causing negative for 20 percent growth in the sector in 2006/2007 (IMF, 2008a), agriculture still accounts for 32% of estimated total GDP (2003), mainly cereal crops (27%) and by the opium economy (an estimated 35% of GDP) and it accounted for almost one-half of Afghanistan’s exports in 2006 (IMF, 2008c). It is also the main occupation and means of subsistence of the vast majority of the population, although livelihood reliance on agriculture as a single source has dropped as households in some areas have responded to drought by diversifying their livelihood strategies (Famine Early Warning Systems Network, FEWSNET, 2007).

Other sectors are relatively small, including manufacturing (9%)—most of its small-scale agricultural processing and other small-scale activities, construction (3%), and public administration (3%). The striking feature of Afghanistan’s economic structure is the dominance of the informal sector—not only in agriculture and in the drug industry (outright illegal), but also in the most other sectors. Small-scale generators in the informal sector, for example, provide a large portion of electricity supply. It is inherently difficult to estimate the size of the informal economy, except in sectors where it is dominant like agriculture and narcotics. Nevertheless, it is clear that some 80-90% of economic activity in Afghanistan occurs in the informal sector, which has been largely responsible for the economic recovery and dynamism.97

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3.5.2 Opium

Cultivation of poppies remains the largest and most important industry in Afghanistan (UNODC, 2007). Over 4 percent of the agricultural land (193,000 ha) is devoted to opium farming and some 3.3 million Afghans are involved in opium cultivation. Opium income to farmers was $760 million in 2007, while potential exports of opium were $3.1 billion during the same year (Byrd, 2007). However, farmers are receiving a lower percentage of the potential value of the crop, from 48% in 2002 to only 24.5% in 2006. This could imply that more processing is being conducted in Afghanistan, or that lower prices are being paid to farmers. In addition, the share of potential exports of opium to total GDP declined from 62.4% in 2002 to 44.0% in 2006.98 Opium production has been increasing rapidly in Afghanistan, from 3,400 metric tons in 2002 to 8,200 metric tons in 2007 (UNODC, 2008). The Afghan opium crop now constitutes 93% of the world’s total opium output. Despite this growth in output, the number of provinces growing opium has decreased from a high of 34 in 2004 to 21 provinces in 2007, most of which are located in the south of the country (see Table 7). Cannabis production is increasing, with some 70,000 hectares cultivated in 2007 (UNODC, 2007). Farm-gate value of opium accounts for 13 percent of official GDP, whilst the whole opium/heroin sector amounts to 35 percent. Once opium is taken out of the official agriculture figures, legal agriculture is reduced to 19 percent of official GDP and it becomes the sector with the smallest contribution.99

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98 Using opium figures from Byrd (2008) and GDP figures from the IMF.
3.5.3 Industry

Afghanistan’s Industry is driven by construction, but also manufacturing, has been one of the most dynamic sectors during the last five years, accounting for over one-quarter of 2006 GDP. Construction is one of the main driving forces behind the growth of the sector, and was the most dynamic sub-sector in 2006/2007, with 30 percent growth (IMF, 2008b). This reveals the important resources devoted to infrastructure reconstruction, but also how the large amounts of drug money are reinvested in real estate in Afghanistan (the rest is invested outside the country). Textiles, clothes and leather represented the second largest sub-sector, but it was the largest sector in terms of exports (including carpets and skins). It is worth noting that even in the presence of strong foreign inflows the manufacturing sector has been able to keep up with the rest of the economy in terms of growth, supporting the idea that exchange rate management has been adequate or in general the benefits associated from investment and stability that go directly to reinforce country’s competitiveness. However, growth in all these sectors is influenced by the very low levels from which the sectors started, following a process of deindustrialization through conflict that, in the last year for which data is available, 1995, had left Afghan industry with only 10 percent of GDP.100

3.5.4 The Informal Economy

It has been reported that 80-90 percent of country’s GDP is informal, including 35 percent of illegal opium related activities and an array of other informal activities (World Bank, 2005c). No accurate estimation exists, but more than one-half of this black economy (non-opium) is subsistence level agriculture and livestock (World Bank, 2005c).

The black economy includes also barter trade, manufacturing and commerce and other non-recorded services (e.g., the hawala system or electricity from small-scale generators), but also smuggling and re-exports. The smuggled exports include gravels and construction materials, gems and semi-precious stones, logging and other non-recorded exports, but this has decrease from 5 percent of official GDP in 2002/03 to 2 percent in 2006/07. Smuggled imports were estimated at US$690m in 2006/07, but the contribution from that to the GDP should only include the value added that is generated in the country and consider the loss in tariff revenues. We roughly estimate this to be around 2.5 percent of legal GDP in 2007.  

A large re-export activity exists between Afghanistan and neighboring countries (mostly Pakistan), but the value added from this activity and hence its contribution to the Afghan GDP is also very low, probably between 2-3.5 percent of official GDP in 2007.  

Based on these rough approximations, the whole smuggling (imports and exports) and re-export sector would represent no more than 8 percent of official GDP in 2007.

The main components in the informal economy are: non-recorded agriculture and livestock (~30 percent of official GDP, World Bank 2005c), opium production and processing activities (35 percent of official GDP, World Bank 2005c), illegal trade (6.5-8 percent of official GDP, as per our estimations) and other non-recorded activities (including small manufacturing and services).

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102 Ibid.
3.5.5 Employment

The official figure from the government for unemployment is 40 percent (ANDS). But little more is known about the size and composition of the labour market in the country. Using NRVA 2005, we estimated the importance of different sectors in the occupational profile of the economy (see Annex 2 for the list of occupation and a description of our aggregated definitions). Table 8 present the results. At the national level, 66 percent of the households depend on agriculture (including opium\textsuperscript{103}) and livestock as the main source of income, this number is 66% in rural areas and 14% in the cities. Trade and services employ 15 percent of the national population but is—as expected—the main source in urban areas (64 percent as first source, 14 percent as second source). Manufacturing is just 1 percent at national levels, with 3 percent in urban areas, being the third largest occupation.

Any discussion of economic growth policy systems must recognize what Pain and Goodhand have described as the three economic systems that operate in Afghanistan simultaneously: \textsuperscript{104}

1) The warlord economy,
2) The black-market economy,
3) The coping or subsistence economy.

The warlord economy is run by what Pain and Goodhand call “conflict entrepreneurs,” that is, by regional and local armed commanders and fighters who engage in hostilities

\textsuperscript{103} NRVA is based on self-reporting and therefore all figures relative to opium are considered to be underestimated.

not only to protect ethnic and religious values but also, and perhaps primarily, to make profits and accumulate wealth and power. Their economy is based on smuggling consumer goods, minerals, wheat, and opium, informal taxation of both legal and illicit economic activities, arms trading, economic blockades, asset stripping and looting, and illegal currency trading. 105 The warlord economy is primarily exploitive rather than productive. It has disrupted markets, destroyed economic assets, violently redistributed resources, created illegal entitlements, and further impoverished vulnerable groups. In some regions, warlords have driven out the better-educated population especially those associated with minority ethnic or religious groups. The black market economy operated in some places by warlords consists more widely of noncombatant profiteers, traders in illegal goods, cross-borders smugglers, poppy farmers and opium dealers, and truck drivers who constitute the “transport mafia”. Black-market economy participant’s benefit from continuing military conflict, ethnic and religious tensions, and a weak state. The black-market economy thrives in the absence of other legal means of making profits and creating wealth and is primarily diversionary rather than developmental. Participants derive income from unsustainable extraction of natural resources and minerals; smuggling of antiquities, rare animals, and minerals; the flourishing hawala money-order and currency-exchange systems; and the capture and diversion of international aid resources. 106

The coping economy in which most of the Afghan population participates in is characteristic of a subsistence agricultural sector and a weak system of commercial trade.

In the coping economy, poor families and communities often exploit the labor of children in order to survive during periods of widespread asset erosion. Those engaged in the coping economy obtain their livelihoods from diverse low-risk activities such as subsistence agriculture, petty trade, and on- and off-farm low wage labor. Some participants migrate to Pakistan, Iran, or other countries surrounding Afghanistan and remit part of their earnings to dependents back home. Others survive on income redistribution and support through extended family, local ethnic and religious networks, and humanitarian assistance. The coping economy both results from, and reinforces, the lack of secure and steady employment and long-term investment and the deterioration in health and education standards.

3.6 Improvements needed in the private sector:

A dynamic private sector is essential for Afghanistan to achieve the robust, sustained economic growth that is necessary for national poverty reduction, state building, and other reconstruction objectives. Tremendous entrepreneurial talents exist in Afghanistan, but in order to be the “engine of growth” the private sector must be able and encouraged to move beyond the bounds of the informal economy. While Afghanistan will continue to have a great many small, household and family-based businesses in agriculture, handicrafts, trade, and other services, some enterprises need to grow into medium or even large firms, thereby becoming a source of competitiveness for Afghanistan. According to (…) the challenge for the Government in encouraging and supporting private sector development is:

(i) To support through macroeconomic policies a strong demand environment for the private sector, by maintaining robust economic growth;
(ii) To create a structural and regulatory enabling environment in which private enterprises can compete and grow;
(iii) To ensure that key infrastructure services (power, roads, water, telecommunication) are efficiently provided to the private sector; (iv) To help the private sector build capacity (including through financial services and business support services) so that it will be able to respond effectively to opportunities.  

In order for the Afghan economy to run at its fullest potential, it needs to overcome these challenges: Creative alternative, stable livelihoods and entrepreneurial opportunities in agriculture, trading services, mining, natural resources development, and small-scale manufacturing, and the acceleration of macroeconomic growth, may be the only ways to lure participants from the warlord and black-market economies into mainstream economic activities and provide those caught in the coping economy with more fruitful opportunities. Creating those opportunities depends not only on achieving reconstruction objectives quickly, but also on laying the foundations for long-term economic growth.

3.6.1 Alternative growth strategies

There is a debate among international development organizations about how best to initiate economic growth in subsistence economies, and international assistance organizations have experimented with a wide range of interventions to help poor countries. Two general strategies emerged—a “big push” or “balanced development” strategy that seeks to promote rapidly a comprehensive set of changes simultaneously in order to create the conditions that launch and sustain economic growth, and a “leading sector” strategy that seeks sequential changes in one or two sectors and relies on the

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107 Montgomery, Rondinelli, p. 203
creation of lateral linkages and multiplier effects for spreading growth to other sectors of the economy over time.\textsuperscript{109}

a) The big push strategy relies on observations, primarily in advanced economies, that all sectors are interdependent and that massive investment is needed in both the private sector and the public sector simultaneously, in order to trigger economic growth.\textsuperscript{110} The interdependence of all sectors implies that investment in only one sector would not stimulate growth throughout the whole economy. The strategy requires investment, mainly in industry, but also concurrently in agriculture, services, infrastructure, education, technology, and health in order to stimulate macroeconomic growth and to provide mutually reinforcing support in all sectors for continued development. The experience with international development over the past 50 years, however indicates that in most countries, a big push approach is often difficult to launch and the impacts are not always positive. As the United Nation Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) pointed out in its 50-year assessment of development experience, “such a strategy, based on industry-led growth and often accomplished through an urban bias in fiscal and social policies largely failed, leaving behind vast rural poverty and food insecurity while accelerating problems linked to rapid urbanization.”\textsuperscript{111}

b) The other approach, a leading sector strategy, also sees the interdependence of sectors in the economy but asserts that focused investment in one or two key sectors can drive growth in all others to which they are linked. More importantly, leading sector

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid.
theorists recognize the limited absorptive capacities, governance and administrative
capacities, entrepreneurial and business skills, and access to capital resources in poor
countries that are needed to make a big push or balanced development strategy work.\textsuperscript{112} Advocates of leading sector strategy argue that resources should be concentrated in one
or two sectors of the economy that will generate multiplier effects by creating demand in
other sectors, leading to a more equitable distribution of income and wealth. Often the
leading sector chosen for investment is agriculture because the majority of the population
in poor countries earns its livelihood from farming, petty trading, and services in rural
areas.\textsuperscript{113} By focusing on agriculture and rural development, economic growth can be
stimulated from the bottom-up rather than top-down, benefiting those in farming and
rural enterprise more quickly and assuring a more equitable distribution of wealth.
Afghanistan’s National Development Framework does not outline a specific strategy for
initiating growth. It does identify a broad set of economic and social reconstruction
projects that might imply a big push approach, but it also recognizes that not all of them
are likely to be undertaken together at the same time. Implying a more sequential
approach, the framework identifies priorities for immediate reconstruction as well as for a
long-term development. The plans of international assistance organization seem to
recognize even more clearly that the existing conditions of Afghanistan and the
experience with economic development in other poor and war-torn countries suggest that
growth must be initiated in the agricultural and rural sectors. By any measure—average
per capita income, life expectancy, other social indicators, or broader indexes like the
U.N Human Development Index (HDI)—Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in

\textsuperscript{112} United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, “What Have We Learned?” The State of Food and
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid.
the world. Afghanistan was very poor before the war and fell further behind the rest of the world during the past quarter-century. Recent rapid economic growth and improvements in some social indicators have not yet changed this situation. Since 2003, 2.5 million Afghan refugees have returned to their home country, while an additional 600,000 IDPs have moved back to their place of origin. About 40% of refugees have returned to Kabul and many others to urban centers across the country.\textsuperscript{114}

3.6.2 Poverty reduction: Main element of growth

The Afghan Government has set ambitious targets for growth and human development, reflecting the country’s need to make up for a quarter of a century of conflict. Securing Afghanistan’s Future (SAF; Afghanistan Government 2004) outlines a scenario with average annual growth of 9 percent for non-drug GDP during the medium term, with income per capita rising to $500 in 2015.\textsuperscript{115} This scenario is underpinned by an investment program of $25.6 billion over seven years (with external assistance requirements, including for recurrent expenditures, of $27.6 billion).\textsuperscript{116} The SAF report is equally ambitious in targeting large improvements in social indicators, in line with the Millennium Development Goals. The gross primary school enrollment rate is targeted to rise from 54 percent (40 for girls) at present to 100 percent for boys and girls by 2015. The under-five mortality rate is targeted to decline from 172 to 130 per 1,000 live births, the infant mortality rate from 115 to 55 per 1,000 live births, and the maternal mortality

\textsuperscript{114} U.N Human Development Index (HDI)—2003
\textsuperscript{115} (SAF; Afghanistan Government 2004)
rate from an estimated 1,600 per 100,000 live births to 205. Indeed, robust, sustained economic growth is essential for Afghanistan to secure peace and improve human development. First, it is a necessary condition to get out of deep poverty—and therefore the central element of a poverty reduction strategy. Second, growth is crucial for state building and political stabilization. Economic growth impacts positively on security, by creating revenues for the government to build police and army forces and by providing people with more of a stake in society. Economic growth will also generate viable alternatives to opium production. Finally, economic growth creates revenue potential, which if tapped in a transparent and non-distortionary way through effective taxation, will generate the domestic fiscal resources that will enable Afghanistan over time to become financially self-sufficient and to provide effective services to its people—another key factor in poverty reduction. Thus the key development challenge for Afghanistan is to put in place the institutions, policies, and services that will generate sustained, broad-based economic growth. As noted in the SAF report, in addition to the level, the quality of economic growth will be critical (the quality of growth is very important). What is needed is growth with improving social indicators (reflecting investments in human capital) and without a significant deterioration in income distribution. This ensures continuing broad consensus around the policies and decisions needed to create the enabling environment for economic growth. In the Afghan context, growth needs to be labor-intensive, sustainable macro-economically and financially, and environment-

117 (SAF; Afghanistan Government 2004)
118 Ibid.
119 Ibid.
120 Ibid.
friendly and conducive to social development.\textsuperscript{123} Growth also needs to be reasonably well-balanced ethnically and regionally in order to avoid exacerbating political tensions among different groups and regions.\textsuperscript{124}

3.6.3 Main Elements of Growth Strategy

In essence, the Afghan Government’s strategy for rapid, sustained, broad-based economic growth centers on the development of a dynamic private sector and is anchored in four key elements:\textsuperscript{125}

(i) Improving security through fair and effective enforcement of law and order and building an effective, accountable State,
(ii) Maintaining macroeconomic stability,
(iii) Delivering support services (especially infrastructure), and
(iv) Creating an enabling environment for business activity through regulatory and structural reforms.

The government has already made a very good start by maintaining macroeconomic stability and initiating some important structural reforms, as well as capacity building in the administration. These very successful and important initiatives need to be complemented by capacity building and delivery of key infrastructural services, by easing the regulatory burden on the private sector and reducing vulnerability to corruption, and most urgently by improving security and strengthening the rule of law.\textsuperscript{126}

\textsuperscript{123} Afghanistan—state building, sustaining growth, and reducing poverty, World Bank.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{126} \url{http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTAFGHANISTAN/News%20and%20Events/20261395/AfghanistanEconomicReportfinalversion909.pdf}
3.6.4 Rule of Law

The first and most fundamental requirement to break out of the “informal equilibrium” is to build security, an appropriate legal framework and functioning judicial system, effective law enforcement mechanisms, and a capable and effective state.\(^\text{127}\) In the general term, the stability, security, and prosperity of Afghanistan will depend on the ability of the state to raise the resources needed to fund the provision of necessary public services. In the SAF report, the government stated its intention to cover its wage bill in five to six years time, and its entire recurrent budget in nine to eleven years time.\(^\text{128}\) Over the last two years, it has already achieved a significant increase in revenues. Additional progress in mobilizing resources will depend on:\(^\text{129}\)

(i) The security situation and administrative capacity of the government, and
(ii) The structure of the economy.

Security sector reform is critical, and this component will also need to include reintegration of disarmed combatants. Government capacity building is underway and needs to be accelerated, on a sustainable basis. Progress in strengthening and reform of the judiciary, which has lagged, will be crucial. Building on informal institutions to create formal institutions is a promising option for moving toward a functioning legal system. Adequate property rights, for instance land titles, enhance the value of assets because, with appropriate institutions for property disputes, they can be used as collateral for credit and facilitate a longer time horizon on the part of their owners.\(^\text{130}\)

\(^{127}\) SAF Report. 2006, p. 100
\(^{128}\) Ibid. p. 101
\(^{129}\) Ibid.
3.6.5 Economic Growth and Development Policy

The reconstruction and development of Afghanistan, following decades of internal conflict and external military intervention, pose challenging dilemmas for international assistance organizations and donor countries that have pledged billions of dollars in aid. Economic growth is essential to generate jobs, income, public revenues, and the capital needed to reconstruct the country’s destroyed infrastructure. It is needed to provide some sense of security and to stabilize Afghanistan, politically and socially. Establishing some degree of social and political stability and military security and at least minimally effective system governance, are generally recognized as preconditions for stimulating economic growth. \(^{131}\) In Afghanistan much of the basic agricultural and manufacturing infrastructure has been destroyed; economic and political institutions have been weakened; and the domestic and international markets for Afghanistan’s food supplies, livestock, and manufactured goods have been disrupted or lost. Ethnic and regional tensions plague a fragmented society, and human capital has deteriorated from years of interrupted education and training, and from the steady decline in health and social services. Governance systems in Afghanistan are still weak and state’s authority barely extends beyond the capital. This is why Afghanistan is so dependent on the aid of donor government, international aid agencies, international organizations and NGOs to help it reach the developmental change beyond the capital in order to create a united growth across the country. These organizations are not to overlook opportunities, repeat mistakes, and ignore threats and complexities, and waste resources.

\(^{131}\) SAF Report, 2010, p. 198
4. Health

4.1 Public Health Overview:

The most progress has been made in Afghanistan’s health sector; it has come a long way since its invasion. A number of development partners, especially the World Bank, the European Union, and the U.S Agency for International Development (USAID), have been key supporters of Afghanistan’s effort to rebuild and strengthen its health sector. Together the three donors invested more than $820 million between 2003/04 and 2008/09 and played key roles in helping the government reshape the health sector. The key challenges the country is facing include high infant and under-five mortality rates, a very high maternal mortality ratio, with most deaths preventable if more births were attended by skilled providers and properly referred; poor sanitation and malnutrition, and a high burden of disease from malaria and tuberculosis.

4.1.1 Why is the health sector much more important than other sectors?

It has to do with the fact that Afghanistan has a high agricultural capacity and good water sources, and agricultural and economic experts believe that Afghanistan has a capacity high enough to exceed the limit of self-sufficiency in food and agricultural production. Afghanistan has 7.9 million hectares of arable land, of which only 3 million hectares are cultivated and about 5 million remain uncultivated. Afghanistan uses merely 30% of its existing water sources. Reconstruction of irrigation system and investment on water sources can increase food production so that the remaining 5 million

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132 Building on Early Gains in Afghanistan’s health, Nutrition, and Population sector, Challenges and options, the World Bank, p. 1
133 Ibid. p.1
hectares of arable land can be used and on the other hand, harvest from irrigated land is at least twice that from rain-fed or non-irrigated land.\textsuperscript{135} The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Animal Husbandry estimates that about 85\% of Afghan people are farmers, though one needs to be skeptical about this figure given the population increase in urban areas. Sufficient investment is yet to be made in Afghan agriculture and water sources. Until the Paris Conference, the Afghan government and international community did not pay the necessary attention to agricultural development and this was a mistake per se. Agricultural approaches in Afghanistan remain localized and outdated and have yet to be mechanized; there are no reserves or refrigerating rooms to sustain food items and fruit. Farmers are forced to urgently offer their products to markets and even sometimes Afghan fruit is sent to Pakistan, kept in Pakistani reserves for a while, and then exported to Afghanistan to be sold at a higher rate.\textsuperscript{136} The year 2008/2009 was a difficult year for agriculture. Drought dominated throughout Afghanistan and many domestic animals died. The Afghan government needed over 2.30 million metric tons of wheat to meet the needs of the people and at the same time, food prices increased. Although government and World Food Program (WFP) assistance were able to help the needy to some extent by lowering and controlling food prices, prices still remained high.

4.1.2 The fundamental right to health

The right to the highest attainable standard of health means that all individuals should have an ever-increasing access to health services and facilities without distinction of any kind. This involves four dimensions, namely, physical accessibility, economic

\textsuperscript{135} SAF Report, 2010, p. 199
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.
accessibility, informational accessibility, and non-discrimination. Health services, materials, and facilities should be physically and safely available for all, especially vulnerable categories of people and all persons should be able to afford such services, materials, and facilities. On one hand, people have the right to search for information on health-related issues and on the other, health services and facilities should be provided for all people without discrimination of any form. Another significant issue is the acceptability of health services and facilities, meaning that these should be compatible with people’s mentality and culture and planned so that they will be accepted by the general public.

According to Article 12 of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) it recognizes that all people have the right to the highest attainable standard of health. Pursuant to international human rights instruments, health services should be provided cheaply and non-discriminatorily for all. Article 52 of the Afghan Constitution requires the government to provide the means for the prevention and cure of ailments and to render free health facilities for all citizens.

4.1.3 Access to Health Services & Insecurity

Although health services are almost free of charge for all Afghan people, vulnerable segments of population encounter many problems since health services have poor quality or inadequate geographical coverage. That is why men’s life expectancy is only 47 years and it is 45 for women—almost half of life expectancy in world’s developed and wealthier countries. The Afghan government and its international partners

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137 [http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cescr.htm#art12](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cescr.htm#art12)
138 Ibid.
always allude to the development of the health sector as one of their significant achievements in the past several years. The government claims approximately 85% of all Afghan people presently have access to health services. Although The Human Rights Field Monitoring (HRFM) Team (HRFM) findings reveal that such a claim is close to reality, health services nevertheless face several major challenges in Afghanistan.\footnote{http://www.humanitarianappeal.net}

Poor-quality health services and facilities, long distances of health centers from remote districts, and growing insecurity are among these challenges. On the other hand, experienced and specialized doctors are unwilling to work in outlying areas for economic and geographical reasons.

According to Interviews HRFM has conducted in 2008, 92.4% of all interviewees said that state or NGO health services were available to them, around 7.4% said these services were unavailable to them, and 0.1% did not answer this question. At the same time, 56% of all interviewees stated that private health services were available to their families; around 30.2% said such services were unavailable for their families, and about 13.0% did not answer this question. The added percentage of people who responded that state or NGO health services were unavailable to them (7.4%) and the percentage of people who stated that private health services were unavailable to them (30.2%), we will have a percentage of 37.6%. Therefore, in aggregate terms, about 62.4% of interviewees have access to state or NGO or private health services, and around 37.6% of interviewees have no access to state or NGO or private health services. This figure stands in gross contrast to the claim made by the Government that 85% of all Afghans are covered by health services.
State or NGO health services are greater than private ones. According HRFM survey on the matter, 45.7% of interviewees stated they have access to state health services, 40.9% stated they have access to private health services, and 13.4% stated they have access to non-state health services\textsuperscript{140}.

According to HRFM interviews, the number of hospitals is less than that of health centers and mobile clinics, indicating that health centers and mobile clinics offer around 75% of health services and the remaining services (25%) are rendered by hospitals.

As mentioned earlier, approximately 93% of people have access to state and non-state health services, but there are problems in the quality of their access to these services. These problems, according to HRFM, include long distances of centers, poor-quality medicine, poor facilities, and inexperienced personnel. Around 29.2% of interviewees said that they do not use state or NGO health services. Data shows that 61% of interviewees use state or NGO health services and around 8.4% did not answer this

question. Accessibility is the most important factor for not using health facilities. The following figure presents these reasons.

Data shows that physical inaccessibility is the most significant reason why people are not able to access health services, both public and private. Long distances of health facilities make it very different for people in outlying districts to access them. Some interviewees stated that they are forced to pay a lot for transportation in order to reach health centers like hospitals and some use horses and donkeys to take their patients to health centers, spending several hours on the way to reach these centers. Health services offered by private institutions also have shortcomings and problems. HRFM data shows that around 8.6% of interviewees do not use private health services, around 47.1% use such services, and around 44.3% did not reply. Interviewees who do not use private health services provided the same responses as those who do not use state or NGO health services.

Reasons why interviewees do not use private health services include inaccessibility, poor-

\[\text{Reasons why interviewees do not use the available Gov/NGO healthcare facilities}\]

- Have to pay: 1.1%
- Discrimination: 1.2%
- Others: 1.9%
- No female staff: 3.1%
- Un-answered: 4.6%
- Poor staff quality: 7.3%
- Lack of medicine/equipment: 30.0%
- Difficult to get to: 50.8%

quality medicine and equipment, and inexperienced personnel. Approximately 25.1% of interviewees do not use such services because of inaccessibility, 3.8% do not use because they have to pay money, 4.6% do not use because of poor-quality medicine and equipment, 5.8% do not use because health personnel are inexperienced, and 1.7% do not use because there are no female staff. Poor-quality medicine is a key shortcoming of health services in Afghanistan. This problem is more serious in rural areas and outlying districts, because the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) exerts less control there. Its been reported that the Ministry burnt around 3,525 items of outdated and non-standardized medicine amounting, in general, to 86 tones. This shows the Ministry’s monitoring of health services in the country and at the same time, it is indicative of a huge amount of outdated and non-standardized medicine in the health market.

The foregoing shows that people have a problem of physical access to health centers, either private or state or NGO sponsored and hence, there should be an increase

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in the number of health centers in different areas, especially in disadvantaged ones. Another difficulty is the poor-quality medicine and equipment, and inexperienced and low-capacity health personnel, to which many interviewees referred. More efforts should be taken to raise the quality of health services.  

A key component of the right to health is the acceptability of health services. Such services should be provided that people do not feel alienated and to be “the other”. The presence of female midwives, nurses, and doctors is a must in hospitals and other health centers. In many areas, patients do not consult hospitals and clinics unless they are in a critical condition. This issue is more often seen among women, especially in areas where there are no women nurses and doctors. The government should train more women as birth attendants, midwives, nurses, and physicians. As part of government’s reporting to the electorate, MoPH said that hundreds of female health personnel were trained in (2008/09). The Ministry’s 2009 report says that 19,975 community health personnel were trained in 34 provinces in the previous year with 50.8% of them being men and 49.2% being women.  

Among other concerns is the growing insecurity which has limited the delivery of health services. According to the Third Report on Economic and Social Rights of covering the period from March 2007 to early 2008, health workers have been targeted by government opposition in southern and southeastern areas, as a result of which the

146 Ibid.
government closed down around 36 health centers only in the first three months of 2008, depriving about 360,000 people of health services. It is difficult to study whether this state of affairs has continued, because there is a lack of accurate information as a result of rising insecurity in (2008/09); but it can undoubtedly be said that security if the situation has not improved more health centers may have to be shut down. The Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) is encouraged by the objectives of Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANSDS) to extend the basic package of health services to at least 90% of the population by 2010. However, in line with the findings of this commission report which indicate that the main obstacle is not the availability of health care facilities but an inability to access existing health facilities, the Commission urges the Government and international development partners to focus their efforts on tackling obstacles preventing access to health facilities, rather than simply increasing the number of clinics.

Initials benchmarks in the ANDS Monitoring Matrix indicate that there will be an emphasis on increasing community access to health care, including outreaches work by trained health workers. In particular this would address some of the obstacles preventing rural women from using existing health facilities, and enable access for vulnerable group such as the elderly, disabled, children, minorities, migrant laborers and remote rural communities.

148 Ibid.
4.2 Women and Children’s health

Afghanistan has some of the highest infant and under-five mortality rates in the world, although both rates have steadily declined since 1960. In 2002 the number of deaths per 1,000 live births was estimated at 165 for infants and 257 for children under five (UNICEF 2004). Considerable investments in the health sector since 2003 has contributed to reductions in both mortality rates: the under-five mortality rate dropped 26 percent and the infant mortality rate dropped 22 percent between 2003 and 2006. At present the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target for Afghanistan is to reduce the infant mortality rate to 82 per 1,000 live births and the under-five mortality rate to 128 deaths per 1,000 live births by 2015. If these targets are to be achieved, Afghanistan needs to register the progress at a higher rate than it did between 2003, 2006 and 2009. Infant mortality rate is in every 1,000 live births, under-five child mortality rate is 191 in every 1,000 live births and maternal mortality rate are 1,800 in every 100,000 live births, placing Afghanistan with the second highest maternal mortality rate in the world just after Sierra Leone. Though efforts to raise parental awareness on child bearing and rearing have greatly contributed to the fall of under-five child mortality rate, the existing child mortality level is unacceptable.\footnote{http://www.aihrc.org.af/2010_eng/Eng_pages/Reports/Annual/Annual2009.pdf} Under-five mortality rate in Afghanistan is caused by infectious factors and diarrhea, acute respiratory infections, and vaccine-preventable diseases account for around 60% of mortality cases. HRFM data indicates that over 62% of women gave birth to their children without the support of professionally trained health personnel. Of 18 cases recorded by the AIHRC regarding violations of the right to health, 6 cases—roughly one-third—are related to women’s health. One should note that addressing women’s health without considering traditions and customs that
deprive them of access to health services will not yield an effective result. Traditional practices and harmful customs are the main reasons why women are deprived of accessing health services, while 40% of basic health facilities lack female staff members.\textsuperscript{151}

Interviews with 6,675 children as part of HRFM indicate that 16.9% of these children do not use hospitals, clinics, and other health facilities when they fall ill. The most significant reasons were long distance (43.9%), lack of medicine (13.2%), lack of women personnel (3.7%), and expensive services (8.8%)\textsuperscript{130}. This is while pursuant to the Afghanistan Compact, primary healthcare should cover 90% of Afghanistan’s population by 2010, all under-five children should be vaccinated, and child mortality rate should drop by 20%.

Reduction in child and maternal mortality rate is an indicator of improvement in the delivery of health services. The majority of interviewees said that there was no doctor or birth attendant available to assist the delivery of their last child. HRFM found out that 50% of interviewees were assisted by their relatives and friends during the delivery of their last child.\textsuperscript{152} Around 15.4% of interviewees said doctors or nurses assisted the delivery of their last child, 14% said that traditional birth attendants or educated birth attendants assisted the delivery of their last child. Similarly, 9.1% of interviewees stated that there was no one to help them when their last child was being born. The following

According to the annual report of MoPH, in the year 1387 (2008/09), there was an increase of around 5% in the number of trained birth attendants, who offered about 31% of birth-related services. 131 This figure is comparatively different from HRFM findings, for HRFM data shows that only 14% of interviewees were assisted by trained birth attendants during the delivery of their last child.

MoPH has considered two standards—distance and population—for building hospitals and clinics, which are rational and logical. But practice shows that the standard of distance has, to some extent, not been considered for the construction of health centers, because HRFM data indicates that about 50% of those who do not use state- or NGO-run health centers gave physical accessibility as the reason. To some degree, the Ministry has been successful in the construction of health centers. Of 312 planned clinics, 291 have

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153 Ibid.
been built and in addition, 54 mobile clinics have been established in 1387 (2008/09). Vaccination campaigns have also yielded successes, despite growing insecurity. Approximately four nationwide campaigns were launched to eradicate polio with each campaign targeting 7.5 million under-five children. Additionally, vitamin A capsule vaccination was launched targeting 6.8 million children aged between six months and five years. It is noteworthy that this program was relatively implemented in insecure areas like Kandahar and Helmand.155

4.2.1 Maternal Health

The maternal mortality ratio is extremely high in Afghanistan: the most recent data show 1,800 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births (WHO 2007). Given the expansion and the utilization of maternal and child health services it has increased significantly in Afghanistan, albeit not uniformly across the country. Utilization is positively correlated with wealth status. It is much more difficult for the poor to get to the health facility; distance is a significant obstacle to seeking care. There is evidence that health facilities tend to be located closer to better-off households and farther from poor households.156 Comparing travel time to the nearest health facility using household’s routine mode of transportation, 13.5 percent of the poorest households live within two hours of household in the wealthiest quintile. Furthermore, 54.3 percent of households in the poorest quintile live more than six hours from a health facility, compared with only 3.8 percent of households in the wealthiest quintile.157

157 Ibid.
4.2.2 Immunization and distance:

A massive vaccination program led to a marked reduction in confirmed polio cases. A measles mortality reduction campaign was conducted and reached more than 90 percent of children six months to 12 years of age, and iodized salt has been provided to 300,000 malnourished women and children.\footnote{http://www.moph.gov.af/en/reports/HNSS-Report-ENG-v4-1.pdf} Despite the impressive economic recovery and initiation of a development strategy based on sound principles (outlined in the Government’s National Development Framework), Afghanistan still ranks very poorly on all social indicators. Based on a 2003 NDF sample survey, infant mortality at 115 per thousand live births and under-five mortality at 172 per thousand live births are among the highest in the world. The situation is particularly grim in rural areas where one out of five children dies before reaching five years of age. The estimated rate of maternal mortality (1,600 per 100,000 live births) is among the highest in the world. Nine out of ten births are not taking place in health facilities, and the corresponding figure is even higher in rural areas. Family planning is largely non-existent. Morbidity rates are extremely high: 30 percent of children under five years of age were reported to have diarrhea during the two-week period that preceded the survey and 19% to have suffered from severe respiratory diseases over the same period. Malnutrition is also a critical issue. Seventy percent of children do not receive timely complementary feeding (which could damage their physical and learning capacity). Children living further from a health facility have lower immunization rates than other children. For example, the immunization rates for BCG (Bacillus Calmette-Guerin) among children who live more
than four hours from a health facility is only 60 percent of that of children who live less than two hours from a facility.\textsuperscript{159}

4.2.3 Reproductive health care and distance:

Care seeking for reproductive health is low in Afghanistan there is more than a 25 percentage point drop in the utilization of skilled birth attendance for women who live more than six hours from a health facility compared with women who live within two hours of a facility. Less than 5 percent of women giving birth who live more than six hours from a health facility have a skilled birth attendant. The relationship between distance to a health care facility and maternal care is reflected in maternal mortality ratios, which are extremely high in remote and rural areas. Rural areas, especially remote ones, have a double problem: rural facilities are less likely to have skilled female health workers, and women who live in remote areas have more difficulty accessing health facilities.

4.3 The right to Food:

The right to food means assurance that all people have dignified access to the food they need. States should increasingly employ their resources to reduce levels of hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition. This right comprises four elements, which include availability, accessibility, adequacy, and sustainability. The concept of food availability means that food should be provided either directly from production or through distribution, processing, and market system. This right requires that food should be both

\textsuperscript{159} \url{http://www.aihrc.org.af/2010_eng/Eng_pages/Reports/Annual/Annual2009.pdf}
physically and economically accessible, meaning that citizens should be able to easily access the food they need. On the other hand, the available food should have quality so that it can meet food needs and that food should be safe and culturally acceptable to all, with due consideration to their personal status, age, living conditions, job, and gender. This food should be available not only for the current generation, but for the generations to come also. The right to food requires the government to help their citizens provide their food needs by creating a favorable economic, political, and social environment. Inadequate economic activity is not the only reason for hunger and malnutrition, but these issues in Afghanistan depend on the ability of farmers to produce adequate food and on the access of people to livelihood options. In some cases, farms have good agricultural produce; the major problems could be solved if people can have access to food. This right is also related to Millennium Development Goal 1, eradication of extreme poverty and hunger.

4.3.1 Lack of economic power causes malnutrition

Unfortunately, a dilemma the Afghanis face is the lack of economic power to purchase food items. Food items are available in most Afghan markets, but people do not have the necessary income to purchase their food in markets. This, of course, varies geographically. For example, in Central Highlands and Northeast, people not only lack economic power to purchase food items, but they also cannot physically access food items in these areas, because there is a limited quantity of food items there. Food security is a good indicator for poverty in Afghanistan, because food-insecure families were unable to provide themselves with adequate and nutritious food. HRFM data shows that
the majority of interviewees regard the creation of job opportunities as their top priority, followed by drinking water and food. As previously noted, employment and job opportunities fully depend on income levels and income too can be an indicator of poverty. HRFM findings reveal that 36% of all interviewees and 63.6% of those who work make a daily income of less than 50 Afghanis (approximately equivalent to US$1), 19.2% make a daily income of over 50 Afghanis, and 44.8% either did not work or they were unwilling to answer this question, for their income may be illegal or they may have no income at all. Some 37% of vulnerable people made an income of less than 50 Afghanis per day and 22% made an income of over 50 Afghanis per day in the past year, which refers to a 1% decrease in the number of people who make less than 50 Afghanis per day, but in contrast there is a 3% decrease in the number of people who make a daily income of over 50 Afghanis. Most importantly, there is a 3.8% increase in the number of people who did not answer this question or were unemployed. These indicate that poverty is spreading in Afghanistan and people’s income levels have been on the decline.

It is difficult to determine other indicators of poverty given the lack of systematic data. Government official statistics say that 44% of Afghan families are food-insecure. As previously noted, about 35% of families cannot provide their daily caloric needs and 61% of families have poor-quality food, taking into account the diversity of the food they eat. FAO study on the situation of nutrition found out that over 6% of children

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161 Ibid.
163 Ibid.
164 Ibid.
under the age of five suffer from acute malnutrition (low ratio of weight to height) and 45-60% of children in the same age group suffer from chronic malnutrition (low ratio of weight to height). However, FAO data shows that there has been improvement in the situation of children with chronic malnutrition compared with previous years and that the percentage has fallen from 60 to 50%.

4.3.2 Other indicators of poverty:

During Human rights Field Monitoring interviews, the two main indicators used were the type of household income and the level of indebtedness amongst the families interviewed. Additional factors relating to reintegration of refugees and ongoing displacement can contribute to an understanding of the situation of the right to an adequate standard of living and have therefore been included in this analysis. The main sources of income amongst interviewees were identified as farm labor (31.8%), with only 13.5% of interviewees reporting a stable source of income. These results are consistent with the finding of the 2005 Millennium Development Goal Report.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Family Income</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>5%</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>15%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>25%</th>
<th>30%</th>
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<tr>
<td>Farm Labour</td>
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<td>31.8%</td>
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<td>Unstable Income</td>
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<td>19.0%</td>
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<td>Stable Employed</td>
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<td>9.1%</td>
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<td>Daily Wage Skilled</td>
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<td>4.8%</td>
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<td>Stable Self-Employed</td>
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<td>4.4%</td>
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<td>Begging/Charity</td>
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<td>2.2%</td>
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166 Ibid
167 Ibid.
It is insufficient to define poverty on the basis of a single quantitative indicator. A thorough understanding of the nature of poverty and who the poor in Afghanistan are, should precede the finalization of any development strategy. The findings of this FAO and HRFM must be considered for a more qualitative definition of poverty and should guide the development of indicators in order to accurately monitor the impact of the ANDS on the poor and marginalized.168

4.4 The Right to water

The right to water crucially essential for Afghanistan development

The Afghani people need to have access to adequate, high-quality, and acceptable water to lead a life of health and dignity. Water sources should be adequately and continuously available for a person for such purposes as drinking, personal hygiene, washing, cooking, and family hygiene. Quality of water is also important and water should be free of any types of pollution and other dangers that threaten the health of people. In addition, water should be adequate and compatible with World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines. Above all, water services and facilities should be made accessible for all, including the poorest and most isolated groups of people.169 The Afghan government has pledged under ANDS to reduce by half the ratio of people with no access to healthy potable water by 2020; 50% of families in Kabul and 30% of families in other urban areas shall have access to tap water by 2012; 90% of people in villages shall have access to drinking water; and 50% of people shall have access to sanitation in villages.

168 Economic and Social Rights in Afghanistan, p. 3
Water supply projects are ongoing in the 34 provincial capital cities. The Directorate of Water Supply of Afghanistan, responsible for urban water supply, has been able to provide healthy water.\(^\text{170}\) Even though their report exhibits that a majority of interviewees do not have access to safe drinking water. In the National Development Strategy, the government should make reference to international guidelines on quality and accessibility of water\(^\text{171}\) in order to define indicator and monitor progress, and it should prioritize access to safe drinking water in both rural and urban areas. The Commission urges the Government to take all necessary steps for consultation with relevant institutions in the drafting of the new legislation on water, with a view to ensuring that the law incorporates a rights-based approach to water regulation.

Afghanistan Directorate Water supply have noted that an average 30% of urban wellers produced 15,000 cubic meters of healthy water per day in Kabul and around 30,000 at the national level, but it has now raised this to the level of 120,000 cubic meters of healthy water.\(^\text{172}\) Previously 65 to 70% of produced healthy water was wasted due to a limited water supply grid. Data indicates that the Directorate currently has the capacity to produce 160,000 cubic meters of healthy water.

According to an assessment by the Directorate of Water Supply, of all provinces, Herat (95%) has the highest level of access to healthy water and Kandahar and Mazar-e-Sharif have the lowest levels (less than 16%). Kabul has the gravest problem in ensuring

\(^\text{170}\) [http://www.mrrd.gov.af/spd/Pillars.htm](http://www.mrrd.gov.af/spd/Pillars.htm)
\(^\text{172}\) Ibid.
the right to water. Given the congestion of population and lack of a sewage system in this city, the absolute majority of underground water sources are contaminated and unsafe. About 70% of interviewees do not have access to healthy water and use wells that are not safely covered. The open sewage system is extremely worrisome as it pollutes water wells. HRFM data shows that 33.7% of people use unhealthy, unclean water.

The Directorate of Water Supply says it needs US$750m to complete an urban water supply grid. Currently, a water supply grid exists in 17 major cities and only 30% of interviewees use tap water. But HRFM data shows that 7.5% of interviewees stand in queue for over an hour to get water. The Head of the Directorate criticized the government and international donors for their inattention to the development of a water supply grid and added that the Directorate faces an inadequate budget and low capacity.

It is difficult to access water in rural areas given the country’s successive droughts. In HRFM, 23.9% of interviewees stated that there are not enough water wells, 4.4% stated that there are repeated water cuts, 3.5% stated that water wells are dry, 2.3% stated that water wells are destroyed, and 4.2% stated that well water is saline.

Rural dwellers are also suffering from the long distance of water sources. According to HRFM, 25.7% of interviewees stated they have to walk over 15 minutes one way to reach a usable water source, 8.0% (967 people) stated they have to walk over an hour one way to reach a usable water source. Although the Water Supply Department

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of Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MoRRD) said it did not have accurate information in this respect, it also added that some people have to traverse a distance of around two hours one way to reach water sources.\textsuperscript{175} In addition, HRFM found out that approximately 62.7\% of interviewees have problems in providing water for family use and 2.3\% stated that they had to buy water.

![Walking Distance to Water Source](image)

Most water sources are open and there is no assurance of their safety. Open water sources are, especially in rural areas, used jointly by humans and animals. HRFM data shows that 20.4\% of water sources are jointly used by humans and animals. The Department of Water Supply, Hygienic Education, and Environmental Sanitation of MoRRD has been able to dig 11,824 wells and 72 water supply grids in villages since (2002/03).\textsuperscript{176} According to the Head of the Department, so far 31\% of rural people have access to healthy potable water and 90\% of rural people are expected to have access to drinking water by 2013. Hygienic and sanitary education is important as most people lack

\textsuperscript{175} \url{http://www.mrrd.gov.af/aredp/}

\textsuperscript{176} \url{http://www.mrrd.gov.af/aredp/}
such an education. The aforesaid department has been able to present awareness-raising program to only 1.4 million people since (2002/03), while Afghanistan is second after Sudan to have the highest number of cases of water-borne diarrhea.

Water supply projects are administered by MoRRD and executed by the private sector. According to MoRRD’s Department of Water Supply, Hygienic Education, and Environment Sanitation, insecurity, lack of coordination, a weak private sector, and long bureaucratic procedures are the main challenges facing the development of the country’s water supply grid. Successive droughts have rendered many water wells built by the Directorate and other institutions dry and unusable. The Directorate said that assessment has begun, but it estimates that almost 30% of water wells have gone dry. ①①

5. Development: Situation Analysis

Afghanistan had made progress since December 2001 in the aftermath of a generation of conflict that left the country devastated, but recent upsurge in violence has stalled and in some areas reversed progress. While the gross domestic product has grown steadily, to $12,850 million in 2008, the 24 per cent inflation rate places an increasing burden on the poor. Growing insecurity and the recurrence of violence affect service

delivery, accessibility, and private-sector development and employment, and causes population displacement. Anti-government elements, combined with factional, tribal and community conflicts, all contribute to instability. Weak rule of law, corruption, narco-trafficking and an inability to protect the civilian population in many areas, and their basic human rights remain a major cause for concern. The most affected tend to be the poor and vulnerable, particularly the women. With a female literacy rate of a mere 14 per cent, Afghan women face formidable challenges. Gender based violence is very high and access to justice as well as livelihood opportunities is severely limited for women. At the same time, humanitarian space is being squeezed, with over 30 per cent of the territory inaccessible to UN, implementing partners and even Government service providers. Humanitarian aid is being increasingly met by military based actors causing confusion in perception in the minds of the people.

The human development indicator for Afghanistan is not available, but other indicators depict the challenge: a 42.9-year life expectancy (2005 data). The under-five mortality rate – 191 per 1,000 live births – shows modest improvement, as does the infant mortality rate, down to 129 per 1,000 live births, but both are among the highest in the world. While the adult literacy rate is 28 per cent – one of the lowest in the world – primary completion rates are gradually improving (from 25 per cent to 38 per cent since 2005). The most significant improvement has been witnessed in the maternal mortality rate, cut in half from a staggering 1,600 to 800 per 100,000 births over the past few years. In critical Millennium Development Goals, such as extreme poverty and hunger, the trend is regressing: 42 per cent of population lives below the poverty line, as compared to 33
per cent in 2005. The poorest now comprises 10.5 percent of the population, as compared to 9.3 per cent in 2005, and 39 per cent of the population receive less than the minimum level of dietary energy consumption, compared to 30 per cent in 2005. Despite the efforts of the international community and the enormous resources invested, human development is showing improvement only in the health and education indicators.

The private sector and civil society are fragile, though economic growth is stable. In 2008, 89 per cent of the total national budget was funded from external sources. While the development budget is still funded entirely by international donors, only 40 per cent of the operational budget is mobilized locally. This underlines the need for the international community to remain engaged in supporting Afghanistan. The international community, increasingly coordinated by the United Nations, serves as an important pillar of support to the Afghan people in this transition.

Significant challenges remain. Overall, the analysis shows that security, governance and human development challenges are inextricably linked, and long-term investments targeting the poorest will be required to ensure that the human development trajectory of the country is in the right direction. The Afghanistan national development strategy has been formulated and adopted. It projects “a vision of a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan, based on the principles of Islam, outlining the priorities of the Government in terms of security, governance, development and humanitarian
domains". The Government, in consultation with the international community, has developed a strategic plan for its implementation and is moving forward with it.

6. Past cooperation and lessons learned

Since early 2002 the UNDP program in Afghanistan has supported stabilization, state-building, governance and development, so far disbursing in the region of $1.5 billion. UNDP support, in partnership with the government, the United Nations system, the donor community and other development stakeholders, has contributed to the emergency Loya Jirga; adoption of the Constitution; presidential, parliamentary and provincial council elections; institutional development through capacity-building to the legislature, the judicial and executive arms of the state, and key ministries, government agencies and commissions at the national and sub national levels. UNDP has played a key role in the management of the Law and Order Trust Fund, which supports the Government in developing and maintaining the national police force and in efforts to stabilize the internal security environment. Like many other strategic UNDP programs in Afghanistan, the Trust Fund has benefited, and continues to benefit, from the very active support of donors. Major demobilization, disarmament and rehabilitation and area-based livelihoods and reconstruction programs have taken place nationwide. UNDP also supported the formulation of the first ever, Millennium Development Goals-based Afghanistan national development strategy, and the Government is institutionalizing and promoting its implementation.

The new country program builds on the lessons from the assessment of development results for the period 2002-2007, which was recently completed by the UNDP Evaluation Office. The assessment pointed to the need for UNDP to strengthen its coherence and provide more substantive programs in the next phase of assistance, building on the new direction adopted in 2005. It recommended that UNDP adopt a more direct presence outside Kabul to enhance the outreach of its programs to ordinary Afghans. While this has to be balanced with security concerns, it is a key objective in this new country program, as an emphasis on secure provinces in the past cycle undermined development for large segments of the population. UNDP invested heavily in central institutional development; however, the positive impact of the lives of Afghans was limited, and more must be done to improve state-society relationships, trust and confidence. To strengthen accountability, the assessment recommended improved reporting of development results from interventions and better integration of UNDP programs and coordination with UNAMA and the United Nations system as a whole. It noted that the donor practice of paying government salaries and supplements and creating externally funded implementation units affected sustainability.

The new country program takes these lessons and recommendations into account and will build on the foundations laid during the last cycle. It will focus on institution-building and will support ongoing efforts to systematically build capacities within the government and civil society and to deepen the functioning of transparent and accountable democratic governance. Emphasis will be increasingly placed on sub-
national governance, a pro-poor private sector, and livelihood development programs aimed towards the most vulnerable groups.\textsuperscript{179}

\textbf{VI Summary and Conclusion}

In this research I intended to identify the impediments of development and state building and how to overcome the development and stability roadblocks that Afghanistan faces today. The failures and successes of Afghanistan’s development argued in this paper could be summarized as such; the economic activity in Afghanistan turned to double-digit growth rates in 2007 as a consequence of both a recovering in the agriculture sector and after the 2006 drought and a large demand impulse based on donor financed spending and drug money. Growth in the medium and long term is expected to decline, and will depend on improvement on governance and a successful integration into the world economy. Private sector investment has still not recuperated from peak levels in 2005. Pressured to increase revenues, the government is taking the wrong steps by overtaxing the formal sector (while offering no public goods in exchange) and increasing tax uncertainty especially to large taxpayers, instead of broadening the tax structure by means of increasing investment and formalizing part of the legal but informal economy.

We then moved to define a proper definition that suits Afghanistan’s development. In the case of Afghanistan, development consists of citizens having economic and social rights in their homeland. The government should do more than just acknowledge that the human rights obligations in the international treaties to which Afghanistan is a state party are an applicable legal framework for its National

\textsuperscript{179} \url{www.undp.org.af/Publications/__2010__/UNDPAFG_CPD_2010-2013.pdf}
Development Strategy and that the strategy must not be in violation of these obligations. The government needs to explicitly recognize that the National Development Strategy is a step towards the full realization of rights recognized in international human rights instruments. Further, we discussed and analyzed the economic reconstruction and public health context in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2010. The country has very low quantity and a poor quality of human capital, however, there is no evidence this is a constraining factor for the private sector at the present time. In addition to this, geographical challenges, including being landlocked and the challenges that are imposed for Afghan exports, as they must transit into neighboring countries, add to the list of constraining issues. Geography combined with the lack of adequate infrastructure in particular related to the agribusiness (transportation, irrigation, value-chain links) and other potentially exporting sectors, appear to be the second most binding constraint to economic activity, and it is the most important challenge for the country in the long-term perspective.

Afghanistan still today has a basic agricultural and manufacturing infrastructure that was destroyed and has not fully recuperated; economic and political institutions have been weakened; and the domestic and international markets for Afghanistan’s food supplies, livestock, and manufactured good have been disrupted or lost. Ethnic and regional tensions plague a fragmented society, and human capital has deteriorated from years of interrupted health and education and training, and from the steady decline in health and social services.

Afghanistan’s Health sector has made the most progress. But with the health sector growth and the market share recovery, these elements of growth suggest that there is still a possibility to overcome the infrastructure limitation. In order to overcome these
limitations, Afghanistan’s government must implement the rule of law on its state.

According to the Human Development Index, Afghanistan is the second least developed country in the world. Goals that Afghanistan must achieve: The National Priority Programs Priority program mentions six initial goals that Afghanistan must reach: (i) to unite Government, donors, the private sector, NGOs, and civil society around national policies; (ii) to create efficiency, accountability, and transparency in public spending; (iii) to enable resources to be allocated for large national programs, as opposed to smaller and less efficient projects; (iv) to enhance the leadership and ownership of Government and Ministries in the reconstruction process; and (v) to enhance provincial equity in national program execution\textsuperscript{180}.

Governance systems in Afghanistan are still weak and state’s authority barely extends beyond the capital. As you’ve read in this research paper these issues are the reason why Afghanistan is so dependent on the aid of donor government, international aid agencies, international organizations and NGOs to help it reach the developmental change beyond the capital in order to create a united growth across the country. These organizations are not to overlook opportunities, repeat mistakes, and ignore threats and complexities, and waste resources.

We then have evaluated potential routes to improve the distorted reconstruction process in Afghanistan, by focusing on critical sociocultural aspects of Afghan society. To start with, the Afghan government and international development agencies must conduct a closer study of what people on the ground actually desire and need, and in what priority they rank those needs. If the Kabul-based government and countless international aid agencies carry on with their own insular notions of what is

\textsuperscript{180} DFID Understanding Afghanistan, Report 2010.
important for Afghanistan’s reconstruction without consulting its heterogeneous peoples, rebuilding the country will be an impossible project—out of touch with the practical needs and desires of people on the ground, and constantly battling a stubborn insurgency that is growing which restricts the reconstruction process. Rather, for a sustainable peace to take root in Afghanistan again, reconstruction agencies must, as a start, substantially increase their knowledge and understanding of the diverse legal cultures and systems of law that operate, de facto, on the ground in Afghanistan. Meanwhile there is an urgent need for outside forces to respect local law that resonates with the lives of its people, however unfamiliar to the foreign eye. Beyond this, the same international forces now controlling reconstruction must relinquish the notions that creating an Afghanistan in a Western secular-liberal society’s self-image, is nearly impossible. The local socio-legal actors on the ground must take into consideration: the responsibility of building stable and self-supporting civil institutions on the foundation of their own unique Afghani local histories and modes of conflict resolution, a substantial portion of which is rooted in Islamic law.

Furthermore, the findings of the UNDP and Afghanistan National Development Strategy, analysis remind us of how fragile the Afghan economy is and that much more should be done in order to put the country on a path for sustainable development. There are severe deficiencies in every aspect covered by the UNDP and ANDS framework, which all indicate that Afghanistan economy has limited access to formal finance (mostly international aid) and most investments are international organization and it needs more help. On the other hand when analyzing the financial market, we can conclude that due to
poor strategic planning and not lack of domestic savings, the state has hard time maintaining a stable economy. Banks are not providing credit to the private sector and limit their activities to basic services focused on urban areas, foreign and donor community. This is in part due to severe property rights and rule enforcement issues.

In order to attain the ideal result, it is important to work towards creating a robust rule of law, practice and atmosphere; doing so is essential if Afghanistan seeks to revive its economy and provide hope and opportunity to its long-battered constituents. Additionally there’s a need to curb corruption of the Karzai Government but also across different spheres, economical political, police and the military. In order to accomplish the goal set by the developmental multinational institutions and the Afghani government itself, Afghanistan needs to work on different levels simultaneously and create structures for cooperation among the various spheres of influence by not only focusing on a hierarchical structure of top to bottom commandeering, but also lateral cooperation among all levels of government and society. In my research I identified the success and failures of Afghanistan’s development and the cause and effect of each success or failure, and drew conclusions of what steps need to be taken in order to plan a better future for Afghanistan.

I was able to show where Afghanistan’s development has flourished, mostly in the health and economic areas, but development has not been able to expand to other areas such as security and human rights, these areas are still very weak and need improvement. Further development depends on security, and how to build stability within Afghanistan. Is that a responsibility that the United Nations or the United States wants to
be in charge of is NATO going to take the lead, or is NATO better off leaving this task to Afghanistan’s neighboring states, for the region to settle its own issues independently? Ultimately, Afghanistan’s history would teach us, however, that this is not the first time foreign powers underestimated the resilience of indigenous people in this war-torn country. The challenges in the future remains as to whether future U.S. administrations, global development agencies, and other international actors will heed such lessons in time to prevent a repeat of the past’s catastrophic chain of events. Among many some policy recommendation that most growth strategy organizations make are: most urgent reforms in Afghanistan should focus the energy and political and human capital, and donors support in both technical capacity and funding on (i) further reforming the tax collection process and agents, and reducing the “nuisance” taxes and multiplicity of fees; (ii) addressing the widespread corruption, (iii) focusing investments in infrastructure projects directly related to increase competitiveness in the tradable sector, and (iv) securing trade facilitation and transit rights in the region to effectively exploit the regional and world market\textsuperscript{181}.

To these 4 major points, it is also crucial to work toward creating a robust practice of the rule of law, creating security and focusing on effective development strategies. Doing so is essential if Afghanistan seeks to revive its economy and provide hope and opportunity to its long-battered constituents. In order to accomplish the goal set by multinational institutions, NGOs and the Afghani government, coordination and cooperation must be done on multiple levels between these entities and one coordination entity must be formed that will be responsible and accountable for development.

\textsuperscript{181} DFID Understanding Afghanistan, Report 2010
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