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Win, Hold, Fold, or Run?
Afghanistan in the Spring of 2019

Annual U.S./NATO Afghanistan Assessment Community of Interest (COI) Workshop

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Burke Chair In Strategy

Picture: JOHN D MCHUGH/AFP/Getty Images

Introduction

The war in Afghanistan is at a critical stage. After some eighteen years of conflict, the United States has still not come firmly to grips with the need to properly assess the tactics and gains Taliban and other threats in Afghanistan, the potential ability of the Afghan government to overcome its many critical limitations, and how to choose and actually implement some form of a consistent U.S. strategy in Afghanistan.

This study presents a survey of open source metrics and data on the situation in Afghanistan in the spring of 2019. It focuses on the areas where it is possible to map and quantify current developments – recognizing that such indicators can only cover part of the complex issues involved. It does, however, present material that helps address three key challenges shaping Afghanistan's future:

- The need to address all of the key threats involved in the war – including those generated by the Afghan government and U.S. actions.
- The fact that the U.S. now seems to be on the edge of making hard choices about staying, seeking a peace, or finding ways to withdraw even if a peace is not reached.
- A long list of critical uncertainties, only some of which can be addressed with any confidence.

The U.S. currently is pursuing a peace settlement that so far excludes any formal participation by the Afghan government that the U.S is in Afghanistan to aid. Its FY2020 budget request does not call for major change in the U.S. posture in Afghanistan, but press reports indicate that the U.S. is considering 50% cuts in its Embassy staff and would like to make major cuts in its military forces and effort.

The Afghan government has made its own attempts to define a peace settlement, but remains deeply divided and faces a Presidential election in September 2019 that raises serious questions about Afghanistan's future leadership and unity. Afghan security forces are making progress in some areas, but no reliable open source data is available on many aspects of Afghan capacity and no reliable estimate exists of government control and influence over given Districts and the Afghan population. Afghan progress in improving governance and the living standards of the Afghan people seems to be grindingly slow at best, and Afghan ability to meet U.S. demands for improve security forces, governance, and economic progress remains unclear.

At this point, the metrics and data in this study indicate that the war seems to be a stalemate, but one that at least marginally favors the Taliban -- in spite of massive ongoing U.S. air, financial, and advisory support. This study also indicates, however, that open source reporting on the fighting is highly controversial – to the point where the U.S-led command seems to be cancelling reporting on Afghan government vs. Taliban control and influence and no longer reports on many aspects of ANSF operational capabilities. The summary data and metrics in this study can only provide a partial summary picture of these issues, but the excerpts from SIGAR reporting are particularly revealing.

It still clear, however, that the Afghan government cannot survive without billions of dollars in annual financial aid from outside powers like the U.S. It is equally clear that it would suffer unacceptable military losses if the U.S. did not continue to provide massive amounts of air support and if the U.S. and its allies did not provide substantial train and assist help to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and direct land force support to Afghan Special Security Forces and other elite units. Afghan forces may be making progress, but serious questions emerge as to whether they would (or could) stand on their own without outside support for something like the next half-decade.

The study does not examine the politics of Afghanistan or the current peace efforts in detail. These issues have become too topical and volatile. It does, however, present metrics that show that while Afghanistan continues to pursue reform in many civil areas, but its success is questionable at best. Sources like the World Bank, the United Nations, and the U.S. Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction show just how badly governed and corrupt the country still is. They show, how serious the challenges it faces in terms of poverty and development still are, and its growing dependence on on a narco-economy.

And finally, the metrics show that a deeply divided population is growing at a rate its economy cannot properly support and that it faces critical challenges in employing its youth even if it can achieve some meaningful form of peace, unity, and development.

These civil problems are so critical that they raise serious questions as to whether the country can either create a peace the bring true stability and security, or emerge out of its coming election with a successful enough government to either continue the fight or manage a peace. Afghanistan's civil threats are as serious as its security threats.

Table of Contents

- **Key Challenges** **4**
- **The Changing U.S. Role** **10**
- **NATO, Resolute Support, and International Aid** **25**
- **Afghan Force Development** **30**
- **Military Balance, Patterns of Combat Activity, and Levels of Control and Influence** **45**
- **Casualty Trends** **63**
- **Terrorism in Afghanistan: Uncertain to Dubious Reporting** **73**
- **Afghan Perceptions** **79**
- **Narcotics** **86**
- **The Civil Threat and Causes of Instability – Governance and Corruption** **94**
- **The Civil Threat and Causes of Instability – Economic and Poverty** **103**
- **The Civil Threat and Causes of Instability – Demographic Pressures and the Youth Bulge** **118**

Key Challenges

Key Challenges

After eighteen years of war, the United States has still failed to come to grips with at least two of its three major threats in Afghanistan. The first is the importance of the civil side of the war. The U.S. has not faced the the fact that the weaknesses of the Afghan government, the divisions within the Afghanistan population, and Afghanistan's structural problems in governance, economics, and demographics are as serious a threat to any lasting form of stability and victory as the Taliban.

It also has not faced the fact that America's constant changes in strategy, it erratic civil and military aid programs and funding, its lack of any coherent approach to nation building, and its fluctuating military posture pose an equal threat to success.

The U.S. now faces a long list of major uncertainties, none of which it has properly addressed:

- Peace Process vs. War By Other Means
- Taliban Intentions: Victory/Exhaustion/Peace
- U.S. and Allied Intentions: Stay/Leave/Conditional/Equivocate/Cut
- Afghan Intentions: Power/Fight/Negotiate/Divide
- Tactical Situation – Control, Influence, Stalemate
- ANSF and Other Afghan Security Forces
- Afghan Political Stability, Election, Fragmentation and "Kabulstan"
- Civil Stability: Governance, Economic, Population
- Neighbors: Pakistan, Iran China, Russia, Iran, Central Asia
- Impact of War of Attrition, Chance of Implosion
- Impact of NATO-ISAF/US Withdrawal
- Strategic Value of Afghanistan and War: Cost-Benefits of Treating as a "Sunk Cost"

To the extent U.S. has succeeded in the war, it has been largely in making major reductions in the size of the in-country U.S. land force effort, and in the annual cost of the war in casualties and dollars. It has done so largely by increasing its use of airpower, and developing a new mix of manned and unmanned targeting and precision strike capabilities, while providing training, equipment, and sustainment support to Afghan forces, and a limited number of specialized combat forces to support Afghan elite National Security forces. This has so far given the Afghan government the capability to hold heavily populated areas. At the same time, the U.S. has largely abandoned serious efforts at nation building, and to shape the future of Afghan politics, governance, economics and civil society even though a divided Afghan government has been in a series of crises that seem to have with no predictable end.

The metrics in this study suggest that the war has become a faltering stalemate where the Taliban and other threat forces now seem to have a marginal advantage. They also seem to indicate that the the U.S. is replacing a "conditions-based aid" strategy that it implemented a little over a year ago, but never fully implemented, with a "peace" strategy that borders on becoming a "conditions based withdrawal."

Current U.S. military and civil aid programs, America's current military and diplomatic posture, and the President FY2020 budget request still call for a continued levels of US financial commitment and civil-military presence in Afghanistan. However, some senior U.S. policy makers no longer seem to support an "open-ended" war, and many members of Congress have begun to question U.S. strategy and there have been growing demands for peace negotiations and finding some end to the war.

This lack of policy-level, political, and public support may explain why later sections of this study show the U.S. has become unwilling to provide official open source assessments of the relative success of the Afghan government and Taliban in controlling and influencing the Afghan population and given Districts in the country. It may also explain why the U.S. seems to be seeking a peace with the Taliban that would lead to full U.S. withdrawal in one and one-half years.

So far, U.S. policymakers have not publically addressed the probable consequences of a peace settlement and/or U.S. withdrawal for the country, the region, or broader U.S. strategic interests. It is clear, however, that the risks are serious. Where Clausewitz one described war as an "extension of politics by other means," the U.S. may be seeking "peace as an extension" of war by other means, and as a way of declaring some kind of victory and leaving. Beyond that, it is unclear that the U.S. has any longer-term strategy for either Afghanistan -- or the region -- than one of fighting an indefinite war of attrition.

Counterinsurgency: The Real Nature of the Threat

The Three Primary Threats that Always Dominate the War

- **The overt enemy: The insurgents, extremists, terrorists**
- **The host country government or "partner" whose divisions, corruption, and failures create and sustain the threat**
- **U.S. ignorance of the host country and its neighbors, efforts to transform in its own image, erratic programs and strategies, rapid rotations, and unwillingness to face the challenges and complexity of creating lasting *civil-military* outcomes.**

Optional Elements

- **Outside powers and sanctuaries.**
- **Governance, economic, corruption, demographic, ethnic and sectarian problems within the host country.**
- **Failure to control costs, casualties, and duration.**

Six Options: Afghan Peace or Afghanistan in Pieces?

1. **Peace agreement: Rapid U.S. and allied withdrawal, aid cuts**
2. **Peace agreement: U.S. provides military support, sustained aid.**
3. **U.S. withdrawal: Rapid U.S. and allied withdrawal, aid cuts**
4. **U.S. withdrawal: U.S. provides military support, sustained aid.**
5. **U.S. stays: Open ended war of attrition**
6. **U.S. Stays: Afghanistan election creates successful governance. Afghan forces take over over time and win war of attrition. Aid is conditional and Afghan economic development succeed in Afghan terms**

Key Uncertainties

- Peace Process vs. War By Other Means
- Taliban Intentions: Victory/Exhaustion/Peace
- U.S. and Allied Intentions: Stay/Leave/Conditional/Equivocate/Cut
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The Changing U.S. Role

The Changing U.S. Role

The metrics in this section describe an awkward mix of success and failure – one documented in far more narrative detail in the reports of the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) and the Lead Inspector General for Oversea Contingency Operations (LIG):

- The United States has reduced its military casualties to minimal levels – trends matched by its outside allies. The situation is reverse, however, in the case of Afghan forces. Although Resolute Support does not publish casualty statistics for U.S. or Non-US NATO and other outside forces, the level of Afghan military and police casualties has risen so sharply that it is classified by the Afghan government. President Ghani mentioned an unsupported figure of 28,000 dead since he became President in 2014 in early 2018, and and then 47,000 dead on January 25, 2019. No one has issued an official open source estimate of the number of wounded and injured.
- The U.S. has still not provided real transparency as to the the cost of the Afghan War, but recent metrics indicate that the total cost of warfighting and development/reconstruction has dropped from an annual peak of $112 billion – which may have included substantial money actually spent on Baseline and other programs -- to a planned total of $7 billion in FY2019. (The FY2019 total may not include the cost of air operations based outside Afghanistan and the full cost of supporting Afghan counterterrorism forces.)
- The US spent $133 billion on military and civil aid to Afghanistan between FY2002 and FY2019 – 63% of which was military aid. The cost of that aid dropped from $14.7 billon in FY2015 to $5.2 billion in FY2019.
- The annual funding and force level profiles of U.S. military and civil aid from FY2002 to the present have been incredibly erratic. They rose far too slowly from 2002 to 2008 to react to a reemerging threat, then received virtual flood of aid that peaked sharply in FY2011, and the fell precipitously in the years than followed. Funding levels were so turbulent, and tied to so many changes in program content, that vast amounts of money had to be wasted – problems compounded by what both General H.R. Macmaster and SIGAR found to be a gross lack of effective contract and execution management and massive corruption.
- The proposed FY2020 program is little more than an extension of the FY2019 program, once the changes in cost definition are examined. It does not track with either Presidential policy statements or the ongoing U.S. peace initiative.
- Official reporting on U.S. military and civil personnel levels is highly suspect, and seems to omit substantial numbers of temporary duty and other personnel. The military total has dropped from a peak over over 100,000 in 2011, however, to some 12,000 military in FY2019 – with as goal of 15,000 in FY2020. This does not include some 29,400 contractors in 2019, 11,600 of which were U.S. citizens and many of which were performing roles played by uniformed U.S. military in past wars.
- Press reports indicate that the US Embassy in Kabul – an embassy that became one of the largest the world -- is now going to be reshaped by plans to cut personnel by some 50% in April 2019.
- The U.S. military role shifted sharply from reliance on U.S. land combat forces to using airpower to support Afghan land forces after 2014. AFCENT data show that the U.S. flew 1,408 strike sorties in 2013 vs. 966 in 2018 – a drop of 48% in manned sorties releasing munitions. However, once unmanned aircraft are included, the U.S. dropped 7,362 munitions in 2018, versus 2,758 munitions in 2013 (+166% in 2018), only 947 in 2015 (+667% in 2018), and 4,361 in 2017 (+59% in 2018).

US Casualty Data as of April 30, 2019

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM U.S. CASUALTY STATUS [3, 4]					
OEF U.S. Military Casualties	Total Deaths	KIA	Non-Hostile	Pending	WIA
Afghanistan Only [3]	2,216	1,833	383	0	20,057
Other Locations [4]	131	11	120	0	39
OEF U.S. DOD Civilian Casualties	4	2	2	0	
Worldwide Total	**2,351**	**1,846**	**505**	**0**	**20,096**

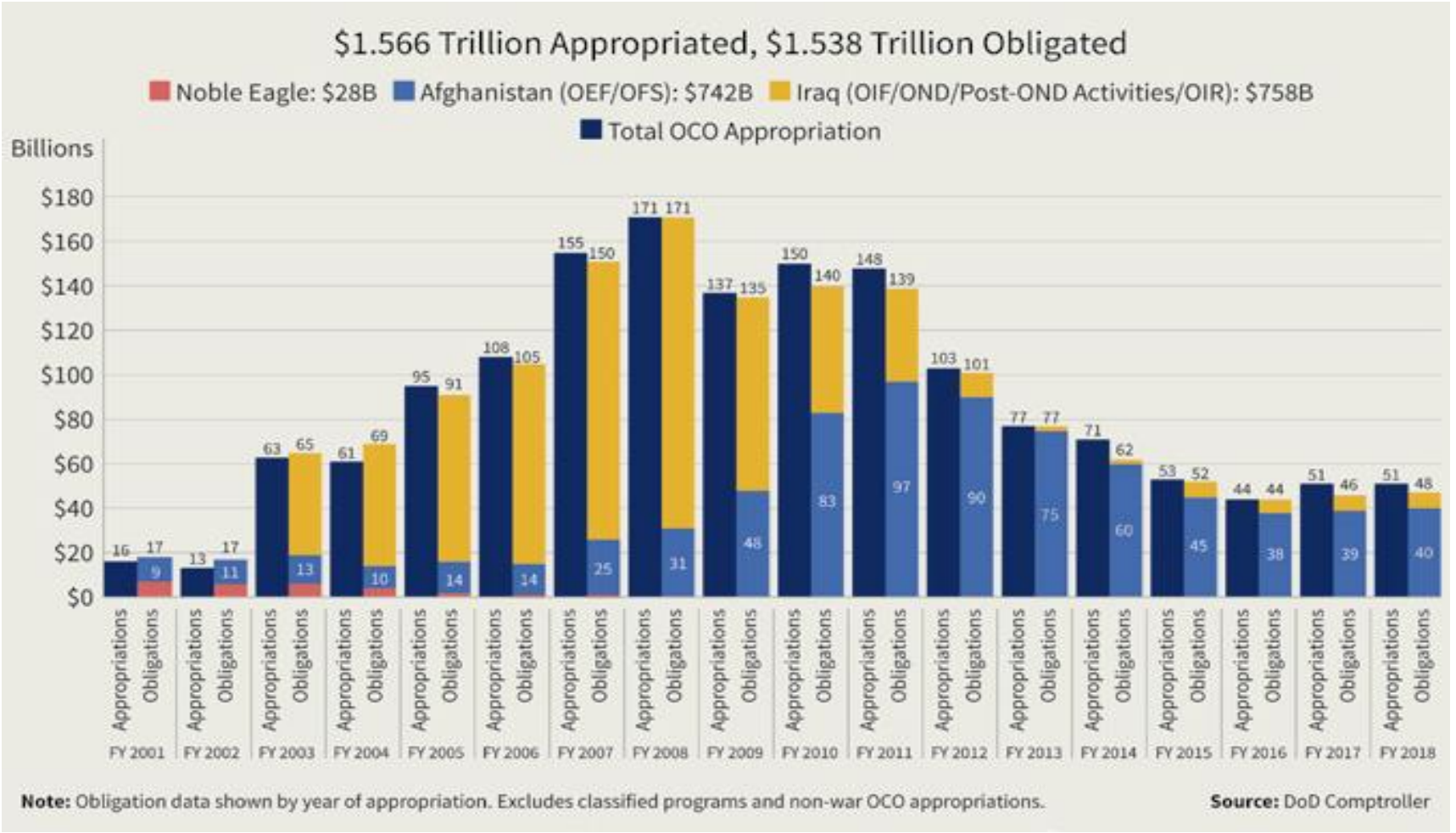
[3] OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (Afghanistan only) includes casualties that occurred between Oct. 7, 2001, and Dec. 31, 2014, in Afghanistan only.
[4] OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (Other Locations), includes casualties that occurred between Oct. 7, 2001, and Dec. 31, 2014, in Guantanamo Bay (Cuba), Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Philippines, Seychelles, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan and Yemen. Wounded in action cases in this category include those without a casualty country listed.

OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL U.S. CASUALTY STATUS [6]					
	Total Deaths	KIA	Non-Hostile	Pending	WIA
OFS U.S. Military Casualties	68	50	18	0	392
OFS U.S. DOD Civilian Casualties	2	2	0	0	
Totals	**70**	**52**	**18**	**0**	**392**

[6] OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL includes casualties that occurred in Afghanistan after Dec. 31, 2014.

Source: Department of Defense, https://dod.defense.gov/News/Casualty-Status/

Costing the Wars: Afghanistan vs. The Rest: OSD Comptroller



In December, the DoD Comptroller released the DoD's congressionally-mandated quarterly *Cost of War* report, which details the DoD's spending on overseas contingency operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria through September 30. According to this report, the DoD has spent $1.5 trillion in support of contingency operations since September 11, 2001. The total cost of operations in Afghanistan over that time was $737.6 billion, of which $157.9 billion has been obligated in support of OFS since that operation began in 2015.157

The Comptroller reported that the DoD obligated $41.2 billion for OFS during FY 2018, which was $1.3 billion less than the amount spent on OFS in FY 2017. Average monthly spending on all OCO in FY 2018 was reported at $3.7 billion, of which $3 billion was in support of operations in Afghanistan. According to the DoD Comptroller, these obligations cover all expenses related to the conflicts, including war-related operational costs, support for deployed troops, and transportation of personnel and equipment.158

USFOR-A's implementation of the South Asia strategy called for an increase in personnel in Afghanistan in FY 2019 above the estimate included in the President's FY 2018 Budget. The DoD Comptroller submitted an amendment to this budget, which included an additional $1.2 billion to support an increase in U.S. forces. Of this funding, $836.8 million was designated for Army operating forces. Other major costs included Navy weapons maintenance, Navy weapons support, Army logistics, and pay and benefits for U.S. military personnel

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, January 30, 2019, pp. 34-3 .

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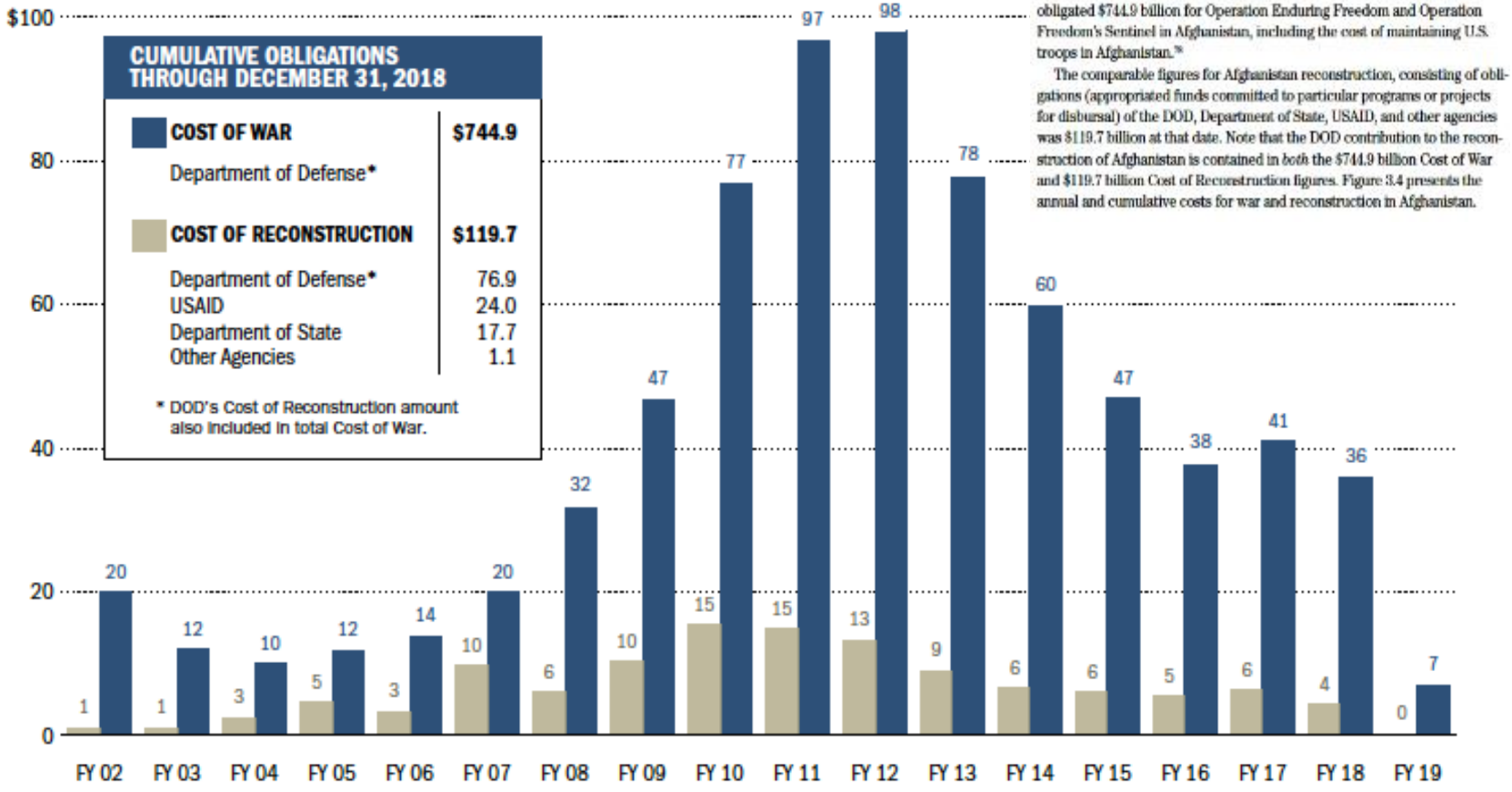
Costing the War: Afghanistan FY2002-FY2019: SIGAR

AFGHANISTAN COST OF WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION, ANNUAL AND CUMULATIVE OBLIGATIONS FY 2002 TO FY 2019 Q1 ($ BILLIONS)



Reconstruction costs for Afghanistan equal approximately 16% of all funds obligated by the Department of Defense for Afghanistan since 2001. DOD reported in its *Cost of War Report* as of December 31, 2018, that it had obligated $744.9 billion for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Freedom's Sentinel in Afghanistan, including the cost of maintaining U.S. troops in Afghanistan.[*]

The comparable figures for Afghanistan reconstruction, consisting of obligations (appropriated funds committed to particular programs or projects for disbursal) of the DOD, Department of State, USAID, and other agencies was $119.7 billion at that date. Note that the DOD contribution to the reconstruction of Afghanistan is contained in *both* the $744.9 billion Cost of War and $119.7 billion Cost of Reconstruction figures. Figure 3.4 presents the annual and cumulative costs for war and reconstruction in Afghanistan.

Note: Numbers have been rounded. Cumulative obligations through December 31, 2018, differ markedly from cumulative appropriations through March 31, 2019, because the former figures do not include unobligated appropriations and DOD reporting lags one quarter.

Source: DOD, *Cost of War Monthly Report*, "Total War-related Obligations by Year Incurred," data as of December 31, 2018. Obligation data shown against year funds were obligated. SIGAR analysis of annual obligation of reconstruction accounts as presented in SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, 1/30/2019. Obligation data shown against year funds were appropriated.

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, April 30, 2019, p. 54,.

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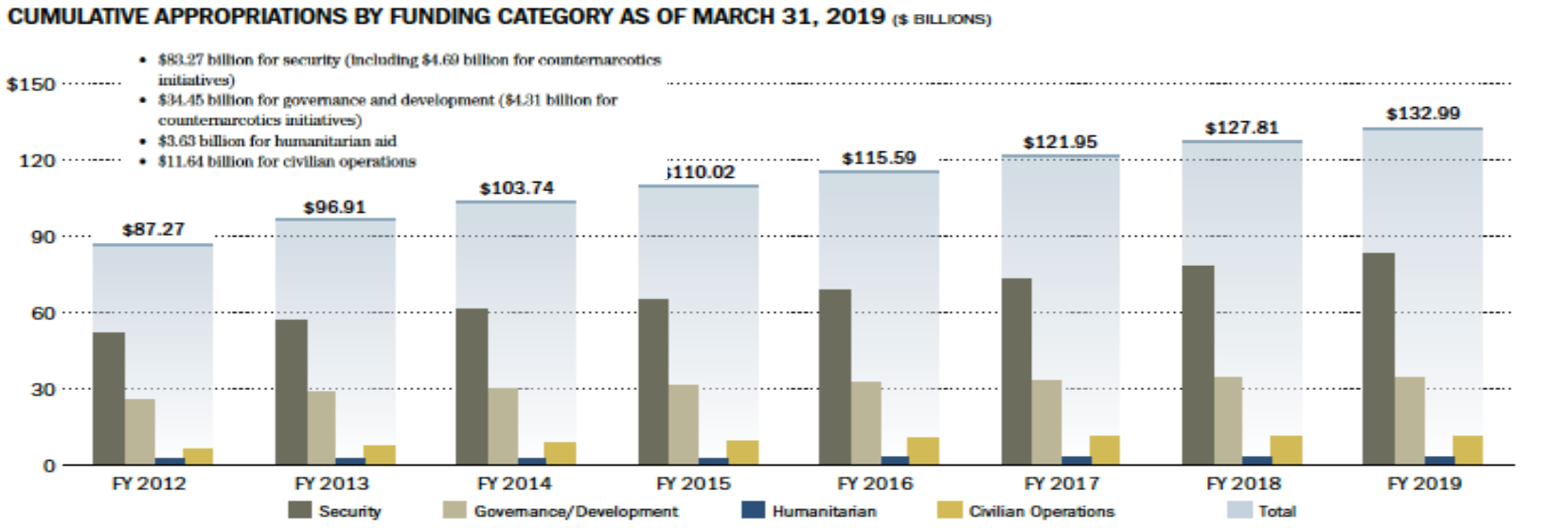
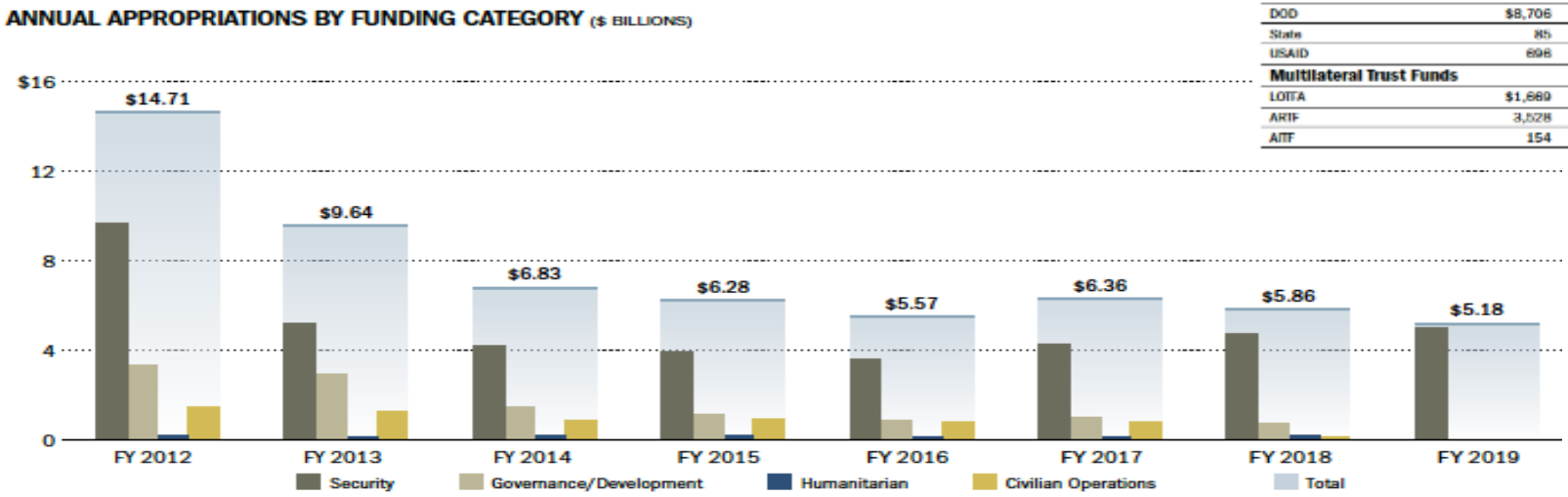
US Aid Spending: 2012-2019



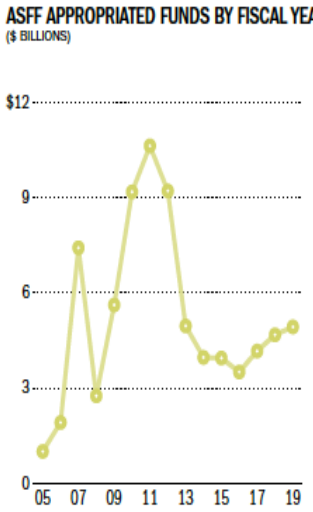


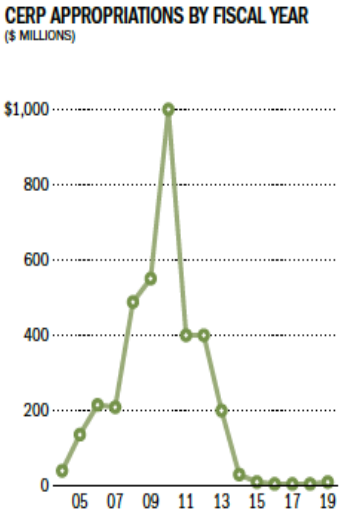
U.S. ON-BUDGET ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN, SINCE 2002 ($ MILLIONS)	
Government-to-Government	
DOD	$8,706
State	85
USAID	698
Multilateral Trust Funds	
LOTFA	$1,689
ARTF	3,528
AITF	154

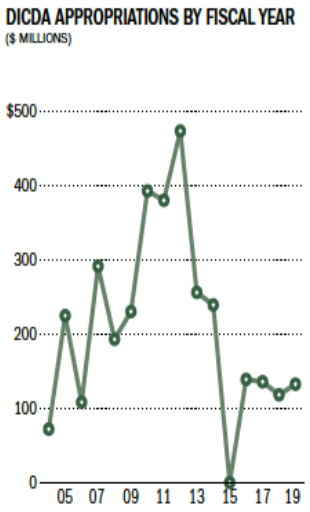
Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, April 30, 2019, pp. 52-53.

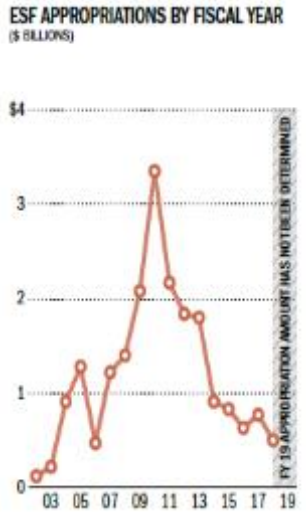
Erratic US Aid Spending by Major Category: 2012-2019

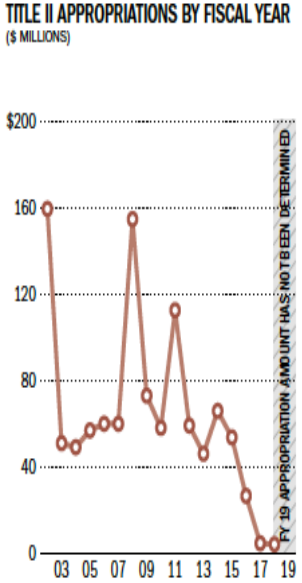
ASFF: Afghanistan Security Forces Fund
CERP: Commander's Emergency Response Program
DICDA: Drug Interdiction and Counter-Drug Activities
ESF: Economic Support Fund
TITLE II: Public Law No. 480 Title II
IDA: International Disaster Assistance
INCLE: International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement
MRA: Migration and Refugee Assistance
NADR: Non-Proliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining, and Related Programs

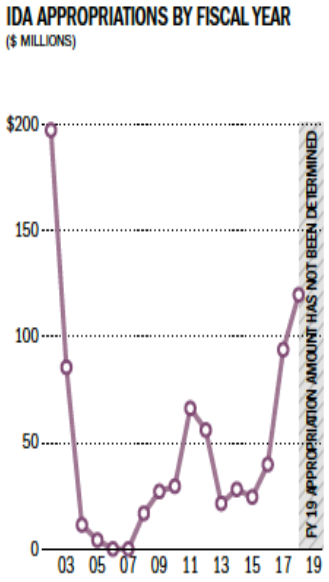


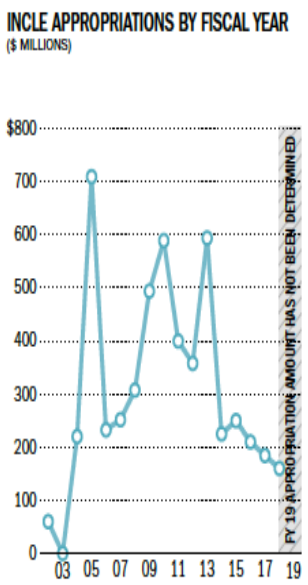


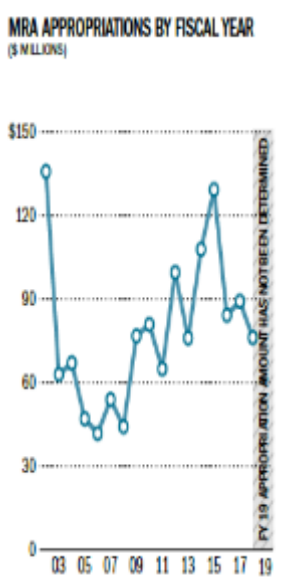


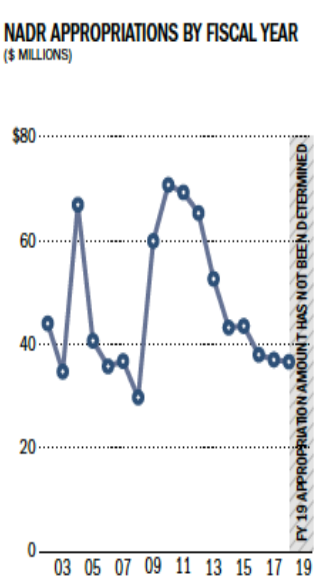






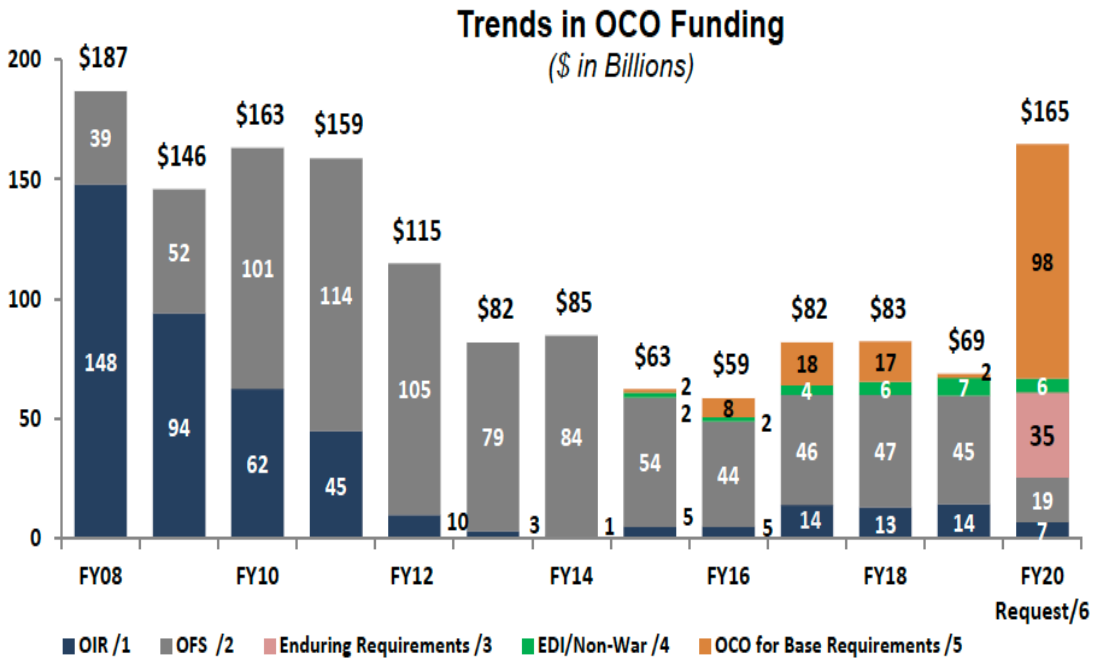






Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, April 30, 2019, pp. 59-67.

OCO Cost Reporting Shifts and Funding Level Trends



Operation/Activity	FY 2019 Enacted	FY 2020 Request /2	Delta FY 2019 – FY 2020
Operation FREEDOM'S SENTINEL (OFS) Direct War Costs	18.5	18.6	+0.1
Operation INHERENT RESOLVE (OIR) Direct War Costs	8.9	6.9	-2.0
Enduring Theater Requirements and Related Missions	33.7	35.3	+1.6
European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) and the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI)	6.5	5.9	-0.6
Subtotal	**67.6**	**66.7**	**-0.9**
Prior-Year Rescissions	-1.3	-	+1.3
OCO for Base Requirements /1	2.5	97.9	+95.4
Emergency Requirements	-	9.2	+9.2
Grand Total	**68.8**	**173.8**	**+105.0**

Numbers may not add due to rounding

1/ The FY 2019 Enacted "OCO for Base Requirements" reflects congressional adds, including the ISR Transfer Fund ($500 million). The FY 2020 "OCO for Base Requirements" reflects the DoD base budget requirements requested in the OCO budget in order to comply with the base defense caps in current law. Congress does not appropriate by operation, therefore the FY 2019 Enacted column is a DoD estimate by operation.

2/ The "Direct War" and "Enduring Requirements" were developed for FY 2020 and have been applied as an estimate to the FY 2019 appropriation.

OCO CATEGORIES

The FY 2020 OCO request is divided into three requirement categories – direct war, enduring, and OCO for base.

Direct War Requirements ($25.4 billion) – Reflects combat or combat support costs that are not expected to continue once combat operations end at major contingency locations. Includes in-country war support for Operation FREEDOM'S SENTINEL (OFS) in Afghanistan and Operation INHERENT RESOLVE (OIR) in Iraq and Syria. Funds partnership programs such as the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF), the Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund (CTEF), the Coalition Support Fund (CSF), and Middle East border security.

OCO for Enduring Requirements ($41.3 billion) – Reflects enduring in-theater and CONUS costs that will remain after combat operations end. These costs, historically funded in OCO, include overseas basing, depot maintenance, ship operations, and weapons system sustainment. It also includes the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI), the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI), and Security Cooperation. Combined, enduring requirements and direct war requirements comprise "traditional" OCO.

OCO for Base Requirements ($97.9 billion) – Reflects funding for base budget requirements, which support the National Defense Strategy, such as defense readiness, readiness enablers, and munitions, financed in the OCO budget to comply with the base budget defense caps included in current law.

Source: OSD Comptroller, FY2020 Budget Overview, pp. 6.3-6.4.

OCO FY2020 Request by Functional/Mission Category

($US Current Billions)

OCO and Emergency Budget	FY 2019 Enacted	FY 2020 Request	Delta FY 2019 to FY 2020
Operations/Force Protection	14.5	14.2	-0.3
In-Theater Support	19.5	20.0	+0.5
Defense Threat Reduction Agency / Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat	0.5	0.5	-
Equipment Reset and Readiness	8.6	8.1	-0.5
Classified Programs	9.9	10.5	+0.6
Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF)	4.9	4.8	-0.1
Support for Coalition Forces	1.0	0.6	-0.4
Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund (CTEF)	1.4	1.0	-0.4
Security Cooperation	0.8	1.1	+0.3
European Deterrence Initiative (EDI)	6.5	5.9	-0.6
Subtotal	**67.6**	**66.7**	**-0.9**
ISR Transfer Fund	0.5	-	-0.5
OCO for Base Requirements	2.0	97.9	+95.9
Emergency Requirements	-	9.2	+9.2
Prior-Year Rescissions	-1.3	-	+1.3
Total	**68.8**	**173.8**	**+105.0**

Numbers may not add due to rounding

The request supports the following activities:

- Executing DoD's counterterrorism and train, advise, assist missions in Afghanistan to support the President's South Asia strategy as leaders work to negotiate a settlement that safeguards national interests
- Sustaining personnel forward deployed to the Middle East to continue operations to ensure an enduring defeat of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and allow flexibility for a deliberate, coordinated, disciplined withdrawal from Syria
- Building the capacity of the Iraqi Security Forces and Syrian opposition forces to counter ISIS in support of the United States' comprehensive regional strategy
- Conducting U.S. Central Command in-country and in-theater support activities, including intelligence support to military operations
- Enhancing U.S. deterrence activities in Eastern Europe to assure North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and partners and deter aggressive actors

Source: OSD Comptroller, FY2020 Budget Overview, pp. 6.3-6.9.

Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF) ($4.8 billion): This request funds the sustainment, infrastructure, equipment, and training requirements for up to 352,000 members of the Afghan National Army and National Police as well as up to 30,000 Afghan Local Police. The request supports further development of the ANDSF as an effective and sustainable force to combat a resilient insurgency and as a reliable counterterrorism partner with the United States. A key element of the request is funding for the final year of the President of Afghanistan's four-year ANDSF Roadmap to increase the capacity and combat effectiveness of the AAF and the ASSF and seize the initiative in the fight against insurgent and terrorist forces, strengthen and restructure Afghan Security Institutions, and facilitate a political settlement to the war.

Support for Coalition Forces ($0.6 billion): Amounts requested to finance coalition, friendly forces, and a variety of support requirements for key foreign partners who wish to participate in U.S. military operations but lack financial means. Such support reduces the burden on U.S. forces and is critical to overall mission success. The FY 2020 budget request for support for coalition forces includes $450 million for the Coalition Support Fund (CSF) and $150 million for the Lift and Sustain program. The FY 2020 CSF request of $450 million reflects a $450 million (50 percent) decrease from the FY 2019 enacted level of $900 million due to the continuing suspension of U.S. security assistance to Pakistan based on the President's January 4, 2018, guidance.

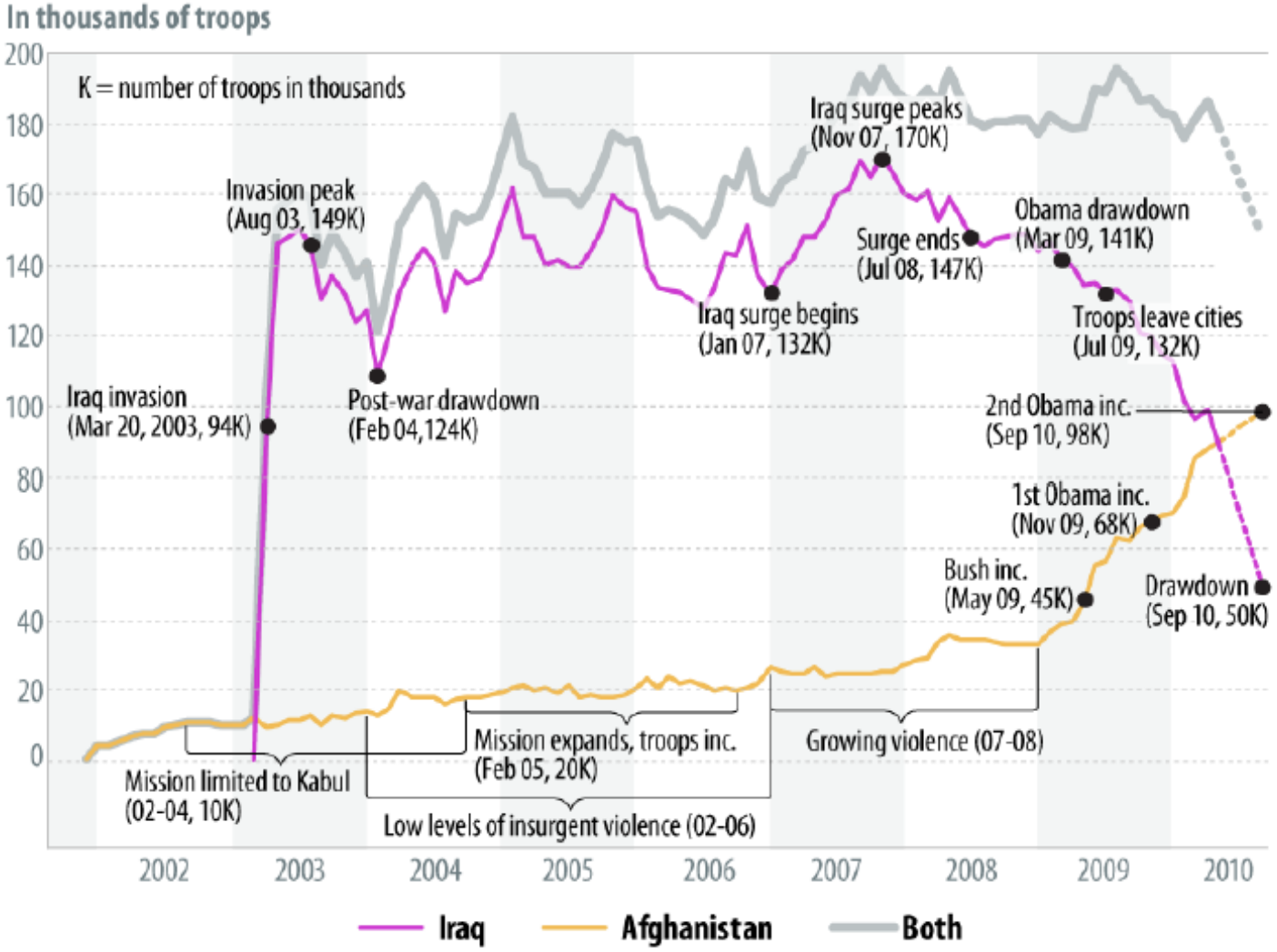
Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund (CTEF) ($1.0 billion): The United States Government's strategy to counter ISIS directed DoD to conduct a campaign to degrade, dismantle, and ultimately defeat ISIS. The focus of DoD's efforts is to work by, with, and through the Government of Iraq's Security Forces and Vetted Syrian Opposition (VSO) forces to build key security force capabilities and promote longer term regional stability.

The FY 2020 CTEF budget request strengthens the security capabilities of DOD partners countering ISIS to secure territory liberated from ISIS and counter future ISIS threats by training and equipping partner security forces. The training, equipment, and operational support in this request will facilitate the consolidation of gains achieved against ISIS and prevent its reemergence. The $1,045 million request includes $745 million to assist the Iraqi Security Forces and $300 million to assist the Vetted Syrian Opposition. The FY 2020 budget also realigns $250 million from the Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund to Operation and Maintenance, Defense-wide, for implementation by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency in order to align DoD authorities and funding to support border security requirements for partner nations fighting ISIS.

Security Cooperation ($1.1 billion): The FY 2020 budget request maintains the existing security cooperation account at $811 million, which funds counterterrorism, crisis response, and other security cooperation support to partner nations. The FY 2020 budget also realigns $250 million from the Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund to the Operation and Maintenance, Defense-wide appropriation for implementation by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency in order to align DoD authorities and funding to support border security requirements for partner nations fighting ISIS.

Security Cooperation funds support programs to enable partner nations to deter and defeat existing and evolving terrorist and other transnational threats. Training and equipping partner nations allows U.S. forces to be more readily available for other contingency operations, build better relationships with partners, and promote global security in a more cost-effective manner.

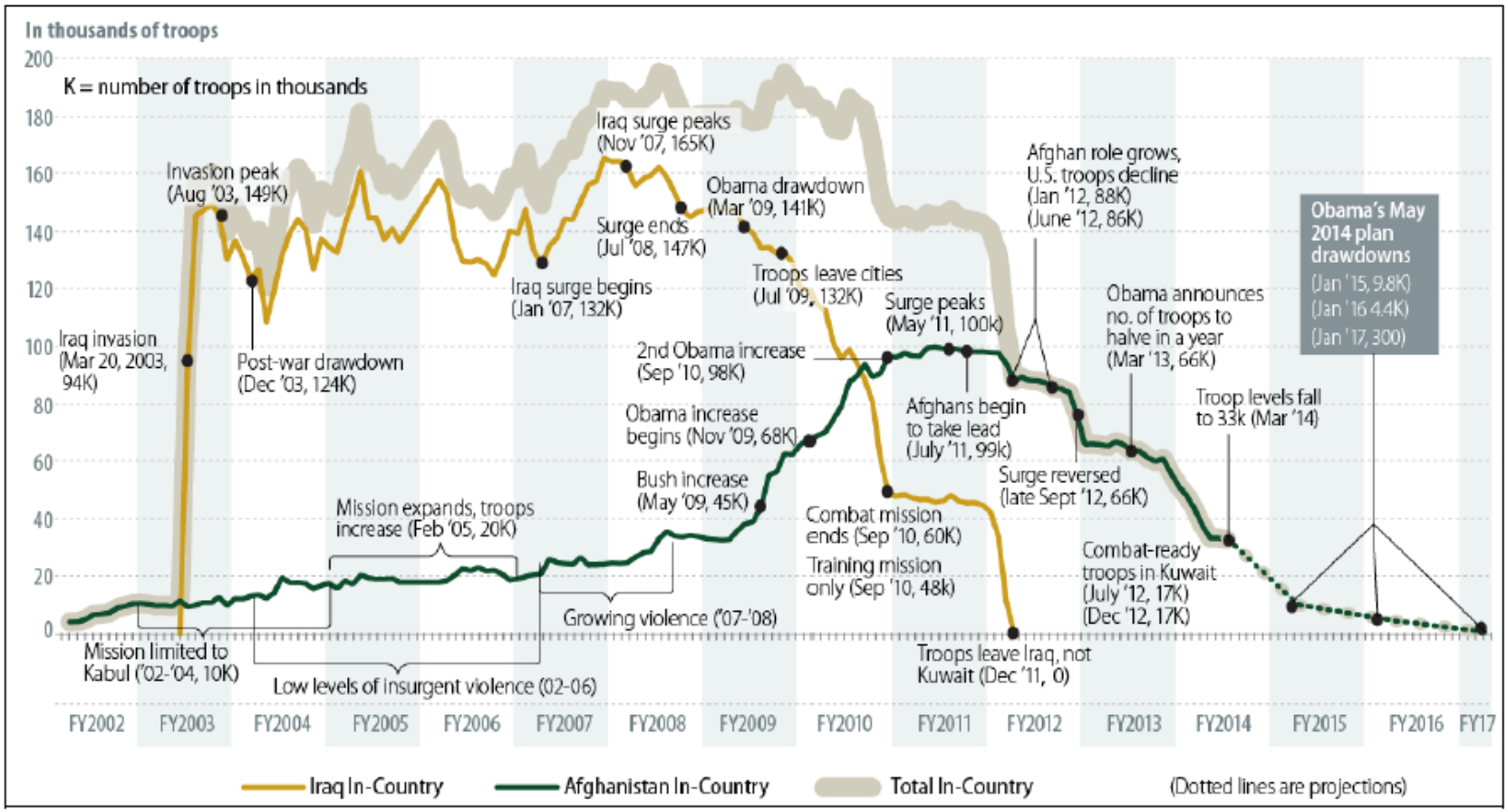
Giving U.S. Priority to Iraq: 2003-2008



Source: DoD Public Affairs, September 2011

US Shift to Lower Personnel Levels: FY2002-FY2017

In thousands of U.S. troops

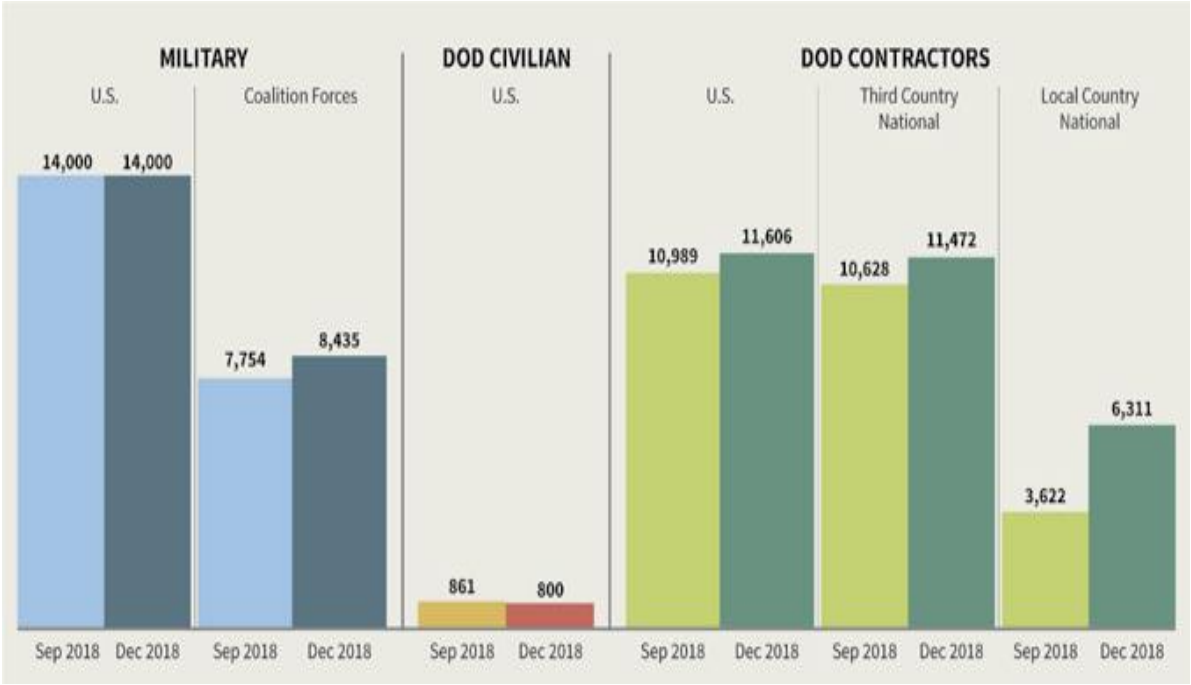


Sources: DOD, Monthly Boots-on-the Ground reports provided to CRS and congressional defense committees, 2001-June 2014. For month-by-month troop levels, both in-country and in-theater, see **Table A-1.**

Notes: Reflects U.S. troops in-country; excludes troops providing in-theater support or conducting counter-terror operations outside the region.

Afghanistan: US Personnel in 2018-2019

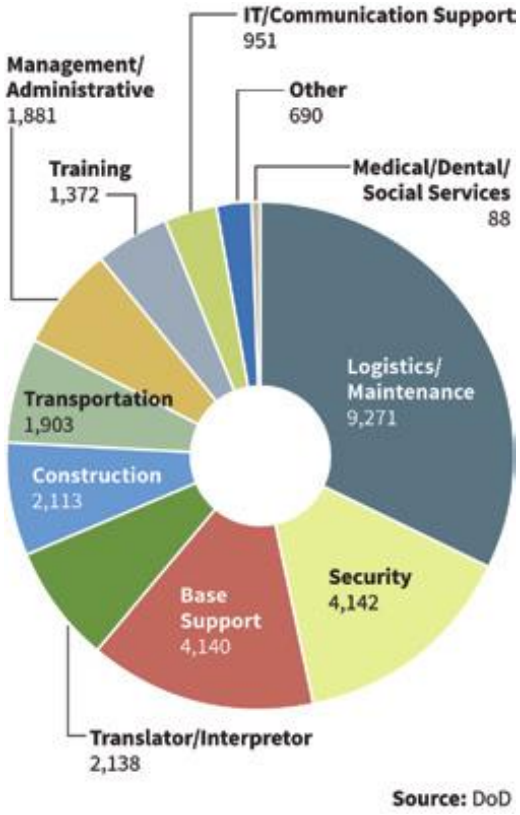
Total Personnel



According to DOD, as of December 2018, approximately 14,000 U.S. military personnel were serving as part of the United States' Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS) mission in Afghanistan, the same number reported for the last year. An additional 861 DOD civilian personnel and 10,698 U.S. citizens who serve as contractors are also in Afghanistan.[128] Of the 14,000 U.S. military personnel, 8,475 U.S. personnel are assigned to the NATO RS mission to train, advise, and assist Afghan security forces, unchanged since last quarter.[129] The remaining U.S. military personnel serve the OFS mission in support roles or in conducting air operations, training the Afghan special forces, and conducting counterterror operations.[130]

As of December 2018, the RS mission included roughly 8,444 military personnel from NATO allies and non-NATO partner nations, bringing the current total of RS military personnel to 16,919 (a 690-person increase since last quarter). The United States contributes the most troops to the RS mission, followed by Germany (1,300 personnel) and the United Kingdom (1,100).[131]

Contractors by Function



While the number of U.S. military and civilian personnel remained constant, the number of contractors increased by nearly 14 percent during the quarter, reaching the highest level since the 1st quarter of FY 2016. The greatest growth during the quarter was among contractors who perform logistics/maintenance, management/ administrative, and training tasks

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, January 30, 2019, p. 34-35, 77.

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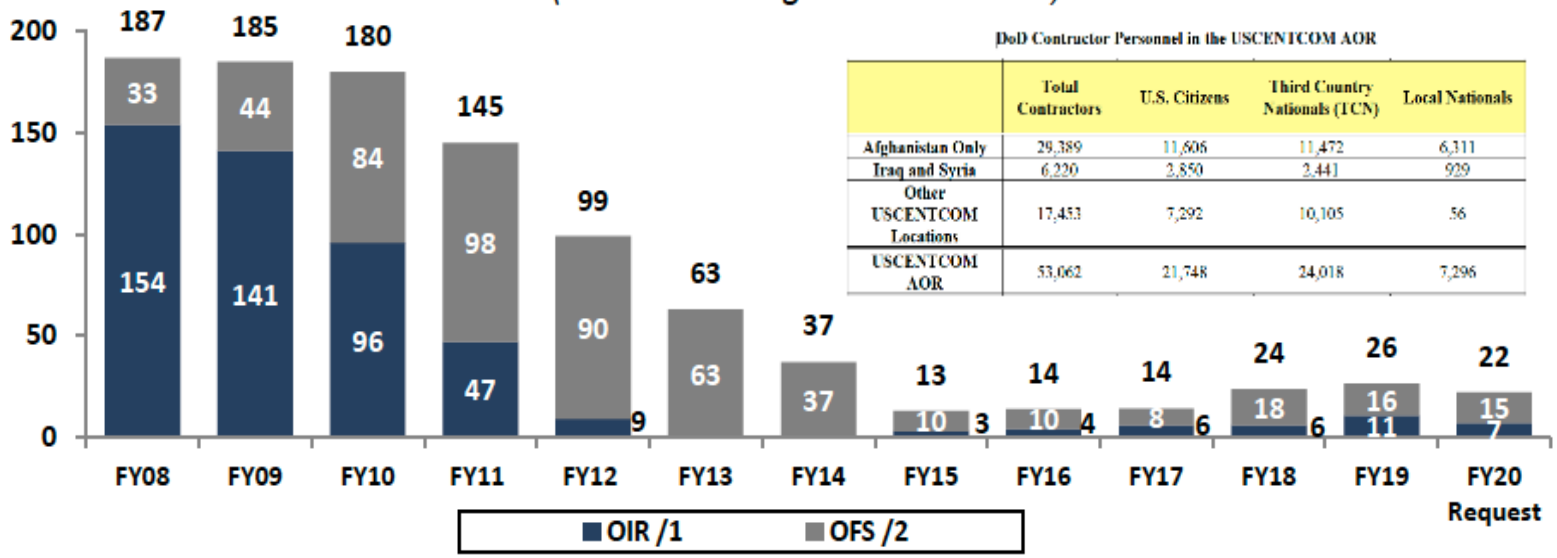
OCO Manning FY2008-FY2020

Trends in OCO Troop Levels in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan

(Annual Average in Thousands)



DoD Contractor Personnel in the USCENTCOM AOR

	Total Contractors	U.S. Citizens	Third Country Nationals (TCN)	Local Nationals
Afghanistan Only	29,389	11,606	11,472	6,311
Iraq and Syria	6,220	2,850	2,441	929
Other USCENTCOM Locations	17,453	7,292	10,105	56
USCENTCOM AOR	53,062	21,748	24,018	7,296

(Average Annual Troop Strength)

	FY 2019 PB Request	FY 2020 PB Request[3]
Afghanistan (OFS)	11,958	15,000
Iraq/Syria (OIR)	5,765	7,200
In-Theater Support[1]	59,463	46,473
In-CONUS[2]/Other Mobilization	16,610	19,149
Total Force Levels	**93,796**	**87,822**

[1] In-Theater support includes support for Afghanistan/Iraq/Syria, Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) HOA / NW Africa CT, and EDI (including approximately 10,500 afloat forces).

[2] In-CONUS = In the Continental United States

[3] FY 2020 includes Temporary Enabling Force (TEF) support for Afghanistan/Iraq/Syria. This is a change from FY 2019 in which the TEF support was counted as part of In-Theater Support.

Source: OSD Comptroller, FY2020 Budget Overview, pp. 6.3-6.4, and DoD reporting as of 12/2018 for contractors.

Radical Shifts in US and Coalition Airpower: 2015-2019

(CAOC) Public Affairs – afcent.pa@afcent.af.mil as of February 28, 2019)

- **Flew 1,408 strike sorties in 2013 vs. 966 in 2018 – drop of 48% in Manned sorties.**
- ***But*, dropped 7,362 munitions in 2018, versus 2,758 in 2013 (+166%) and 4,361 in 2017 (+59%)**

Afghanistan

OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL/RESOLUTE SUPPORT MISSION

Strike Aircraft (manned)

	Sorties
2013	21,900
2014	12,978
2015	5,774
2016	5,162
2017	4,603
2018	8,196
2019	1,188

	Sorties with at least one weapon release
2013	1,408
2014	1,136
2015	411
2016	615
2017	1,248
2018	966
2019	289

Number of Weapons Released (Manned & RPA strike assets)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2013	193	297	250	284	368	337	256	158	232	189	118	76	2,758
2014	92	114	95	115	164	272	205	437	441	217	87	126	2,365
2015	40	30	47	31	41	109	79	156	111	203	69	31	947
2016	127	115	58	62	89	94	160	108	162	205	92	65	1,337
2017	54	200	203	460	328	389	350	503	414	653	352	455	4,361
2018	378	469	339	562	591	572	746	715	841	769	841	539	7,362
2019	463	327											790

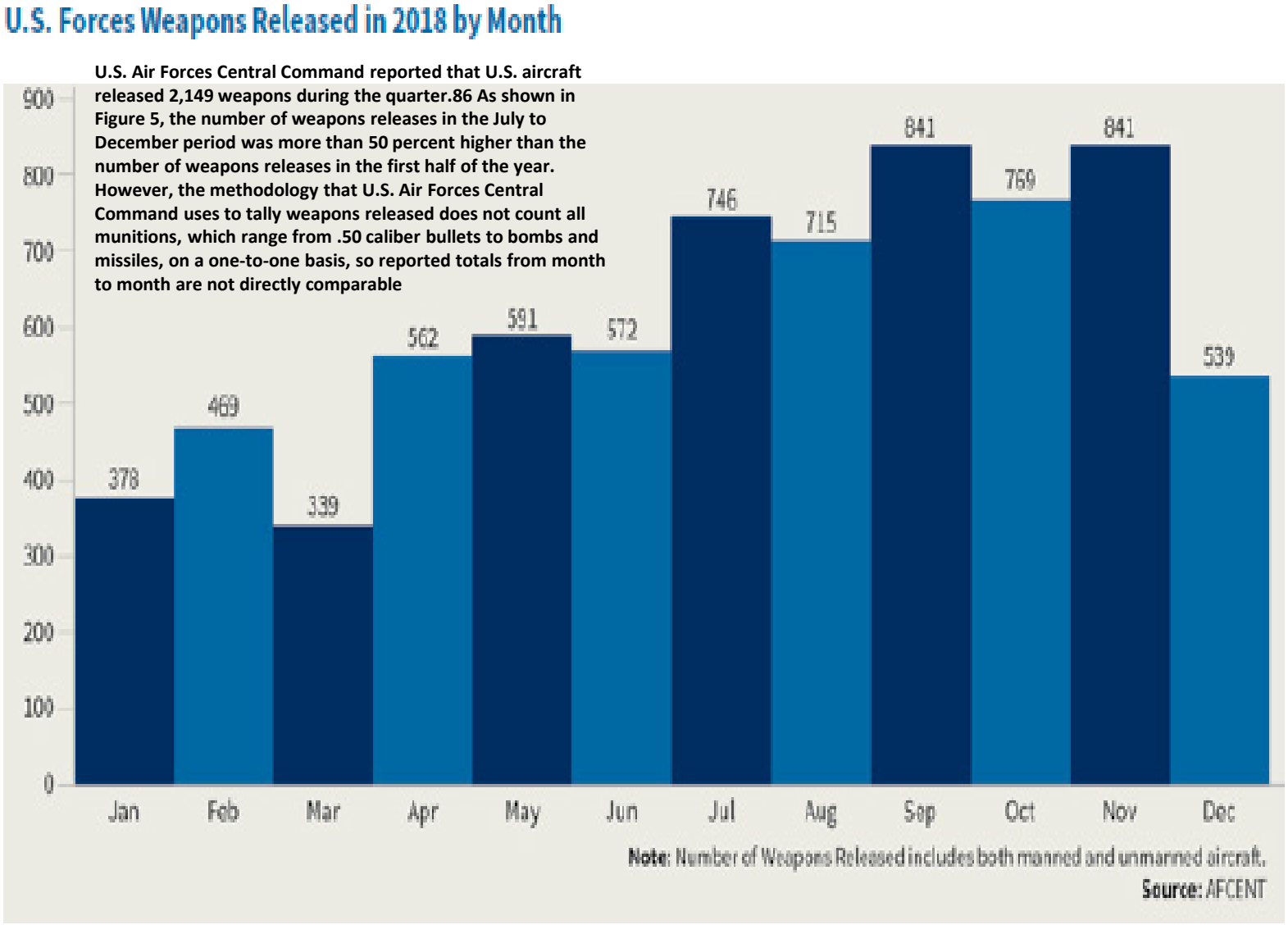
Statistics provided includes numbers of sorties (not strikes) and munitions expended by aircraft under CFACC control

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Intel, Surveillance and Recon Sorties	31,049	32,999	21,634	19,681	15,404	12,716	2,747
Airlift and Airdrop Sorties	32,000	17,040	6,900	10,300	11,166	12,783	1,729
Airlift Cargo (Short Tons)	201,000	158,400	50,000	69,200	84,208	89,584	10,934
Airlift Passengers	506,000	202,700	78,000	111,100	120,554	150,330	24,310
Supplies Airdropped (Pounds)	10,883,000	28,000	0	0	33,423	667,880	37,280
Tanker Sorties	12,319	9,085	5,323	4,910	5,714	4,673	554
Fuel Offloaded (Millions of Pounds)	723	636	201	150	170	189	22
Aircraft Refuelings	53,266	46,793	26,162	18,137	17,989	19,214	2,824

Some figures may have changed due to data re-calculation and re-verification

• Assets under CFACC control include a compilation of aircraft from all U.S. military branches of service, as well as Coalition aircraft; however, not all aircraft flying in the AOR fall under CFACC control

Rising Number of Air Strikes in 2018



Source: **Lead Inspector General, OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL, LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS OCTOBER 1, 2018–DECEMBER 31, 2018, p. 21**.

NATO-Resolute Support and International Aid

The Role of Allied Countries

The metrics in this section summarize the level of Allied military forces officially assigned to the NATO mission in Afghanistan in the spring of 2019, and major allied aid contributions from 2002 to that date. They also understate the allied contribution because they do not include substantial additional national aid to civil and military personnel and programs.

- Official NATO casualty data are not available on the sacrifices allied forces made in terms of killed an wounded, but allied forces did suffered substantial casualties.
- The personnel data show that allied military personnel peaked in early 2011 at a nominal level of 41,982 or 32% of the total. The reported U.S total was 90,000, but there were well over 10,000 U.S. military personnel not assigned to ISAF.
- By April 2019, there were only 17,034 U.S. and allied military personnel in the NATO force. U.S. assigned personnel had dropped to only 8,475 – roughly 60-70% of the actual U.S. total of permanently assigned personnel in country. Allied personnel, however, had risen to 50% of the NATO total.
- A metric drawn from a SIGAR report shows that allies donated some $14.4 billion in aid to international aid efforts. Additional purely national allied aid that was spent in allied areas of responsibility in Afghanistan or in purely national or NGO programs may have approached this total.

The lack of proper official U.S. recognition of these allied and strategic partner efforts, and adequate consultation on changes in strategy and force levels in Afghanistan, remains a serious problem in U.S strategic communications.

NATO Resolute Support Forces in April 2019

Troop Contributing Nations

Albania	135	Germany	1.300	Portugal	193		
Armenia	121	Greece	12	Romania	733		
Australia	300	Hungary	93	Slovakia	36		
Austria	17	Iceland	3	Slovenia	8		
Azerbaijan	120	Italy	895	Spain	67		
Belgium	82	Latvia	42	Sweden	29		
Bosnia-Herzegovina	63	Lithuania	50	North Macedonia	47		
Bulgaria	159	Luxembourg	2	Turkey	593		
Croatia	106	Mongolia	233	Ukraine	16		
Czech Republic	357	Montenegro	29	United Kingdom	1.100		
Denmark	155	Netherlands	160	United States	8.475		
Estonia	39	New Zealand	13				
Finland	24	Norway	54				
Georgia	870	Poland	303	Total	17.034		

See links to media backgrounder on "NATO-Afghanistan relations (February 2019)" and to media backgrounder on the ANA Trust Fund.

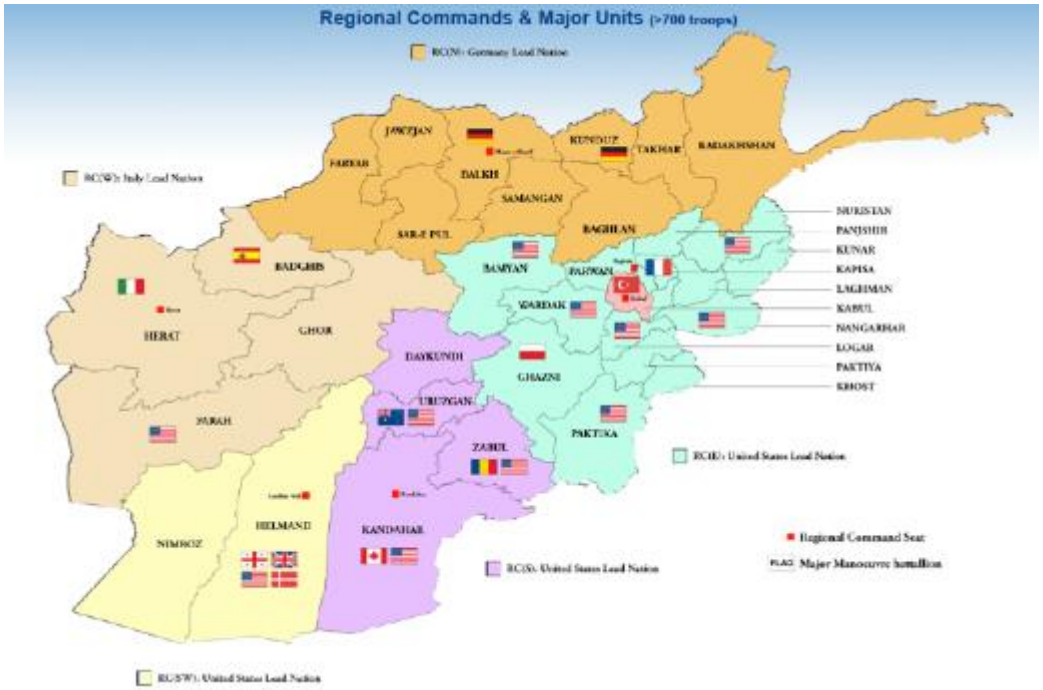
Following the completion of the mission of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) at the end of 2014, a new, follow-on, NATO-led mission called Resolute Support was launched on 1 January 2015 to provide further training, advice and assistance for the Afghan security forces and institutions. At the 2016 NATO Summit in Warsaw, Allied leaders decided to extend the presence of RSM beyond 2016. Two years later, at the Brussels Summit in July 2018, they committed to sustaining the mission until conditions indicate a change is appropriate. At a meeting of defence ministers in November 2017, RSM troop-contributing nations confirmed that the number of troops deployed would increase from around 13,000 to around 16,000 troops.

Over 16,000 personnel from 39 NATO member states and partner countries are deployed in support of the Resolute Support Mission (RSM). At the 2018 Brussels Summit, NATO welcomed two new troop-contributing nations, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, which are currently finalising the details of their offers to contribute.
RSM operates with one central hub (in Kabul/Bagram) and four spokes in Mazar-e Sharif, Herat, Kandahar and Laghman. It focuses primarily on training, advice and assistance activities at the security-related ministries, in the country's institutions and among the senior ranks of the army and police. The Resolute Support Mission works closely with different elements of the Afghan army, police and air force.
Key functions include:

Supporting planning, programming and budgeting;
- Assuring transparency, accountability and oversight;
- Supporting the adherence to the principles of rule of law and good governance;
- Supporting the establishment and sustainment of such processes as force generation, recruiting, training, managing and development of personnel.

Source: NATO, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_113694.htm?, accessed 23.4.2019.

NATO Peak International Security Assistance Force in January 2011

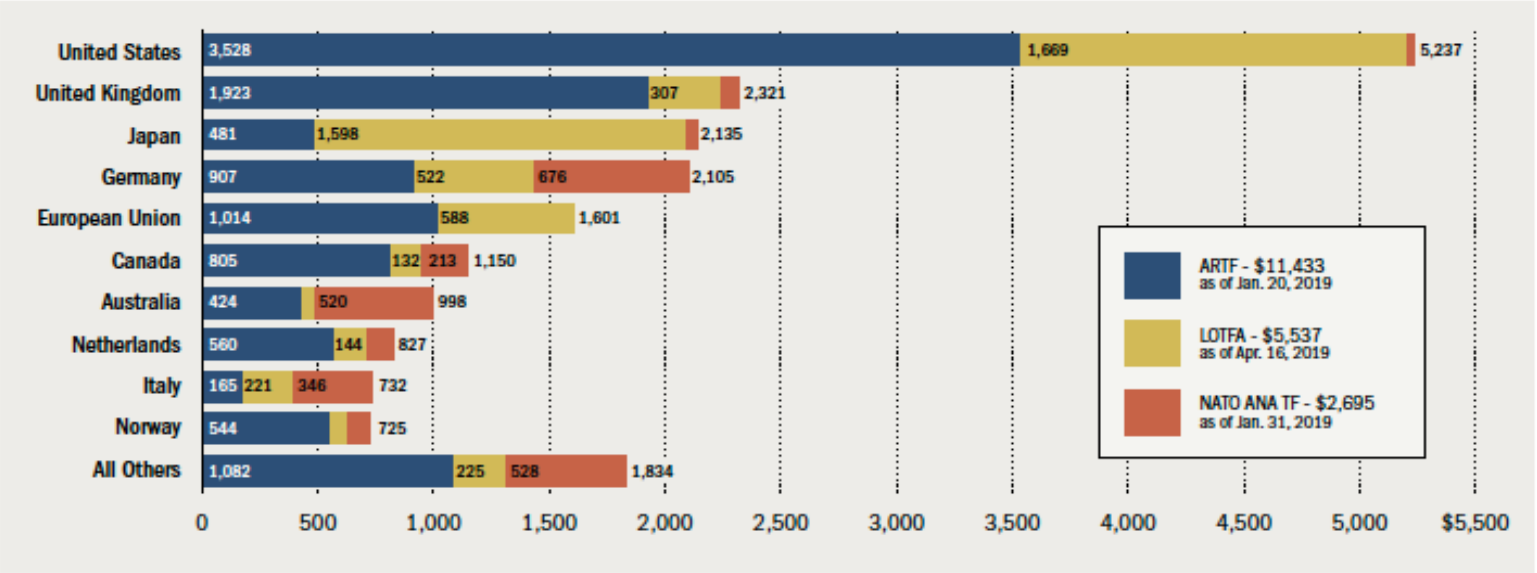


Source: NATO, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_113694.htm?, accessed 23.4.2019.

	Albania	250		Greece	136		Portugal	116
	Armenia	40		Hungary	522		Romania	1693
	Australia	1550		Iceland	4		Singapore	48
	Austria	3		Ireland	7		Slovakia	301
	Azerbaijan	94		Italy	3772		Slovenia	80
	Belgium	530		Jordan	0		Spain	1472
	Bosnia & Herzegovina	45		Republic of Korea	246		Sweden	500
	Bulgaria	611		Latvia	136		The FYROM*	163
	Canada	2903		Lithuania	179		Tonga	55
	Croatia	288		Luxembourg	9		Turkey	1823
	Czech Republic	471		Malaysia	30		Ukraine	20
	Denmark	750		Mongolia	62		United Arab Emirates	35
	Estonia	159		Montenegro	35		United Kingdom	9500
	Finland	165		Netherlands	196		United States	90000
	France	4000		New Zealand	234			
	Georgia	924		Norway	413			
	Germany	4922		Poland	2490		Total	131982

Major International Aid: 2002 to January 20, 2019

CUMULATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO ARTF, LOTFA, AND NATO ANA TRUST FUND BY 10 LARGEST DONORS ($ MILLIONS)



Note: Does not include the Asian Development Bank's Afghanistan Infrastructure Trust Fund (AITF), whose partners, the NATO ANA Trust Fund, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, have committed $841 million as of June 2018.

Source: World Bank, *ARTF: Administrator's Report on Financial Status as of January 20, 2019 (end of 1st month of FY 1398)*; UNDP, *LOTFA Receipts 2002–2019*, Updated April 16, 2019, in response to SIGAR data call 4/9/2019; NATO, *Afghan National Army (ANA) Trust Fund, Media Backgrounder, Status of Contributions Made as of January 31, 2019*; Asian Development Bank, "Afghanistan Infrastructure Trust Fund 2018 Fact Sheet."

The international community provides significant funding to support Afghanistan relief and reconstruction efforts. Most of the international funding is administered through trust funds. The three main trust funds are the World Bank-managed Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-managed Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA), and the NATO-managed Afghan National Army (ANA) Trust Fund (NATO ANA Trust Fund or NATF).

The largest share of international contributions to the Afghan government's operational and development budgets comes through the ARTF. From 2002 to January 20, 2019, the World Bank reported that 34 donors had paid in more than $11.43 billion.[112] Figure 3.26 shows the five largest donors over this period as the United States, the UK, the European Union, Germany, and Canada. Figure 3.27 shows these five countries as the largest donors to the ARTF for Afghan FY 1397 (December 22, 2017–December 21, 2018). The ARTF received contributions of $1.02 billion in Afghan FY 1397, marking the second highest annual amount of contributions received by the fund in its 17-year history.

NATO ANA Trust Fund

The NATO ANA Trust Fund (NATF) has received contributions of more than $2.69 billion from 29 NATO members, including the United States, and from six other Coalition partners to support the ANDSF through ASFF and its own NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA).[87] The NATF has contributed more than $1.52 billion to ASFF for specific projects funded by donor nations, and DOD has obligated, disbursed and returned to donor nations approximately $824.79 million, $671.56 million and $381.00 million, respectively, of these funds through March 31, 2019.[88] These amounts are not reflected in the U.S. government-funded ASFF obligation and disbursement numbers presented in Figures 3.6 and 3.7.

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, April 30, 2019, pp. 58, 68.

Afghan Force Development

Afghan Force Development

The metrics for Afghan security forces shown in this section reflect a steady increase in the classification of virtually every area of force effectiveness. There now is virtually no official open source reporting beyond uncertain data on personnel levels by service and on the fluctuations in these levels.

Such data have little value and are often more misleading than useful. Military history has shown for thousands of years that such total "manning" levels are little more than meaningless when they cannot be related to the effectiveness of key units. No such data are available on the order of battle, the relative size and capability of Afghan government and threat forces, relative casualty levels, and ANSF ability to meet key warfighting needs.

The previous funding metrics show there were long delays in properly funding the Afghan force development effort, and that the sudden peak in funding between 2009 and 2011 was followed by an equally precipitous fall. The metrics in this section show that even greater problems existed in creating stable force expansion plans, and then in providing the necessary training effort and capacity.

The limited personnel numbers that are still provided are also suspect in many ways because it is not clear how many personnel are really active and in place, how many can actually be committed to combat, and how corrupt various aspects of given forces still are. There also is no way to tie manning levels to loyalty in a country where unemployment is a major crisis, and few other jobs are available.

These problems are further compounded by the fact that media reporting indicates that the most effective ANA and ANP units tend to be grossly overburdened with combat assignments, are the most dependent on U.S. airpower, and still need direct combat support from U.S. special forces, other advisors, and intelligence. The failure to report the dependence of the best Afghan units on U.S. support indirectly implies far more capability in both these units and the overall mass of Afghan land forces than is actually the case.

Similarly, the data on the development of the Afghan Air Force and increases in Special Security Forces do warn about the slow pace of their development, but do not warn that even if all the Air Forces current aircraft were fully combat ready, they could not approach the current level of airpower support that Afghan forces now get – and depend upon – from US and coalition airpower.

The same is true of increases in the Special Security Forces which cannot eliminate the need for Afghan land force dependence on U.S. combat forces – a dependence that U.S. does not describe in open source material, but is reflected in a wide range of media reporting.

Coupled to the problems in ANP and ALP forces described in SIGAR Quarterly Reports, and summarized in the metrics that follow, the current levels of classification make it virtually impossible to determine the effectiveness of – and credible future timelines in -- the U.S. and Resolute Support effort to improve Afghan forces.

SIGAR High Risk Assessment of ANSF Development

Since the previous *High-Risk List* in January 2017, SIGAR has published numerous oversight products on Afghanistan's security institutions and has reported new developments in its quarterly reports to Congress. Of those, SIGAR's most comprehensive effort is the Lessons Learned Program report, *Reconstructing the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces: Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*. That 2017 SIGAR product presented key findings, including that the U.S. government was not properly prepared from the outset to help build an Afghan army and police force capable of protecting Afghanistan from internal and external threats and preventing the country from becoming a terrorist safe haven.[17]

SIGAR found that the U.S. government lacked a comprehensive approach to security-sector assistance and a coordinating body to successfully implement whole-of-government programs that were necessary to develop a capable and self-sustaining ANDSF.[18]

The 2019 *High-Risk List* reported that according to DOD, RS, and U.S. Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A), the ANDSF currently face critical capability gaps in key areas that hinder the force's effectiveness and readiness and may continue to do so in the future, including:

Force manning: recruiting, retention, and attrition: As of October 31, 2018, the Afghan National Army (ANA) was 36,621 personnel below its authorized strength of 227,374, and the Afghan National Police (ANP) was 6,686 personnel below its authorized strength of 124,626.[19]

With insufficient personnel, the ANDSF are less able to provide security to the Afghan population, are increasingly vulnerable to enemy attacks, and are at risk of incurring higher casualties. These issues make the force less sustainable in the long term and less capable of conducting its mission successfully.

Personnel accountability and pay systems: The ANDSF also struggles to accurately pay and account for its personnel. Since the beginning of the RS mission in January 2015, U.S. and Coalition personnel had scant presence at the lower tactical levels of the ANDSF, forcing the mission to rely on unverifiable Afghan personnel reporting.[20] Over the past two years, RS advisors have worked to reduce their reliance on manual Afghan personnel reporting by implementing the Afghan Personnel and Pay System (APPS), in which ANDSF personnel are biometrically enrolled. The system is designed to integrate personnel data with compensation and payroll data to process authorizations, record unit-level time and attendance data, and calculate payroll amounts, among other uses.[21] According to USFOR-A, as of December 2018, the APPS system has been delivered to and is fully capable for use by both the ANA and the ANP, but only 84% of ANA personnel (including civilians) and 60% of ANP personnel were enrolled into the system, matched to authorized positions, and met the minimum data-input

Logistics and maintenance: The Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Ministry of Interior (MOI) face key logistics and maintenance challenges, one of which is the implementation and maintenance of their electronic equipment-inventory and repair-status system, Core Inventory Management System (CoreIMS). According to DOD in December 2018, overall, MOD and MOI logisticians require persistent RS advisor attention, and their problems conducting national logistics planning remain "a vulnerability to the mission."[23]

Institutional training: DOD reported in December 2018 that institutional and professional training for ANDSF personnel, coordinated at the national and regional levels (above corps or zone levels), are at a relatively nascent phase. DOD reports that despite RS advisory efforts, strong training institutions have not emerged, particularly within MOI, which controls the national police.[24]

Persistent terrorist threat from Islamic State: Although U.S. officials have consistently asserted that Islamic State Khorasan, the Islamic State affiliate in Afghanistan, has been degraded on multiple fronts, the group poses a greater security threat to the Afghan people and security forces than it did in 2016.[25] As the terrorist group has not been defeated, is not a party to peace negotiations, and continues to execute high-casualty attacks in major Afghan population centers, it remains potent.

Stalemated control of districts, population, and territory: The stalemated battlefield situation between the ANDSF and the Taliban is another risk, as the intensity of fighting has increased and both sides have incurred more casualties as they seek greater leverage at the negotiating table.[26] If negotiators fail to secure a peace agreement, the ANDSF will be hard pressed to increase its control over Afghanistan's population, districts, and territory. From November 2016 through October 2018, Afghan government control and influence over its districts ranged between 54% and 60%. Over the same period, the Afghan government controlled or influenced between 64% and 66% of the population.[27]

These issues indicate the importance of considering questions regarding the U.S. role in training, advising, and assisting the ANDSF following a peace agreement; preserving the capability gains of the Afghan Air Force and special forces; assisting the ANDSF in adapting to peacetime security functions and sustaining its systems and equipment; and integrating former Taliban fighters into the national security forces.

Source: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update*, April 30, 2019, pp. 7-9.

Classifying Most Key Reporting on the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces

ANDSF Data Classified or Not Publicly Releasable

USFOR-A newly classified the following data this quarter:

- A narrative assessment about Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF) misuse by the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Ministry of Interior (MOI)

USFOR-A continued to classify or restrict from public release, in accordance with classification guidelines or other restrictions placed by the Afghan government, the following data (mostly since October 2017):

- ANDSF casualties, by force element and total
- Corps- and zone-level Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) authorized and assigned strength by component
- Performance assessments for the ANA, ANP, MOD, and MOI
- Information about the operational readiness of ANA and ANP equipment
- Special Mission Wing (SMW) information, including the number and type of airframes in the SMW inventory, the number of pilots and aircrew, and the operational readiness (and associated benchmarks) of SMW airframes
- Reporting on anticorruption efforts by the MOI (unclassified but not publicly releasable)
- Reporting on the status of the ANDSF's progress on security-related benchmarks of the Afghanistan Compact (unclassified but not publicly releasable)

ANDSF Combat Element Performance – Most Data Classified

USFOR-A continued to classify most assessments of ANDSF performance. SIGAR's questions about ANDSF performance can be found in Appendix E of this report. Detailed ANDSF performance assessments are reported in the classified annex for this report.

This quarter, USFOR-A provided a general overview on ANDSF performance. According to USFOR-A, senior ANDSF leaders are continuing to demonstrate progress in organizational management, decision-making, and operational planning and execution. The Afghan government has been striving to employ quality leaders and continues to successfully identify and replace ANDSF leaders found guilty of corruption.[197]

USFOR-A continued to report that ANA corps receive the preponderance of Coalition train, advise, and assist (TAA) support, and that as a result, their capabilities continue to advance more rapidly than the ANP's. USFOR-A said the ANA's improvements are evident in their ability to synchronize combat enablers (e.g., air and artillery support) and to conduct coordinated operational planning with adjacent corps.[198]

USFOR-A also reported this quarter that the Afghan government has dissolved the ANP's zone system, which has challenged Coalition advisors, who must now provide TAA support to multiple provincial police headquarters (PHQs) rather than to a single zone. Now instead of eight regional ANP zones, the 34 PHQs serve as the command structure for ANP throughout the country.[199]

Source: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update*, April 30, 2019, p. 83 & 86.

Major US Aid for Afghan Forces: FY2005-FY2020

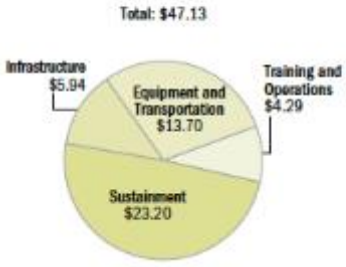
ASFF FY 2020 BUDGET REQUEST—SUSTAINMENT ($ MILLIONS)

Sustainment Budget Categories and Line Items	Afghan National Army	Afghan National Police	Afghan Air Force	Afghan Special Security Forces	Total
Vehicles and Aircraft[1]	$116.1	$108.3	$729.3	$150.3	**$1,104.0**
Personnel[2]	539.8	12.8	31.4	115.6	**699.7**
Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants	170.9	88.8	26.5	9.9	**296.1**
Communications & Intelligence	116.6	49.0	N/A	73.8	**239.3**
Ammunition	93.9	16.6	95.8	N/A	**206.3**
Facilities	109.6	72.4	4.5	13.6	**200.0**
All Other	166.1	75.0	6.3	74.8	**322.1**
Total	**$1,313.0**	**$422.8**	**$893.8**	**$437.9**	**$3,067.6**

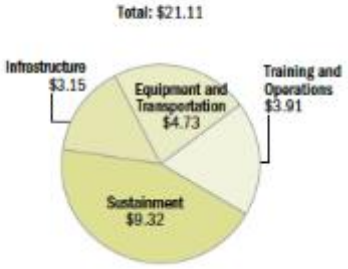
Note: Numbers have been rounded. N/A = Not available.
[1] Vehicles and Aircraft consists of the Vehicles and Transportation budget category for the four ISAGs and the Aircraft Sustainment budget category for AAF and ASSF, less the Ammunition budget line item in AAF Aircraft Sustainment.
[2] Personnel excludes $273.3 million budgeted by LOTFA for its contribution to ANP and ASSF personnel requirements.

Source: DOD, *Department of Defense Budget Justification for FY 2020 Overseas Contingency Operations, Afghanistan Security Forces Fund*, 3/2019.

ASFF DISBURSEMENTS FOR THE ANA BY SUBACTIVITY GROUP, FY 2005 TO FY 2018 APPROPRIATIONS THROUGH MARCH 31, 2019 ($ BILLIONS)



ASFF DISBURSEMENTS FOR THE ANP BY SUBACTIVITY GROUP, FY 2005 TO FY 2018 APPROPRIATIONS THROUGH MARCH 31, 2019 ($ BILLIONS)

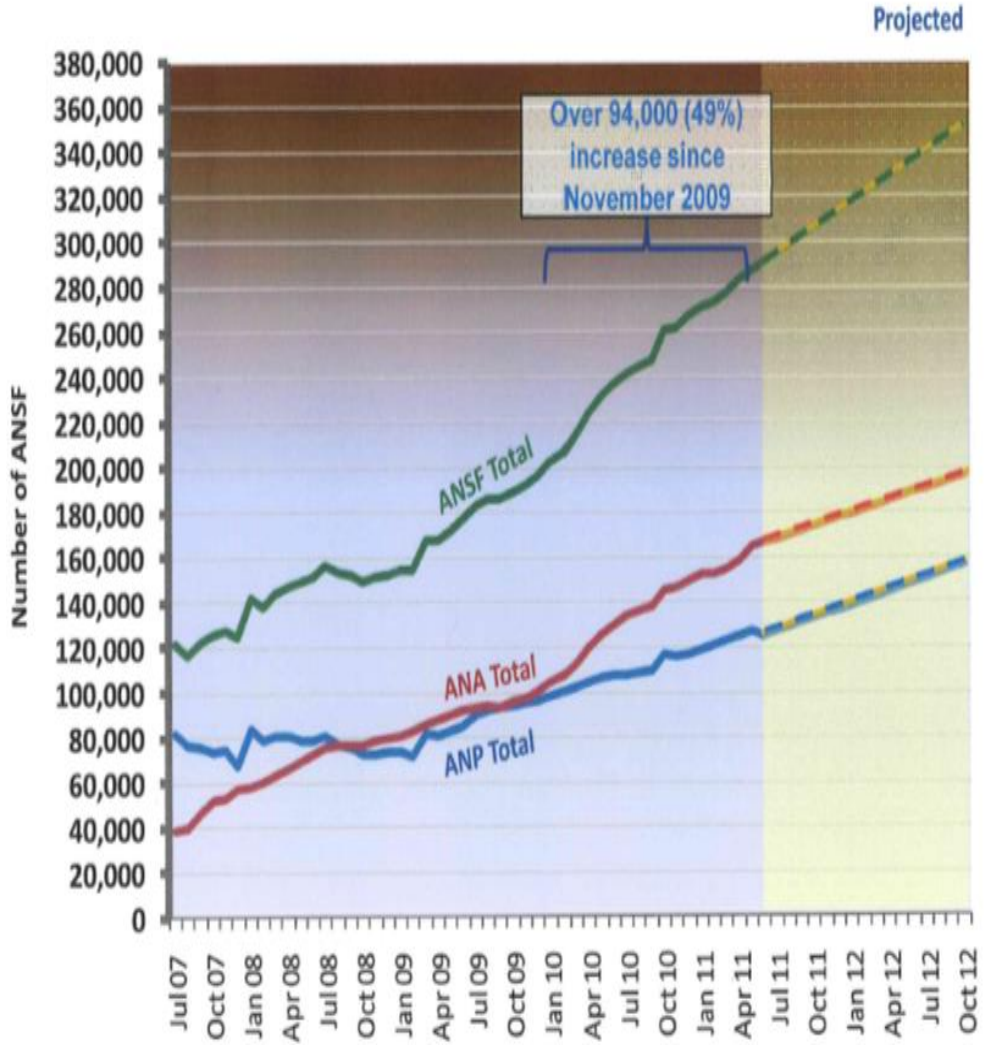


Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, April 30, 2019, pp. 57-59.

ASFF FY 2019 BUDGET AND FY 2020 BUDGET REQUEST ($ MILLIONS)

	FY 2019 Appropriated	FY 2020 Budget Request
Total	**$4,920.0**	**$4,804.0**
Afghan National Army, Total	**1,764.4**	**1,589.7**
Sustainment, Total	**1,399.7**	**1,313.0**
Personnel	609.0	539.8
Ammunition	158.2	93.9
Communications and Intelligence	187.6	116.6
Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants	92.2	170.9
All Other	352.7	391.8
Infrastructure, Total	**137.7**	**37.2**
Equipment and Transportation, Total	**61.9**	**120.9**
Training and Operations, Total	**165.1**	**118.6**
Afghan National Police, Total	**726.3**	**660.4**
Sustainment, Total	**497.6**	**422.8**
Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants	105.5	88.8
All Other	392.1	334.0
Infrastructure, Total	**43.0**	**2.4**
Equipment and Transportation, Total	**14.6**	**127.1**
Training and Operations, Total	**171.2**	**108.1**
Afghan Air Force, Total	**1,727.3**	**1,825.5**
Sustainment, Total	**892.5**	**893.8**
Ammunition	98.3	95.8
Rotary-Wing Contract Support	516.8	542.3
Fixed-Wing Contract Support	175.5	174.6
All Other	101.9	81.1
Infrastructure, Total	**30.4**	**8.6**
Equipment and Transportation, Total	**537.3**	**567.0**
Rotary-Wing Aircraft (UH-60s)	419.6	463.3
All Other	117.7	103.7
Training and Operations, Total	**267.2**	**356.1**
Afghan Special Security Forces, Total	**702.0**	**728.4**
Sustainment, Total	**353.7**	**437.9**
Aircraft Sustainment	132.9	134.4
Personnel	142.7	115.6
All Other	78.2	188.0
Infrastructure, Total	**43.1**	**21.1**
Equipment and Transportation, Total	**151.8**	**153.8**
Training and Operations, Total	**153.4**	**115.6**

Waiting Until 2008 to React to the Taliban



Force Element	Manpower Goal End 2012	% of Total
MOD	NA	NA
ANA	172,055	49%
AAF	7,639	2%
Subtotal	195,000	51%
MOI	NA	NA
ANCOP	14,451?	4%
AUP	110279	31%
ABP	23,090	7%
Subtotal	157,000	45%
CNPA	2,986?	0.8%
ALP-Militias	30,000-40,000	NA
APPF	11,000-23000	NA

As of 7 May 2011

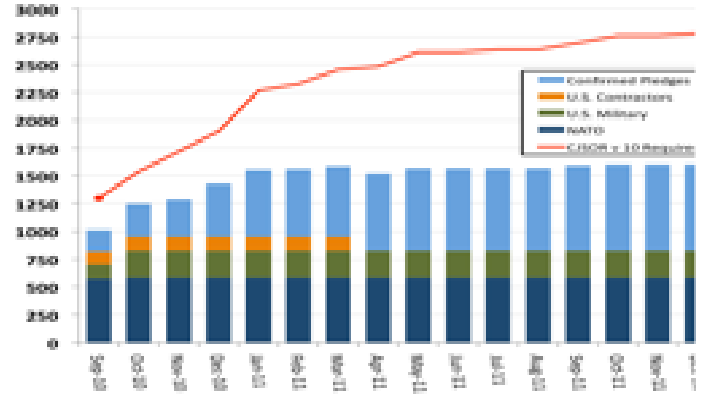
UNCLASSIFIED

Grossly Inadequate Training Through Early 2011

Suitable ANSF Force Growth and Adequate Training Capacity Do Not Occur Until 2011

Source: NTM-A, *Year In Review, November 2009 to November 2010*, p. 8.

Critical Shortfalls in ANSF Trainers Existed Before Decision to Create Effective ANSF Forces in 2010 and Continued Through 2012



Only 32% of Trainers Actually in Place on September 1, 2010

Authorized	In Place	Pledged	Shortage
2,796	896	980	920

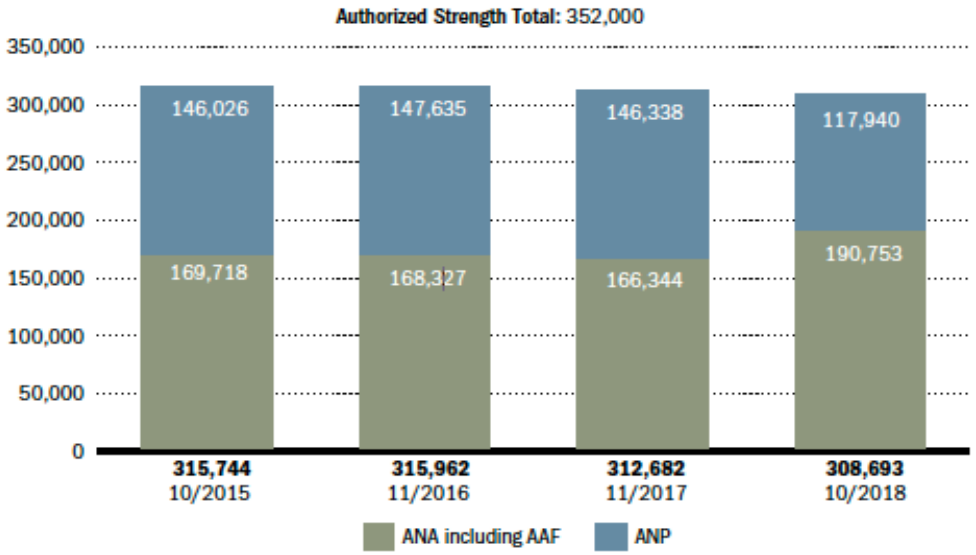
Following the September 23, 2010 NATO Force Generation Conference, in-place trainers and pledges increased by 18 percent and 34 percent, respectively, which decreased the remaining shortage of trainers by 35 percent. The total requirement in CJSOR v10 is 2,796, a net growth of 471 personnel.

To address the NATO CJSOR v10 shortfall temporarily, the United States is providing an additional 868 personnel with skills not found in the deployed units. For the fielded ANSF Force, the current shortfall is 16 Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) and 139 Police Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (POMLTs). .In 2011, the shortfalls will increase with the departure of the Canadian brigade in Kandahar and the additional growth of the ANSF. By 2011, the shortfall is projected to be 41 OMLTs and 243 POMLTs

Source: *NTM-A, Year In Review*, November 2009 to November 2010, p. 25; *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, Report to Congress In accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181), as amended, November 2010, p. 20-21

Afghan Military & Police Forces: 2015-2018

FOURTH QUARTER ANDSF ASSIGNED STRENGTH SINCE 2015



ANDSF ASSIGNED AND AUTHORIZED STRENGTH, AS OF OCTOBER 31, 2018

ANDSF Component	Authorized Strength	Assigned Strength	% of Target Authorization	Difference Between Assigned and Authorized	Difference
ANA including AAF	227,374	190,753	83.9%	(36,621)	(16.1%)
ANP	124,626	117,940	94.6%	(6,686)	(5.4%)
ANDSF Total without Civilians	**352,000**	**308,693**	**87.7%**	**(43,307)**	**(12.3%)**

Note: ANDSF = Afghan National Defense and Security Forces; ANA = Afghan National Army; AAF = Afghan Air Force; ANP = Afghan National Police. CSTC-A always caveats that ANDSF strength numbers are Afghan-owned and that RS cannot validate the data for accuracy.

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR data call, 12/20/2018 and response to SIGAR vetting, 1/16/2019; DOD, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, 12/2018, p. 41; SIGAR, analysis of CSTC-A-provided data, 1/2019.

ANDSF Personnel Strength

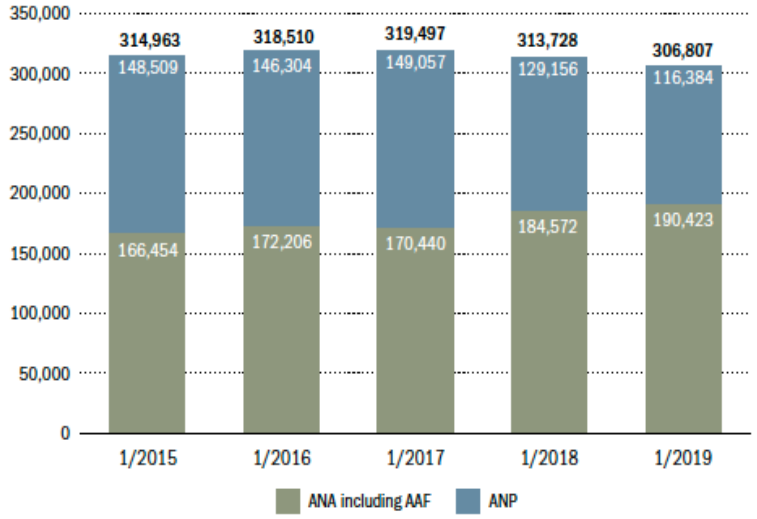
USFOR-A reported that the assigned (actual) personnel strength of the ANDSF as of October 31, 2018, (not including civilians) was 308,693 personnel, which includes 190,753 personnel in the ANA and AAF and 117,940 in the ANP.[135] ANDSF strength this quarter is the lowest it has been since the RS mission began in January 2015. ANDSF strength decreased by 3,635 since last quarter and by 3,983 since the same period in 2017. CSTC-A always caveats that ANDSF strength numbers are Afghan-owned and that RS cannot validate the data for accuracy.[136] See Figure 3.38 for a historical record of fourth-quarter ANDSF strength since 2015.

According to DOD, the ANDSF's total authorized (goal) end strength in December remained 352,000 personnel, which includes 227,374 ANA and 124,626 ANP personnel, but excludes 30,000 Afghan Local Police, who are under MOI's command.[137] Seen in Table 3.5 on the next page, this quarter's assigned strength puts the ANDSF at 87.7% (43,307 personnel short) of its authorized strength, down from 88.8% during the same period in 2017.[138]

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, January 30, 2019, pp. 71-72.

Afghan Military & Police Forces: 2019

FIRST-QUARTER ANDSF ASSIGNED STRENGTH SINCE 2015



Note: ANA = Afghan National Army; AAF = Afghan Air Force; ANP = Afghan National Police; ANDSF = Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. ANA strength numbers include the AAF and trainees, transfers, holdees, and student personnel. No civilians are included. ANP strength numbers do not include "standby" personnel, generally reservists, personnel not in service while completing training, or civilians.

This quarter, ANA data is as of January 31, 2019, and ANP data is as of December 21, 2018. The change in the individual strengths of the ANA and ANP from 2017 to 2018 and 2018 to 2019 is skewed due to the gradual transfer of two force elements from MOI to MOD, but this change did not impact the overall strength of the ANDSF. The strength numbers reported here should not be viewed as exact: CSTC-A and SIGAR have long noted many data consistency issues with ANDSF strength numbers, and CSTC-A always caveats that ANDSF strength numbers are Afghan-reported and that RS cannot validate the data for accuracy.

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR data call, 3/20/2019 and 3/20/2015; CSTC-A, response to SIGAR vetting, 5/10/2018; SIGAR, *Quarterly Reports to the United States Congress*, 4/30/2016 and 4/30/2017; SIGAR, analysis of CSTC-A-provided data, 4/2019.

TABLE 3.7

ANDSF ASSIGNED AND AUTHORIZED STRENGTH

ANDSF Component	Authorized Strength	Assigned Strength	% of Target Authorization	Difference Between Assigned and Authorized	Difference
ANA including AAF	227,374	190,423	83.7%	(36,951)	(16.3%)
ANP	124,626	116,384	93.4%	(8,242)	(6.6%)
ANDSF Total without Civilians	**352,000**	**306,807**	**87.2%**	**(45,193)**	**(12.8%)**

Note: ANP data is as of December 21, 2018, and ANA data is as of January 31, 2019; ANDSF = Afghan National Defense and Security Forces; ANA = Afghan National Army; AAF = Afghan Air Force; ANP = Afghan National Police. CSTC-A always caveats that ANDSF strength numbers are Afghan-reported and that RS cannot validate the data for accuracy.

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR data call, 3/20/2019; SIGAR, analysis of CSTC-A-provided data, 4/2019.

According to DOD, the ANA's total authorized (goal) end strength as of December 2018 was 227,374.[207] USFOR-A reported that the assigned (actual) strength of the ANA and AAF as of January 31, 2019, (not including civilians) was 190,423 personnel, a decrease of 330 personnel since last quarter. This quarter's ANA strength represents a 5,851-person increase from the same period in 2017, but this figure is skewed due to the transfer of 18,950 personnel from the Afghan Border Police (formerly under MOI) to MOD. When adjusting for that transfer, the ANA actually lost 13,099 personnel compared to the same period in 2017.[208] CSTC-A always offers the caveat that ANDSF strength numbers are Afghan-reported and that RS cannot validate the data for accuracy.[209]

The ANA's 190,423 personnel consisted of 83,702 soldiers, 72,027 noncommissioned officers, and 34,694 officers. The ANA's noncommissioned officer and officer ranks experienced attrition since last quarter (losing 429 and 69 personnel, respectively), but the number of soldiers increased by 168.[210] This quarter's assigned strength puts the ANA at 83.7%, or 36,951 personnel short, of its goal strength, a slight decrease since last quarter.[211]

According to CSTC-A, ANA monthly attrition rates averaged approximately 2.2% over the quarter, a slight improvement from the 2.5% recorded over the previous quarter. This percentage accounts for attrition alone, not the total decrease in force strength listed on the previous page, as that percentage change includes any gains made from recruitment occurring over the quarter. CSTC-A reported that attrition figures are calculated by taking an average of monthly ANA attrition rates over the last three months. CSTC-A noted this figure was calculated from Afghan-owned and -reported data provided by the MOD and that CSTC-A cannot independently verify its accuracy.[212]

According to DOD, the ANP's total authorized (goal) end strength in December 2018 was 124,626.[248] The assigned (actual) strength of the ANP, as of December 21, 2018, was 116,384 personnel. This figure represents a decrease of 1,556 personnel since last quarter, and a 12,772-person decrease compared to the same period in 2018. The latter decrease was mostly due to the transfer of 18,950 Afghan Border Police (formerly MOI) personnel to MOD. When adjusting for that transfer, the ANP actually gained 6,178 personnel compared to last year. CSTC-A always offers the caveat that ANDSF strength numbers are Afghan-reported and that RS cannot validate the data for accuracy.[249] This quarter's strength puts the ANP at 93.4% (or 8,242 personnel below) of its authorized strength.[250]

According to CSTC-A, ANP attrition rates this quarter averaged approximately 2.2%, the same average reported last quarter. This percentage accounts for attrition alone, not the total decrease in force strength above as that percentage change would include any gains made from recruitment occurring over the quarter. CSTC-A reported that attrition figures are calculated by taking an average of monthly ANP attrition rates over the last three months. CSTC-A noted this figure was calculated from Afghan-owned and -reported data provided by the MOI.[251]

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, April 30, 2019, pp. 84, 98-99.

SIGAR Assessment of High Risk in Afghan Police

SIGAR's quarterly reports track ANP reconstruction metrics, some of which appear to show that the ANP has sustained itself or even improved in important areas such as organizational structure, the number of security incidents involving the ANP, personnel strength, and personnel accountability since SIGAR's last *High-Risk List* was published in January 2017. Challenges, of course, remain in all of these areas.

In late 2017 and early 2018, the ANP's Afghan Border Patrol (ABP) and Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) were reassigned from the MOI to the MOD. Technically, the ANCOP had been the ANP's element responsible for high-risk districts. The ABP was meant to be responsible for securing ports of entry along international borders and at airports. But, ANCOP and ABP were often misused as military forces because no other security element had the ability to handle certain missions. For example, on one day in 2010 in Kandahar Province, the ABP attacked and secured key Taliban-controlled villages in Arghandab District. Arghandab is a lush agricultural district more than 60 miles from the Pakistan border. This mission was not related to airport or border security. The ABP was used for fighting in a high-threat district, very far from the border, because Kandahar authorities believed the ABP would succeed where the ANA and other forces had not. In this context, the intent of transferring ANCOP and ABP to the MOD was to move police forces that were focused more on military operations to the MOD, leaving MOI to deal with civil policing.75

Security incidents involving the ANP are also decreasing. According to data compiled by the State Department-sponsored Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), from January 1, 2017, through January 31, 2019, the number of security incidents involving the ANP has been trending downward, despite significant increases during the summers of 2017 and 2018. For example, in January 2017, 152 security incidents involving the ANP were recorded; in contrast, only 72 such incidents were recorded in January 2018 and 41 in January 2019. The vast majority of ACLED-recorded incidents pertaining to the ANP are of military-style armed conflict.76 The exact reasons why ANP armed conflict is declining is unclear, but a decline in police fighting, under any circumstances, is an important step towards a final cessation in hostilities. Further, this downward trend in ANP security incidents has likely helped the ANP sustain its force strength numbers.

ANP strength has improved after adjusting for the transfers of 30,689 ANCOP and ABP personnel from the MOI to MOD, the ANP gained 2,291 personnel since 2017 (ANP assigned strength has declined by 28,398 personnel as of October 31, 2018, due largely to ANCOP and ABP transfers during 2018, in comparison to October 2017). This puts the ANP assigned strength at 94.6% of its authorized strength of 124,626 personnel. The ANP is thereby at nearly full strength, and the January 2019 assigned-to-authorized strength ratio is consistent with the 94% assigned-to-authorized strength reported in January 2017.77 Additionally, since SIGAR published its 2017 *High-Risk List*, improvements have been made in accounting systems that should verify if these strength numbers are accurate.

Source: SIGAR, 2019 High Risk List, March, 2019, pp. 20-23.

New Leadership

	Officers Indentified for Retirement	Jan. 1-Mar. 1, 2018	Jul. 1-Sep. 1, 2018	Jan. 1-Mar. 1, 2019	Total Retirements	Waivers Granted
MoD	293 Generals 1,619 Colonels	**Wave 1** 162 Generals 494 Colonels	**Wave 2** 61 Generals 497 Colonels	**Wave 3** 24 Generals 344 Colonels	247 Generals 1,335 Colonels	46 Generals 284 Colonels*
MoI	302 Generals 1,473 Colonels	—	**Wave 1** 142 Generals 738 Colonels	**Wave 2** 139 Generals 400 Colonels	281 Generals 1,138 Colonels	21 Generals 335 Colonels

*Some waivers pending approval

New Leadership. The increase in ANA offensive military pressure on the enemy throughout winter was a result of a culture shift within the force driven by the new leadership, including replacing five of six Corps commanders, the Chief of General Staff (CoGS), and the Minister of Defense and the Minister of Interior. Parliament subsequently confirmed the appointments of Minister of Defense Bahrami and Minister of Interior Barmak, empowering both leaders to pursue much-needed reform. For example, soon after his confirmation, Minister Barmak replaced seven Provincial Chiefs of Police (in Farah, Sar-e Pul, Herat, Takhar, Samangan, Khost, and Kabul) and all 18 Kabul District Chiefs of Police. Selection for replacements included a merit-based screening and board process culminating with Presidential approval.

Inherent Law. A generational change in leadership began within the MoD in January 2018 with the first wave of Inherent Law retirements (including 656 colonels and generals)—and subsequent merit-based promotions—and continued this reporting period when the MoD retired 497 colonels and 61 generals under the second wave of Inherent Law. Similar changes in MoI leadership began this reporting period when the first wave of MoI Inherent Law retired 738 colonels and 142 generals. This generational change of leadership will open senior leadership positions for the next generation of ANDSF leaders selected based on merit rather than patronage. The anticipated rapid turnover of personnel underscores the importance of ministerial commitment to facilitate an orderly transition and oversee the education and training of new leadership.

Unity of Effort/Unity of Command

The FY17-18 MoD Optimization program sought to correct command and control shortcomings by decreasing the span of control of some organizations and by increasing the number of civilian positions at the ministerial level. Reducing the top-heavy structure, civilianizing the workforce, and enabling a progressive generation of leaders are all among the optimization goals. These efforts led to more than 900 personnel reductions, which allowed for ASSF and AAF growth. In 2017, the Afghan Border Police transferred to MoD and became the Afghan Border Force (ABF).

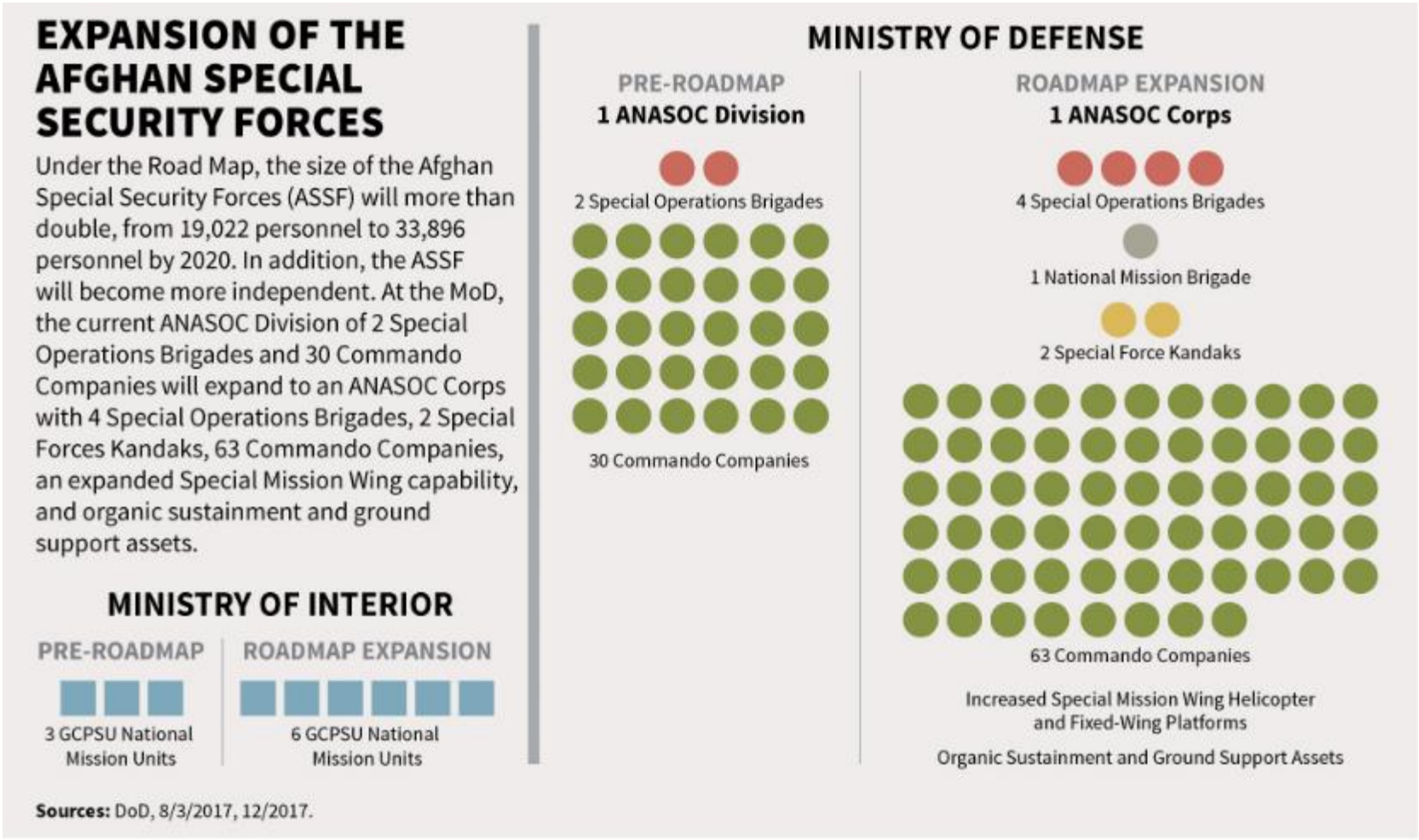
Counter-Corruption[17]

The Afghan government made tangible progress on important anti-corruption reforms, but more work remains. President Ghani unveiled the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) in September 2017. Corruption remains the top strategic threat to the legitimacy and success of the Afghan government. President Ghani continues to demonstrate his commitment to reform in this critical area by enforcing the investigation and prosecution of corrupt officials through the concerted efforts of the Major Crimes Task Force (MCTF), the Anti-Corruption Justice Center (ACJC), and the Afghan Attorney General's office.

Source: Source: **Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan;** December 2018, pp.
Report to Congress In Accordance With Section 1225 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (P.L. 113-291), as amended, , pp. 39-40.

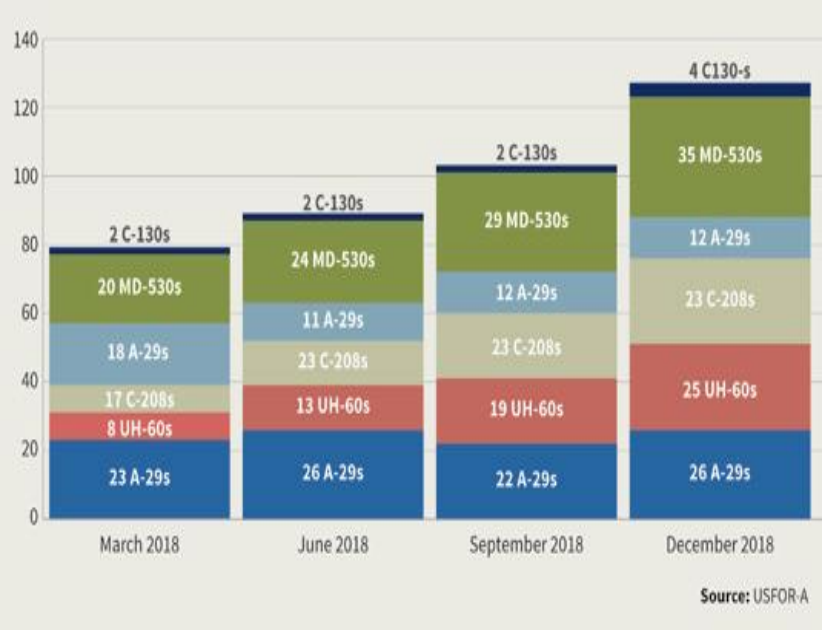
Expansion of Afghan Special Security Forces

As part of the ANDSF Roadmap,
the ANASOC division expanded from a division of 11,300 personnel to a corps with four brigades and a National Mission Brigade, totaling 22,994 personnel.



Source: **Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan;** December 2018, pp.
Report to Congress In Accordance With Section 1225 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (P.L. 113-291), as amended, p. 83.

An Uncertain Afghan Air Force – LIG Reporting



AFGHAN AVIATION SUMMARY, AS OF DECEMBER 2018

AIRCRAFT	Total	Usable	Command Pilots	Co-Pilots	Other Aircrew
A-29	12	11	15	0	8
Mi-17	47	26	25	33	7
UH-60	26	25	11	26	35
MD-530	35	35	50	30	0
C-130	4	4	8	3	15
C-208	24	23	27	22	0

Note: Only qualified pilots and aircrew are listed in this table. "Other Aircrew" includes loadmasters, flight engineers, and special mission operators and vary by airframe. These figures do not include the aircraft or personnel for the Special Mission Wing, which are classified.

Source: TAAC-Air, response to SIGAR data call, 12/20/2018 and response to SIGAR vetting, 10/3/2018; SIGAR, analysis of TAAC-Air-provided data, 12/2018.

In December, 25 AAF aircraft, mostly Mi-17 helicopters, were not usable. The AAF had 9 A-29 light attack aircraft based in the United States for pilot training, in addition to 12 usable A-29s in Afghanistan.
However, the AAF has not been able to train enough pilots to keep pace with its rapidly growing fleet. The UH-60 program, for example, has not filled all of its pilot classes due to attrition and lack of candidates, USFOR-A said.126 The DoD said that because the initial fielding of the UH-60s occurred nearly two years earlier than initially planned, the throughput of pilot candidates initially lagged the pace of aircraft fielding. In addition, some UH-60 pilots who were in the United States for training went AWOL. The DoD has ended U.S.-based training for rotary wing pilots and is conducting it in other
Training of MD-530 pilots is also unable to keep pace with projected expansion due to low numbers of pilot candidates. The A-29 pilot training program, conducted at Moody Air Force Base, Georgia, is training a sufficient number of pilots, USFOR-A said.
Continued pilot production will depend on full program resourcing as it transfers to Afghanistan by

Source: Adapted from **Lead Inspector General, OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL**, **LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS**, **OCTOBER 1, 2018–DECEMBER 31, 2018, pp. 28**; SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, January 30, 2019, pp. 94.

An Uncertain Afghan Air Force – SIGAR Reporting

Note the Crisis in Training for for Fixed Wing Attack Aircraft

As seen in Table 3.12, the AAF's current in-country inventory, as of February 2019, includes 160 aircraft (133 of which are operational).[228]

Train, Advise, Assist Command-Air (TAAC-Air) reported this quarter that the AAF received six more MD-530s and 10 UH-60s in Afghanistan. Additionally, the AAF received its first five AC-208 light attack aircraft this quarter. Five more AC-208s are scheduled to arrive in Afghanistan by late May 2019, and two MD-530s, six UH-60s, and three A-29s are scheduled to arrive by September. Two MD-530s were lost this quarter: one was hit by surface-to-air fire near Ghazni City on February 7 and destroyed in place; another experienced engine failure after a hard landing in Zabul Province on February 10. The latter aircraft is expected to be recovered, but TAAC-South has so far had higher-priority missions.[229]

TAAC-Air reported that the AAF flew 14,398 sorties from December 1, 2018, through March 31, 2019. A sortie is defined as one takeoff and one landing. There were an average of 3,600 sorties per month this quarter, with the most sorties (4,027) flown in March 2019. This is a 10% increase from the 3,264 average sorties per month reported last quarter (August 1–November 30, 2018).[230] As in previous quarters, the Mi-17 flew the greatest number of sorties (6,182), followed by the UH-60 (3,270).[231]

- **UH-60:** The UH-60 program is currently making a new effort to maximize the recruitment and training of pilots and aircrew utilizing a third-country location. The new effort will push all aircraft-qualification training through a third-country and mission-qualification training (which includes combat skills training) will take place in Kandahar. This adjusted, parallel effort will allow for qualified aircrew to keep pace with aircraft deliveries in Afghanistan. TAAC-Air is also using smaller class sizes in more frequent intervals to minimize the delay time for students between training programs. Some Mi-17 aircrew will be converted to UH-60 aircrew as the Mi-17 mission draws to a close for the AAF. There remains a continued emphasis on night-vision goggle training and employment for the UH-60 platform.
- **AC-208 and C-208:** The AC-208 pilot training classes that were underway in the United States were disbanded due to the number of trainees who were going absent without leave (AWOL). Those students that did not go AWOL were pulled back to Afghanistan to complete their training; as a result, only one class graduated from the U.S.-based program. The second and third classes will continue and finish their training in Afghanistan. TAAC-Air has a plan to continue the student training and is developing a contract solution to support the effort to train the initial group of AC-208 aircrew. TAAC-Air said the C-208 trainees continue to progress to a self-sustaining level of proficiency.

AFGHAN AVIATION SUMMARY AS OF FEBRUARY 2019

Aircraft	Total	Usable	Quarter Change	Command Pilots	Co-Pilots	Other Aircrew
A-29	12	11	0	13	0	8
Mi-17	46	23	(3)	25	33	7
UH-60	36	35	10	11	26	35
MD-530	43	41	6	32	28	0
C-130	4	4	0	8	3	14
AC-208	5	5	5	5	0	4
C-208	24	24	1	25	25	0

Note: Only qualified pilots and aircrew are listed in this table, except for AC-208 personnel (who will be fully qualified in May 2019). "Other Aircrew" includes loadmasters, flight engineers, and special mission operators and vary by airframe. These figures do not include the aircraft or personnel for the Special Mission Wing, which are classified. "Quarter Change" refers to the change in usable aircraft only. All AC-208s are in this category because the air platform is new this quarter to the AAF's inventory.

- **A-29:** The A-29 program is still building its pilot force at Moody Air Force Base in the United States. The U.S.-based program will end in late 2020 and the A-29 training efforts will transition to Afghanistan in order to develop the remaining A-29 force. After the required force is built, A-29 pilot training in Afghanistan will still be needed to create new pilots as older pilots leave due to promotions and retirements. The Afghanistan portion of the program will begin with a very small footprint in mid-2019 and is expected to be located in Mazar-e Sharif. TAAC-Air is exploring options to streamline the training timeline for pilots from entry level pilot training to mission qualified training. Night training also continues to be a training priority for this platform.

- **MD-530:** TAAC-Air said it continues to find efficient solutions for the MD-530 training pipeline to ensure that students delivered to the squadron are trained to the best standard possible. Following issues raised last quarter, they are currently exploring options to expand the pilot training pipeline, including options to give contractors that provide training support more flexibility to train students. This would reduce the strain on the already limited Afghan trainer force. As with the UH-60 platform, TAAC-Air is also considering a third-country option to expand and streamline the pilot and aircrew training pipeline for the MD-530.

Source: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update*, April 30, 2019, pp. 96-97.

SIGAR High Risk Area: Civil Policing Capability

Based on its work and analysis, SIGAR has found there is no comprehensive strategy for how the United States and Coalition partners will align its nationwide police advising mission to support Afghan rule of law and civil policing.[28] Throughout the reconstruction effort, the United States has placed more emphasis on reconstructing the Afghan National Army (ANA) than the Afghan National Police (ANP). For years, the ANP were used to provide paramilitary support to ANA counterinsurgency rather than performing core police functions.[29]

This presents a problem and a serious risk: Following a political settlement, Afghan police, rather than the army, are likely to be the element responsible for everyday security and will serve as a direct link between the Afghan government's authority and the Afghan people. The U.S. Department of Justice has a program to train foreign police forces—the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program—but that program has no independent funding or operational authority and must fully rely on State or DOD.[30] NATO itself does not have a police advising capability, although efforts are underway to create a capability to deploy professional police advisors in future NATO operations. The concept is pending review and approval.[31]

The need to revise the role and raise the normal policing capabilities of the ANP raises questions about the U.S. strategy going forward with allies and the Afghan government to improve civil policing, provide funding, potentially integrate former Taliban fighters into the force, promote observance of the rule of law, and counter the impacts of corruption and narcotics trafficking.

Source: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update*, April 30, 2019, p. 9.

Military Balance, Patterns of Combat Activity, and Levels of Control and Influence

Military Balance, Patterns of Combat Activity, and Levels of Control and Influence

Virtually every piece of data on Afghanistan and the Afghan War has been uncertain since the beginning of the U.S. intervention, and the apparent precision of many reports disguises the fact that they often have no reliable inputs or that the data are different conflict from source to source. Even estimates of basic data like total population, poverty, unemployment, life expectancy, infantry mortality, education and levels are notoriously uncertain.

The estimates of Government versus Taliban control of Afghan Districts and its population have always been a key source of controversy. ISAF and the Resolute Support Command have issued over-optimistic estimates for years, and ones where apparent Government control of a small part of a District like its Capital could disguise strong Taliban or other insurgent influence in most of that District. The same has been true of the estimates of "contested" districts, where Resolute Support issued low-end estimates that many outside experts questioned.

These command estimates became more uncertain and controversial after 2014, when U.S. forces in the field were cut back and U.S. access to much of the country became limited. However, Resolute Support did produce less favorable estimates over time. By early 2018, even the official estimates reflected a stalemate with trends that slightly favored the Taliban, although no one could assess the level of relative uncertainty in the official versus outside estimates.

By the end of 2018, all major estimates indicated that the situation had further deteriorated, although the various estimates still differed. The metrics in this section show that Lead Inspector General (LIG) of the Department of Defense stated in its February 2019 report (p.17) that Afghan Government "control" dropped from 75 to 74 districts (18%) out of a total of 407 between Jul 2018 and October 2018, and that Government "influence" dropped from 151 to 145 districts (36%). At the same time, Government control over the total population stayed constant at 34% of the population, although Government influence over the population dropped from 31% to 29%.

In contrast, the LIG reported that Taliban "control" rose from 10 to 12 districts, although its "influence" dropped from 39 to 38 districts and its mix of control and influence over the population remained constant at 11%. The LIG also reported that the number of "contested" Districts where neither side dominated rose from 132 to 138, and the percentage of the total population that was contested rose from 24% to 26%. Put differently, this meant a total of 188 districts were contested or under Taliban control and influence by late October 2018, and 37% of the population.

Another official U.S. source, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) used a similar set of figures in the report that it issued at the end of January (pp. 71-72). This estimate did, however, put the October 2018 numbers in perspective. It stated that the Government "control" and "influence" over the Districts had dropped

by more than 18% since SIGAR first began receiving such reports from the Resolute Support Command in November 2015. It also stated that the number of contested Districts had risen by nearly 13% and the number under insurgent control or influence had risen by 5%.

SIGAR reporting for the first Quarter of 2019 indicates that Resolute Support has now stopped making such estimates, and suggests that it may have done so because they provided a level of bad news that the U.S. did not want publicize. It is not clear that this is the case. What is clear is that Resolute Support has stopped making such estimates, means there *now is no official estimate of progress in the war since late 2018*.

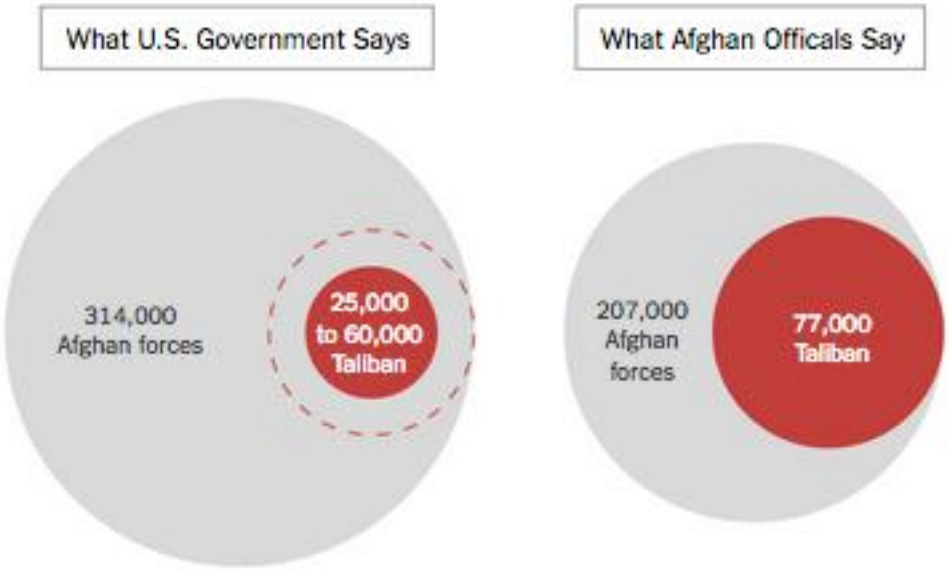
Moreover, one of the most respected outside sources, the *Long War Journal*, estimated on 29 April 2019 that the Taliban now controlled 141 out of 398 (407?) Districts (35%), and 9% of a population that it estimated was some 33 million. (https://www.longwarjournal.org/mapping-taliban-control-in-afghanistan)

In sharp contrasts to Resolute Support, the Long War Journal estimated that the Taliban "contested" control over 42% of the total population, versus Resolute Support's estimate that it had an "influence" of only 26% -- an estimate and one that painted a far more negative picture of the war. This higher level of Taliban success (and Afghan government weakness) is one that many reporters and outside analysts feel may be more correct, but there is no way to establish the facts, and "contested" does not have the same literal meaning as "influence."

In short, there now are no official metrics that begin to provide a reliable way to know who is "winning" or the level of "stalemate." This gap in reporting is further compounded by the fact that other official estimates of progress -- like Enemy Initiated Attacks -- have been little more than meaningless.

There also are no clear alternatives to draw upon. Estimates by the UN of "safe" districts are no longer public. And, public estimates have ever noted which Districts, or how much of the population, has been under power broker or warlord control, had effective governance, or was dominated by narco-trafficking. These omissions are not minor considerations in a war for "hearts and minds" in country whose security problems are compounded by critical civil problems, and by a level of governance and political leadership that the World Bank and Transparency International estimate is one of the worst and most corrupt in the world.

Differing Estimates of Relative Afghan and Taliban Force Strength: May 2018



The American military says the Afghan government effectively "controls or influences" 56 percent of the country. But that assessment relies on statistical sleight of hand. In many districts, the Afghan government controls only the district headquarters and military barracks, while the Taliban control the rest.
On paper, Afghan security forces outnumber the Taliban by 10 to 1, or even more. But some Afghan officials estimate that a third of their soldiers and police officers are "ghosts" who have left or deserted without being removed from payrolls. Many others are poorly trained and unqualified.

The Afghan government says it killed 13,600 insurgents and arrested 2,000 more last year — nearly half the estimated 25,000 to 35,000 Taliban fighters an official United States report said were active in the country in 2017. But in January, United States officials said insurgents numbered at least 60,000, and Afghan officials recently estimated the Taliban's strength at more than 77,000.

Source: ROD NORDLAND, ASH NGU and FAHIM ABED , **How the U.S. Government Misleads the Public on Afghanistan**, New York Times By SEPT. 8, 2018

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Killing Key Reporting on Afghan Government and Insurgent Control and Influence

This quarter, NATO's Resolute Support (RS) train-advise-assist mission in Afghanistan formally notified SIGAR that it has discontinued producing one of its most widely cited Afghan security metrics: district, population, and territorial control data. The command said they no longer saw decision-making value in these data.[129] The latest data from the few remaining publicly available measures of the security situation in Afghanistan—enemy-initiated attacks, general ANDSF casualty trends, and security incidents—show that Afghanistan experienced heightened insecurity over the winter months.

According to Resolute Support (RS), enemy-initiated attacks rose considerably: the monthly average attacks from November 2018 through January 2019 was up 19% compared to the monthly average over the last reporting period (August 16 to October 31, 2018).[130] USFOR-A said that from December 1, 2018, through February 28, 2019, "the number of ANDSF casualties were approximately 31% higher during this three-month period when compared to the same period one year prior."[131] The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) reported 2,234 security-related incidents in Afghanistan from December 1, 2018–February 28, 2019, a 39% increase compared to same period the year before.[132] These trends are notable considering that violence has typically waned during the winter months in Afghanistan over the last several years.[133]

These data align with the U.S. intelligence community's most recent public assessment that "Afghan forces generally have secured cities and other government strongholds, but the Taliban has increased large-scale attacks, and Afghan security suffers from a large number of forces being tied down in defensive missions, mobility shortfalls, and a lack of reliable forces to hold recaptured territory."[134] Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats projected in late January that in 2019 "neither the Afghan government nor the Taliban will be able to gain a strategic advantage in the Afghan war in the coming year, even if Coalition support remains at current levels."[135] General Votel echoed this statement in March. When pressed whether current conditions in Afghanistan merit a withdrawal of U.S. forces, General Votel said "The political conditions . . . right now don't merit that."[136]

ANDSF Data Discontinued

USFOR-A discontinued the following data this quarter:

- District-stability assessments (district, population, and territorial control data)

Population, District, and Territorial Control

This quarter, RS formally notified SIGAR that it is no longer producing its district-level stability assessment of Afghan government and insurgent control and influence, expressed in a count of the districts, the total estimated population of the district, and the total estimated area of the districts. According to RS, they determined the district-stability assessments were "of limited decision-making value to the [RS] Commander." RS added that there is currently no other product or forum through which district-level control data is communicated to the command.[137] The last district stability data RS produced was for its October 22, 2018, assessment; SIGAR reported on that assessment in its January 2019 *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*.

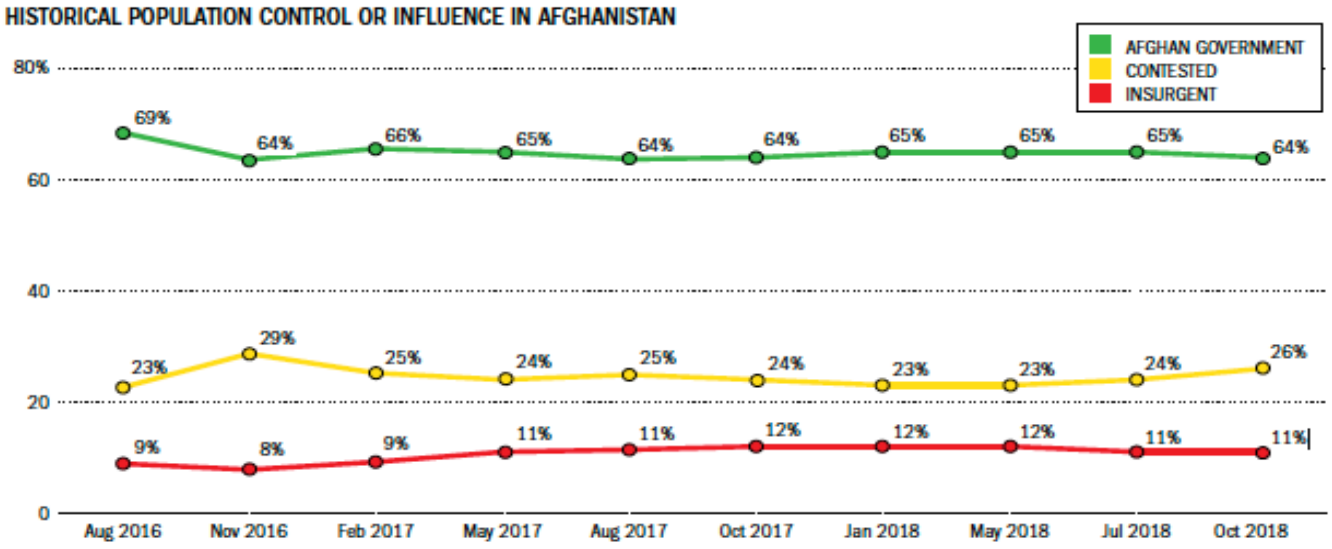
In mid-January, DOD told SIGAR that the assessments "are not indicative of effectiveness of the South Asia strategy or of progress toward security and stability in Afghanistan, particularly in the wake of the appointment of U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad." They reiterated that there is some "uncertainty in the models that produce [the district-stability data] and the assessments that underlie them are to a degree subjective." DOD said that it is "more important to instead focus on the principal goal of the strategy of concluding the war in Afghanistan on terms favorable to Afghanistan and the United States."[138]

SIGAR recognized and reported the limitations of the district-stability assessment, including its increasing level of subjectivity.[139] However, senior RS officials had previously cited its importance in public statements. For example, in November 2017, the RS commander said that improving population control in Afghanistan (to 80% by the end of 2019) was one of his strategic priorities.[140] Additionally, RS told SIGAR in May 2017 that the district-control assessments were being "methodologically improved" by making them more subjective, basing them on RS regional commanders' informed opinions about the control status of districts within their area of responsibility.[141] Despite its limitations, the control data was the only unclassified metric provided by RS that consistently tracked changes to the security situation on the ground. While the data did not on its own indicate the success or failure of the South Asia strategy, it did contribute to an overall understanding of the situation in the country.

As SIGAR has reported, RS's control data from May 2017 to October 2018 showed a stagnant security environment in Afghanistan. Addressing the stagnation, RS said in late January that "one necessary condition [for a political resolution] is the perception by both sides that the conflict is in a military stalemate . . . little variation in district stability data support multiple years of assessments that the conflict is in a stalemate."[142]

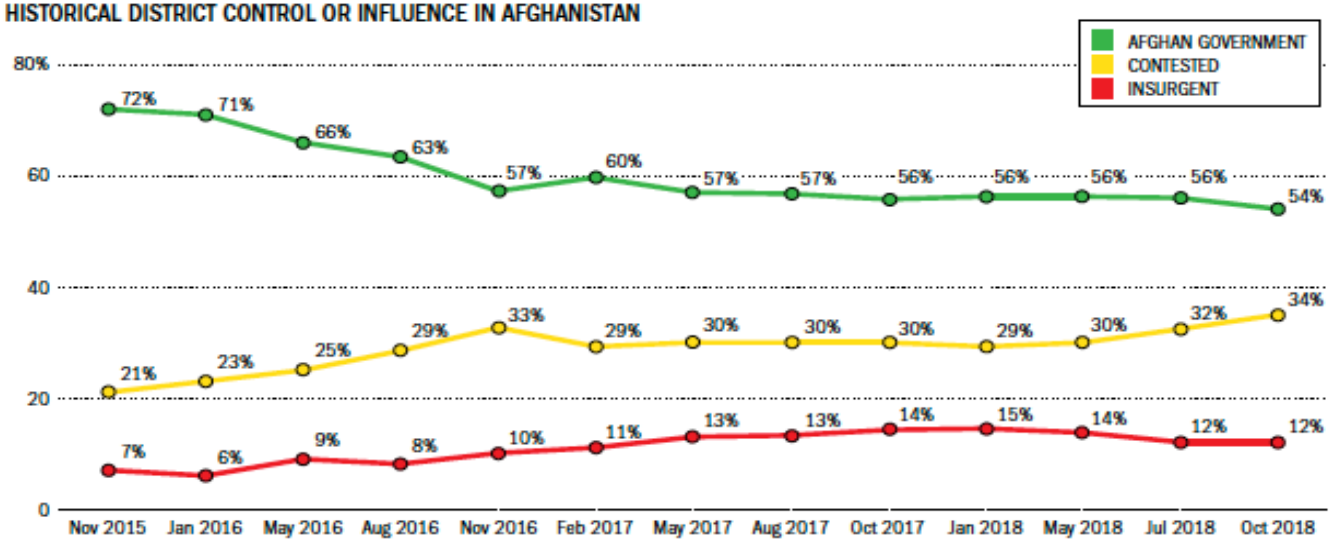
Source: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update*, April 30, 2019, pp. 73-74.

Resolute Support-LIG: Population and District Control and Influence: 8/16-10/18



Note: Component numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding. Afghan government and insurgent figures include control and influence.

Source: RS, response to SIGAR data call, 8/28/2016, 11/15/2016, 2/20/2017, 5/15/2017, 8/28/2017, 10/15/2017, 3/22/2018, 6/22/2018, 9/19/2018, and 12/20/2018; RS, response to SIGAR vetting, 1/16/2018.



Note: Component numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding. Afghan government and insurgent figures include control and influence.

Source: RS, response to SIGAR data call, 11/27/2015, 1/29/2016, 5/28/2016, 8/28/2016, 11/15/2016, 2/20/2017, 5/15/2017, 8/28/2017, 10/15/2017, 3/22/2018, 6/22/2018, 9/19/2018, and 12/20/2018; RS, response to SIGAR vetting, 1/16/2018.

Source: Adapted from **Lead Inspector General, OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL, LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, OCTOBER 1, 2018–DECEMBER 31, 2018, p. 17**.

Resolute Support-LIG : District Stability Assessment 2018 -I

Resolute Support District Stability Assessment, July and October 2018

	Population		Districts	
	July 2018	October 2018	July 2018	October 2018
Afghan Government Influence	31%	29%	151	145
Afghan Government Control	34%	34%	75	74
Total Afghan Government Control or Influence	65%	63%	226	219
Total Contested	24%	26%	132	138
Taliban Influence	10%	9%	39	38
Taliban Control	2%	2%	10	12
Total Taliban Control or Influence	11%	11%	49	50

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding. **Source:** USFOR-A

The most recent Resolute Support District Stability Assessment, conducted in October 2018, found that the percentage of Afghan citizens who live in areas under government control or influence decreased slightly compared to the previous quarter. As shown in Table 3, 63 percent of Afghan citizens were assessed to be living in areas under government control or influence in October, compared to 65 percent in July.74 The net total of districts assessed as contested increased by six districts, and the net total of districts assessed as under Taliban control or influence increased by one district. The provinces with the greatest number of Afghans living under insurgent influence or control were Faryab, Kunduz, and Helmand.

In late 2017, USFOR-A and the Afghan government stated that a major objective of the South Asia strategy and Afghan Road Map was to increase security to the point that 80 percent of the Afghan population lived in areas under government control or influence by the end of 2019. A previous Lead IG quarterly report questioned the analytical foundation for that goal. The DoD stated this quarter that district and population control "are not indicative of the effectiveness of the South Asia strategy." The DoD also attributed the lack of large changes in district and population control to the "uncertainty in the models that produce them."

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Source: Adapted from **Lead Inspector General, OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL, LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, OCTOBER 1, 2018–DECEMBER 31, 2018, p. 17**.

SIGAR: District Stability Assessment as of October 22, 2018 - II

GOVERNMENT AND INSURGENT CONTROL WITHIN AFGHANISTAN AS OF OCTOBER 2018

Control Status	Districts		Population		Territory	
	Number	%	In Millions	%	Sq Km	%
GOVERNMENT						
Control	74	18%	11.3	34%	104,000	16%
Influence	145	36%	9.9	30%	258,000	40%
CONTESTED	138	34%	8.5	26%	171,000	27%
INSURGENT						
Control	12	3%	0.6	2%	40,000	6%
Influence	38	9%	3.0	9%	71,000	11%
Total	**407**	**100%**	**33.3**	**100%**	**644,000**	**100%**

Note: Sq Km = square kilometers. Component numbers may not add to 100 because of rounding. Territory figures have been rounded by RS.

Source: RS, response to SIGAR data call, 12/20/2018; RS, response to SIGAR vetting, 10/11/2018.

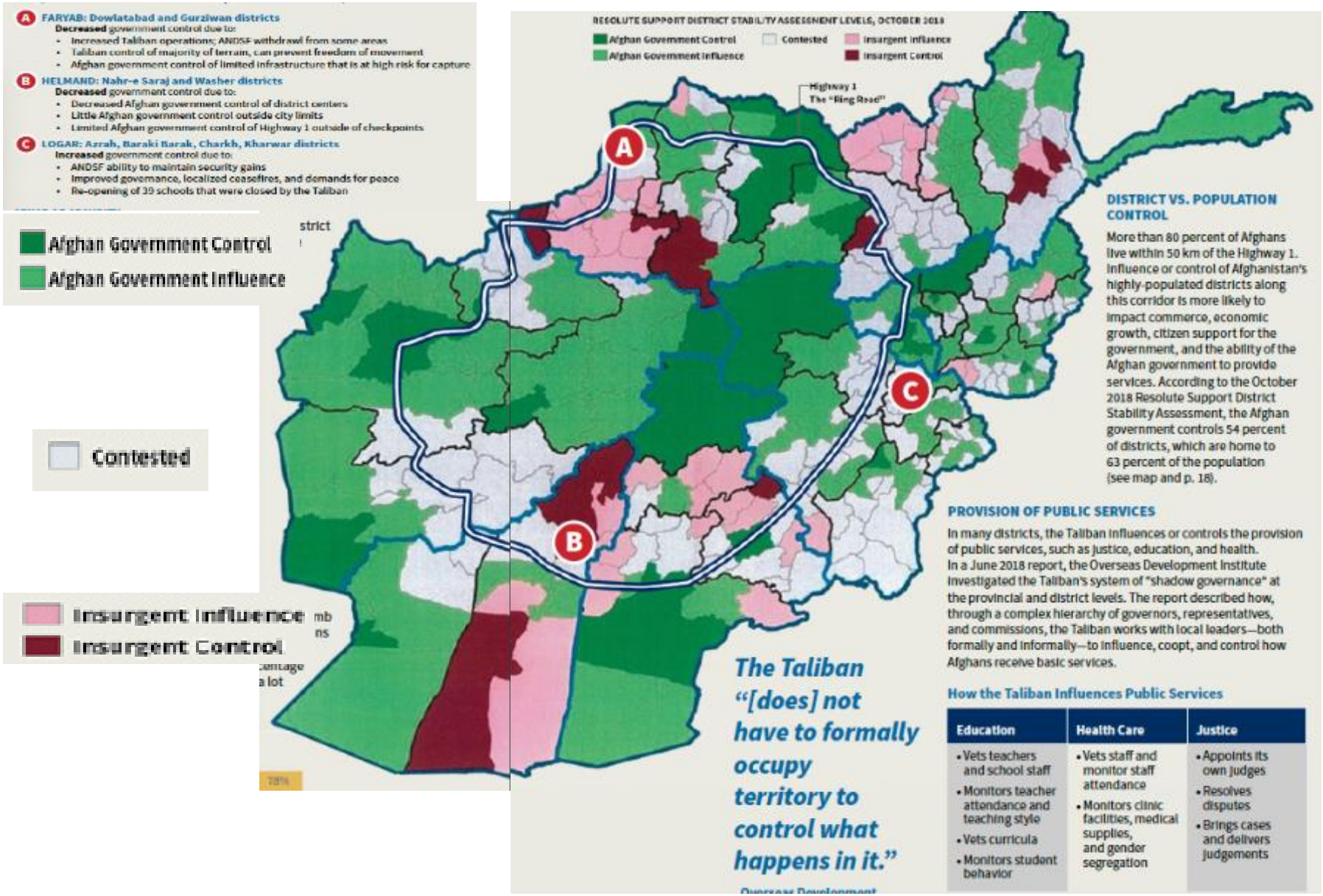
Since SIGAR began receiving district-control data in November 2015, Afghan government control and influence over its districts has declined by more than 18 percentage points; contested districts have increased by about 13 points; and insurgent control or influence has risen by about five points.[111] A historical record of district control is shown in Figure 3.31.

RS identified the provinces with the most insurgent-controlled or -influenced districts as Kunduz (five of seven districts), and Uruzgan (four of six districts), and Helmand (nine of 14 districts).[112] DOD reported in December that the provincial centers of all of Afghanistan's provinces are under Afghan government control or influence.[113] See Figure 3.32, for an RS-provided map showing Afghan government and insurgent control or influence by district.

As seen in Table 3.3 on the next page, RS reported that the Afghan government controlled or influenced 360,000 square kilometers (56.1%) of Afghanistan's total land area of roughly 644,000 square kilometers, down less than half a percentage point since last quarter. The insurgency controlled or influenced 111,000 square kilometers (17.3%) of the total land area, also down by roughly half a percentage point since last quarter. The remaining 171,000 square kilometers (26.6%) was contested by the government and insurgents, a one percentage-point increase since last quarter.[114]

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, January 30, 2019, pp. 71-72.

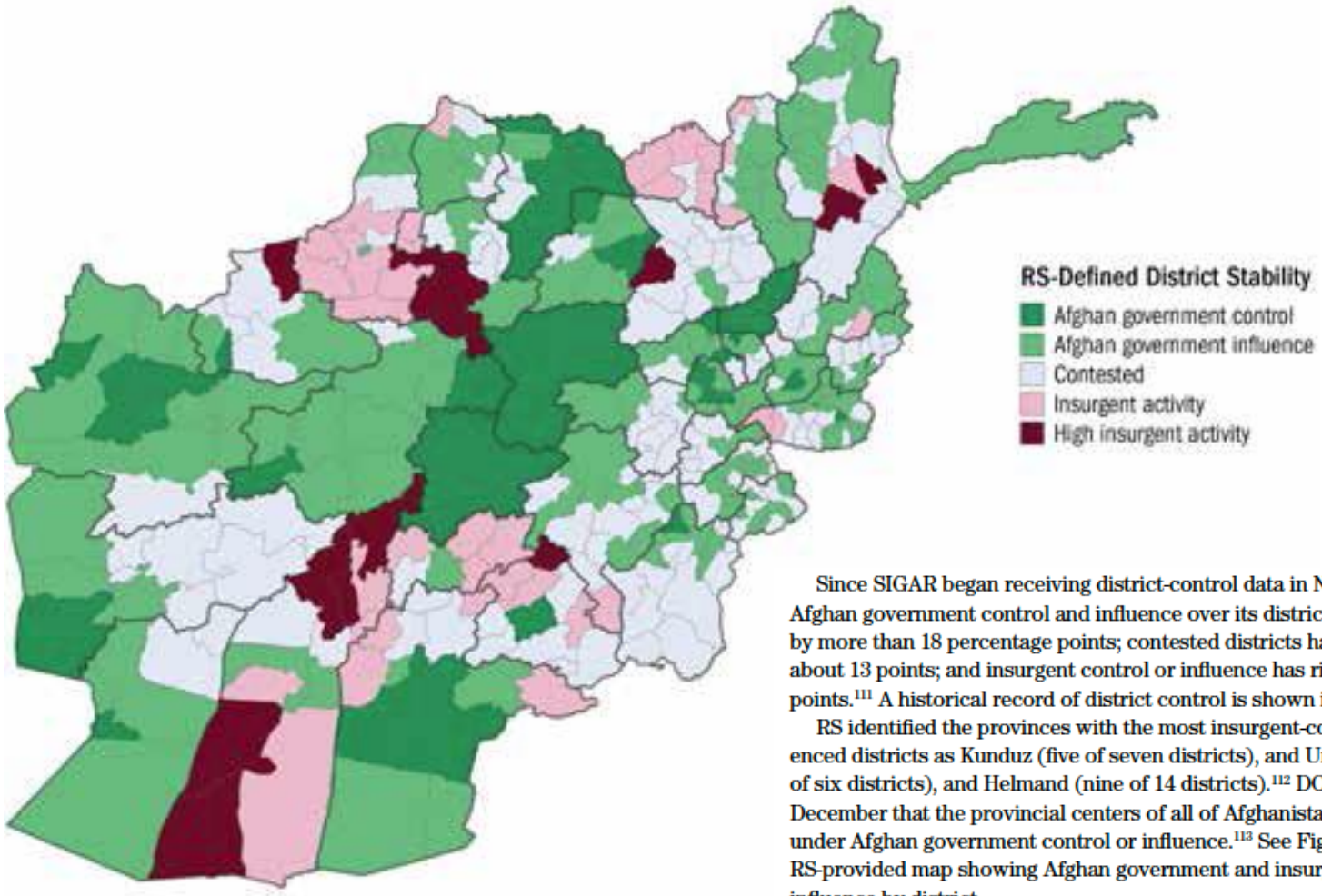
Resolute Support - LIG : District Stability Assessment 2018 -II



Source: Adapted from **Lead Inspector General, OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL, LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS**
OCTOBER 1, 2018–DECEMBER 31, 2018, pp. 22-23.

SIGAR: District Stability Assessment as of October 22, 2018 - I

STABILITY LEVEL OF AFGHANISTAN'S 407 DISTRICTS AS OF OCTOBER 22, 2018



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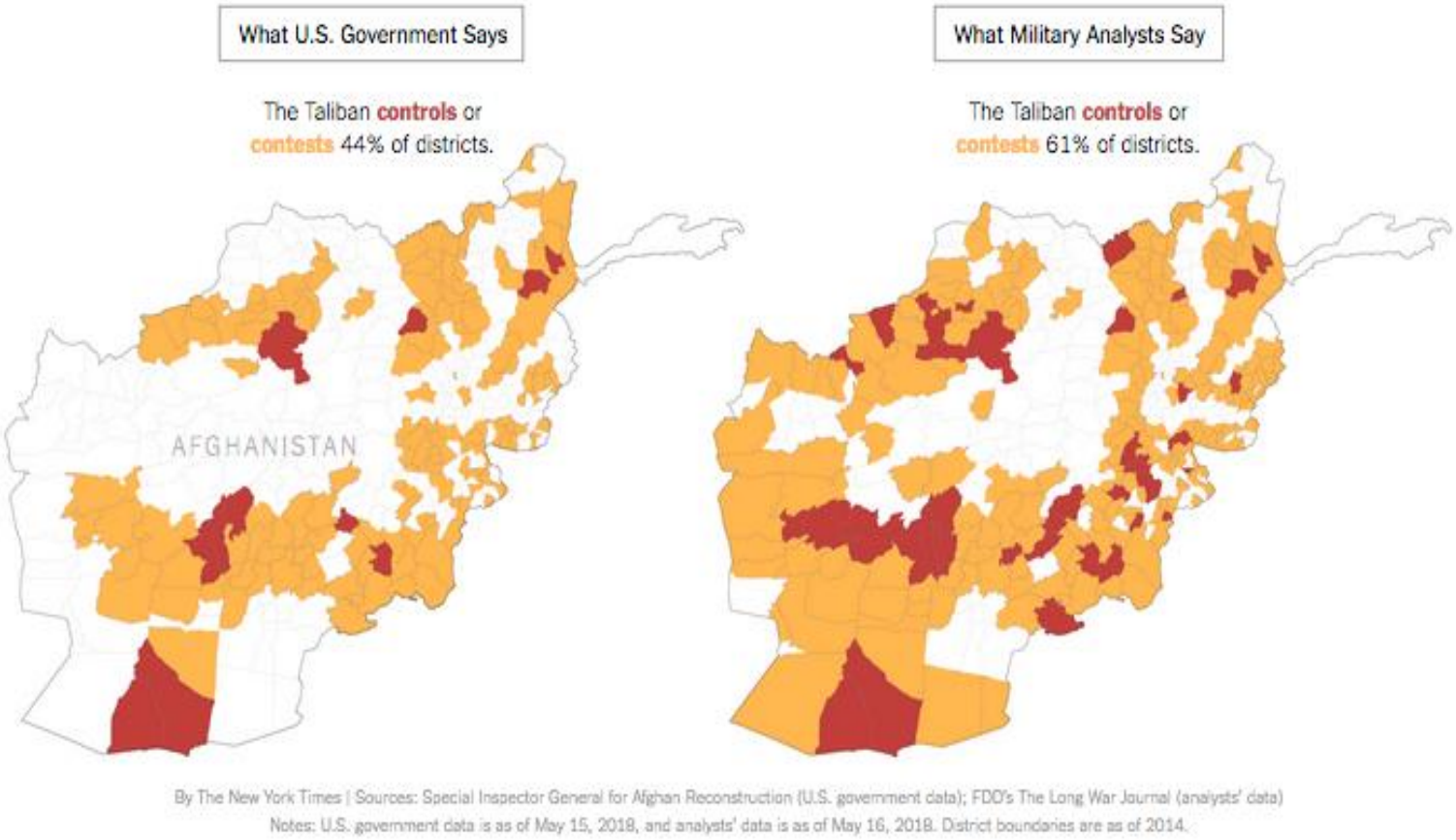
Note: A district is assigned its district-stability level based on the overall trend of land-area/population control of each district as a whole.

Source: RS, response to SIGAR data call, 12/20/2018.

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, January 30, 2019, p. 71.

SIGAR versus Long War Journal Estimates of Taliban Control: May 2018



Notes: U.S. government data is as of May 15, 2018, and analysts' data is as of May 16, 2018. District boundaries are as of 2014

Source: ROD NORDLAND, ASH NGU and FAHIM ABED , **How the U.S. Government Misleads the Public on Afghanistan**, New York Times By SEPT. 8, 2018

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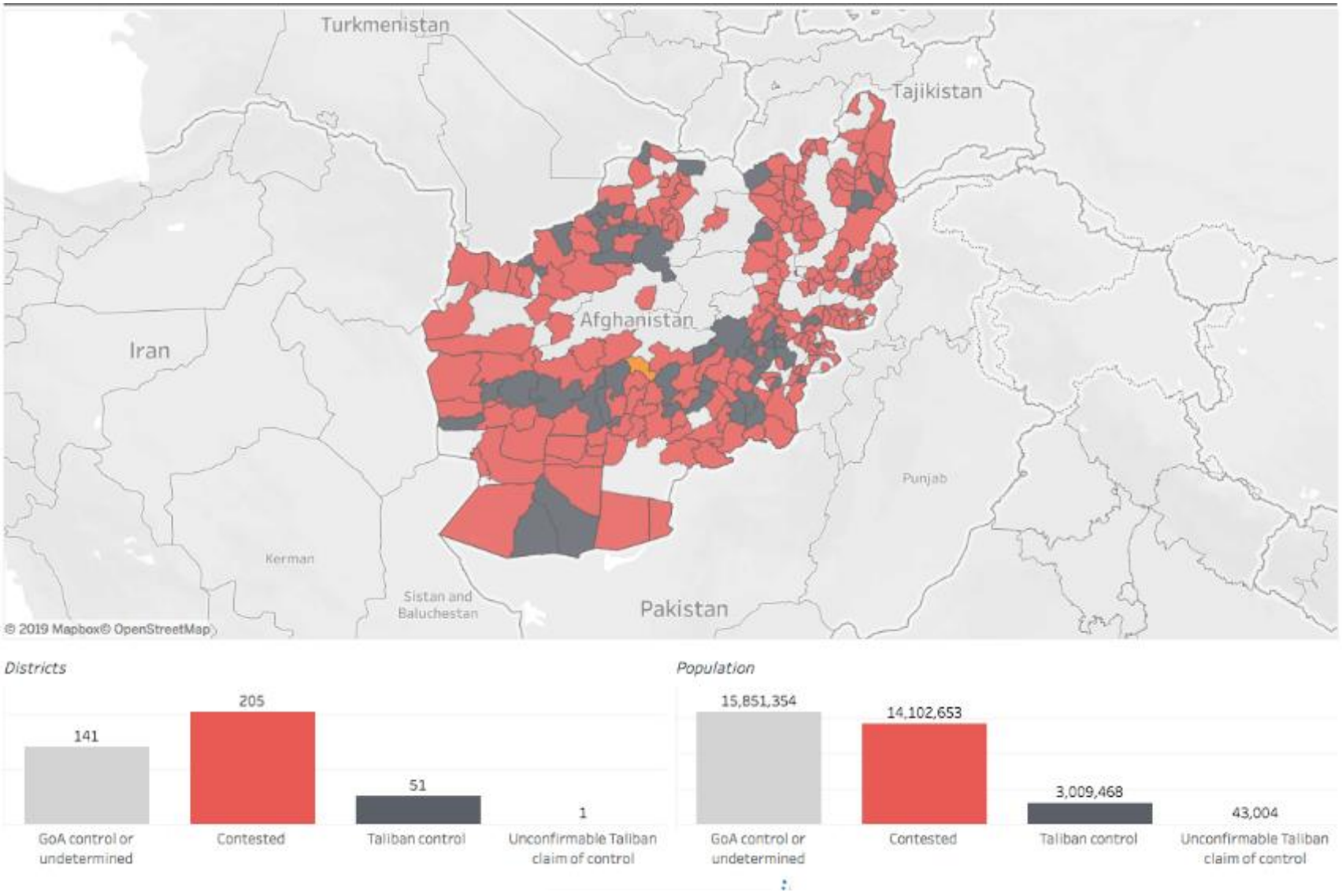
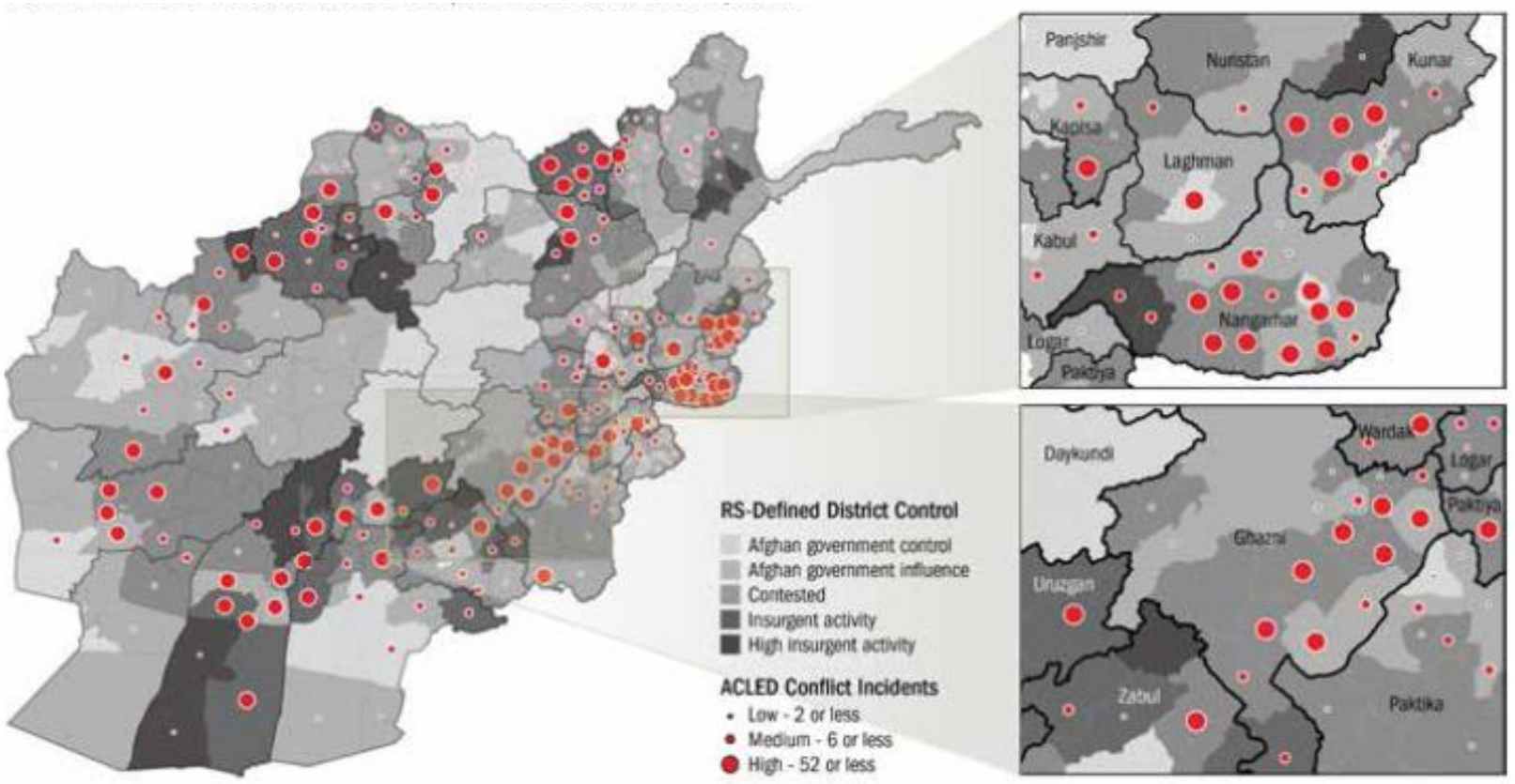
Long War Journal Estimate of Taliban Control in April 2019



Source: Mapping Taliban Control in Afghanistan, Created by Bill Roggio & Alexandra Gutowski, https://www.longwarjournal.org/mapping-taliban-control-in-afghanistan.

Resolute Support Estimate of Violent Incidents vs. District Control: August 1-October 31, 2018



Note: The district map was adapted from the 2012 Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office (AGCHO) shapefile that included 399 districts. Adjustments, some approximate, were made to data for districts that were whole in AGCHO's 399-district set but that were split in RS's 407-district set. See R.L. Helms, *District Lookup Tool*, https://arcg.is/1bOjGv, accessed 10/14/2018, for differences amongst district sets. This 407-district set was used to aggregate RS-provided district control data and Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) incident data. SIGAR used ArcGIS Pro 2.2 for this analysis and all layers were projected to UTM 42N. ACLED data showing political conflict and protest data between 8/1/2018, and 10/31/2018 was used in order to match RS's district-control reporting period. ACLED data was sorted to the district level by using a geo-precision code of 1 or 2 and incidents were summed. This left 1,658 district-level incidents for analysis. To create the map, incidents were categorized into three classes using the quantile method. The quantile method produces an equal number of observations per class to facilitate comparative analysis, but the interval of the class must therefore be variable.

Source: RS, response to SIGAR data call, 12/20/2018; ACLED, South Asia 2016-Present dataset, 8/1/2018–10/31/2018, available online at https://www.acleddata.com/; SIGAR, analysis of ACLED- and RS-provided data, 1/2019.

Source: Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, January 30, 2019, p. 73.

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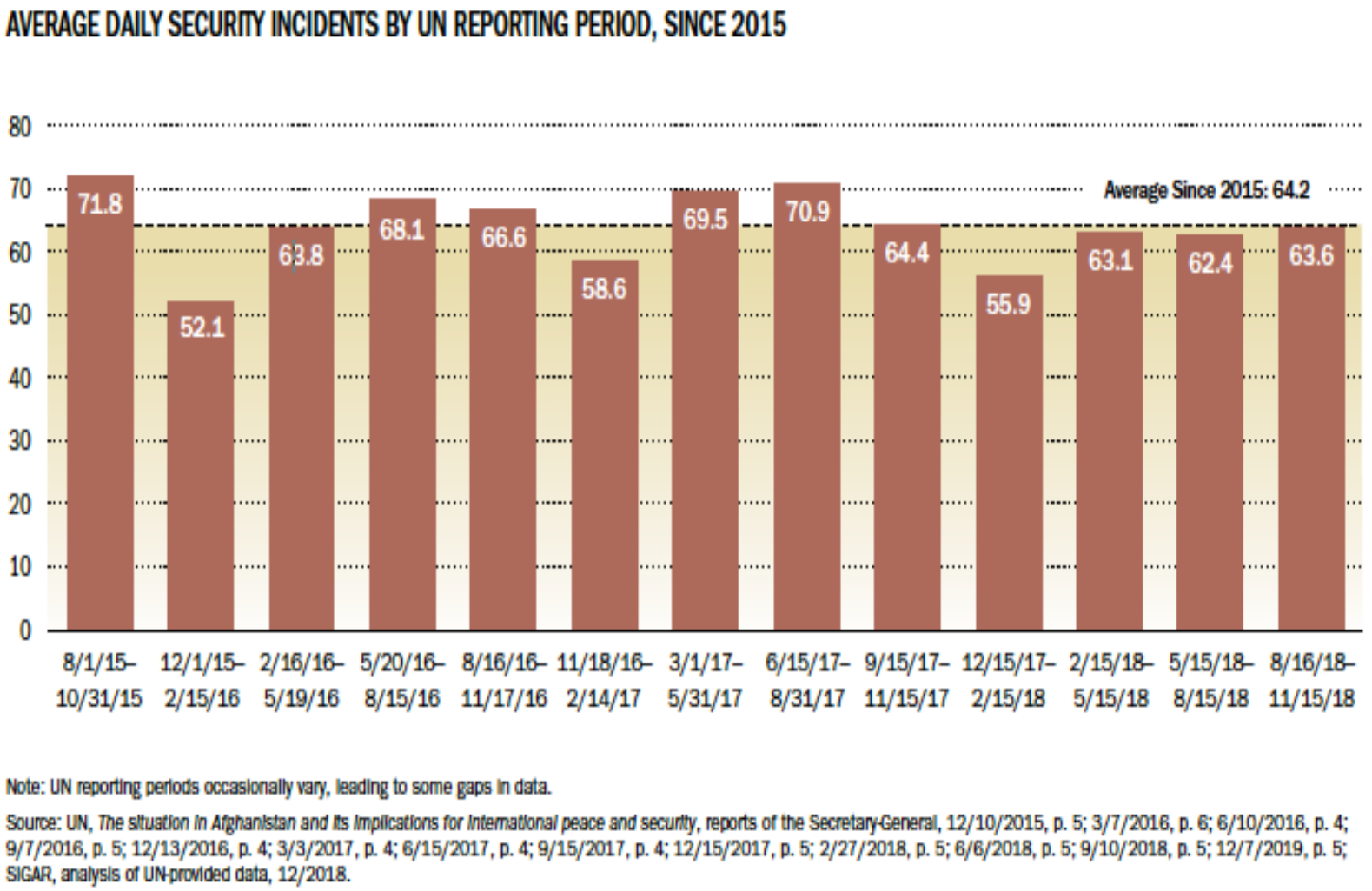
UN Estimate of Security Incidents: 2015-2018
Incidents: 2016-2018: 1225 Report



Source: Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, January 30, 2019, p. 75.

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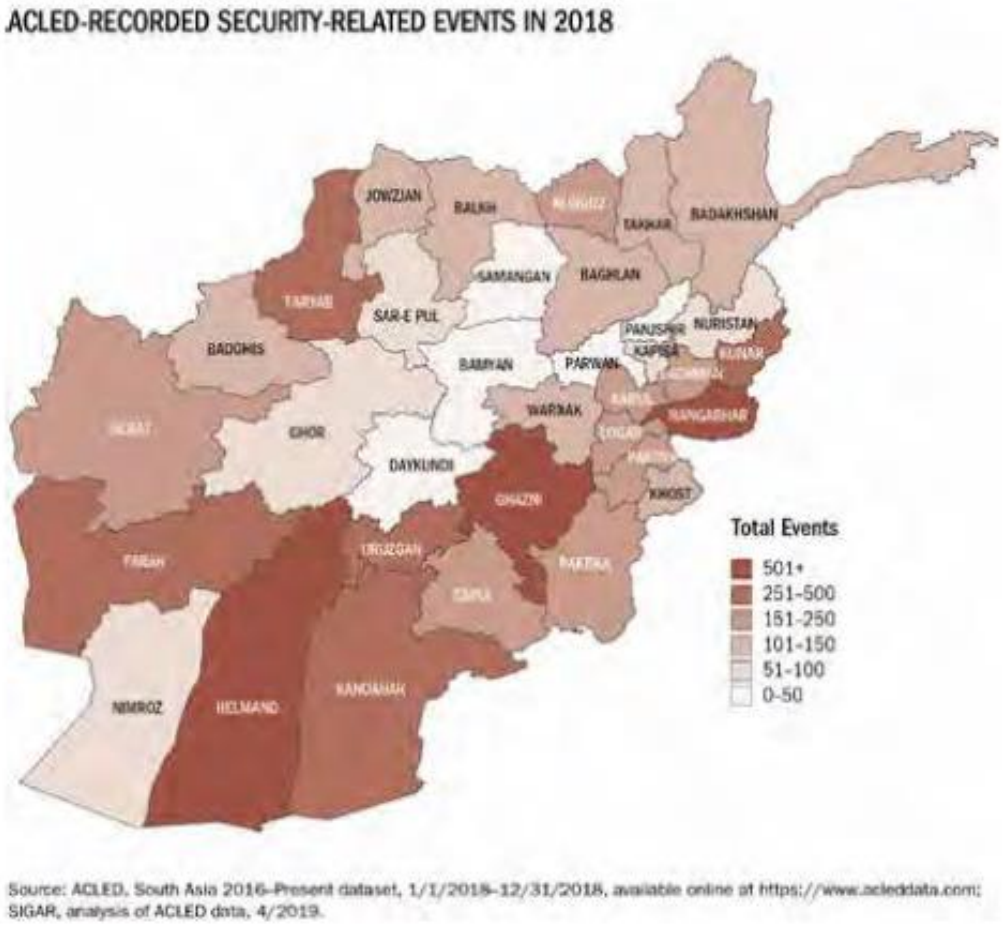
ACLED Reported Security Related Events: 2018



Source: ACLED, South Asia 2016–Present dataset, 1/1/2018–12/31/2018, available online at https://www.acleddata.com; SIGAR, analysis of ACLED data, 4/2019.

SIGAR also analyzes security incident data from Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), which records district-level data of political violence and protest incidents across Afghanistan. For consistency with RS's enemy-initiated attacks data, SIGAR is presenting ACLED data at the provincial level this quarter (see Figure 3.32) and chose a date range for the data in alignment with RS's reporting period (January 1–December 31, 2018).

ACLED recorded 7,399 security-related events in Afghanistan in 2018, roughly the same as the 7,345 recorded in 2017. The three provinces with the most events were unchanged from 2017 to 2018: Nangarhar, Ghazni, and Helmand. The events occurring in these three provinces accounted for 35% of 2018's total events.[150] Eight of the top 10 provinces with the most ACLED-recorded security-related events in 2018 were also within the top 10 provinces where RS recorded the most enemy-initiated attacks in 2018 (Helmand, Farah, Faryab, Uruzgan, Kandahar, Herat, Ghazni, and Nangarhar).[151]

ACLED recorded 2,234 security-related events over the winter months (December 1, 2018–February 28, 2019), a roughly 39% increase compared to the 1,610 events reported during the same period one year prior.[152] The three provinces with the most security-related events were Helmand, Kandahar, and Nangarhar.[153] Much of the increase in events this reporting period compared to the same period the year before was due to increases in events reported in Kandahar and Helmand Provinces.[154]

What is ACLED?

The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) is "a disaggregated conflict collection, analysis, and crisis-mapping project" funded by the State Department. The project collects the dates, actors, types of violence, locations, and fatalities of all political violence, protest, and select non-violent, politically important events across several regions, as reported from open, secondary sources. ACLED's aim is to capture the modes, frequency, and intensity of political violence and opposition as it occurs.

ACLED considers the event data it collects as falling into three categories "violent events," "demonstrations," or "nonviolent actions." Within these categories, ACLED codes their events as: (1) Battles, (2) Explosions/ Remote Violence, (3) Protests, (4) Riots, (5) Strategic Developments, and (6) Violence against Civilians.

Source: Excerpted from SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update*, April 30, 2019, pp. 76-77.

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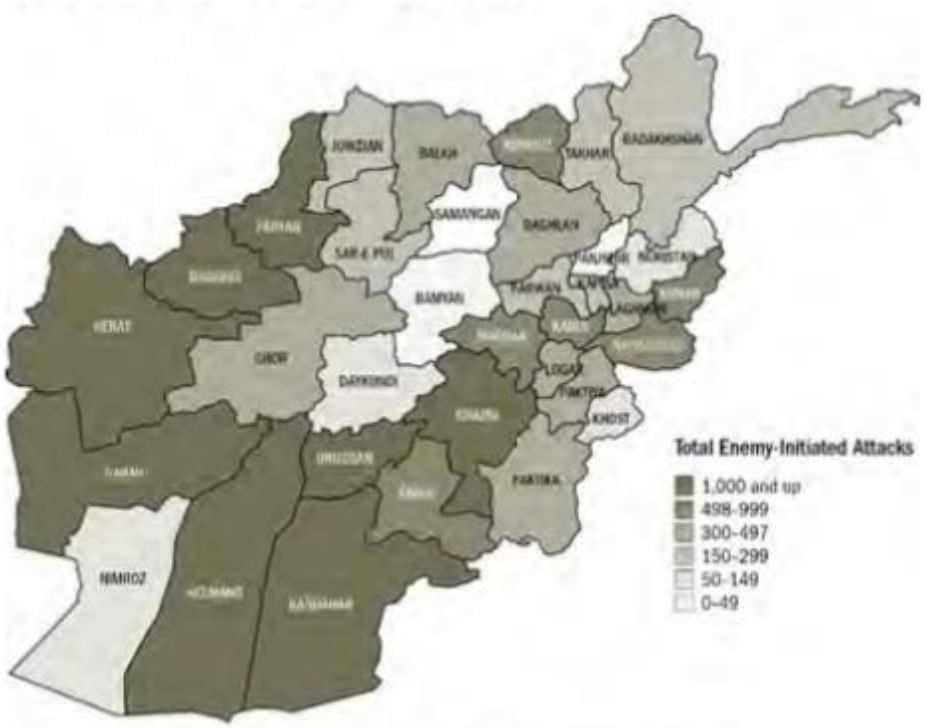
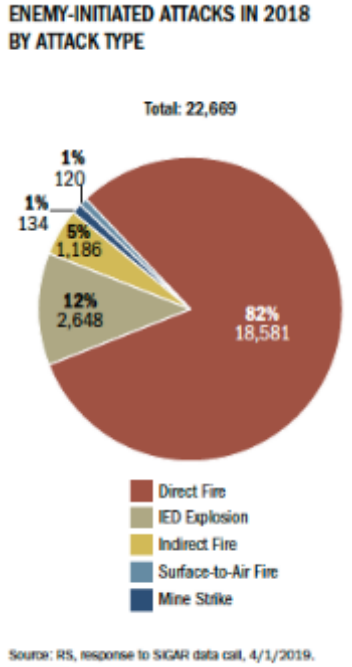
Resolute Support Estimate of Enemy Initiated Attacks: 2018



Source: RS, response to SIGAR data call, 4/1/2019; SIGAR, analysis of RS-provided data, 4/2019.



Source: RS, response to SIGAR data call, 4/1/2019.

IS-K Attacks Continue to Decrease

The number of IS-K-claimed attacks decreased this quarter. According to ACLED, the group claimed three attacks in Afghanistan this quarter (October 2, 2018, to January 15, 2018) that killed 20 people, compared to 14 claimed attacks last quarter (July 16 to October 1, 2018) that killed 96 people. However, there were 74 attacks this quarter conducted by unidentified armed groups—some of which could have been IS-K—that killed 220 people. These unclaimed attacks included the major attack on a gathering of Sunni clerics in Kabul on November 20 that killed 55 people and wounded 94.

Enemy-Initiated Attacks

According to RS, "enemy-initiated attacks are defined as all attacks (direct fire, indirect fire, surface-to-air fire, IED and mine explosions, etc.) initiated by insurgents that are reported as [significant activities] (SIGACTs)."[143] RS reported 22,669 enemy-initiated attacks (EIA) in Afghanistan in 2018, with 4,374 (19%) of them occurring in the last two months of the year (November 1 to December 31, 2018).[144] RS reported 6,245 EIA this quarter (November 1, 2018–January 31, 2019). This reporting period's figures reflect an average of 2,082 EIA per month, a 19% increase in EIA compared to the average monthly EIA last reporting period (August 16 to October 31, 2018).[145]

As seen in Figure 3.30, most of the attacks in 2018, (13,828, or 61%), occurred in eight of Afghanistan's 34 provinces: Badghis, Farah, Faryab, Ghazni, Helmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan, and Herat. Of these provinces, Helmand and Badghis experienced the greatest increase in EIA since October 31 (96% and 30%, respectively). The most violent province in terms of EIA shifted toward the end of the year, with the most EIA reported by far in Helmand (2,861), followed by Farah (1,801), and Badghis (1,798) Provinces. Last quarter's data showed Farah with the most reported EIA, followed by Helmand and Faryab Provinces.[145]

Figure 3.31 shows that the most common methods of attack for the EIA in 2018 were direct fire (82% of EIA), followed by IED explosions (12%), and indirect fire (5%).[147] SIGAR will continue to monitor EIA to track trends over time.

For the first time this quarter, SIGAR requested effective enemy-initiated attacks (EEIA) data from RS. Of the 22,669 EIA reported in 2018, RS said there were 10,900 EEIA, meaning about 48% of total EIA resulted in ANDSF, Coalition, or civilian casualties. RS recorded 2,384 EEIA this reporting period (November 1, 2018–January 31, 2019), about 38% of total EIA for the same period.[148] DOD has previously offered the caveat that ANDSF units do not always report insurgent attacks that do not result in casualties. As such, the number of EIA could be higher than what RS has reported, which would also impact the percentage of EEIA to EIA.[149]

Each type of incident data presented here has advantages and limitations: RS-reported enemy-initiated attack data comes from an official source, but is only available unclassified at the provincial level and does not include U.S. and ANDSF initiated attacks on the enemy; Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project's (ACLED) events data can be disaggregated to the district level, to a variety of security incident types, and to all the parties to the conflict, but depends entirely on media reporting of security-related events.

Source: Excerpted from SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update*, April 30, 2019, p. 7476.

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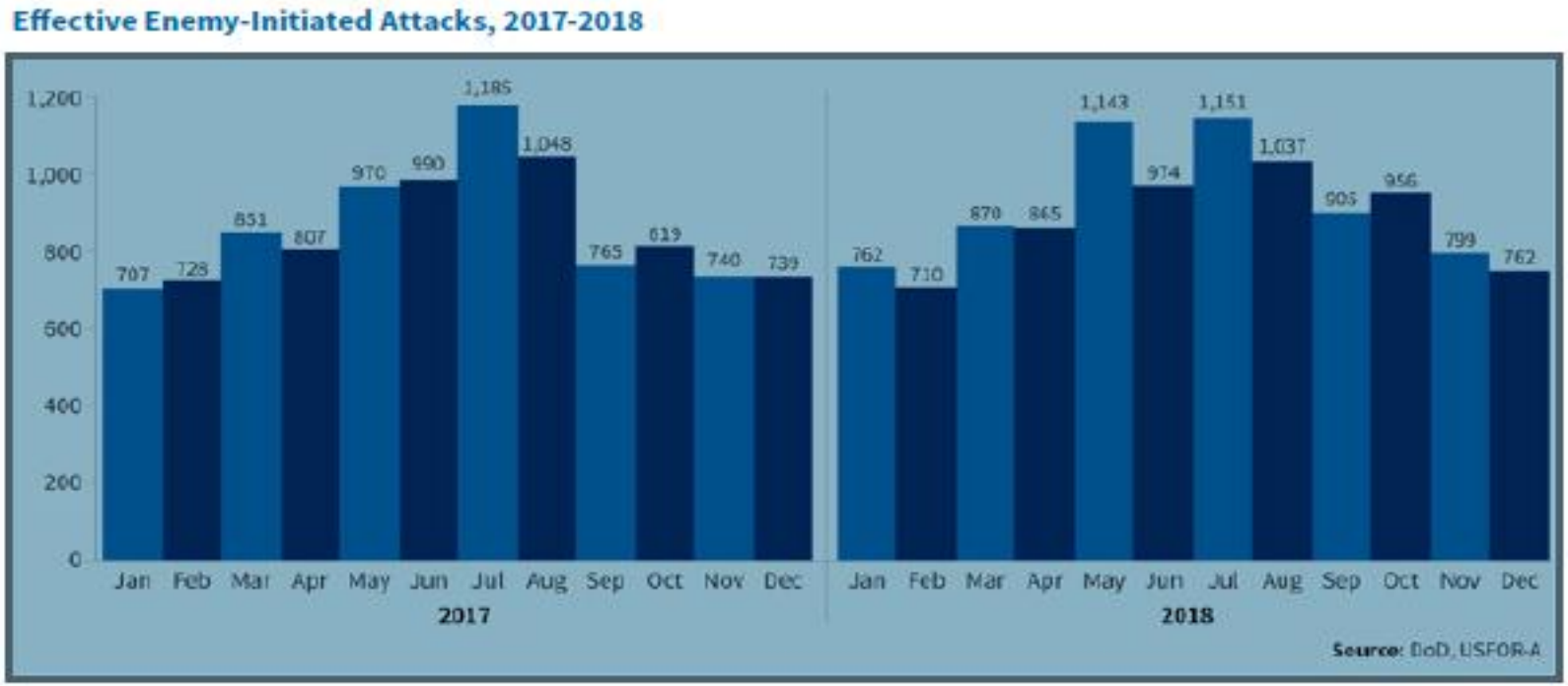
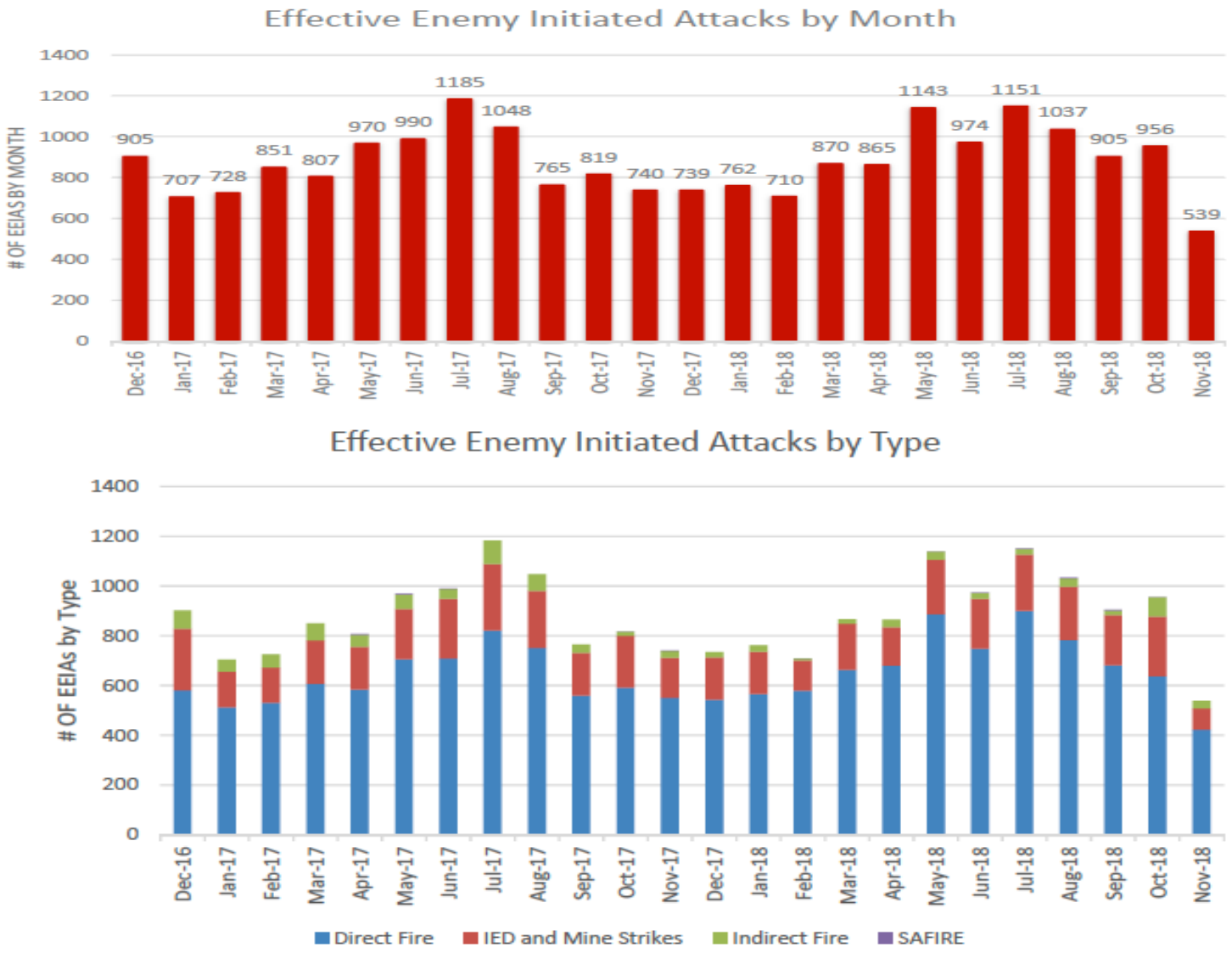
Resolute Support: Effective Enemy Attacks: 2016-2018



Resolute Support labels an enemy-initiated attack as “effective” if it causes a casualty. USFOR-A reported that there were 2,517 effective enemy-initiated attacks in Afghanistan between October and December.69 This represents a decline in enemy initiated attacks compared to the July to September period (3,093), but a nearly 10 percent increase compared to the same period in 2017 (2,298). During 2018, approximately 49 percent of reported enemy-initiated attacks (10,955 out of 22,495 attacks) were effective.70 However, the ANDSF often does not report attacks that do not result in casualties, so the actual percentage of enemy-initiated attacks that were effective may be lower.7

Source: **Lead Inspector General, OPERATION FREEDOM’S SENTINEL, LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS OCTOBER 1, 2018–DECEMBER 31, 2018, p. 17**.

Effective Enemy Attacks: 2016-2018: 1225 Report



Source: **Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan;** December 2018, pp.
Report to Congress In Accordance With Section 1225 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (P.L. 113-291), as amended, pp. 30-31.

Casualty Trends

Casualty Trends

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The metrics in this section reflect serious differences between UN and largely US sources. The UN and the Resolute Support Command have long differed in making such estimates of civilian casualties. Most of the recent differences come from higher UN estimates of the casualties caused by Coalition and Afghan air attacks, and by ANA land forces, than those issued by the Resolute Support Command, Afghan government, and U.S. official sources.

Civilian casualties from air attacks have become a key source of contention. Resolute Support Command argues that it is careful to minimize civilian losses when it uses airpower, and civilian, deaths are very low. The UN argues that they rose sharply in 2018, and have been rising steadily since 2014.

Part of the difference comes from the fact that the UN relies heavily on on-the-ground interviews, and Resolute Support argues that many of those who make claims about civilian casualties are exaggerating them because they support the Taliban or ISIS, or in a search for compensation.

Some of the Resolute Support claims that the Taliban does manipulates such accounts to exaggerate civilian losses., and understate its presence in the target area. seem to be valid. However, \the issue cannot be dismissed.. An independent analysis of US air attacks on narcotics targets published in April 2019 tended to support the UN estimates. It argued that civilian casualties were substantially higher than Resolute Support admitted, although the BBC analysis also relied heavily on eye-witness accounts after the event.

At the same time, both sets of estimates do not show a major rise in casualty levels after 2015, and the overall civilian levels are surprisingly low in comparison with comparable civilian casualty estimates in Iraq and Syria in other wars. This may reflect the fact that combat is generally more sporadic and localized. The Afghan War has certainly been a long one, but the U.S. has made a major effort to avoid civilian casualties and the number of major battles in civilian areas has been limited.

UNAMA vs. Resolute Support Estimates of Casualties: 2019

UNAMA: Civilian Casualties in Early 2019 Decline Sharply

In a stark change from the final months of 2018, UNAMA documented 1,773 civilian casualties from January 1 through March 31, 2019, a 23% decrease in casualties compared to the same period in 2017 and the lowest number of civilian casualties in the first three months of the year since 2013. The casualties included 581 deaths and 1,192 injuries.[160]

UNAMA noted that the significant decrease in civilian casualties so far this year was primarily driven by a 76% decrease in casualties caused by suicide IED attacks. Last year's figures were higher due to many more suicide attacks in early 2018, including the January 27, 2018, attack in Kabul, which was the deadliest incident UNAMA had ever recorded. UNAMA also said the particularly harsh winter conditions during the first three months of this year may have contributed to the decline in civilian casualties, and that it is unclear whether the trend was influenced by any measures undertaken by parties to the conflict to better protect civilians, or by the ongoing talks between some of the parties. UNAMA expressed continued concern about the increase in civilian casualties from the use of nonsuicide IEDs by antigovernment elements (up 21% compared to last year).[161]

UNAMA reported that progovernment elements caused more civilian deaths than antigovernment elements thus far in 2019 (608 casualties, 305 deaths and 303 injuries). This was attributed to substantial increases in civilian casualties caused by progovernment aerial (41%) and search operations (85%) compared to last year. UNAMA attributed 17% of all civilian casualties to the ANDSF, 13% to international military forces, 2% to progovernment armed groups, and 2% to multiple progovernment forces. As in previous years, antigovernment elements were responsible for the majority of overall civilian casualties during the first quarter of 2019 (963 casualties, 227 deaths and 736 injuries).[162]

The decrease UNAMA reported for the first three months of 2019 is offset by the high number of civilian casualties seen from October through December 2018 (2,943). Civilian casualties from October 2018–March 2019 were at roughly the same level they were from October 2017–March 2018.[163]

RS Civilian Casualties Data

RS reported 9,214 civilian casualties in 2018 (2,845 killed and 6,369 wounded). As reported last quarter, September and October were the deadliest months, with 950 and 1,274 civilian casualties respectively. RS's and UNAMA's data aligned in that Kabul, Nangarhar, and Helmand Provinces experienced the most civilian casualties in 2018. According to RS, about 21% of 2018's civilian casualties occurred in Kabul Province (1,976 casualties), 17% in Nangarhar (1,590), and 5% in Helmand (477). As seen in Figure 3.35 on the previous page, RS said the majority of the civilian casualties reported in 2018 were caused by IEDs (50%), followed by direct fire (22%), and indirect fire (7%).[164]

UNAMA Collection Methodology

According to UNAMA, data on civilian casualties are collected through "direct site visits, physical examination of items and evidence gathered at the scene of incidents, visits to hospital and medical facilities, still and video images," reports by UN entities, and primary, secondary, and third-party accounts. Information is obtained directly from primary accounts where possible. Civilians whose noncombatant status is under "significant doubt," based on international humanitarian law, are not included in the figures. Ground-engagement casualties that cannot be definitively attributed to either side, such as those incurred during crossfire, are jointly attributed to both parties. UNAMA includes an "other" category to distinguish between these jointly-attributed casualties and those caused by other events, such as unexploded ordnance or cross-border shelling by Pakistani forces. UNAMA's methodology has remained largely unchanged since 2008.

Source: UNAMA, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 3/6/2018, I–II; 1/2010, p. 35; 2/11/2009, pp. 4–5; and 8/2015, p. 4.

RS Collection Methodology

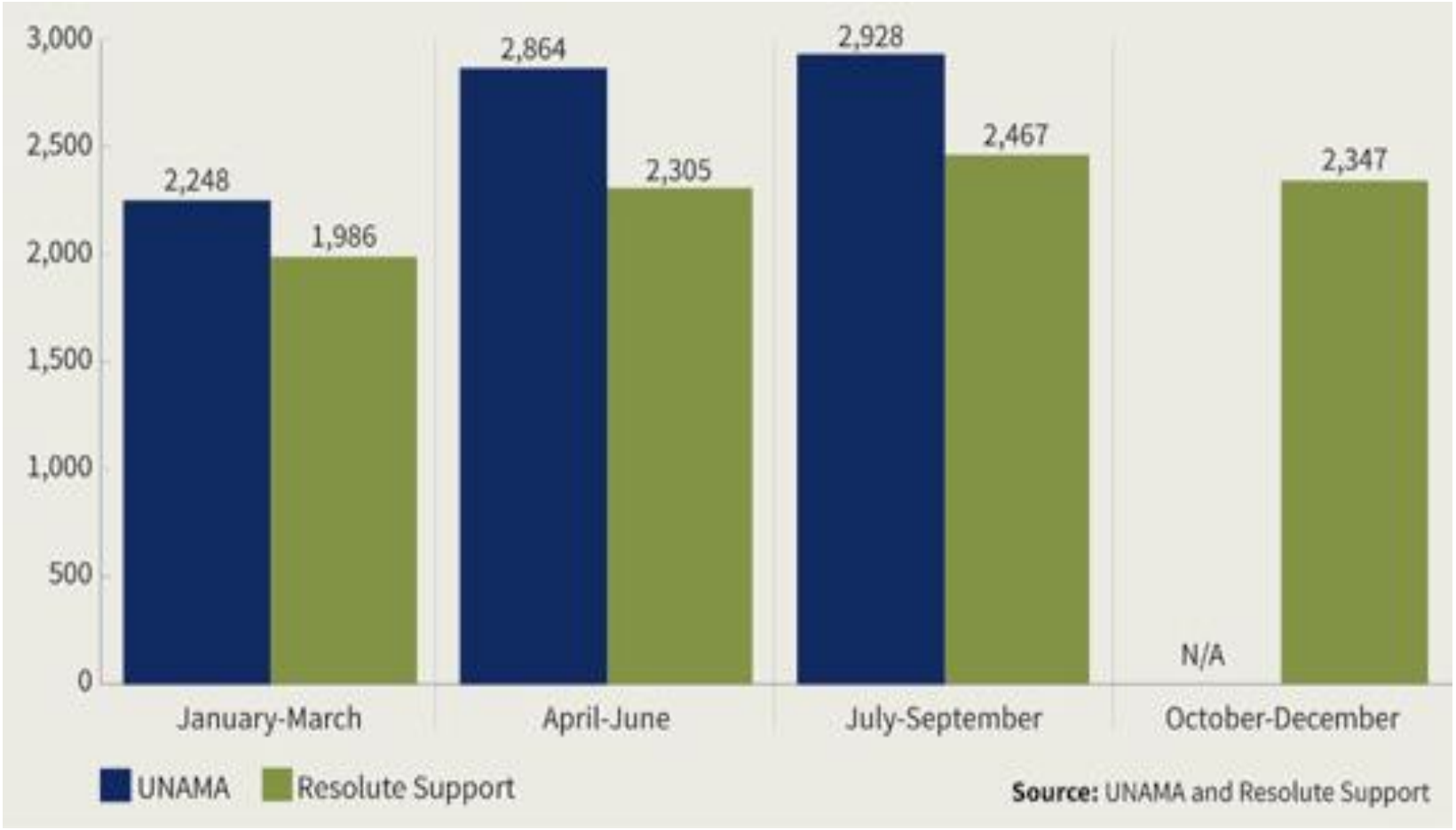
According to DOD, the RS Civilian Casualty Management Team relies primarily upon operational reporting from RS's Train, Advise, and Assist Commands (TAACs), other Coalition force headquarters, and ANDSF reports from the Afghan Presidential Information Command Centre to collect civilian-casualty data.

Source: DOD, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, 12/2017, p. 27.

Source: SIGAR, *Quarterly Report to the U.S. Congress*, April 30, 2019, pp 79-80.

Conflicting Estimates of Civilian Casualties

Civilian Casualties by Quarter and Reporting Organization, October-December 2018



Source: Adapted from **Lead Inspector General, OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL, LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS**
OCTOBER 1, 2018–DECEMBER 31, 2018, p. 20..

Resolute Support on RS vs. UNAMA Casualty Estimates - I

International forces in Afghanistan aim for zero civilian casualties, applying that standard to all stages of operations. One civilian death is one too many, and General John Nicholson, Commander of Resolute Support, and United States Forces- Afghanistan, has said "We go to extraordinary lengths to avoid civilian casualties, and we wave off strikes if we identify civilians."

Since 2009 the United Nations mission in Afghanistan, UNAMA, has investigated reports of civilian casualties in Afghanistan. Their work to highlight war's effect on normal life, and in particular to improve protection for women and children, is tireless and rightly highly regarded. The downward trend recorded in their annual figures for 2017 – the first move down since 2012 – is welcome, especially amid a campaign when insurgents have specifically targeted civilians on a scale never before seen in Afghanistan.

Investigating every civilian death is no less thorough inside the Resolute Support Mission. Using a different methodology than UNAMA, the trend of casualties recorded by the RS Civilian Casualty Mitigation Team (CCMT) is in the opposite direction to that found by UNAMA. While UNAMA found that civilian casualties caused by the conflict fell 9 percent to 10,428 in 2017, RS recorded a rise to 8,319, perhaps explained by more accurate reporting by Afghan forces who, with better training, have become more aware of the effect of the war on the civilian population.

In assessing what accounts for the difference in these figures, there is no doubt who causes most civilian casualties in Afghanistan – insurgents whose hypocrisy was laid bare as they turned to Afghan civilians as their prime target in 2017 after they failed to gain ground against superior Afghan forces. RS investigators calculate that 88 percent of Afghan civilians killed and injured in 2017 were victims of the Taliban, IS-K and other insurgent groups. UNAMA assessed the proportion at 65 percent.

In other areas there were even bigger differences in assessing those killed and injured. In 2017, RS recorded no civilian casualties from international forces on the ground, and 51 from the air – 19 killed and 32 injured. RS assessed another 69 casualties (33 dead and 36 injured) were caused by the Afghan Air Force. UNAMA attributed 246 casualties to international military air strikes (154 deaths and 92 injured), and 309 casualties to the Afghan Air Force, with a further 76 casualties from air strikes attributed to unknown pro-government forces.

So how can these discrepancies be explained?

Both UNAMA and RS have experienced teams who examine every allegation. One explanation lies in different sources that are available to either UNAMA or RS. In the case of ground attacks, the RS team collect and assess operational planning data, and upon completion of operations potential civilian casualties are assessed, with some reported immediately by units involved. For air strikes, RS know whether a plane or unmanned aerial vehicle was involved. Everything is recorded and stored, including gun-tapes from Afghan planes and helicopters, which now carry out most air strikes.

The RS investigation team assess that in several of the cases where casualties were alleged to be from air strikes, no aerial platforms were nearby at the time, and reported explosions may have resulted from concealed IEDs or insurgents firing rockets and mortars. In other cases, RS investigators have access to surveillance information that gives them confidence that civilians were not present at the scene of a strike.

For example, on November 19 2017, in the air campaign under new US authorities striking Taliban revenue streams, a suspected drug lab was struck in northern Helmand. UNAMA relayed information to RS alleging that nine civilians from the same family were killed in the strike. They shared detailed information about three women, two boys and four girls – including a one-year-old. This claim of nine dead was included in the UNAMA report, but not counted by RS. RS investigations disproved the allegation as surveillance of the house over a significant period of time showed no sign of the presence of a family. Local government officials said that no civilians were killed.

While RS shares evidence with UNAMA to enhance understanding, UNAMA investigations rely primarily instead on eyewitness accounts, requiring at least three independent sources per incident. UNAMA proactively search for sources of different genders and from different ethnic groups, evaluating them for credibility. But at times are unable to conduct onsite investigations owing to security constraints, and in order to protect privacy will not share eyewitness identity, which means their accounts are difficult to corroborate.

Excerpted from Civilian Casualties, www.rs.nato/int.media-center/baclgrounders, April 2018.

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Resolute Support on RS vs. UNAMA Casualty Estimates - II

This difference in methodology is only one explanation for disparate findings. Of the 99 separate allegations of civilian casualties by international military forces passed to RS by UNAMA, only three air strikes were proved to be confirmed civilian casualty cases to the satisfaction of the RS investigation board.

Another discrepancy results from different definitions for 'civilian' and for 'casualty'. Legal advisers on both sides assess civilians differently. For UNAMA the definition is wide, giving legal protection to people who might be considered combatants under other interpretations of international humanitarian law. And in defining 'casualties', UNAMA includes those treated at the scene who return home, while a casualty to RS is someone whose injuries involved treatment at a medical facility.

Improved protection for civilians in Afghan military operations

Increasingly Afghan forces, in the air and on the ground, are conducting the campaign without international support. They now have their own forward ground controllers to identify targets, and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) platforms to send accurate information to attack planes. On many occasions Afghan planes return to base without releasing their weapons rather than risking civilian lives (as indeed do the air platforms of international military forces).

UNAMA "acknowledged the significant measures undertaken by the Afghan national security forces to improve the protection of civilians in 2017, especially during ground fighting and related operations." As well as new policies, UNAMA noted "the adoption of practical measures on the battlefield, including relocation of security bases from civilian areas, and increased constraints on the use of mortars and other indirect fire weapons during ground fighting in civilian-populated areas."

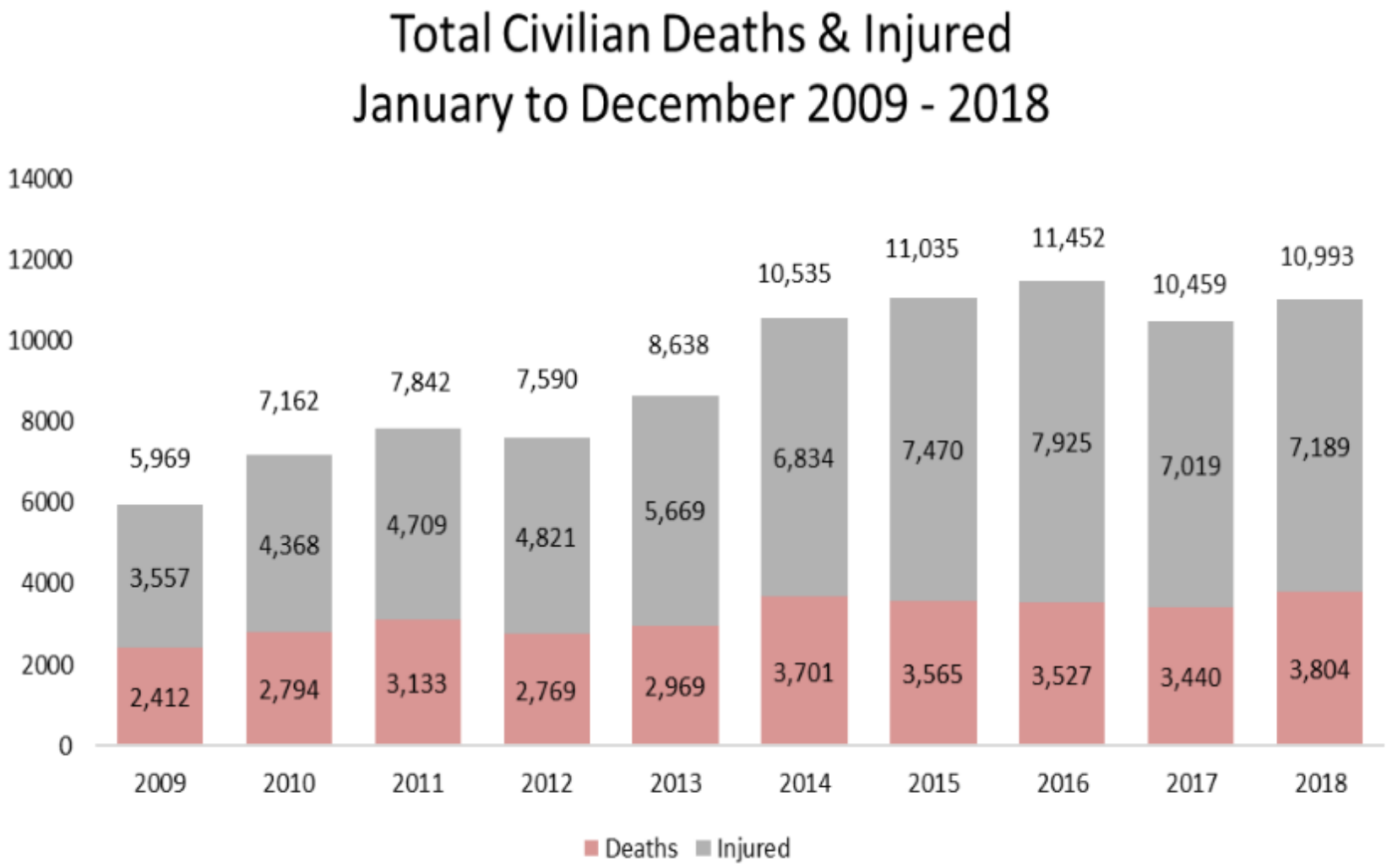
There were also indications that the "overall increase in air operations may have played a role in constraining and/or deterring large scale attacks against cities by anti-government elements." And this is in stark contrast to the way the enemy is increasingly prosecuting its campaign. Afghanistan's prime security concern is large-scale attacks by insurgents who indiscriminately pursue civilians in their homes, schools, hospitals, markets and places of worship, rather than carrying out their fight on the battlefield. Instead of seeking military targets, insurgents led a massacre of 150 civilians, with another 600 injured, while destroying the German Embassy in May 2017.

And already in 2018, the Taliban have stormed the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul with AK-47 assault rifles, killing 22 civilians. IS-K attacked Save the Children in Jalalabad, killing four people and wounding 22 at an organization whose primary aim is to help Afghan children have a better life and future. And in a commandeered ambulance, the Taliban again unleashed their fury upon innocent civilians on the streets of Kabul, killing 103 and injuring 235 more.

There was no dispute over who was responsible for these casualties.

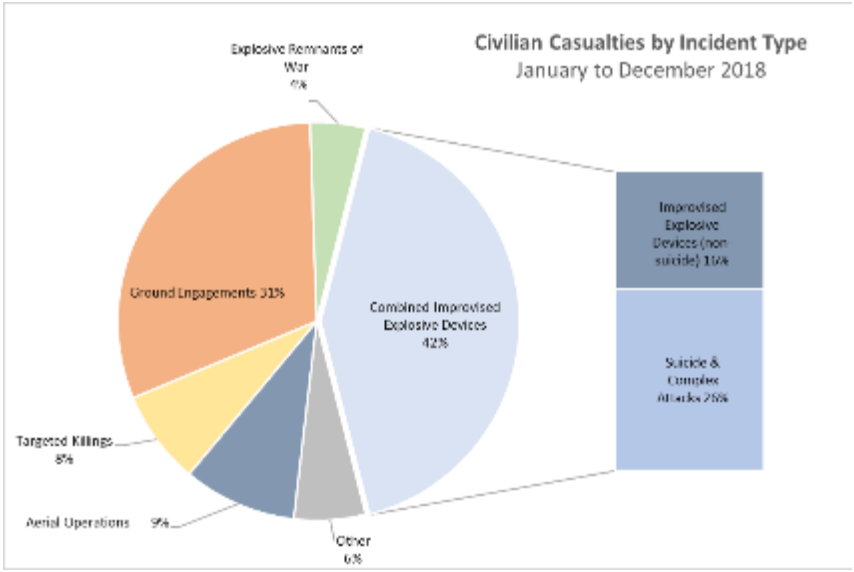
Excerpted from Civilian Casualties, www.rs.nato/int.media-center/baclgrounders, April 2018.

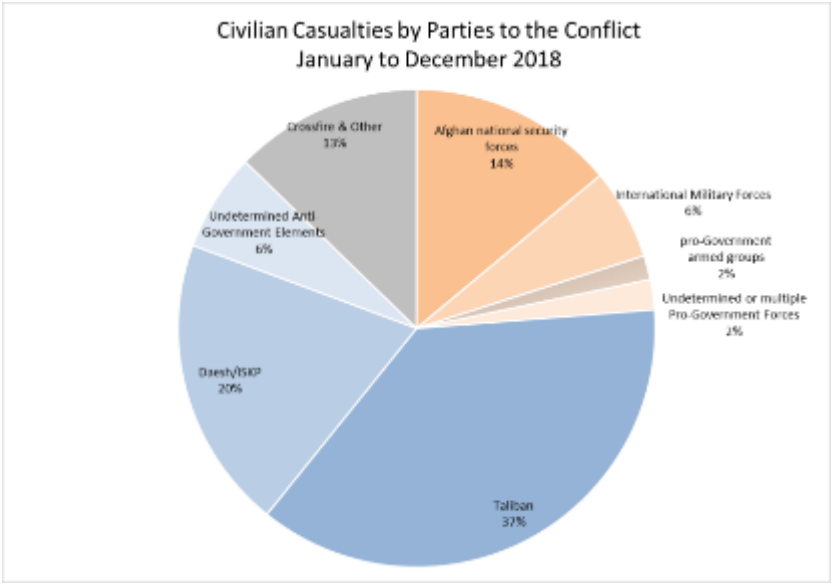
UNAMA Estimates of Total Civilian Casualties: 2009-2018



Source: UNAMA, Afghanistan: *Protection of Civilians in Armed Combat, Annual 2018*, 24.2.2019, p. 1

UNAMA Estimates of Causes of Casualties: 2018



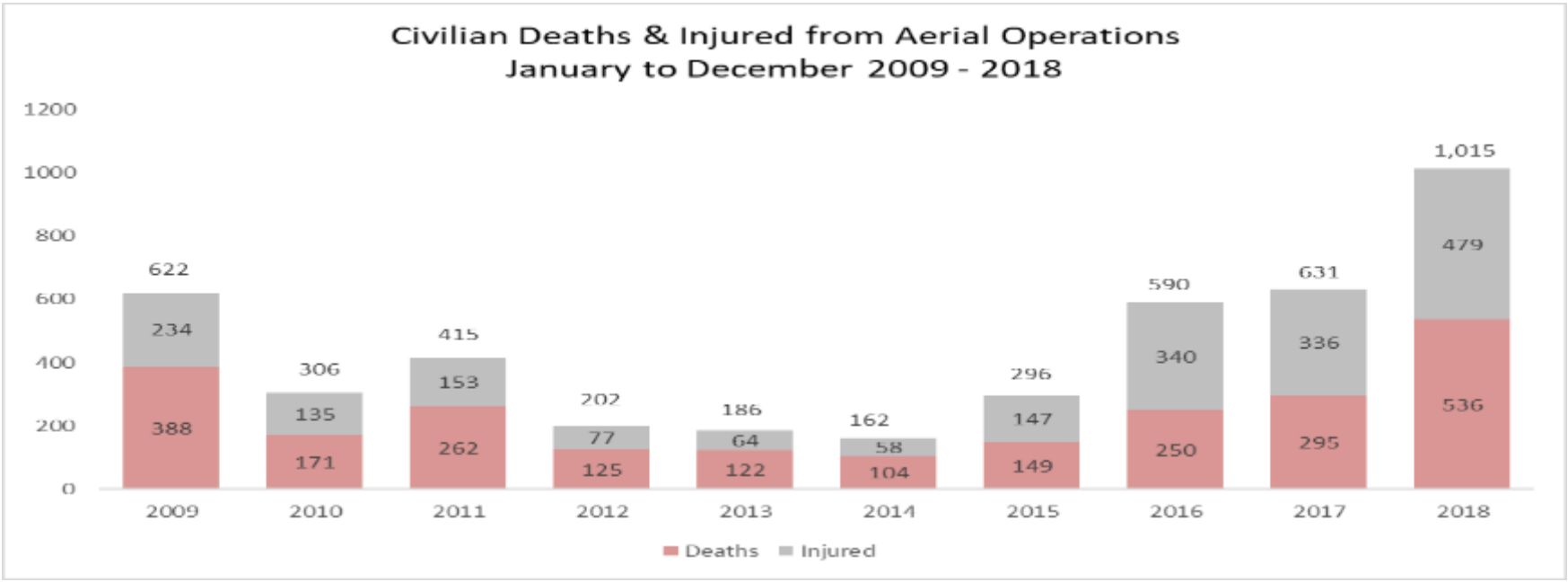


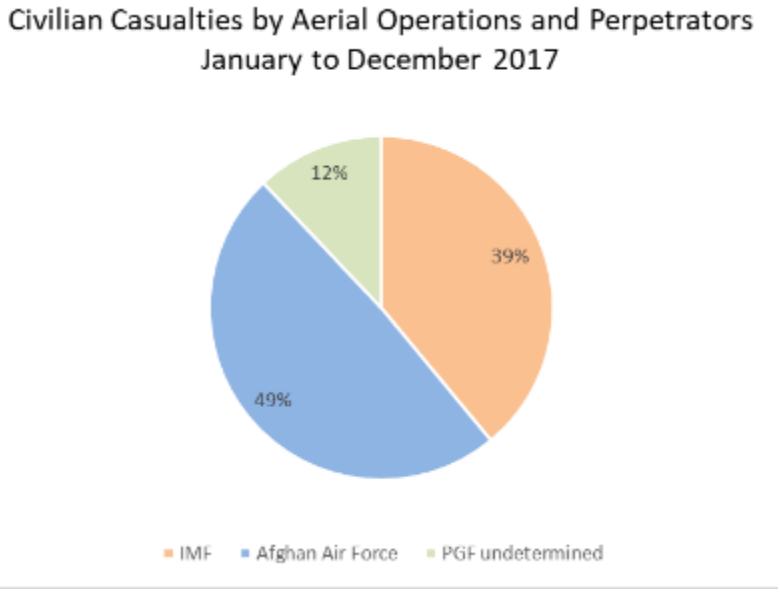
Responsible party (attributed by UNAMA)[56]	Civilians killed	Civilians injured	Total civilian casualties	Percent of overall civilian casualties
Taliban	1,348	2,724	4,072	37 per cent
Daesh/ISKP	681	1,500	2,181	20 per cent
AGE undetermined	196	482	678	6 per cent
Other/multiple	18	31	49	Less than 1 per cent

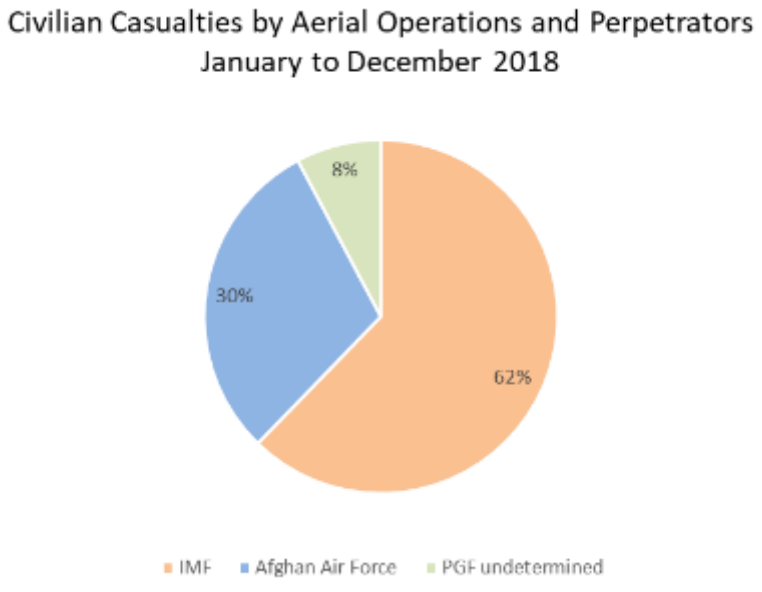
Responsible Party (Attributed by UNAMA)	Civilians killed	Civilians Injured	Total Civilian Casualties	Per cent of overall civilian casualties
Afghan national security forces	606	929	1535	14 per cent
Pro-government armed groups	99	81	180	2 per cent
International military forces	406	268	674	6 per cent
Undetermined Pro-Government Forces / multiple Pro-Government Forces	74	149	223	2 per cent

Source: UNAMA, Afghanistan: *Protection of Civilians in Armed Combat, Annual 2018*, 24.2.2019, pp. 3-4, 18, 33

UNAMA Estimates of Aerial Casualties in 2018







Source: UNAMA, Afghanistan: *Protection of Civilians in Armed Combat, Annual 2018*, 24.2.2019, pp. 38, 45

UNAMA Estimates of Civilian Casualties: 1st Quarter 2019

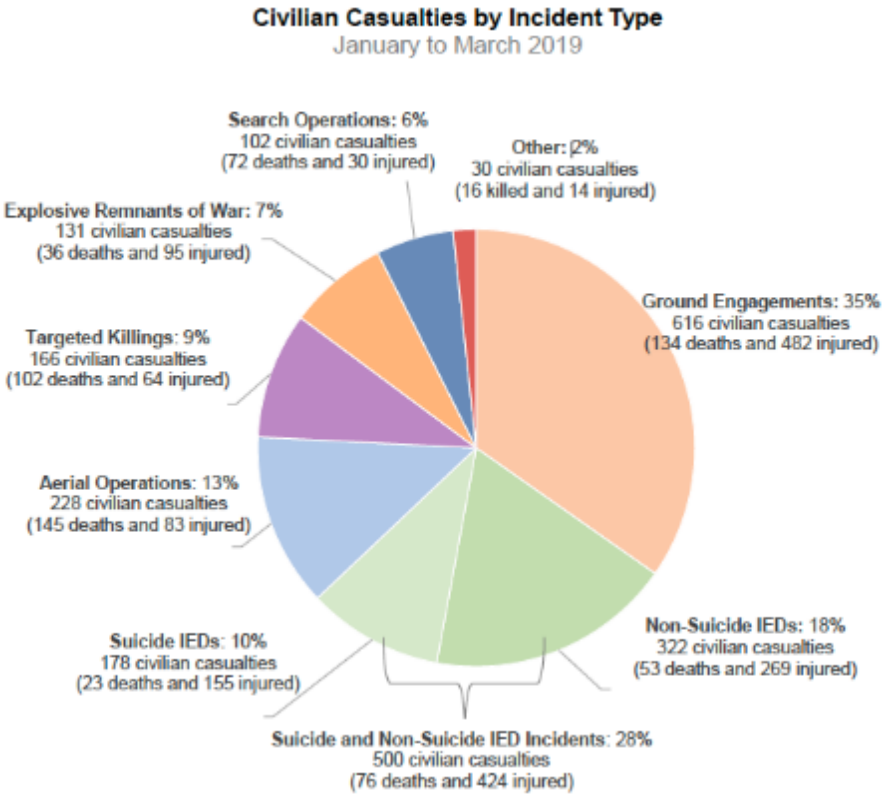
In the first quarter of 2019, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) continued to document high levels of harm to civilians from the armed conflict. From 1 January to 31 March 2019, UNAMA documented 1,773 civilian casualties (581 deaths and 1,192 injured), including 582 child casualties (150 deaths and 432 injured). This represents a 23 per cent decrease in overall civilian casualties as compared to the same period last year and is the lowest for a first quarter since 2013.

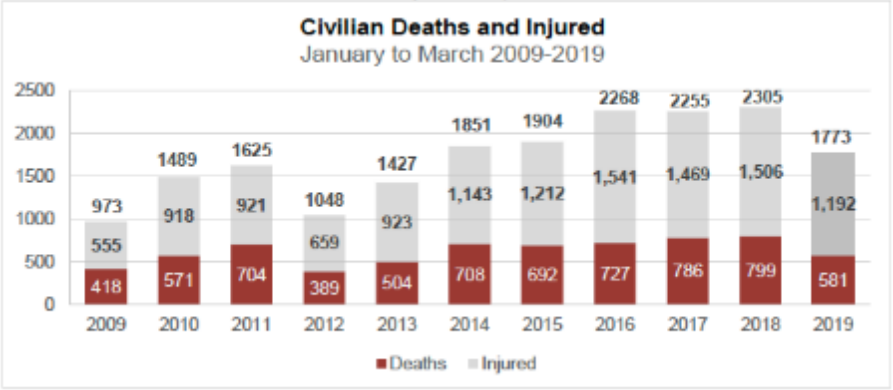
The overall reduction of civilian casualties was driven by a decrease in civilian casualties by suicide improvised explosive device (IED) attacks. UNAMA notes the particularly harsh winter conditions during the first three months of the year, which may have contributed to this trend. It is unclear whether the decrease in civilian casualties was influenced by any measures taken by parties to the conflict to better protect civilians, or by the ongoing talks between parties to the conflict.

UNAMA is very concerned by the continued targeting of civilians and increase in civilian casualties from the use of non-suicide IEDs by Anti-Government Elements, as well as significant increases in civilian casualties from aerial and search operations, which drove an overall increase in civilian

casualties by Pro-Government Forces. Civilian deaths attributed to Pro-Government Forces surpassed those attributed to Anti-Government Elements during the first quarter of 2019.

Ground engagements were the leading cause of civilian casualties, causing approximately one-third of the total. A single mortar attack incident by *Daesh*/Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) on 7 March 2019 in Kabul caused approximately one-fifth of all civilian casualties from ground engagements (see below). The use of IEDs was the second leading cause of civilian casualties. Contrary to 2017 and 2018 trends, the majority of IED civilian casualties were caused by non-suicide IEDs rather than suicide IEDs. Aerial operations were the leading cause of civilian deaths3 and the third leading cause of civilian casualties, followed by targeted killings and explosive remnants of war. Civilians living in Kabul, Helmand, Nangarhar, Faryab and Kunduz provinces were most affected (in that order).





Source: UNAMA, **QUARTERLY REPORT ON THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT: 1 JANUARY TO 31 MARCH 2019** , 24.2.2019, pp. 1-2

Terrorism in Afghanistan : Uncertain to Dubious Reporting

Terrorism in Afghanistan: Uncertain to Dubious Reporting

The metrics in this section are highly uncertain, and are more a warning of the problems in distinguishing between terrorism and insurgency/counterinsurgency, than a source of useful data and insights.

The continued level of insurgent conflict in Afghanistan makes it difficult to impossible to distinguish between terrorism and insurgent action, a problem compounded in many areas by a high level of social and tribal violence. START does estimate that the Taliban accounted for some 60% of terrorism between 20ll and 2016, but such counts seem to be extremely uncertain.

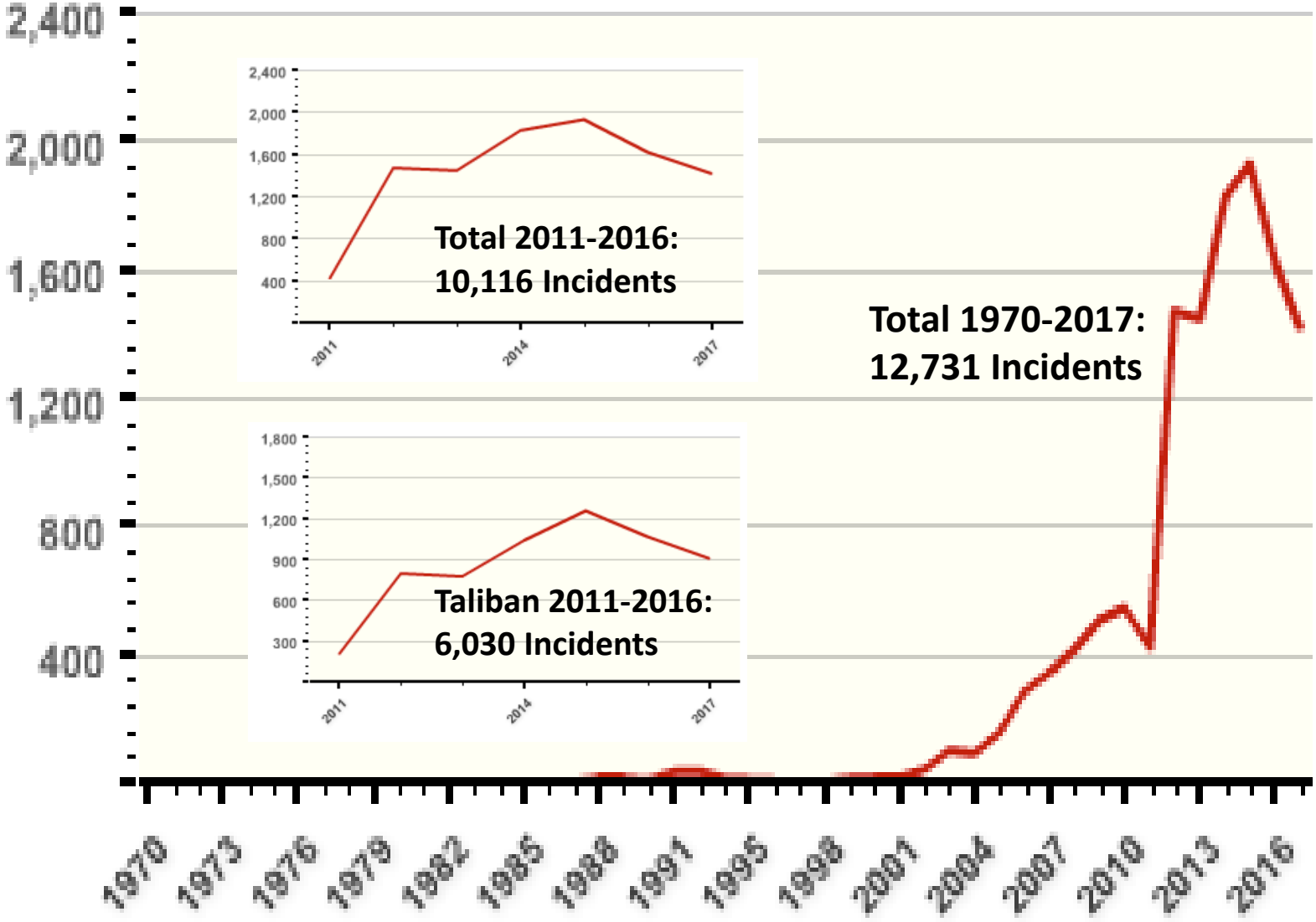
IHS Janes and START make very different estimates of the level of terrorist attacks/incidents in 2017, and IHS Janes and UNAMA make very different estimates of civilian casualties – a category where there seem to be no clear criteria for separating out casualties from terrorism from casualties caused by insurgent fighting.

Many terrorist attacks are also estimated to have been directed against the Army and the Police, and it is not clear that these is a basis for distinguishing between terrorism and warfare in many such cases. The fact that guns and explosives are used in so many "terrorist" incidents is a further indication of the difficultly in distinguishing between insurgency and terrorism.

What is clear is that Daesh/ISIS – which has not been not a major player in the insurgency – has become a more significant player in terrorism. UN reporting indicates that ISIL strongholds exist in the eastern provinces of Nangarhar, Kunar, Nuristan and Laghman. The UN estimates the total strength of ISIL in Afghanistan at between 2,500 and 4,000 militants.

The UN also notes, however, that the Taliban attacked ISIS forces in2018, and inflicted serious casualties on at least one occasion.

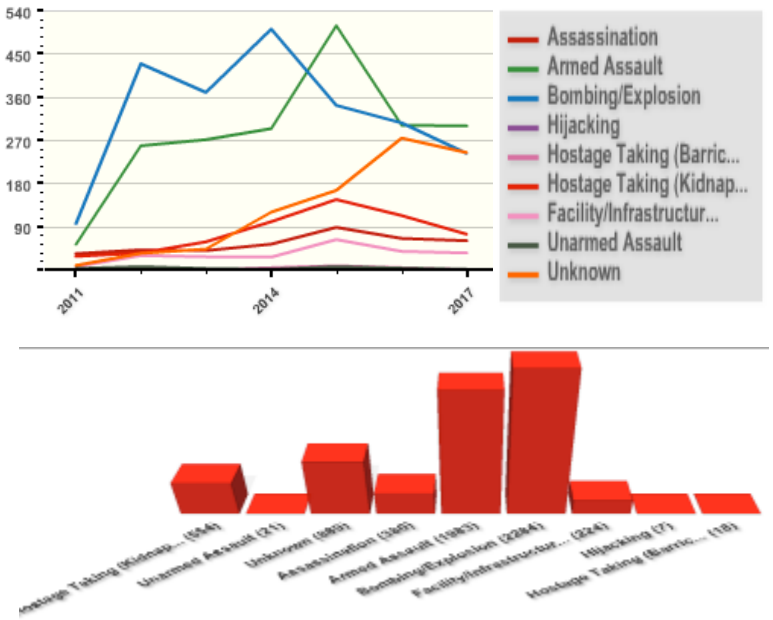
START: Terrorism Trends: 1970-2017



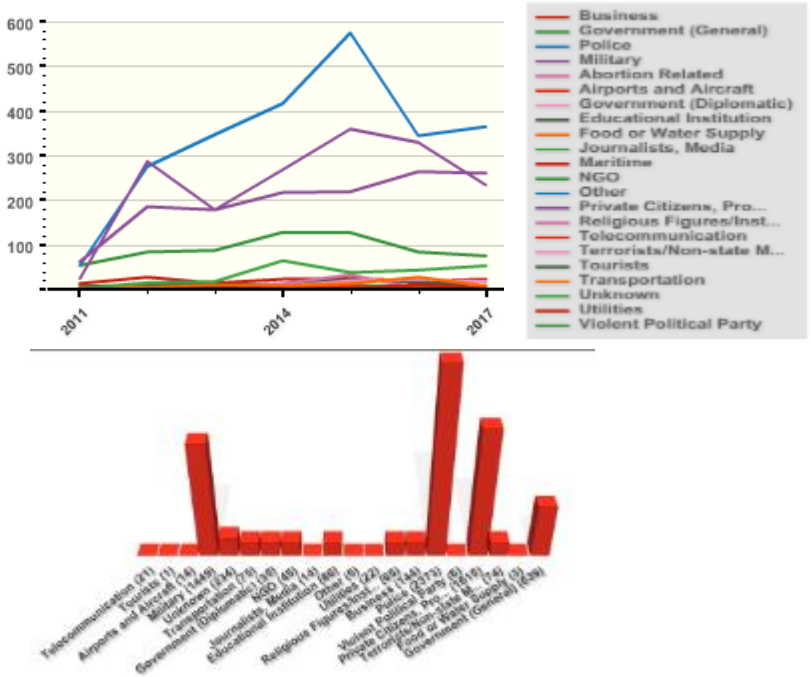
SOURCE; START ADVANCED DATABASE,
https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?chart=perpetrator&casualties_type=b&casualties_max=&start_yearonly=2011&end_yearonly=2017&dtp2=all&country=4&perpetrator=652,20529&weapon=1,2,6,7,5,8,9,4,12,3,11,13,10, Accessed 29.4.2019

START: Taliban Attack Patterns: 2011-2017

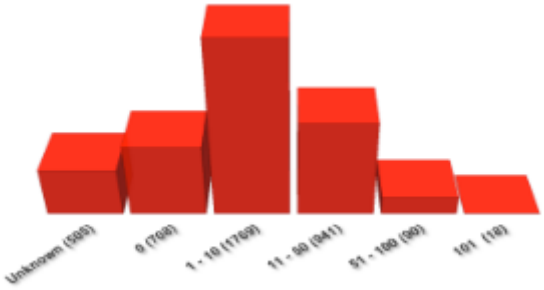
Attack Type – 6,030 Incidents



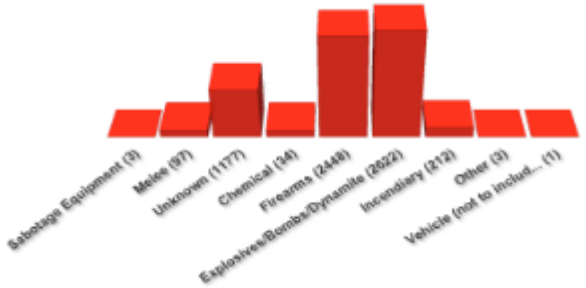
Target Type – 6,030 Incidents



Casualties: Killed & Injured Per Incident – 6,030 Incidents



Weapon Type – 6,030 Incidents



Years: (between 2011 and 2017). All incidents regardless of doubt. SOURCE; START ADVANCED DATABASE, https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?chart=target&casualties_type=b&casualties_max=&start_yearonly=2011&end_yearonly=2017&dtp2=all&country=4&perpetrator=20029,40325,20225,40151,652,20529 , Accessed 29.4.2019

Comparative Terrorist Attacks and Total Civilian Casualties: 2017-2018

Source	Attacks/Incidents		Non Militant Fatalities	
	2017	2018	2017	2018
IHS Janes	661	869	2,299	4,180
START	1,414	ND	ND	ND
UNAMA Total			3,438	3,804
• Anti-Government Elements (AGEs)			2,303	2,243
• Taliban			1,574	1,348
• Daesh/ISKP			399	681

SOURCES; IHS Janes, 2018 Global Attack Index, Afghanistan; ; START ADVANCED DATABASE, https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?chart=target&casualties_type=b&casualties_max=&start_yearonly=2011&end_yearonly=2017&dtp2=all&country=4&perpetrator=20029,40325,20225,40151,652,20529 , Accessed 29.4.2019; UNAMA, Afghanistan: *Protection of Civilians in Armed Combat, annual 2018, Annual 2018*, 24.2.2019.

UN Assessment of Daesh/ISIS Threat: 2/2019

…while ISIL has transformed into a covert network, including in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, it remains a threat as a global organization with centralized leadership. This threat is increased by returning, relocating or released foreign terrorist fighters

At present, ISIL strongholds in Afghanistan are in the eastern provinces of Nangarhar, Kunar, Nuristan and Laghman. The total strength of ISIL in Afghanistan is estimated at between 2,500 and 4,000 militants… ISIL is also reported to control some training camps in Afghanistan, and to have created a network of cells in various Afghan cities, including Kabul. The local ISIL leadership maintains close contacts with the group's core in the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq. Important personnel appointments are made through the central leadership, and the publication of propaganda videos is coordinated. Following the killing of ISIL leader Abu Sayed Bajauri on 14 July 2018, the leadership council of ISIL in Afghanistan appointed Mawlawi Ziya ul-Haq (aka Abu Omar Al-Khorasani) as the fourth "emir" of the group since its establishment.

…Throughout 2018, ISIL is assessed to have carried out 38 terrorist attacks in Afghanistan, many of them high profile, including some in Kabul… ISIL targets have included Afghan security forces, the Taliban, North Atlantic Treaty Organization military personnel, diplomats, employees of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, journalists and medical institutions, as well as religious minorities viewed by ISIL as soft targets.

…ISIL suffered a severe setback in northern Afghanistan during the reporting period. In July 2018, 1,000 Taliban attacked ISIL positions in Jowzjan province, killing 200 ISIL fighters, while 254 ISIL fighters surrendered to government forces and 25 foreign terrorist fighters surrendered to the Taliban. One Member State assesses that the ISIL presence in Jowzjan has been eliminated while, elsewhere in the north, a minority of Taliban – approximately 170 fighters in Faryab, 100 in Sari Pul and 50 in Balkh – retain sympathies for ISIL…

…ISIL is seeking to expand its area of activity in Central Asia and has called for terrorist attacks targeting public gatherings, primarily in the Ferghana Valley of the Central Asian region. On 30 July 2018, ISIL claimed responsibility for the killing of four foreign cyclists in Tajikistan. In November, ISIL stated that one of its fighters was responsible for the attack that had sparked the riot in a high-security prison in Khujand, Tajikistan.

…ISIL killed 24 and injured 60 people in the Islamic Republic of Iran in the 22 September 2018 Ahvaz attack…

Excerpted from United Nations S/2019/103 **Security Council** Distr.: General 1 February 2019 Original: English 19-01206 (E) 050219 ***1901206*** **Eighth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat**

Afghan Perceptions

Afghan Perceptions

The polling metrics in this section, and those that follow, present significant problems. Afghan perceptions are difficult to poll. Direct interviews involve serious risks, and efforts to poll by telephone present the problem that most Afghans do not have phones, and those that do are likely to be wealthier and more urban.

The Asian Foundation has, however, established a long record of success in polling Afghan perceptions. These polls still indicate that most Afghan hope for a successful outcome of the war, but this year's poll shows a sharp drop in popular confidence that Afghanistan is moving in the right direction, and far less optimism among every other ethnic group than among Pashtuns.

The key reasons for this pessimism are broadly based. Some 61% of the population felt pessimistic, and more than 70% cited security, 30%-48% cited the economy, and 30%-34% cited governance as among the top two reasons.

The polls also show that the percent of Afghans who fear for their safety has increased by 31% since 2006. It also shows a high rate of fear when traveling, and when encountering International forces, and an even higher rate when encountering ISIS/Daesh and Taliban forces.

Broad popular perceptions of the ANA and ANP are relatively good, however, although most Afghan recognize they are still heavily dependent on outside support.

The same is not true of perceptions of the Afghan government – which are shown later in this report. Satisfaction with the government has dropped steadily since 2007, as has confidence in the government.

All levels of government and the justice system is seen are highly corrupt, although they have improved since 2016. To a lesser degree, key elements of the ANSF are also seen as corrupt – in spite of the generally favorable attitudes towards the security services.

Popular Confidence

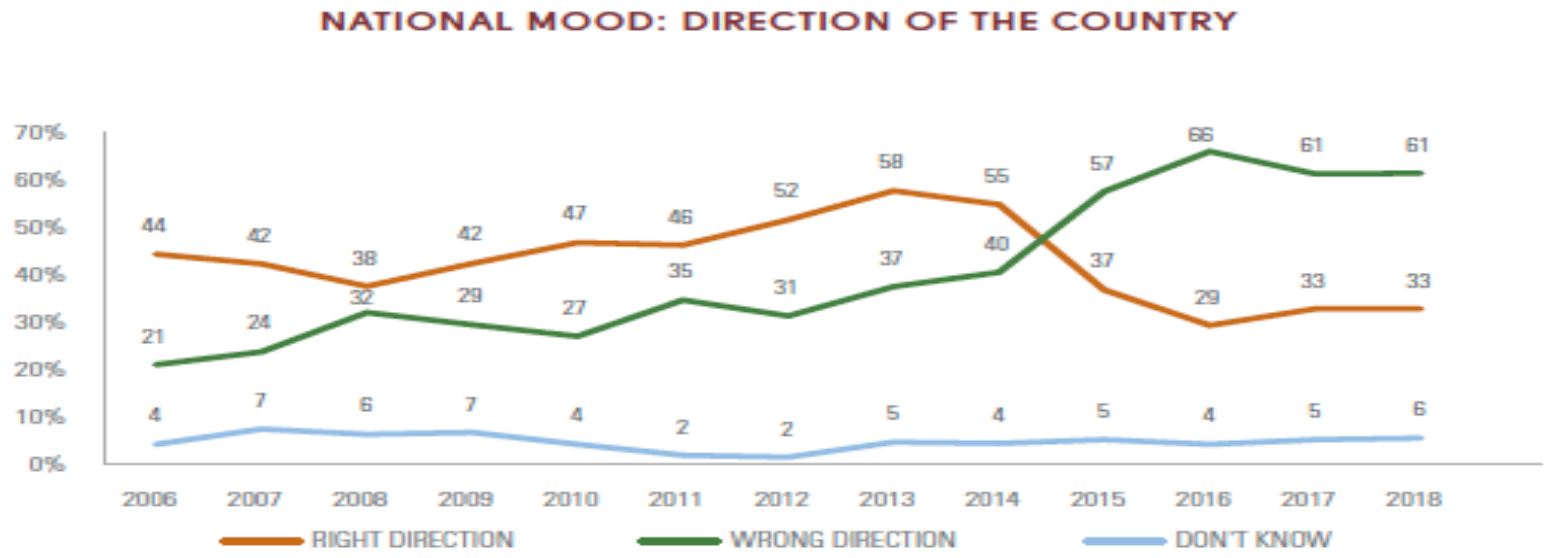
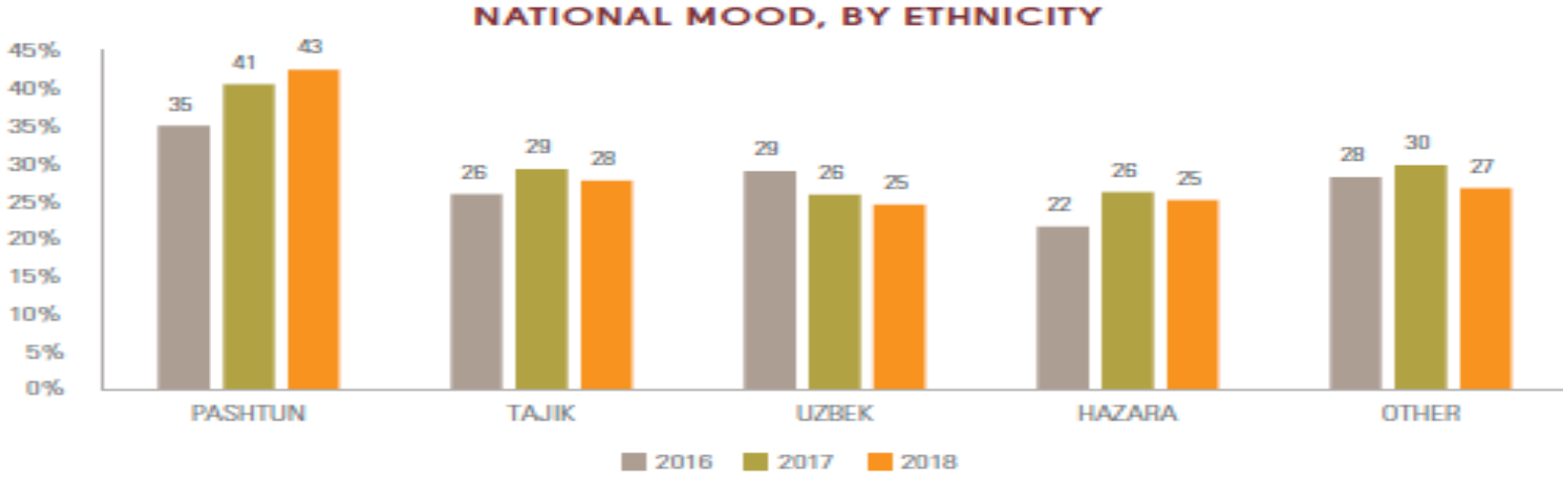
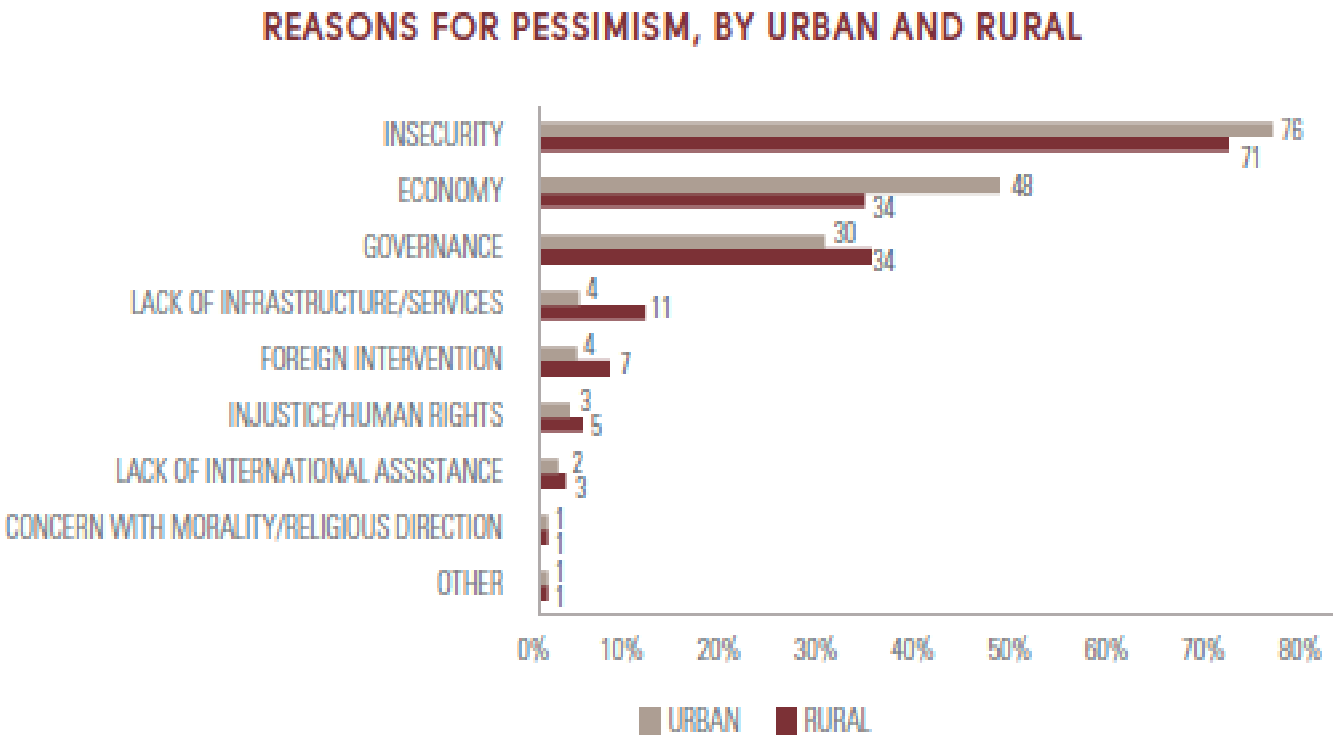


FIG. 1.1: Q-1. *Overall, based on your own experience, do you think things in Afghanistan today are going in the right direction, or do you think they are going in the wrong direction?*



Asia Foundation, Survey of the Afghan People, 2018, https://asiafoundation.org/publication/afghanistan-in-2018-a-survey-of-the-afghan-people/, pp. 16-18

Reasons for Pessimism (61% of Population)



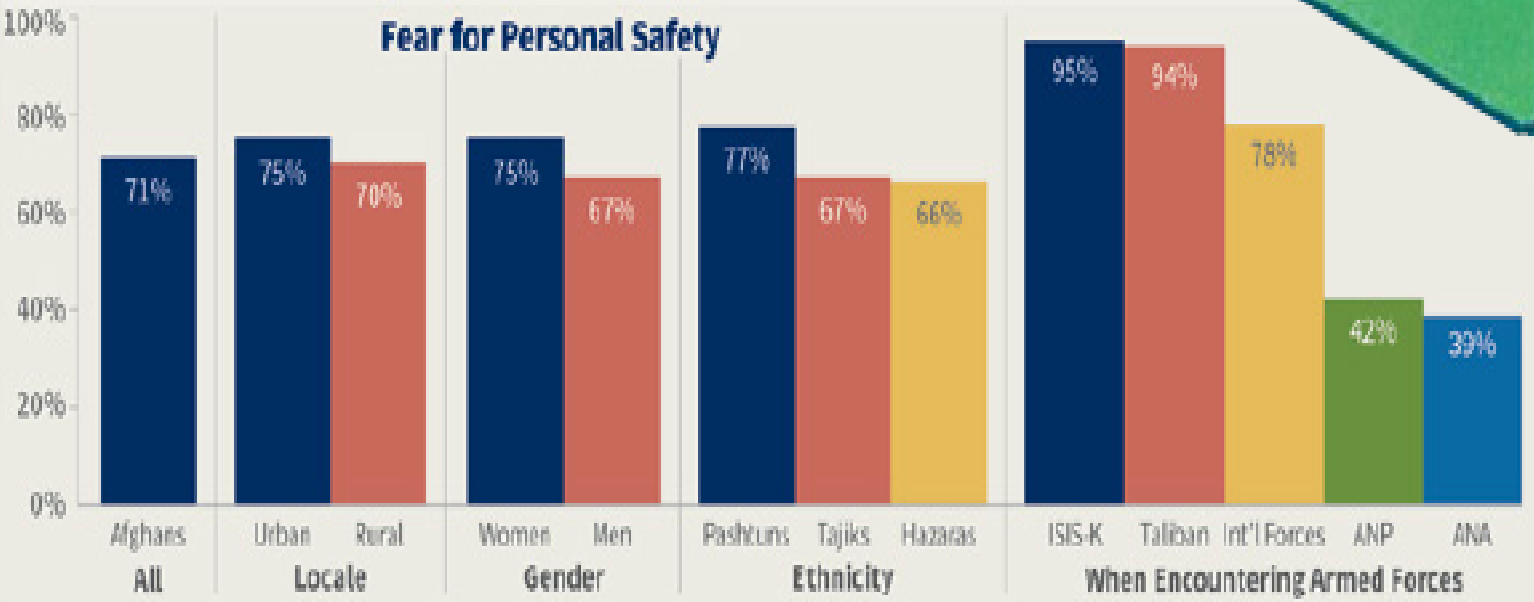
(Ask if answer to Q-1 is "wrong direction.") What are two reasons you think that Afghanistan is going in the wrong direction?

Asia Foundation, Survey of the Afghan People, 2018, https://asiafoundation.org/publication/afghanistan-in-2018-a-survey-of-the-afghan-people/, pp. 16-18

Popular Sense of Security - I

SENSE OF SECURITY

A district center may be under government control, but incidents of violence and harassment, such as a car bomb or a Taliban threat letter, can lead to a deteriorating sense of security. Feelings of insecurity may prevent Afghans from going to the market, sending a child to school, or engaging in other routine activities. In December 2018, The Asia Foundation released its annual *Survey of the Afghan People*, which has documented a 31 percentage point increase in fear for personal safety since 2006. In 2018, 71 percent of Afghans reported some or a lot of fear for their personal safety. Fear varied according to where Afghans live, their gender, ethnicity, and with whom they interact, as shown below.



Source: Adapted from **Lead Inspector General, OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL, LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, OCTOBER 1, 2018–DECEMBER 31, 2018, p. 17**.

Popular Sense of Security - II

FIG. 2.1: Q-21. *How often do you fear for your own personal safety or security or for that of your family these days? Would you say you always, often, sometimes, rarely, or never fear for you and your family's safety? (Percent who respond "always," "often," or "sometimes.")*

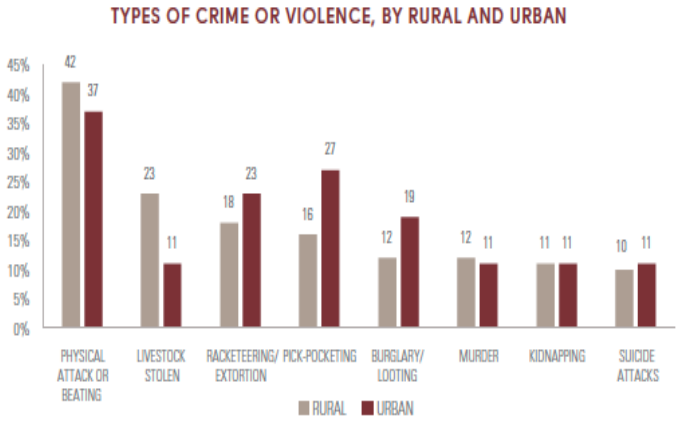
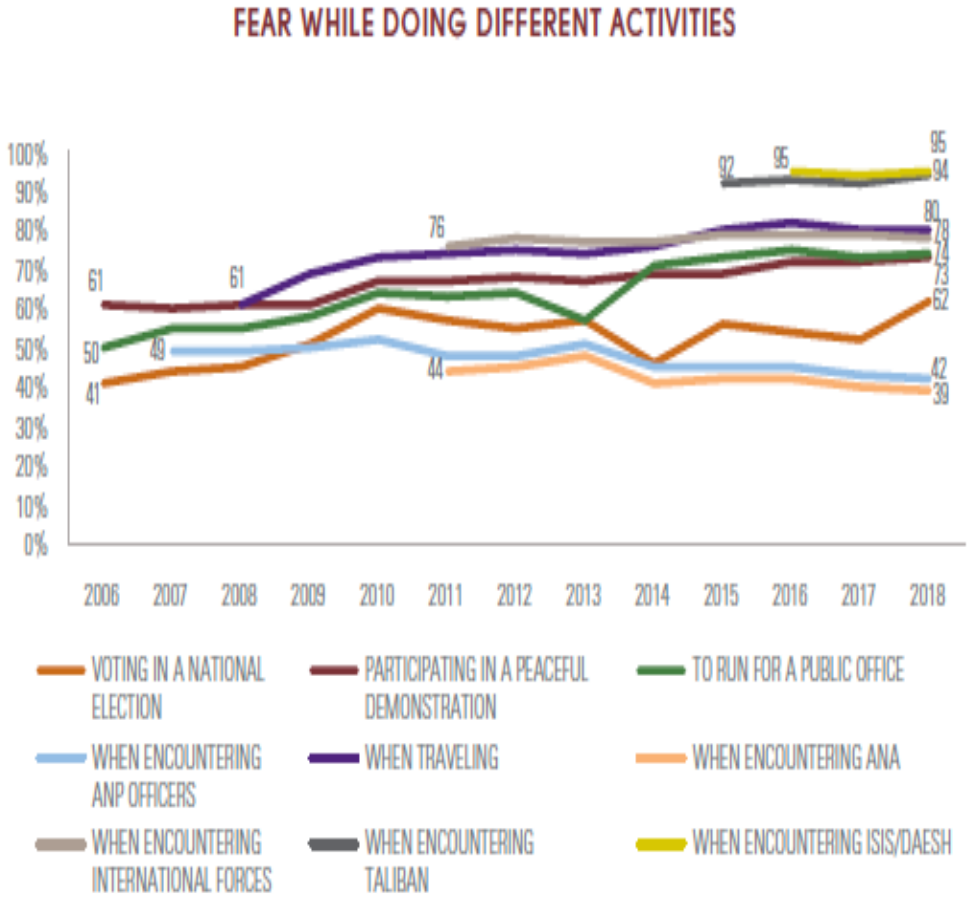
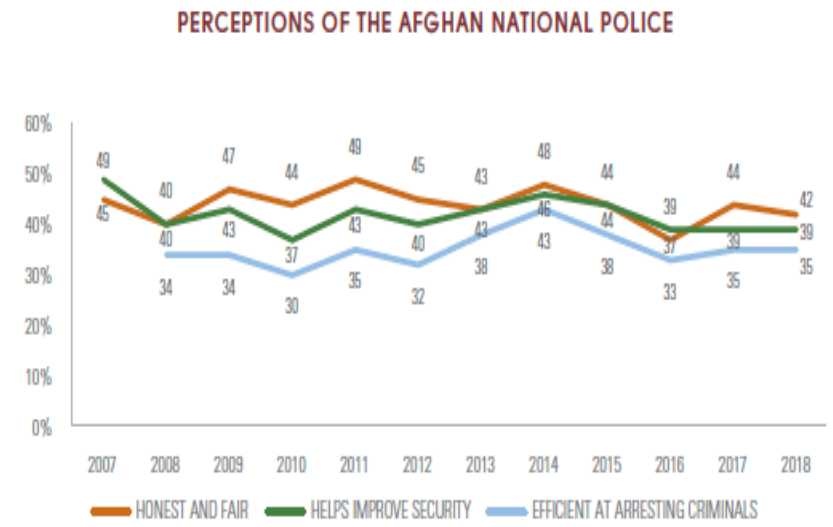


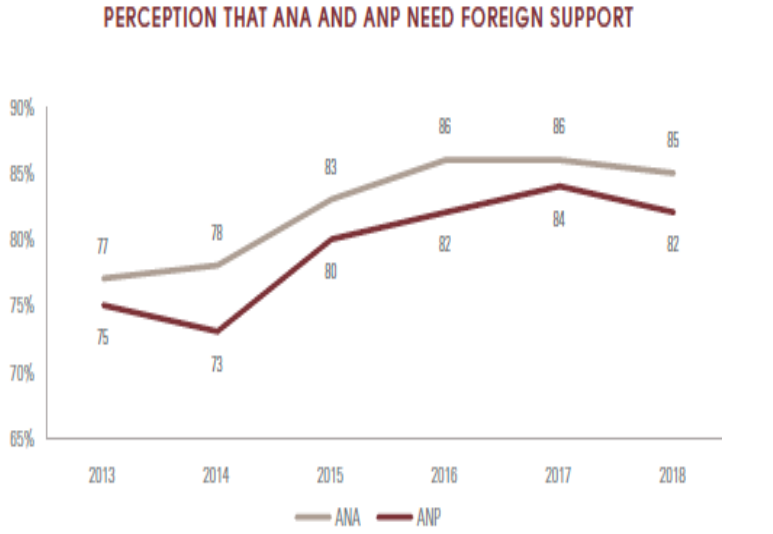
FIG. 2.6: Q-25. *(Ask if answer to Q-24 is yes.) If it is ok to ask, what kinds of violence or crimes did you or someone in your family experience in the past year?*

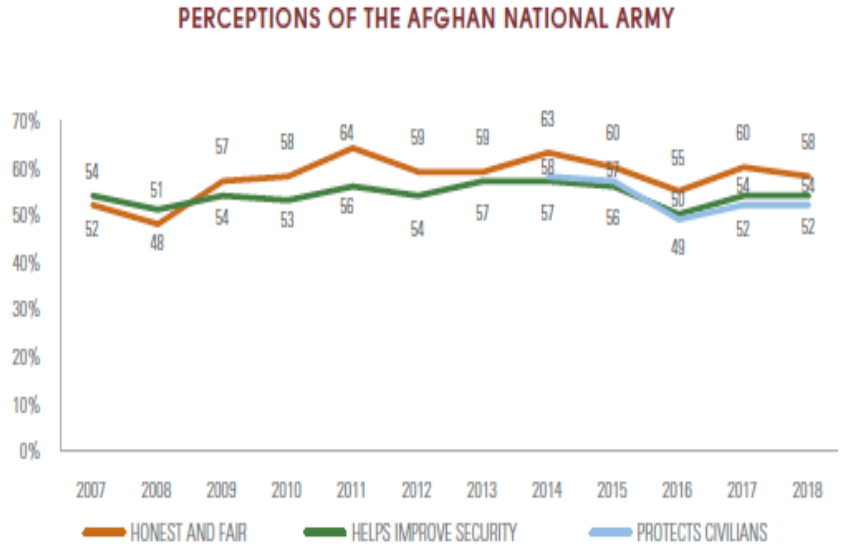


Asia Foundation, Survey of the Afghan People, 2018, https://asiafoundation.org/publication/afghanistan-in-2018-a-survey-of-the-afghan-people/, pp. 45-46,53

Afghan Perceptions of Security Provider







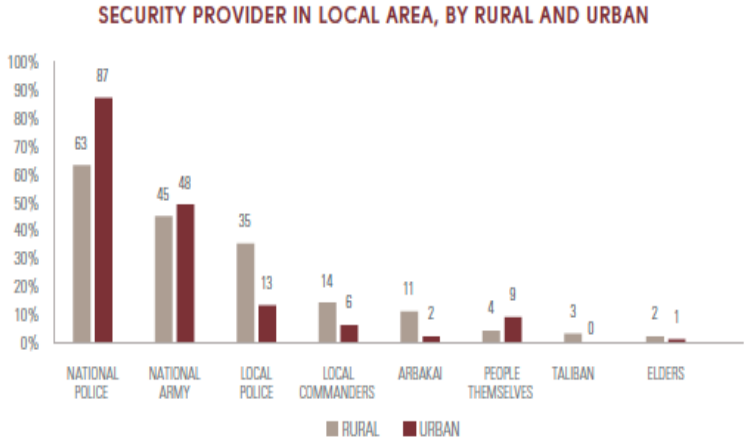


FIG. 2.9: Q-15. *Which group would you say is most responsible for providing security in this village/gozar? And the second most?*

Asia Foundation, Survey of the Afghan People, 2018, https://asiafoundation.org/publication/afghanistan-in-2018-a-survey-of-the-afghan-people/, pp. 56-59

Narcotics

Narcotics

Afghanistan plays a critical role in the global supply of opiates. It is clear that massive U.S. efforts to make major cuts in Afghan production have only had sporadic success, and have become less success with time as Afghanistan has become more dependent on opiate exports as a key source of income and hard currency. It is also clear from UNDOC and SIGAR reporting that weather, plant diseases, and demand have been far more important in determining the size of the opium crop than efforts at eradication and persuading farmers to find substitute crops.

The metrics in this section highlight both the growth of opium production and the issues surrounding its role in shaping Afghan macroeconomics. The work by SIGAR on this subject is particularly important because it indicates that opium is major source of Afghan economic growth, and is Afghanistan's most important export. It also shows a high correlation between opium production and Taliban control and influence and indicates that opium plays a key role in financing the war as well as in areas where power brokers still operate with some degree of independence from the central government.

The importance of opium has been understated in the past because international bodies like the World Bank and IMF did not fully assess the impact of opium on the Afghan economy, and because various estimates of the value of the crop focused on farm gate prices rather than the massive rise in income and profits once the product left the farm -- and particularly after it was processed. It also took time to realize how important opium income was becoming to the Taliban, and there is still a tendency to ignore how important opium is as cause of corruption and income to Afghan power brokers and officials in the Afghan government and security forces.

The Macroeconomics of Narcotics

CONTRASTING MACROECONOMIC OBSERVATIONS, INCLUDING AND EXCLUDING THE OPIUM ECONOMY

Observation Including the Opium Economy	Observation Excluding the Opium Economy
Afghanistan's 2017 economic growth rate was a robust 7.2%.	Afghanistan's 2017 economic growth rate was a modest 2.7%.
Depending on the level of opium exports, Afghanistan's 2017 merchandise trade deficit may have been between zero and $2.3 billion.	Afghanistan's merchandise trade deficit in 2017 was $6.3 billion.
Afghanistan's real growth rate in 2015 was -2.4%. By 2017, it had risen to 7.2%, an average annual growth rate increase of nearly five percentage points.	From 2015–2017, Afghanistan's economic growth rate gradually rose from 1.0% to 2.7%.

Source: IMF, *Fourth Review Under The Extended Credit Facility Arrangement, Request For Modification Of Performance Criteria, And Request For Extension And Rephasing Of The Arrangement*, 11/20/2018, p. 23; NSIA, *Afghanistan Statistical Yearbook 2017–2018*, p. 110; UNODC, *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2017: Challenges to Sustainable Development, Peace and Security*, 5/2018, p. 14; NSIA, *Afghanistan Statistical Yearbook 2016–17*, 5/10/2017, p. 163; NSIA, *Afghanistan Statistical Yearbook 2015–16*, 5/31/2016, p. 139; SIGAR analysis.

Any presentation or analysis of Afghanistan's economic output (and by extension its growth rate) without accounting for the opium trade provides an incomplete picture of the Afghan economy. By value, opium poppy is the most important crop in Afghanistan, generating between $4–6.5 billion of potential exports in 2017—the equivalent of 20–32% of Afghanistan's licit GDP—according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).[549]

The drug trade's impact on the political economy of Afghanistan has been deeply corrosive. Corruption associated with the opium economy undermines state legitimacy and public institutions, particularly in the security and justice sectors.[550] Opium production has also directly worked against security goals by financing insurgent groups.[551]

Nevertheless, from a purely economic perspective, it has also brought significant benefits, supporting Afghanistan's balance of payments and bolstering aggregate demand (although it does not directly contribute to Afghan government revenues).[552] Additionally, from a livelihoods perspective, opium-poppy cultivation can substantially impact rural households through both employment and increased purchasing power.[553] According to the UNODC, opium-poppy weeding and harvesting provided up to 354,000 jobs in rural areas in 2017.[554] In poppy-growing areas, opium has a strong multiplier effect, creating secondary jobs as farmers accrue capital to spend on food, medical care, and other consumer products.[555]

Setting aside the various ways in which it undermines the Afghan state, the opium economy's sheer size renders it highly relevant to assessments of Afghanistan's economic performance. However, the World Bank, IMF, and others exclude the value of opium production from their reported GDP estimates, as SIGAR has reported previously.[556] In contrast to these multilateral institutions, since 2015–2016, Afghanistan's National Statistics and Information Authority (NSIA) has reported the country's GDP and GDP growth rates with two figures: one that includes, and one that excludes the opium economy.[557] Due to what the UNODC described as "record-high" opium production in 2017, Afghanistan's total economy, including the opium sector, grew by a robust 7.2% in 2017, according to the NSIA, compared to 2.9% excluding opium.[558] More or less in line with the NSIA's licit growth estimate for 2017, the IMF and the Bank reported that Afghanistan's growth rate in 2017 was 2.7%.[559]

While visiting Kabul this quarter, SIGAR's Research and Analysis Directorate asked USAID's Office of Economic Growth whether it accounts for opium in evaluating the performance of Afghanistan's economy. Despite the potential for the inclusion of opium to generate contradictory conclusions about Afghanistan's growth and trade picture, OEG stated it does not, claiming that opium statistics are speculative.[562] But the extent to which opium-related economic figures are actually speculative, relative to other economic data from Afghanistan is debatable. One economic expert on Afghanistan—a former World Bank economist—wrote in 2008, "data on the opium economy are generally no worse, and in many respects better, than the data available on the rest of Afghanistan's economy."[563] While this statement may be dated, the World Bank readily compares the size of the opium economy with the size of the licit agricultural economy in its most recent (August 2018) macroeconomic update on Afghanistan, implying data quality equivalency (though again, the Bank does not incorporate the opium economy into its GDP estimates and projections for Afghanistan).[564] On the topic of licit economic figures, the IMF said in May 2018, "Data provision has significant shortcomings, hampering evidence-based policy decisions. The national accounts, the BOP, CPI, and inter-sectoral consistency are areas of concern."[565] In other words, poor data quality pervades many areas of the licit macroeconomy.

The opium economy contracted in 2018: due to high levels of supply that resulted in price reductions, income earned by farmers fell from an estimated $1.4 billion in 2017 to just over $600 million in 2018—a 56% reduction, according to the UNODC.[566] The UNODC added that the area under opium-poppy cultivation declined by 20% in 2018, year-on-year—a decrease of approximately 65,000 hectares—driven in part by the ongoing drought.[567] Nonetheless, the estimated 2018 figure of 263,000 hectares was the second-highest number recorded since systematic monitoring began in 1994.[568] Opium, in other words, is not going away. Ultimately, the significance of narcotics to Afghanistan's economy is far from speculative and is likely to complicate assessments of Afghanistan's macroeconomy for years to come.

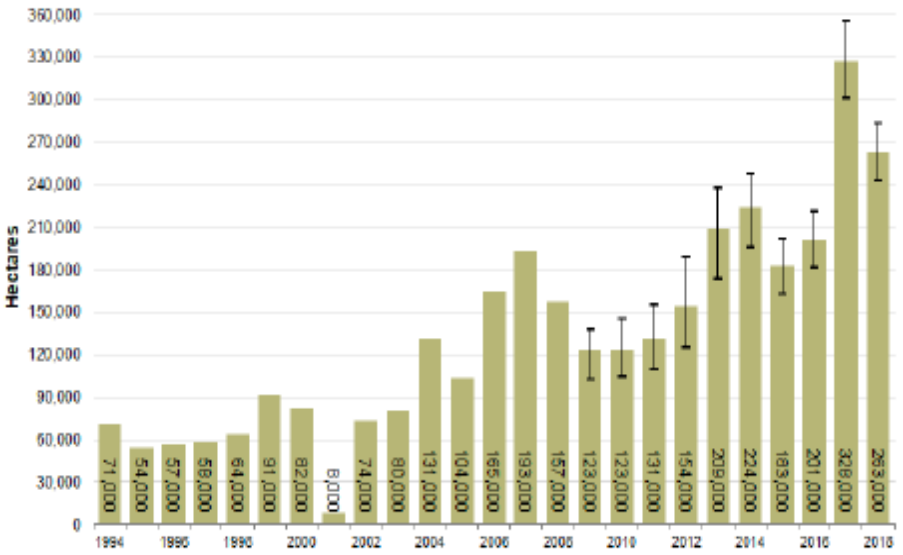
Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, January 30, 2019, pp. 181`-184.

Key UNDOC 2018 Narcotics Survey Results - I

Fact sheet – Afghanistan opium survey 2018

	2017	Change from 2017	2018
Net opium poppy cultivation (after eradication)	328,000 ha (301,000 - 355,000)	-20%	263,000 ha (242,000 - 283,000)
Number of poppy free provinces[1]	10	0%	10
Number of provinces affected by poppy cultivation	24	0%	24
Eradication	750 ha	-46%	406 ha
Average opium yield (weighted by cultivation)	27.3 kg/ha	-11%	24.4 kg/ha
Potential production of opium	9,000 mt (8,000 -10,000)	-29%	6,400 mt (5,600 - 7,200)
Average farm-gate price (weighted by production) of fresh opium at harvest time	US$ 131/kg	-42%	US$ 76/kg
Average farm-gate price (weighted by production) of dry opium	US$ 155/kg	-39%	US$ 94/kg
Total farm gate value of opium production	US$ 1.4 billion	-56%	US$ 0.6 billion

Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, 1994-2018 (Hectares)



Sources: MCN/UNODC opium surveys 1994-2018. The vertical lines represent the upper and lower bounds of the 95% confidence interval. The purple line represents the average farm-gate price without inflation adjustment, the orange line the farm-gate price after inflation adjustment.

Area under opium poppy cultivation decreased by 20% since 2017 but remains at very high levels

The total opium poppy cultivation area in Afghanistan was estimated at 263,000 (242,000 – 283,000) hectares in 2018, a 20% or 65,000 hectares decrease compared to the previous year. It is the second highest measurement since the beginning of systematic opium poppy monitoring and recording in 1994. The level of 2018 exceeds the third highest level of 2014 by 17% or 39,000 hectares.

Opium poppy cultivation decreased by some 24,000 hectares (-56%) in the Northern region, by 23,200 hectares (-43%) in the Western region and by 15,000 hectares (-8%) in the Southern region. The strong decreases in the Northern and parts of the Western regions were mainly attributed to the adverse effects of a drought.

Most of the opium poppy cultivation took place in the Southern region (69%), followed by the Western region (12%). The Eastern and Northern regions accounted for 8% and 7% of total cultivation, respectively. The North-eastern and Central regions together accounted for 4% of the total cultivation.

Potential opium yield and production decreased in 2018, reducing the potential amount of heroin produced from Afghan opium

Potential opium production was estimated at 6,400 (5,600 – 7,200) tons in 2018, a decrease of 29% from its 2017 level (9,000 tons). The decrease in production was due to decreases in area under opium poppy cultivation and opium yield per hectare.

The average opium yield in 2018 was estimated at 24.4 kilograms per hectare, which was 11% lower than in 2017. Yields in the Central, Eastern and Northern regions decreased notably by 47%, 29% and 19% respectively. Yields decreased by 8% in the Southern region and remained stable in the Western and North-eastern regions.

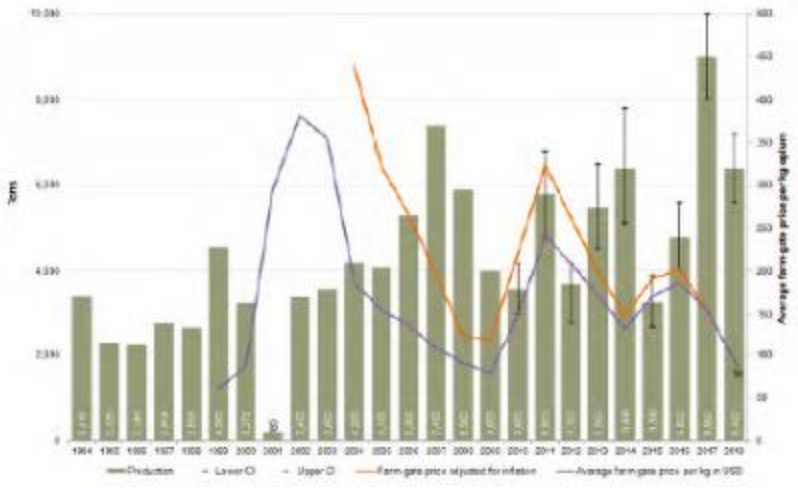
The Southern region continued to produce most of the opium in Afghanistan (68% of national production), followed by the Western (11%), Eastern and Northern regions (8% each). The North-eastern and Central regions accounted for 5%.

After accounting for consumption of raw opium in the region of Afghanistan and neighbouring countries, it can be estimated that 5,000 to 5,300 tons of opium are potentially available for heroin production in and outside of Afghanistan. This can potentially yield some 360 to 610 tons of heroin of export quality (between 50 and 70 per cent purity) or 250 to 300 tons of pure heroin base.

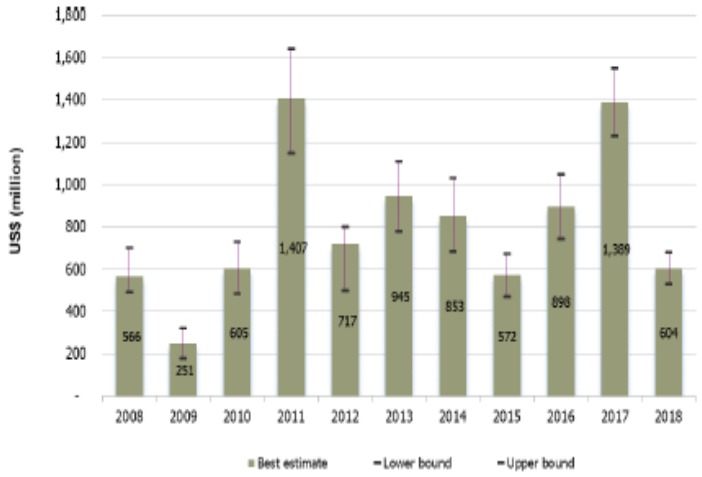
Source: UNODC, Afghan Opium Survey 2018, November 2018, pp. 5-6.

Key UNDOC 2018 Narcotics Survey Results - II

Potential opium production in Afghanistan and average farm-gate prices of opium, 1994-2018 (mt, US$/kg opium)



Farm-gate value of opium production in Afghanistan without inflation adjustment, 2008-2018 (Milion US dollars)



At 263,000 hectares, the area under opium poppy cultivation decreased by 20% when compared to 2017. This decrease can be attributed to an heavy drought in the Northern region and parts of the Western region, and possibly to low and decreasing prices in regions less affected by the drought. Remote sensing data of the Northern region and Badghis (Western region) showed that crops failed at major scale in rain-fed land due to less and late rain. Irrigated areas were also affected, since reduced snow fall in the winter restricted the water available for irrigation in spring. The impact of the drought on opium poppy cultivation appeared to be limited in the Southern region. Here the moderate reduction in opium poppy cultivation could be potentially linked to the low and continuously falling opium prices.

The area under opium poppy cultivation remained at very high levels in 2018 (it is the second highest level since beginning of the monitoring), in spite of decreasing prices and a seemingly saturated opium market. Opium poppy has become a crucial component of the Afghan economy that secures the livelihoods of many Afghans who engage in cultivation, work on poppy fields or partake in the illicit drug trade. In rural areas, a considerable share of the population earned income from opium poppy cultivation. In addition to farming households, opium provides daily wage labor to many local and migrant workers hired by farmers. In 2017, opium poppy weeding and harvesting provided for example the equivalent of up to 354,000 full time jobs to rural areas.

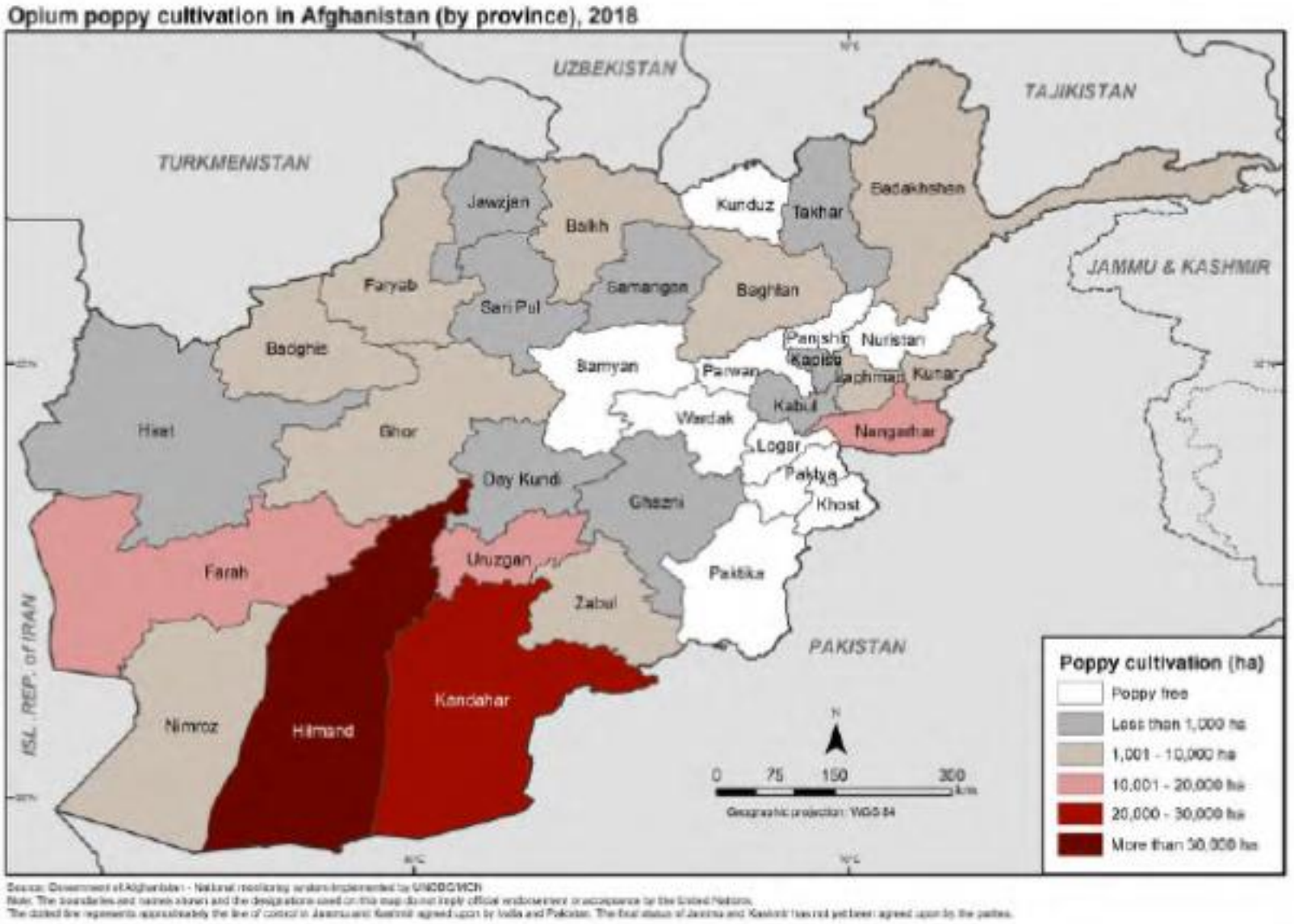
With viable alternatives lacking, many communities - not only farmers - have become dependent on the income from opium poppy to sustain their livelihoods. Afghan farmers continue to grow opium poppy at large scale, even with prices at an all-time low (after adjusting for inflation). This indicates the degree of dependence and the lack of better alternatives to opium poppy.

The continuing improvement of agricultural productivity also plays a role, including the use of solar panels for powering irrigation pumps and fertilizers and pesticides, which may have made opium poppy cultivation increasingly profitable even under unfavorable natural conditions and falling prices. Solar panels for irrigation seem to have replaced diesel pumps in many areas. These panels require a sizable initial investment but have lower running costs than diesel-powered pumps.

There is, however, no single explanation for these continuing high levels of opium poppy cultivation. The multiple drivers are complex and geographically diverse, as many elements continue to influence farmers' decisions regarding opium poppy cultivation. Rule of law-related challenges, such as political instability, lack of government control and security, as well as corruption, have been found to be among the main drivers of illicit cultivation. Socio-economic drivers also impact farmers' decisions. Scarce employment opportunities, lack of quality education and limited access to markets and financial services continue to contribute to the vulnerability of farmers towards opium poppy cultivation.

Source: UNODC, Afghan Opium Survey 2018, November 2018, pp. 5-6.

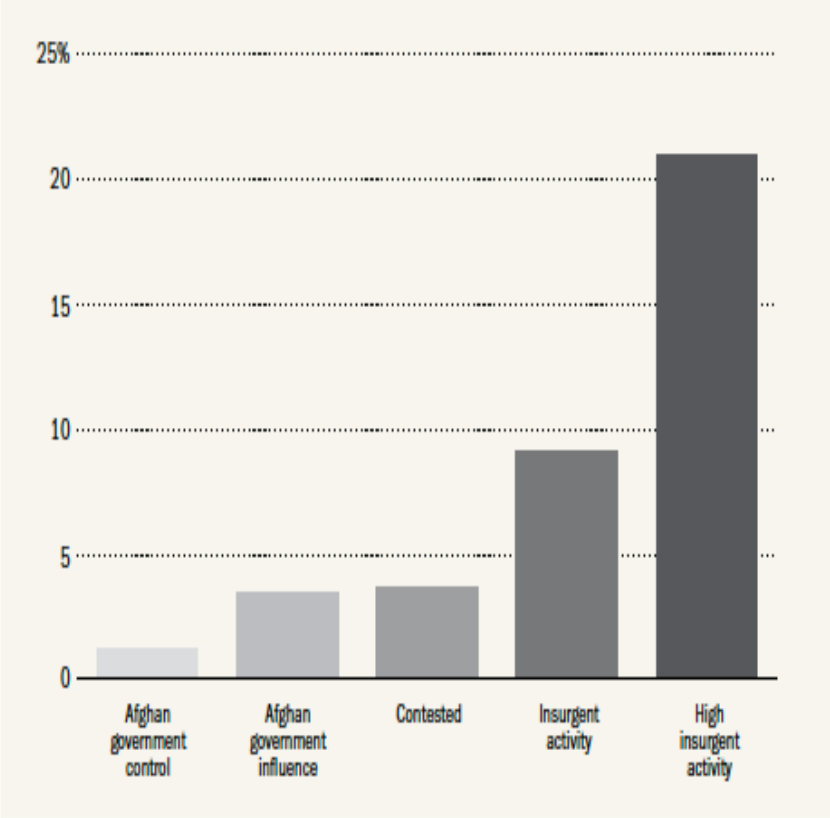
UNDOC Map of Major Opium Production Areas in 2018



Source: UNODC, Afghan Opium Survey 2018, November 2018, p. 10.

Control of Narcotics Production

PERCENTAGE OF AGRICULTURE DEVOTED TO OPIUM-POPPY CULTIVATION BY RS-DEFINED DISTRICT CONTROL



Note: Percentages are unweighted averages.

Source: UNODC, *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2018: Cultivation and Production*, 11/2018, pp. 61–68; FAO, 2010 *Land Cover Database of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan* (www.fao.org/geonetwork); RS, response to SIGAR data call, 12/20/2018.

While insurgent activity and high-activity districts account for the majority of opium-poppy cultivation, SIGAR found that only 40% of opium poppy was cultivated in insurgent activity or high-insurgent-districts in 2017; this rose to 48% of opium-poppy cultivation in 2018.[815]

According to the UN Food and Agricultural Organization, Afghanistan has approximately 7.3 million hectares of irrigated or rain-fed agricultural land suitable for cultivating annual crops such as wheat or opium poppy, among others.[816] RS-defined district control data from October 2018 indicates that most agricultural land is in government-influenced districts (145 districts, 2.66 million hectares), followed by contested (138 districts, 2.20 million hectares), government-controlled (74 districts, 1.14 million hectares), insurgent activity (38 districts, 960 thousand hectares), and high insurgent activity districts (12 districts, 374 thousand hectares).[817]

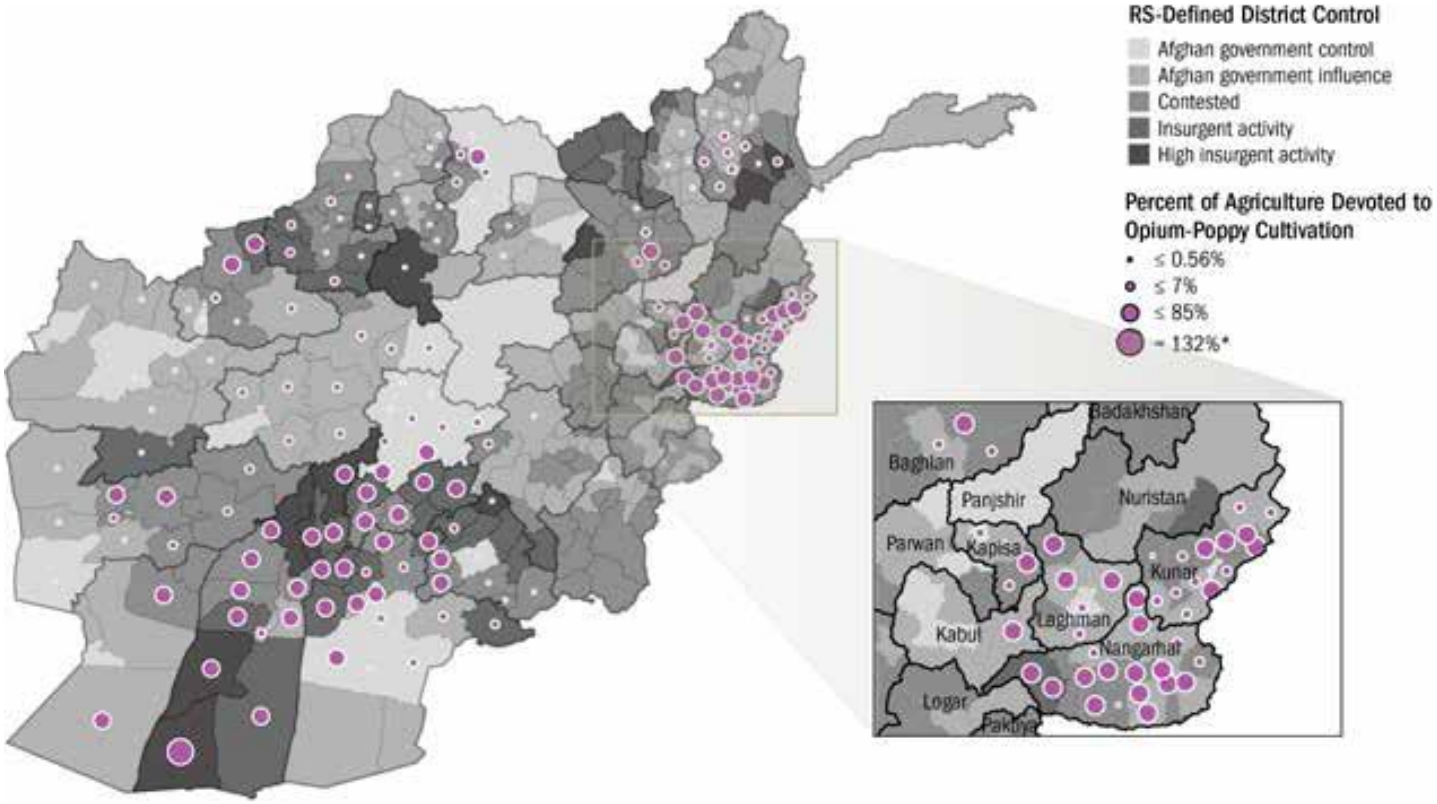
If opium-poppy cultivation were spread evenly across agricultural areas, one would expect that the amount of opium poppy cultivated should be highest in government-influenced districts and lowest in high insurgent activity districts because of the disparity in their respective land areas. However, SIGAR found that most opium poppy is cultivated in contested districts (71,973 hectares), followed by insurgent activity (64,481 hectares), high insurgent activity (59,449 hectares), and at the bottom, government-influenced (54,557 hectares), and government-controlled districts (12,130 hectares).[818]

The mismatch between expected opium-poppy cultivation and measured opium-poppy cultivation can be explained by the intensity in which high insurgent activity districts cultivate opium poppy. Figure 3.48 on shows that at least 21% of the agricultural area in high insurgent activity districts was planted with opium poppy during the 2018 opium-poppy season. In contrast, only about 1% of the agricultural area in government-controlled districts was sown with opium poppy during the same time period. The remaining control types (insurgent activity, 9%; contested, 4%; and government-influenced, 4%) fall between these two extremes.[819]

In short, the agricultural economy in high insurgent activity districts is about 21 times more specialized in opium-poppy cultivation than in government-controlled districts. The cause of this difference is unknown, but likely factors may include security or governance tactics used on all sides, the more rural character of insurgent districts, and varying types of control along the opium-supply chain (opium-poppy cultivation versus opium export).[820]

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, January 30, 2019, pp. 181`-184.

Location of Narcotics Production Relative to Control and Influence



Note: The district map was adapted from the 2012 Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office (AGCHO) shapefile that included 399 districts. Adjustments, some approximate, were made to data for districts that were whole in AGCHO's 399-district set but that were split in RS's 407-district set. See R.L. Helms, District Lookup Tool, https://arcg.is/1b0jGv accessed 10/14/2018, for differences amongst district sets. This year, UNODC recognized a total of 406 districts in comparison to RS's 407 districts. Efforts were made to fit UNODC districts and cultivation data into RS's districts in the following manner: UNODC recognizes but RS does not recognize Baghlan and Baghlan-i Jadeed (RS includes Baghlan in Baghlan-i Jadeed), Ghormach in Faryab (RS recognizes Ghormach in Badghis), Kohistan in Kapisa (unable to locate Kohistan; district ignored because it had no opium-poppy cultivation), Ali Kahil and Shamul in Paktiya (ignored due to zero opium-poppy cultivation in Paktiya), and Hisa-i Duwumi in Panjshir (ignored due to zero opium-poppy cultivation in Panjshir). UNODC does not recognize but RS does recognize Marjah in Helmand (UNODC opium-poppy cultivation data split evenly between RS's Nad Ali and Marjah), Dand in Kandahar (all UNODC opium-poppy cultivation data accounted for in RS's Dand instead of Kandahar District), Bad Pash in Laghman (ignored due to zero opium-poppy cultivation in Mehtar Lam from which Bad Pash was separated in 2011), Delaram in Nimroz (a municipality formerly recognized as part of Khash Rod, ignored due to its urban environment), Mirzakah in Paktiya (ignored due to zero opium-poppy cultivation in Paktiya), Abshar in Panjshir (ignored due to zero opium-poppy cultivation in Panjshir), Chinartu in Uruzgan Province (broken off of Tarin Kot, due to the prevalence of agriculture in RS's Tarin Kot, all UNODC opium-poppy cultivation estimates remained in RS's Tarin Kot). In addition to UNODC opium-poppy cultivation estimates and RS-defined district control data, the UN Food and Agricultural Organization's (FAO) 2010 *Land Cover Database of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan* was used to determine total district-level irrigated and rainfed agricultural area. To produce the map, SIGAR used ArcGIS Pro 2.2, all layers were projected to UTM 42N, and hectares of opium-poppy cultivation were divided by total district agricultural area to derive a percent of district agriculture devoted to opium-poppy cultivation. The percent of opium-poppy cultivation was then symbolized using the quantile method which produces an approximately equal number of observations per class to facilitate comparative analysis, but the interval of the class must therefore be variable.

*Dishu District in the south of Helmand Province registered a seemingly impossible 132% of agriculture devoted to opium-poppy cultivation. This anomaly is most likely due to a rapid increase in total agricultural area between 2010, when FAO collected its land cover data, and 2018 when UNODC recorded their most recent opium-poppy cultivation estimates. Because the percentage of agriculture devoted to opium-poppy in Dishu was approximately 47% higher than the next highest intensity district, Dishu District was excluded from averages, but Dishu opium-poppy and agricultural land area were included in total area calculations.

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, January 30, 2019, pp. 185.

The Civil “Threat” and Causes of Instability - Governance

The Civil "Threat" and Causes of Instability - Governance

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The rise of violent extremism the Islamic world has many causes, but it is clear that a close correlation exists between broad failures in governance, economics, and coping with population growth; and the emergence of large-scale violence, and a shift from terrorism to insurgency. Algeria, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, and Afghanistan are all case examples .

Ideology, religion, leadership, and politics are all important additional causes, and there is no convincing way to weight the relative impact of any given cause or even to provide useful metrics in some cases. However, the following structural causes of instability – ones that help define the term "failed state" -- have clearly been important factors in causing the collapse of various governments and shaping the rise of violence and extremism:

- Sectarian, Ethnic, Tribal discrimination, and violence
- Charismatic, competent violent opposition leader(s)/groups
- Repression and failed authoritarian rule.
- Dysfunctional democracy and civil political structures.
- Excessive/clumsy/abusive use of force -- state terrorism
- Corrupt and ineffective structures of governance and government services.
- Failed rule of law, justice system, basic law enforcement and social order.
- Gross poverty, economic injustice, failure to develop and modernize, lack of reform. Near economic collapse, inflationary crisis.
- Unemployment pressure, lack of stable career options, population pressure.
- Alienation of youth, middle class.
- Rising violence makes the most violent side the "winner."
- Urban instability, violence

It is all too easy to focus on the latest short-term political or military crisis in cases like Afghanistan, focus on religion or culture in abroad sense, or assume that suppressing terrorism or insurgency will bring stability. There is also a natural tendency to "demonize" the insurgents, and "sanctify" the host country government, and to support military campaigns with favorable estimates of civil progress.

It is important to recognize, however, that Afghanistan has not had any lasting period of political stability, effective Governance, or economic development since the King's cousin, Daoud Khan, overthrew King Mohammed Zahir Shah in July 1973 – nearly 46 years ago.

It is equally important to recognize that the Afghan government did not become communist because of a Soviet invasion. Afghanistan had its own communist coup when the Afghan military carried out the Saur revolution in April 1978, and Nur Muhammed Taraki became the head of state. The Soviet invasion in December 1979 only came this communist dictatorship became so repressive and extreme that it triggered a major counter coup, and another Afghan communist, Hafizullah Amin, overthrew and killed Taraki in September 1979.

The end result was a period of devastating civil conflict that lasted from 1979 to 1996. While Russia withdrew in 1989, and the "communist" Najibullah regime collapsed in 1992, the result was to bring power brokers and warlords to power who engaged in their own civil wars. These battles between warlords further crippled every aspect of Afghan governance and development and produced estimates of some 550,000 to two million dead between 1979 and 1992.

The rise of the Taliban, and its first major successes in 1994, were followed by its taking Kabul in 1996. The Taliban not, however, then still had to fight a civil war. It did not take control of the entire country by the time the U.S. invaded in 2001, made no progress in economic development, and was as repressive as the Saur, Taraki/Amin, Najibullah and warlord regimes. By the time the Taliban regime fell in December 2001, Afghanistan had now been governed by three radically different types of regime and had been in a continuous state of civil war for 23 years.

The efforts from 2001 onwards to create a more modern, peaceful, and democratic Afghan government have had some successes, but also many critical failures. A new Afghan constitution created a political system with a dominant president and a legislature with too little power and control over the country's money to be effective – as well as a legislature that had little real responsibility to its constituencies. Local and regional power brokers, surviving warlords, ethnic factions, and gross levels of corruption crippled efforts at progress, divided the country, and left it open to a return by the Taliban.

There were many Afghan politicians and officials that did attempt serious and honest reform – including President Ghani and CEO Abdullah Abdullah. However, corruption and a failed election process left serious doubt about the resulting legitimacy of each successive election. The resulting divisions in Afghan politics, and response to this corruption, created the divided government that still rules and has now stayed in office years longer than its elected term. It also helps explain why a long series of reform pledges and plans -- and anti-corruption efforts – have produced some successes, but have only had a limited overall impact.

The World Bank metrics in this section clearly show this lack of overall progress in governance since 1996, and highlight the lack of progress since 2001. The Asia Foundation polling metrics show the lack of popular confidence in the

government, and confirm the rising popular resentment of the government's gross overall corruption. SIGAR metrics show the continuing role of power brokers and warlords – and the previous metrics have shown the level of national dependence on narco-trafficking

The corruption metrics are particularly important because high ratings of corruption in developing states throughout the world have proved to be seem to be a good indicator of the probability that extremist, terrorism, and insurgents will become a serious problem, although the links between correlation and causation are unclear.

What is less obvious is the impact of the long series of poorly coordinated post-Taliban efforts to create an effective rule of law; and a mix of Afghan military, national police, and local police that could offer justice, conflict resolution, and security. The previous metrics showing the extreme turbulence and instability in U.S. aid efforts highlight these problems to some degree, but the chronology of such efforts – and even the metrics issued at the time – is so complex and poorly documented that it is hard to summarize.

What is clear from the metrics in previous sections is that truly serious efforts to create Afghan security force did not get serious funding *in country* until 2008 – after the Taliban return. This funding then crashed the next year – only to and suddenly peak in 2011 in ways where actual delivery in terms of in-country progress could not have an impact until nearly 2014 – after massive U.S. and allied force cuts.

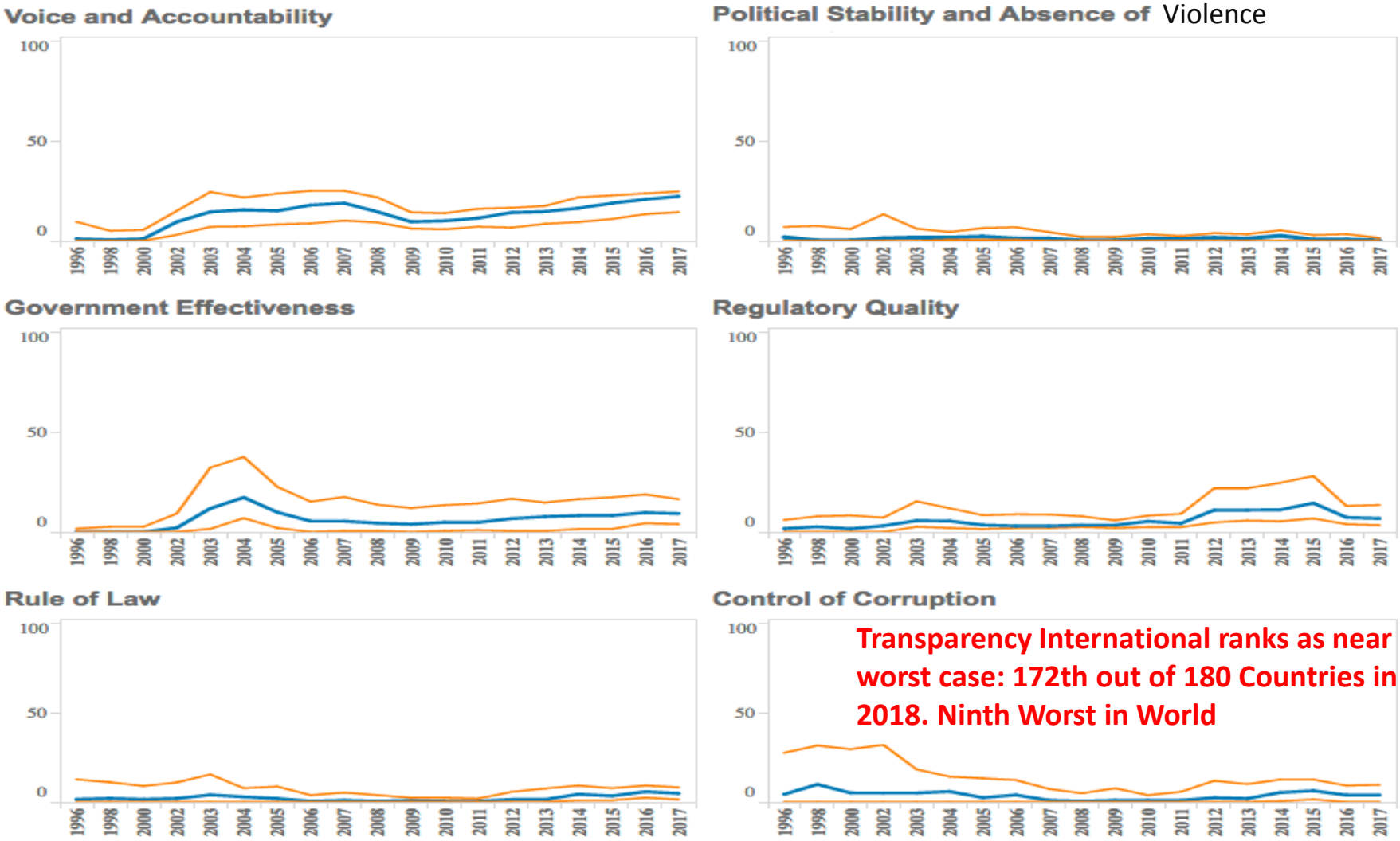
The metrics in the section on Afghan forces that use NTM-A briefing materials developed under Lieutenant General William B. Caldwell, IV -- the first commander of NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan and who served from November 2009 to October 2011 – raise other key issues that are all too easy to forget. They show that the U.S. and other ISAF nations did begin to properly man the Afghan forces train and assist effort until 2010, and that major gaps in the quality and quantity of trainer still exist in 2011 – some ten years after U.S. intervention.

As the SIGAR data point out – and as SIGAR has reported in depth in previous Quarterly reports, there still is no stable or adequate training program for Afghan police and local forces. The critical problems in Afghan governance are compounded by erratic efforts to create effective Afghan security forces.

Civil Reasons why Secularism Fails and Ideological Extremism Rises in Heavily Islamic States

- **Sectarian, Ethnic, Tribal discrimination, and violence**
- **Charismatic, competent violent opposition leader(s)/groups**
- **Repression and failed authoritarian rule.**
- **Dysfunctional democracy and civil political structures.**
- **Excessive/clumsy/abusive use of force -- state terrorism**
- **Corrupt and ineffective structures of governance and government services.**
- **Failed rule of law, justice system, basic law enforcement and social order.**
- **Gross poverty, economic injustice, failure to develop and modernize, lack of reform. Near economic collapse, inflationary crisis.**
- **Unemployment pressure, lack of stable career options, population pressure.**
- **Alienation of youth, middle class.**
- **Rising violence makes the most violent side the "winner."**
- **Urban instability, violence**

Afghanistan: Failed Governance



The inner, thicker blue line shows the selected country's percentile rank on each of the six aggregate governance indicators.
The outer, thinner red lines show the indicate margins of error.

Source: *Kaufmann D., A. Kraay, and M. Mastruzzi (2010), The Worldwide Governance Indicators: Methodology and Analytical Issues*
The Worldwide Governance Indicators are available at: www.govindicators.org

Kraay and Mastruzzi, World Bank, Governance Indicators, http://info.worldbank.org/governance/WGI/#reports, accessed April 23,2018, and and Transparency International, https://www.transparency.org/country/AFG, accessed April 23, 2019.

Afghan Perceptions of Government

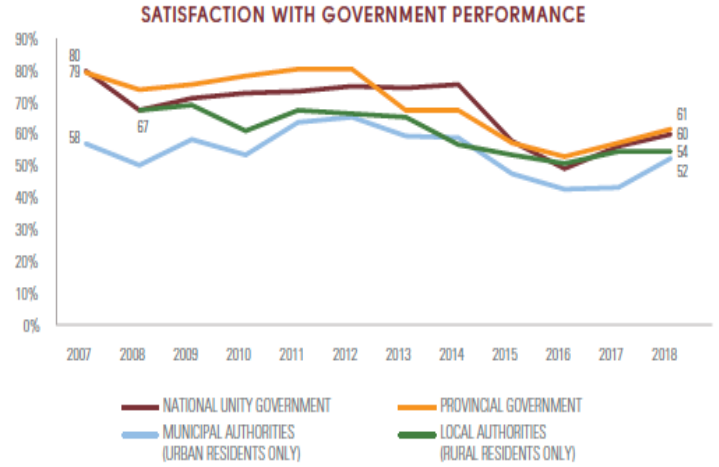


FIG. 5.1: Q-52. *Thinking of the different levels of government in Afghanistan, do you think that overall the [insert item] is doing a very good job, a somewhat good job, a somewhat bad job,*

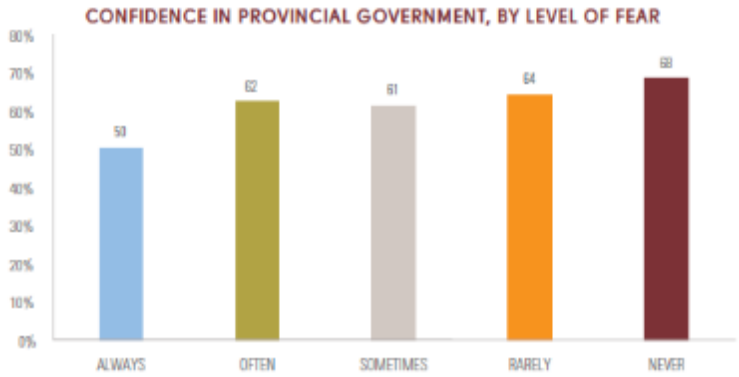


FIG. 5.2: Q-52. *Thinking of the different levels of government in Afghanistan, do you think that overall the [insert item] is doing a very good job, a somewhat good job, a somewhat bad job, or a very bad job? (b) Provincial government. (Percent who say "very good job" or "somewhat good job.") Q-21. How often do you fear for your own personal safety or security or for that of your family these days? Would you say you always, often, sometimes, rarely, or never fear for you and your family's safety?*

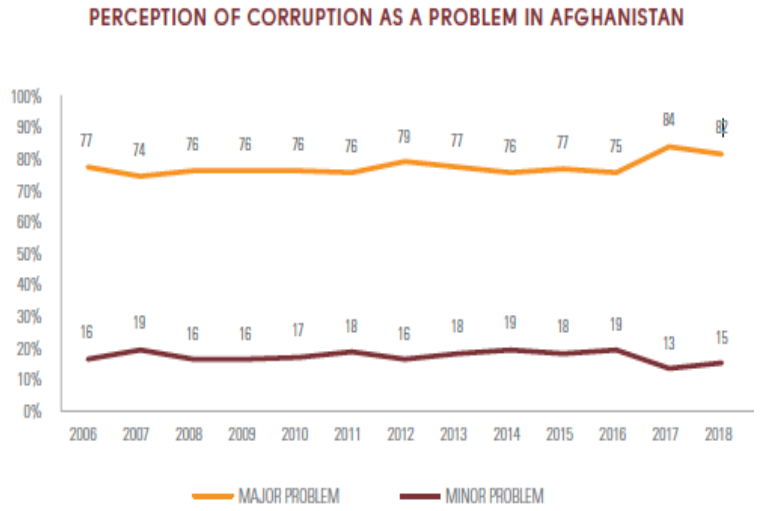
CONFIDENCE IN OFFICIALS, INSTITUTIONS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

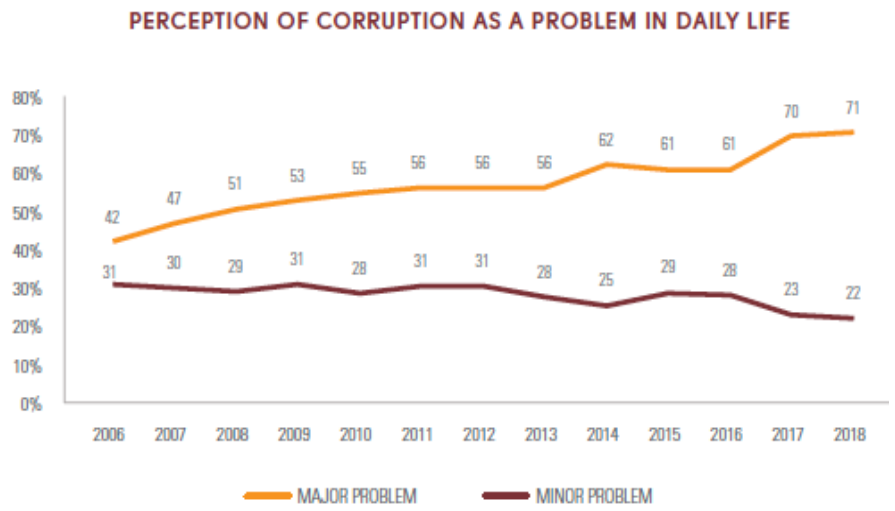
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
INDEPENDENT ELECTION COMMISSION		57	67	54	59	60		66	36	34	38	43
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS	64	65	64	61	68	66	63	65	61	53	58	58
COMMUNITY SHURAS/ JIRGAS	72	69	67	66	70	68	65	69	64	62	66	65
GOVERNMENT MINISTERS	57	51	53	54	56	55	45	47	42	36	36	38
INTERNATIONAL NGOS	64	64	66	54	56	53	51	53	44	44	42	42
MEDIA	62	63	62	57	69	71	67	73	67	65	66	67
NATIONAL NGOS	60	62	61	55	54	54	51	57	50	48	48	49
RELIGIOUS LEADERS					74	73	65	70	64	66	67	69
PARLIAMENT				59	62	62	50	51	42	37	37	40
PROVINCIAL COUNCILS	70	65	62	62	67	66	58	58	52	47	48	51
YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT							47	52	43	35	35	42

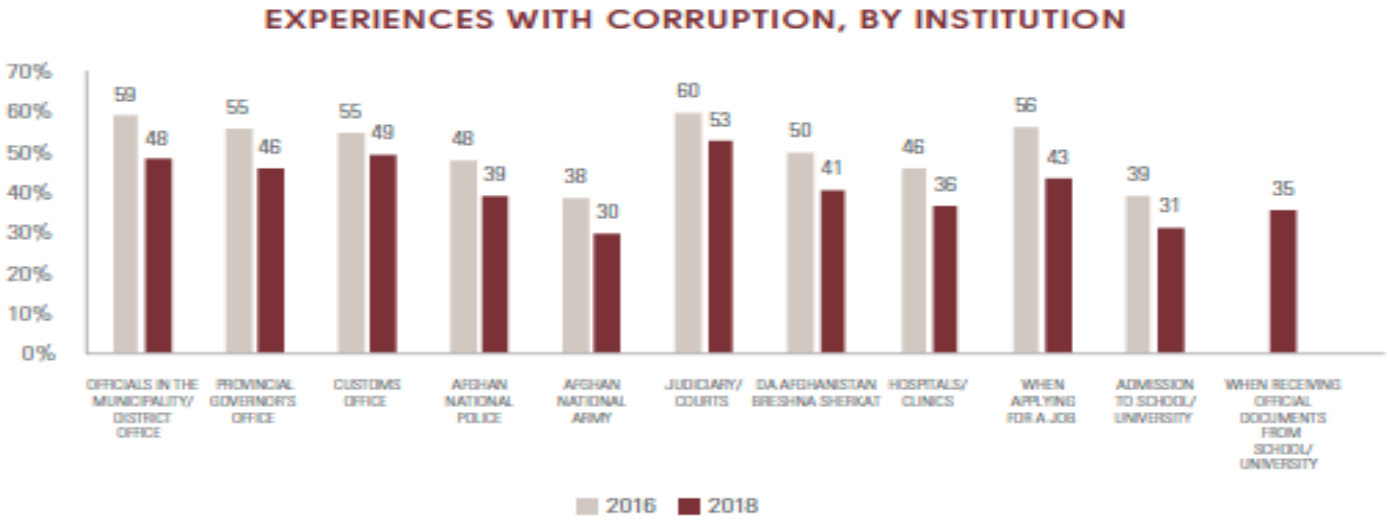
FIG. 5.3: Q-51. *I would like to ask you about some officials, institutions, and organizations. As I read out each, please tell me how much confidence you have in them to do their jobs. Do you have a lot, some, not much, or no confidence at all?*

Asia Foundation, Survey of the Afghan People, 2018, https://www.transparency.org/country/AFG, pp. 113-115

Afghan Perceptions of Corruption







Asia Foundation, Survey of the Afghan People, 2018, https://asiafoundation.org/publication/afghanistan-in-2018-a-survey-of-the-afghan-people/, pp. 117-119

“Kabulstan” versus Afghanistan: Power Brokers

Powerbrokers, Politics, and Security Afghanistan has a long history of powerbrokers who control government and security in various parts of the country. Even with a central government in Kabul, powerbrokers remain a key feature of Afghanistan’s political life and security structure. The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) reported to the DoD OIG that powerbroker activities “primarily revolve around cooperation and support for the political process as a means of leverage to benefit their individual illicit activities and political goals.”… These individuals, who include current members of parliament, national government leaders, and regional leaders, may shape the outcome of the upcoming presidential elections, scheduled to take place in July 2019. The DIA assessed that powerbrokers are weaker than they were 4 years ago, “but remain powerful enough to challenge Kabul’s authority.”…

Powerbrokers can also affect security because of their connection to regional militias. These militias include local protection forces for ethno-tribal or criminal interests, forces that cooperate with the Afghan government to provide local security, and units that are fully integrated into the ALP.146 In September 2018, Resolute Support assessed that 70 ALP personnel nationwide were working for powerbrokers, down from 219 the previous quarter.…

The assassination of Kandahar police chief Abdul Raziq on October 18 highlighted the role that powerbrokers can play in regional stability and instability. The Afghan government postponed elections in the province amid fear that Raziq’s death would create a power vacuum.148 Similarly, in July, President Ghani arrested the leader of a pro-government militia commander in Faryab province, sparking violence and protests. The commander was aligned with 1st Vice President Abdul Rashid Dostum, who recently formed a political alliance to oppose President Ghani in the upcoming election. The crisis, USFOR-A said, “degraded ANDSF operations in the area and likely contributed in part to successful Taliban attacks in the Northwest.”…

Source: Adapted from **Lead Inspector General, OPERATION FREEDOM’S SENTINEL, LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, OCTOBER 1, 2018–DECEMBER 31, 2018, pp. 31-32**.

The Civil “Threat” and Causes of Instability – Economics and “Poverty”

The Civil "Threat" and Causes of Instability – Economics and "Poverty"

The data on Afghan economics and poverty -- key possible reasons why Afghans become alienated from the governance or become insurgents -- are uncertain. Some U.S. government reporting also seems to have deliberately exaggerated Afghan progress, and in credited aid and the Afghan government with effects that were largely the result of lower levels of civil conflict.

The metrics that follow, however, still provide a broad indication of just how serious Afghanistan's problems remain in spite of aid, and a long series of reform plans and pledges. Afghanistan remains one of the poorest and least developed states in the world.

The CIA World Factbook stated in May 2019, that,

> Despite improvements in life expectancy, incomes, and literacy since 2001, Afghanistan is extremely poor, landlocked, and highly dependent on foreign aid. Much of the population continues to suffer from shortages of housing, clean water, electricity, medical care, and jobs. Corruption, insecurity, weak governance, lack of infrastructure, and the Afghan Government's difficulty in extending rule of law to all parts of the country pose challenges to future economic growth. Afghanistan's living standards are among the lowest in the world. Since 2014, the economy has slowed, in large part because of the withdrawal of nearly 100,000 foreign troops that had artificially inflated the country's economic growth.
>
> The international community remains committed to Afghanistan's development, pledging over $83 billion at ten donors' conferences between 2003 and 2016. In October 2016, the donors at the Brussels conference pledged an additional $3.8 billion in development aid annually from 2017 to 2020. Even with this help, Government of Afghanistan still faces number of challenges, including low revenue collection, anemic job creation, high levels of corruption, weak government capacity, and poor public infrastructure.
>
> In 2017 Afghanistan's growth rate was only marginally above that of the 2014-2016 average. The drawdown of international security forces that started in 2012 has negatively affected economic growth, as a substantial portion of commerce, especially in the services sector, has catered to the ongoing international troop presence in the country. Afghan President Ashraf GHANI Ahmadzai is dedicated to instituting economic reforms to include improving revenue collection and fighting corruption. The government has implemented reforms to the budget process and in some other areas. However, many other reforms will take time to implement and Afghanistan will remain dependent on international donor support over the next several years.

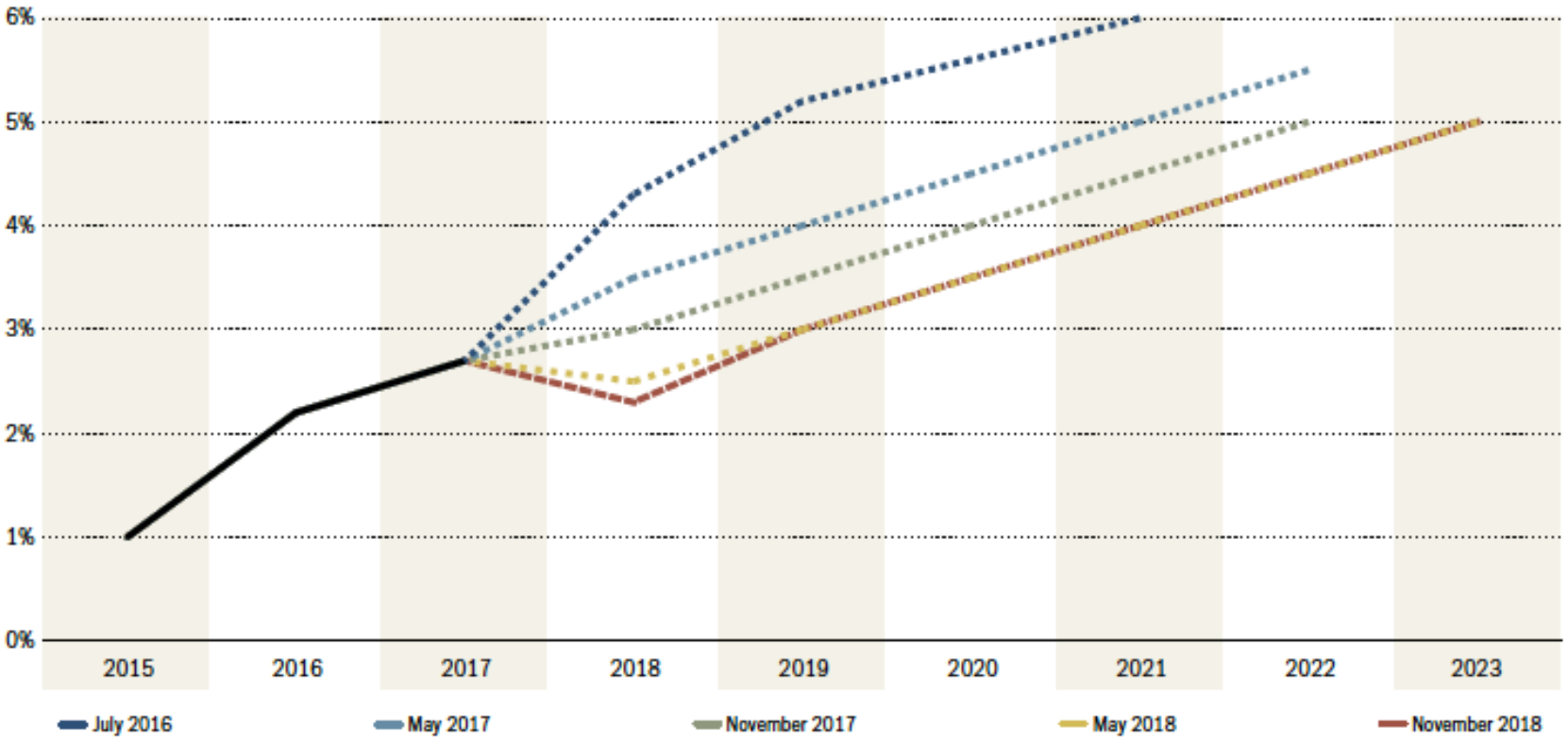
As for poverty, World Bank field teams no longer have access to much of the country, but concluded earlier that poverty began to rise again from 2008 onwards. Continuing refugee and displacement into urban areas with higher costs and few jobs has almost certainly made the problem worse.

Formal poverty levels can also be a misleading indication of unrest or instability since the truly poor and subsistence workers face major problems in leaving their farms or jobs. The same can be true of the unemployed, although this may benefit the Afghan forces – which often are the only employment available to many young Afghan men. (Some reporting indicates that the Taliban and other insurgent groups seem to be able to offer better pay than the Afghan forces). Employed young men, particularly those with poorly paid employment and career opportunities– particularly young people – may actually to be more demanding, easier to radicalize, and have the resources to becoming active threats.

Four other problems affect these data and metrics:

- First, pledges of reform and development are not actual reform and development, and forecasts based on such plans and pledges notoriously go unmet. Only real progress counts. No one can eat, wear, or live in plans or promises.
- Second, far too many assessments of Afghan economic progress are based on estimates that do not involve active data collection in the field except for government budget data and international payments data.
- Third, development plans and economic and poverty data are only reported in broad national terms. They It does not address the differences by ethnicity, sect, tribe, region, or class that can feed extremism. terrorism, and insurgency – or a failure to actively support the government.
- Fourth, these issues are further compounded by a failure to address and quantify the practical realities of corruption, and the extent to which it leads to the failure of development, rises in cost, and the need for educated and skilled workers to become “corrupt” as a critical part of the pay and privileges in given positions and jobs.

Economic Promises vs. Actual Progress: IMF Projections



Note: The IMF conducts periodic reviews of Afghanistan's macroeconomic situation through its Extended Credit Facility (ECF) program. The figure above displays the IMF's real economic growth projections for Afghanistan, as presented in five sequential reviews for, or under, its ECF arrangement. The ECF provides modest amounts of financing to the Afghan government in exchange for implementing various reforms. The IMF generally enters into ECF arrangements with countries experiencing protracted balance of payment problems. Some ECF real growth projections stopped short of 2022 or 2023. In those cases, the lines above terminate in the final year for which a projection was provided. For example, the ECF Request (July 2016) projections terminated in 2021, with a projection of 6% real growth for that year. Growth rates for 2015–2017 are from the IMF's fourth review under the ECF.

Source: IMF, *Fourth Review Under The Extended Credit Facility Arrangement, Request For Modification Of Performance Criteria, And Request For Extension And Rephasing Of The Arrangement*, 11/20/2018, p. 24; IMF, *Third Review Under The Extended Credit Facility Arrangement And Request For Modification Of Performance Criteria*, 5/9/2018, p. 24; IMF, *Staff Report For The 2017 Article IV Consultation And Second Review Under The Extended Credit Facility Arrangement, And Request For Modification Of Performance Criteria*, 11/21/2017, p. 36; IMF, *First Review Under The Extended Credit Facility Arrangement And Request For Modification Of Performance Criteria*, 5/8/2017, p. 26; IMF, *Request For A Three-Year Arrangement Under The Extended Credit Facility*, 7/1/2016, p. 27.

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to Congress, Reconstruction Update, January 30, 2019, pp. 149.

Comparative Poverty Estimates in Countries with Failed State Wars

Like the data on unemployment, poverty data could be a key indicator of the causes of extremism, terrorism, insurgency, and civil conflict. In practice, the data are so bad, so rarely reported, and often so dated that there is no way to tell. (See World Bank, *Piecing Together the Poverty Puzzle, 2018*)

Many countries simply do not report. Others report meaninglessly low levels for what seem to be political purposes and to avoid negative public reactions.

A few countries in the attached table – Afghanistan and Yemen – do report what seem to be credible figures, but most estimates are far too low, and are often based on long outdate levels of poverty that do not reflect real world income needs, particularly in urbanized areas or ones dependent on market prices.

These data also present the same problems as the other data shown in this survey. They report nation-wide figures and do not display inequities in income distribution, or by ethnicity, sect, tribe, or region.

Country	CIA (%)	World Bank Extreme Poverty (%)	IMF Multi-Dimensional Poverty
1. Afghanistan	54.5% (2017)	ND	56.10%
2. Algeria	23% (2006)	0.4% (2017)	2.11% (2013)
3. Egypt	27.8% (2016)	1.4% (2015)	5.22% (2014)
4. Iran	18.7% (2007)	0.4% (2014)	ND
5. Iraq	23% (2014)	2.2% (2012)	14.6% (2011)
6. Libya	33.3%**	ND	1.97% (2014)
7. Somalia	ND	ND	82.22% (2006)
8. Syria	82.5% (2014)	21.2 (2004)	7.39% (2009)
9. Yemen	54% (2014)	40.9% (2014)	47.77% (2013)

ND= No data. * Poverty level is a real world $7.30 per person. **CIA rough estimate.

Source: CIA, National Poverty Levels), https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/221.html, accessed 17.3.2019. World Bank, Piecing Together the Poverty Puzzle, 2018, http://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/poverty-and-shared-prosperity. IMF is World Economic and Financial Surveys, World Economic Outlook Database, Table Six: Multidimensional Poverty Index, Developing Countries, https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2018/01/weodata/index.aspx.

Comparative Human Development Estimates in Countries with Failed State Wars

The HDI was created to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone.
The Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and have a decent standard of living. The HDI is the geometric mean of normalized indices for each of the three dimensions.

The health dimension is assessed by life expectancy at birth, the education dimension is measured by mean of years of schooling for adults aged 25 years and more and expected years of schooling for children of school entering age.

The standard of living dimension is measured by gross national income per capita. The HDI uses the logarithm of income, to reflect the diminishing importance of income with increasing GNI. The scores for the three HDI dimension indices are then aggregated into a composite index using geometric mean.

The HDI simplifies and captures only part of what human development entails. It does not reflect on inequalities, poverty, human security, empowerment, etc.

Country	World Rank In 2017 (189th is Worst)	Human Development Score 2017	Change in Ranking 2012-2015	Average Annual HDI Growth 1990-2017 (%)
1. Afghanistan	168	0.498	-1	ND
2. Algeria	85	0.754	-3	0.99%
3. Iran	60	0.798	-2	1.21%
4. Iraq	120	0.685	1	0.67%
5. Libya	108	0.706	0	0.15%
6. Somalia	ND	ND	ND	ND
7. Syria	155	0.536	-0.21	0.87%
8. Tunisia	95	0.735	2	0.95%
9. Yemen	178	0.452	-20	0.46%

Source: UN *Human Development Report*, accessed 16.4.19, http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/trends.

Afghan Economy – World Bank Overview April 2019

Reflecting slow recent growth, poverty has increased significantly, resulting in 55 percent of the population living below the national poverty line in 2016–2017, compared to 38.3 percent in 2012–2013 – an increase of 5 million.

Living standards are also threatened by continued drought conditions, which are negatively impacting wheat harvests, generating food insecurity in many areas of the country.

The displacement crisis also continues, with more than 1.7 million Afghans internally displaced and more than 2 million returning to Afghanistan – mostly from Pakistan and Iran – since 2015.

Few Afghans have access to productive or remunerative employment. A quarter of the labor force is unemployed, and 80 percent of employment is vulnerable and insecure, comprising self- or own account employment, day labor, or unpaid work.

Almost three-quarters of the population are below the age of 30, and roughly 25 percent are between the ages of 15 and 30. This large youth cohort of approximately 8 million is entering the labor market with little education and few employment opportunities.

World Bank, Overview, accessed April 19, 2017, http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/afghanistan/overview,

Afghan Health and Economy – CIA Summary : April 2019

- **Despite improvements in life expectancy, incomes, and literacy since 2001, Afghanistan is extremely poor, landlocked, and highly dependent on foreign aid.**
- **Much of the population continues to suffer from shortages of housing, clean water, electricity, medical care, and jobs.**
- **Corruption, insecurity, weak governance, lack of infrastructure, and the Afghan Government's difficulty in extending rule of law to all parts of the country pose challenges to future economic growth.**
- **Afghanistan's living standards are among the lowest in the world. Since 2014, the economy has slowed, in large part because of the withdrawal of nearly 100,000 foreign troops that had artificially inflated the country's economic growth.**
- **The international community remains committed to Afghanistan's development, pledging over $83 billion at ten donors' conferences between 2003 and 2016. In October 2016, the donors at the Brussels conference pledged an additional $3.8 billion in development aid annually from 2017 to 2020. Even with this help, Government of Afghanistan still faces number of challenges, including low revenue collection, anemic job creation, high levels of corruption, weak government capacity, and poor public infrastructure.**
- **In 2017 Afghanistan's growth rate was only marginally above that of the 2014-2016 average. The drawdown of international security forces that started in 2012 has negatively affected economic growth, as a substantial portion of commerce, especially in the services sector, has catered to the ongoing international troop presence in the country.**
- **Afghan President Ashraf GHANI Ahmadzai is dedicated to instituting economic reforms to include improving revenue collection and fighting corruption. The government has implemented reforms to the budget process and in some other areas. However, many other reforms will take time to implement and Afghanistan will remain dependent on international donor support over the next several years.**

Source: CIA, World Factbook, "Afghanistan," accessed 21 April 2017.

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Afghan Health and Economy – CIA Factoids: April 2019

Health

- **Life expectancy total population: 52.1 years (2018 est.) country comparison to the world: 223 -- lowest in world**

- **Infant mortality: 108.5 deaths/1,000 live births (2018 est.) Highest in the world: 1**

Economic Strains

- **$2,000 per capita PPP income (2018) Country comparison to the world: 209 (20th lowest)**

- **23.9% unemployment (2017 est.) Country comparison to the world: 194 (23rd worst)**

- **54.5% Population below poverty line: (World Bank 55%, $1.90 a day)**

Budget Gap :

- **revenues: 2.276 billion (2017 est.)**

- **expenditures: 5.328 billion (2017 est.)**

Trade Imbalance

- **Exports: $784 million (2017 est.) -- including opium (India & Pakistan)**

- **Imports: $7.616 billion (2017 est.) – imports 9.7 times exports**

Source: CIA, World Factbook, "Afghanistan," accessed 21 April 2017.

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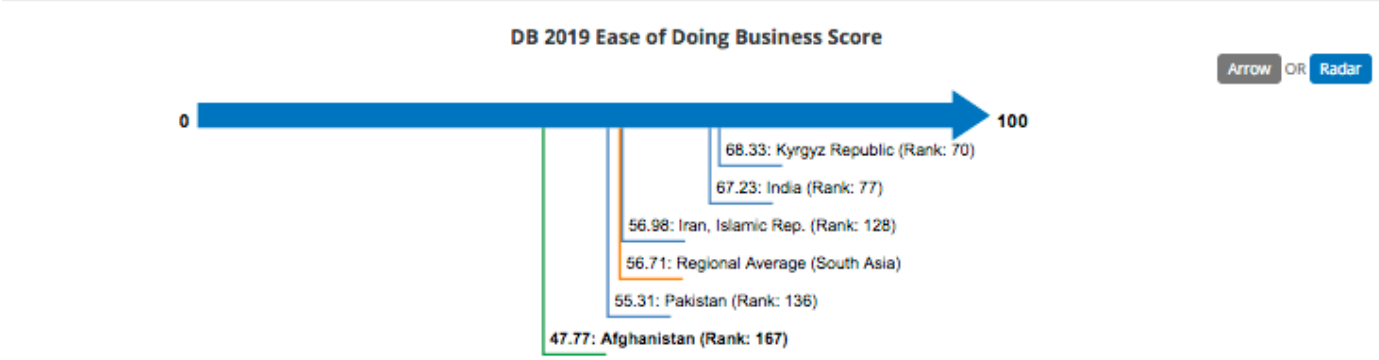
Afghanistan: World Bank Ease of Doing Business Rankings:

Better, But Only 167th in the World in 2019



Note: The ease of doing business score captures the gap of each economy from the best regulatory performance observed on each of the indicators across all economies in the *Doing Business* sample since 2005. An economy's ease of doing business score is reflected on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents the lowest and 100 represents the best performance. The ease of doing business ranking ranges from 1 to 190.

Grid OR Chart

Topics	DB 2019 Rank	DB 2019 Score	DB 2018 Score	Change in Score (% points)
Overall	167	47.77	37.13	↑ 10.64
Starting a Business✔	49	92.04	82.55	↑ 9.49
Dealing with Construction Permits	184	34.54	33.70	↑ 0.84
Getting Electricity	168	44.51	44.58	↓ 0.07
Registering Property	186	27.50	27.50	..
Getting Credit✔	99	50.00	45.00	↑ 5.00
Protecting Minority Investors✔	26	71.67	10.00	↑ 61.67
Paying Taxes✔	177	43.27	41.97	↑ 1.30
Trading across Borders	177	30.63	30.63	..
Enforcing Contracts	181	31.76	31.76	..
Resolving Insolvency✔	74	51.78	23.62	↑ 28.16

✔= Doing Business reform making it easier to do business. ✗= Change making it more difficult to do business.
Click here to see all reforms made by Afghanistan

World Bank, http://www.doingbusiness.org/en/data/exploreeconomies/afghanistan#.
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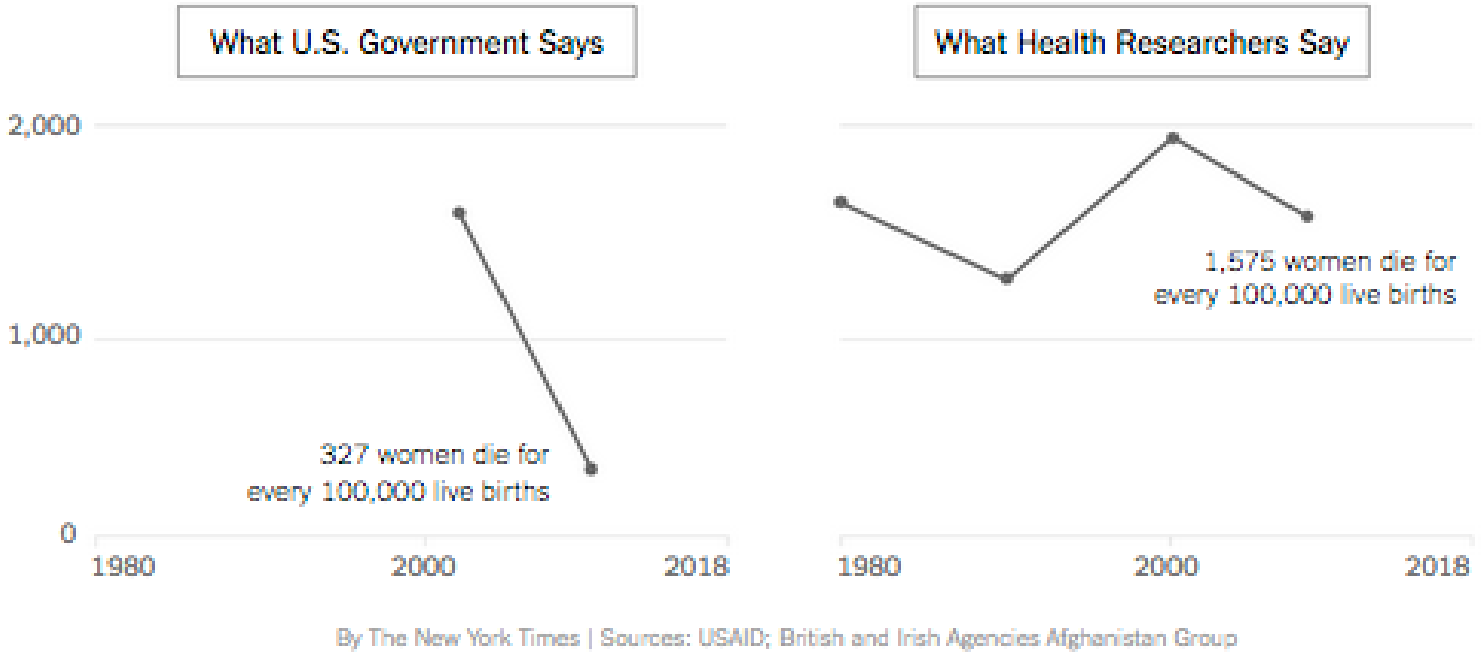
Afghanistan: Conflicting Health Claims – Maternal Mortality

With the status of the battlefield looking grim, American officials say that at least the coalition has improved Afghan living standards — although often they use exaggerated claims there, too.
The most blatant example may be maternal mortality, one of the most important indicators of a society's health. In 2002, American officials reported that 1,600 Afghan mothers died for every 100,000 live births, a rate comparable to Europe during the Middle Ages. By 2010, the United States Agency for International Development said the rate had improved drastically, falling to 327.



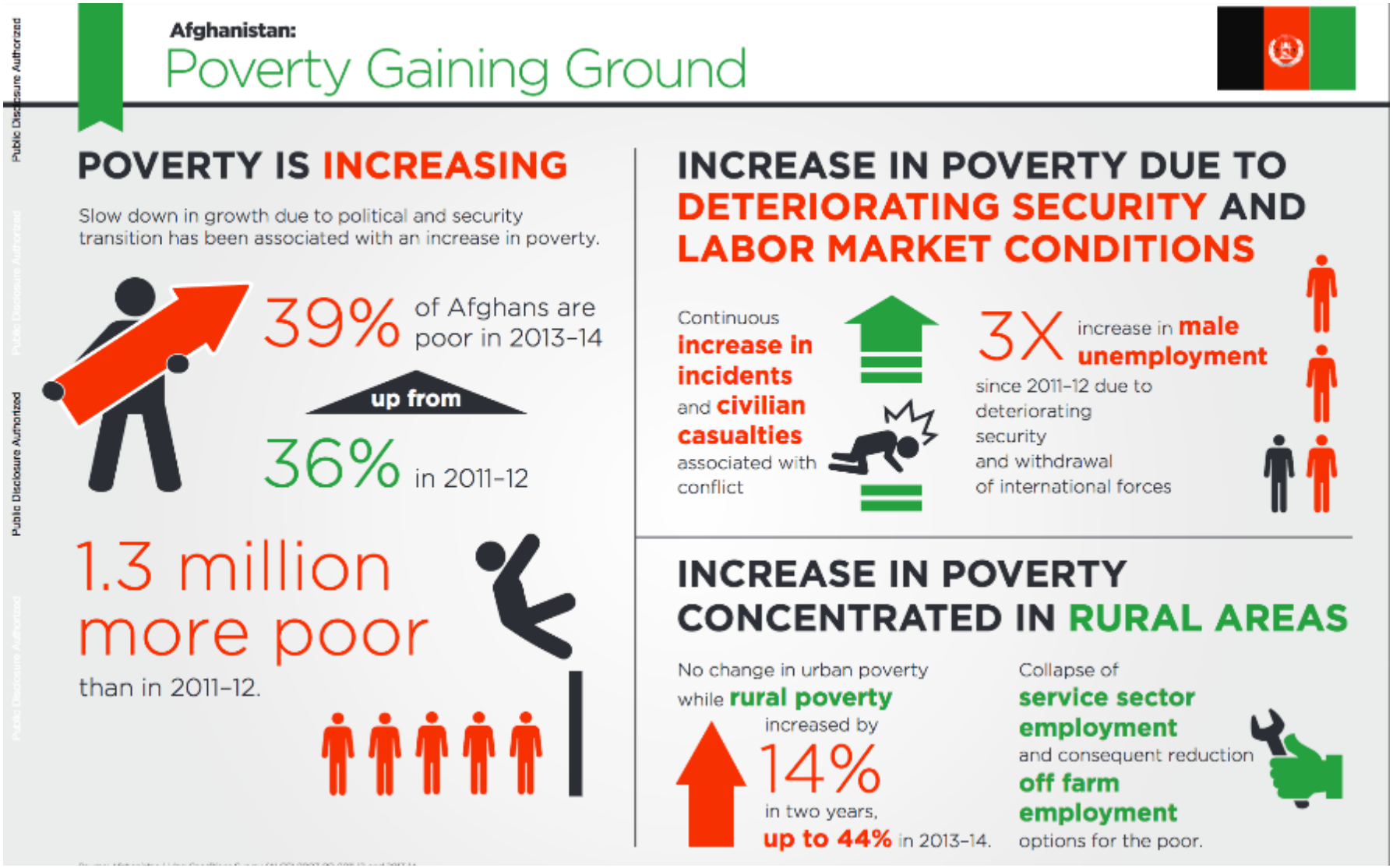
Researchers noted that not since the world discovered antibiotics has any nation seen such a big improvement in maternal health. The long-running security and development challenges Afghanistan faces are factored into health researchers' estimates of maternal mortality. The British and Irish Agencies Afghanistan Group cited a study indicating that 1,575 women died out of 100,000 births in 2010. Other estimates cited by the group put the figure at 885 to 1,600 of 100,000 — meaning that nearly one in a hundred Afghan women will die giving birth. The rate in the United States is 24 in 100,000.

Afghanistan: Conflicting Health Claims – Maternal Mortality

USAID points to a similarly drastic improvement in life expectancy, to 63 years in 2010, up from 41 years in 2002. But the figures were adjusted to ignore a high death rate in early childhood, which skewed results.

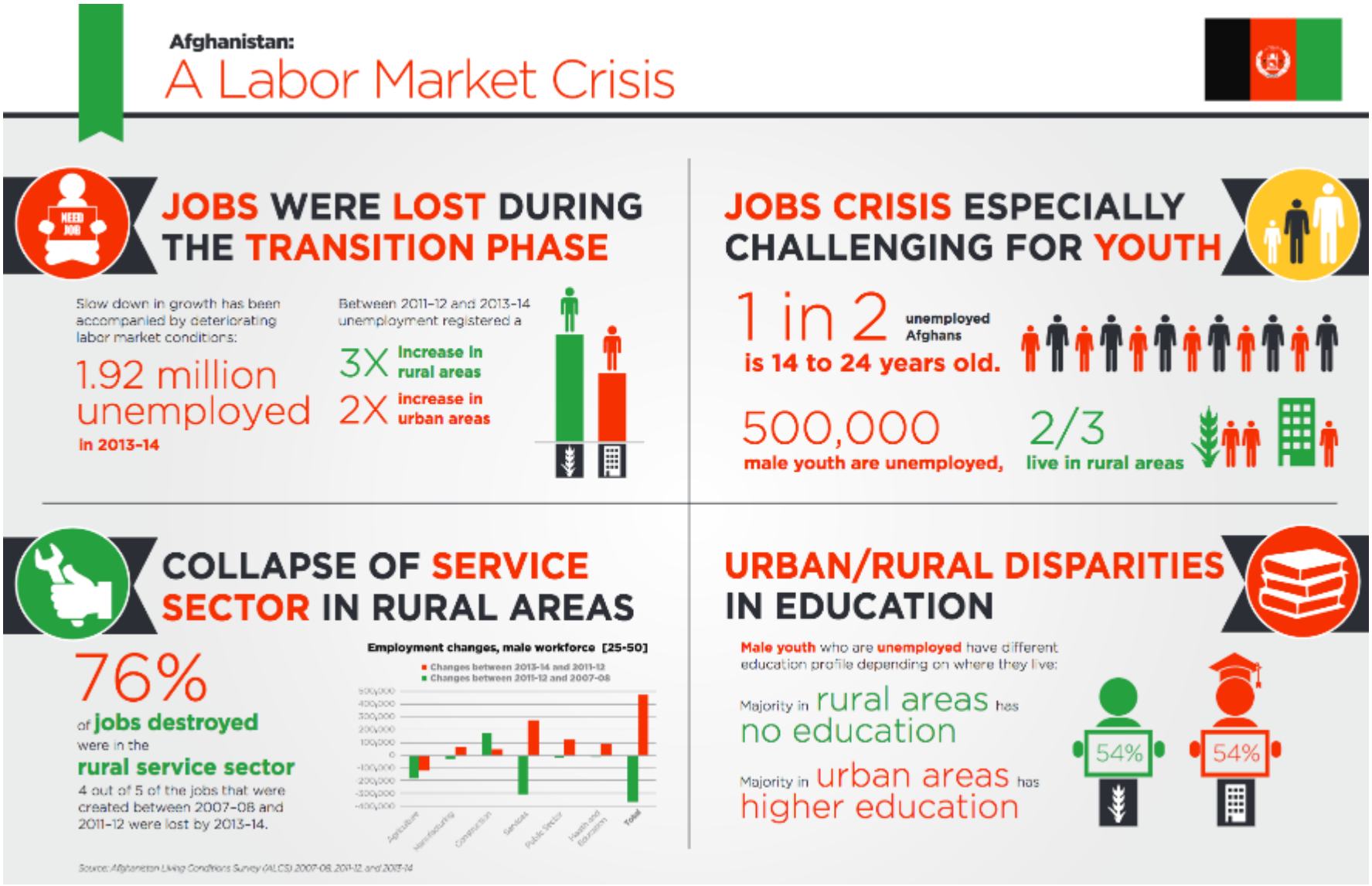
The World Health Organization, meanwhile, estimated in 2009 that Afghan life expectancy was 48 years. Even the C.I.A. does not agree with USAID's number, estimating in 2017 that Afghans typically live to age 51.

Afghanistan: World Bank Poverty Warning I



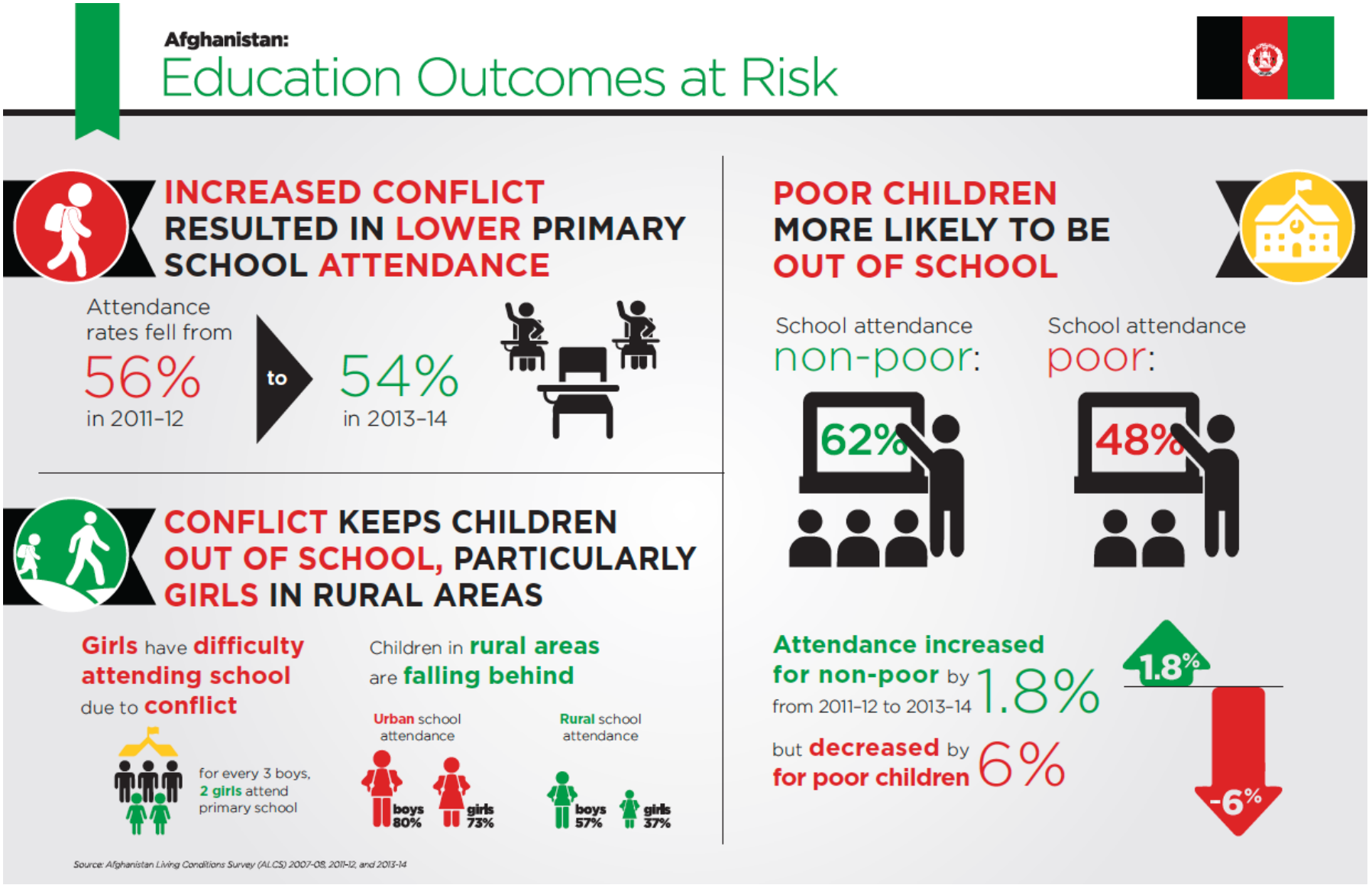
World Bank, Rahimi, Ismail; Redaelli, Silvia, Afghanistan poverty status update : progress at risk (Vol. 2) : Infographics (English), May 2, 2017
http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/300161493795316212/Infographics.

Afghanistan: World Bank Poverty Warning II



World Bank, Rahimi, Ismail; Redaelli, Silvia, Afghanistan poverty status update : progress at risk (Vol. 2) : Infographics (English), May 2, 2017
http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/300161493795316212/Infographics.

Afghanistan: World Bank Poverty Warning III



World Bank, Rahimi, Ismail; Redaelli, Silvia, Afghanistan poverty status update : progress at risk (Vol. 2) : Infographics (English), May 2, 2017
http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/300161493795316212/Infographics.

Demographic Pressures and “Youth Bulge”

The Civil "Threat" and Causes of Instability – Demographics and the Youth Bulge

Population pressure, the number of young men and women seeking jobs and that are satisfied with them, and the high ratio of dependents in countries with young populations are three key indicators of a nation's success or failure. Polls show that security, employment, and corruption are also key indicators of popular support for governments, and may well be key warning indicators of the potential radicalization of young men.

The Afghan metrics in this section sound such a warning. They show that in spite of its long history of war, Afghanistan still has acute population pressure, and one of the largest "youth bulges" in the world.

These metrics also help illustrate some of the pressures to move out of rural areas and into urban areas, and the motive to either join the security forces as the only available form of employment – or to join the Taliban or ISIS if they pay more or offer both pay and more local security.

Finally, these data need to be put in the practical context of why young (or any) Afghans should be satisfied with the quality and level of their government. It is one thing to read about reform plans at a distance. It is another to live with the actual lack of progress on the scene.

Afghan Population and Internal Divisions

Source: Adapted from the CIA *World Factbook* database as of 3.5.19 and NGIA and GAO material

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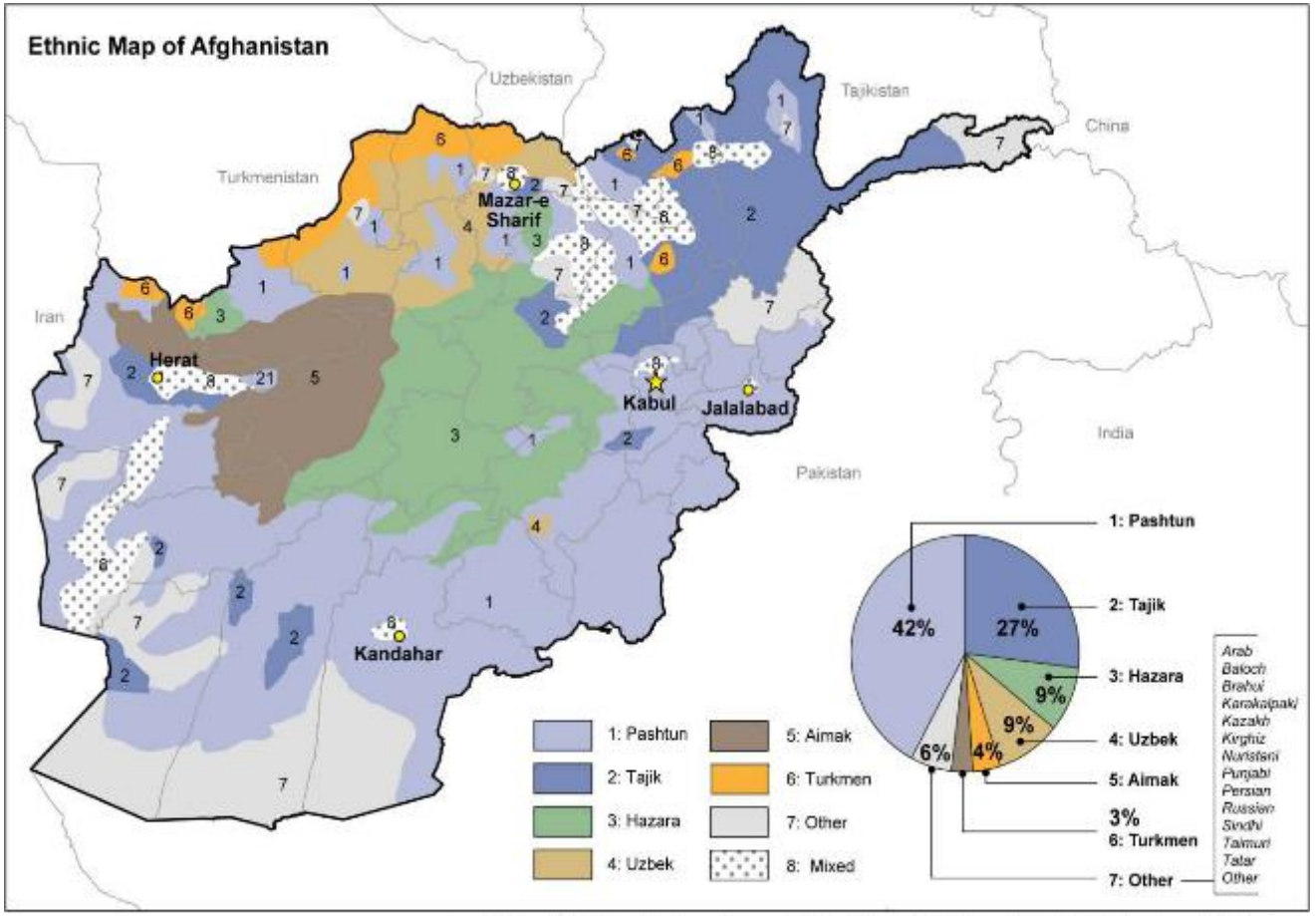


Ethnic groups: Ethnic groups starting with the largest Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, other (includes smaller numbers of Baloch, Turkmen, Nuristani, Pamiri, Arab, Gujar, Brahui, Qizilbash, Aimaq, Pashai, and Kyrghyz) (2015). Current statistical data on the sensitive subject of ethnicity in Afghanistan are not available, and ethnicity data from small samples of respondents to opinion polls are not a reliable alternative; Afghanistan's 2004 constitution recognizes 14 ethnic groups: Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Baloch, Turkmen, Nuristani, Pamiri, Arab, Gujar, Brahui, Qizilbash, Aimaq, and Pashai

Religions: Muslim 99.7% (Sunni 84.7 - 89.7%, Shia 10 - 15%), other 0.3% (2009 est.)

Languages: listed in rank order based on prevalence, starting with the most-spoken language, include Afghan Persian or Dari (official) 77% (Dari functions as the lingua franca), Pashto (official) 48%, Uzbek 11%, English 6%, Turkmen 3%, Urdu 3%, Pashayi 1%, Nuristani 1%, Arabic 1%, Balochi 1% (2017 est.) **S**hares sum to more than 100% because there is much bilingualism in the country and because respondents were allowed to select more than one language. The Turkic languages Uzbek and Turkmen, as well as Balochi, Pashayi, Nuristani, and Pamiri are the third official languages in areas where the majority speaks them

Afghanistan: Population Growth Guesstimate: 1950-2050

- **Grew 4.4 times between 1950 and 2019.**
- **Nearly 20% growth between 2011 and 2019.**
- **78% more growth between 2019 and 2050.**

Demographic Overview - Custom Region - Afghanistan

Demographic Indicators	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019	2025	2030	2040	2050
Population															
Midyear population (in thousands)	8,150	9,829	12,431	15,044	13,568	19,445	22,461	26,335	29,121	32,564	35,780	41,117	45,665	54,717	63,795
Growth rate (percent)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	-5.9	-1.9	3.5	-1.3	3.4	2.1	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.0	1.7	1.4
Fertility															
Total fertility rate (births per woman)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	6.9	8.0	8.0	8.0	6.4	5.9	5.3	4.9	4.3	3.9	3.2	2.8
Crude birth rate (per 1,000 population)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	47	54	53	51	42	40	39	37	34	30	26	22
Births (in thousands)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	709	739	1,035	1,153	1,093	1,158	1,256	1,327	1,383	1,386	1,396	1,422
Mortality															
Life expectancy at birth (years)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	39	42	44	45	47	49	51	52	55	57	61	65
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 births)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	191	168	157	147	137	126	115	106	94	84	65	49
Under 5 mortality rate (per 1,000 births)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	286	251	235	220	205	187	169	155	135	119	90	66
Crude death rate (per 1,000 population)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	24	23	21	19	17	15	14	13	11	10	9	8
Deaths (in thousands)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	366	305	408	434	436	439	452	463	472	474	486	515
Migration															
Net migration rate (per 1,000 population)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	-82	-51	3	-45	9	-3	-2	-0	-0	-0	-0	-0
Net number of migrants (in thousands)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	-1,235	-695	52	-1,017	248	-95	-49	-13	-4	-5	-5	-6

Source Information: Afghanistan

U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base, Afghanistan, accessed 22.4.2019.

Afghan Urbanization: World Bank

CIA: urban population: 25.5% of total population (2018); rate of urbanization: 3.37% annual rate of change (2015-20 est.) Population of Kabul is 4.01 million out of total population of 34.94-37.05 million in July 2018. The second-largest city is Kandahar, with less than 400,000 people.

World Bank: Afghanistan is undergoing a rapid urban transition. While the current share of its population living in cities is comparatively low (25.8 percent in 2014 compared to 32.6 percent across South Asia), Afghanistan's urbanization rate is among the highest in the region. Jun 21, 2017

Here are 10 key findings for Afghanistan made in a World Bank report:

•Afghanistan's urban population grew by almost 4.5 percent a year between 2000 and 2010. Within the region, only Bhutan and Maldives experienced faster growth rates of urban population.

•Much of Afghanistan's urban population growth has been attributable to natural growth rather than rural-urban migration. As a consequence, the share of the population living in officially classified urban settlements has been growing at a much slower pace of just over 1.2 percent a year between 2000 and 2010.

•As of mid-2014, there were, according to UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates, 683,000 people internally displaced by conflict in Afghanistan, more than half of which were living in urban areas.

•In 2010, 27.6 percent of Afghanistan's urban population lived below the national poverty line, while, in 2005, almost 89 percent of the urban population lived in slums.

•An analysis of nighttime lights data shows that Afghanistan experienced growth in urban area of almost 14 percent a year between 1999 and 2010, the fastest in the South Asia region. Urban area grew at more than three times the speed of urban population, suggesting an increasing prevalence of lower-density sprawl. The existence of sprawl, poverty and slums reflects messy urbanization.

•According to the Agglomeration Index, an alternative measure of urban concentration, the share of Afghanistan's population living in areas with urban characteristics in 2010 was 29.4 percent. This compares to an urban share of the population based on official definitions of urban areas of 23.2 percent, suggesting the existence of at least some hidden urbanization.

•In Afghanistan, as in Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan, the shift out of agriculture has been associated with a large decline in the proportion of GDP derived from manufacturing. This implies that urbanization in Afghanistan since 2000 has been led by services rather than by manufacturing -- something of a departure from expected trends based on the historical experiences of today's developed nations.

•Afghanistan's expanding urban population presents it with a considerable affordable housing challenge. In the best case scenario in which urban population density remains constant, meeting this challenge will require expanding the amount of developable urban land by 6,959 km^2 – or just over 350 percent – between 2010 and 2050.

•Analysis of World Health Organization outdoor air pollution in cities data reveals that, from a global sample of 381 developing-country cities, 19 of the 20 with the highest annual mean concentrations of $PM_{2.5}$ are in South Asia. Kabul has the most polluted air amongst Afghan cities in the sample, with an annual mean concentration of 86 mg/m^3, which is higher than the recorded annual mean concentration for Beijing.

•Afghanistan completed its last census in 1979, and that was a partial count. A lack of data hampers rigorous descriptive analysis of urbanization and related economic trends for the country.

World Bank Group, ***Leveraging Urbanization in South Asia: Managing Spatial Transformation for Prosperity and Livability.***, www.worldbank.org/southasiacities, 2016l CVIA World Factbook, Afghanistan, accessed April 23, 2019.

Afghanistan: Population 0-24 Years of Age and Dependency ratio: 1950-2050

Youth Pressure on Total Population

Year	Age	Both Sexes Population	Male Population	Female Population	Percent Both Sexes	Percent Male	Percent Female	Sex Ratio
2000	0-24	14,778,266	7,538,888	7,239,378	65.8	65.9	65.7	104.1
2010	0-24	18,975,565	9,655,145	9,320,420	65.2	65.3	65.0	103.6
2019	0-24	22,303,139	11,335,684	10,967,455	62.3	62.5	62.1	103.4
2030	0-24	26,391,583	13,409,453	12,982,130	57.8	58.1	57.5	103.3
2040	0-24	29,509,248	14,996,229	14,513,019	53.9	54.4	53.5	103.3
2050	0-24	31,262,668	15,894,542	15,368,126	49.0	49.6	48.4	103.4

CIA Estimate as of 2018

Age structure:

0-14 years: 40.92% (male 7,263,716 /female 7,033,427)

15-24 years: 21.85% (male 3,883,693 /female 3,749,760)

25-54 years: 30.68% (male 5,456,305 /female 5,263,332)

55-64 years: 3.95% (male 679,766 /female 699,308)

65 years and over: 2.61% (male 420,445 /female 491,085)

Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 88.8 (2015 est.)

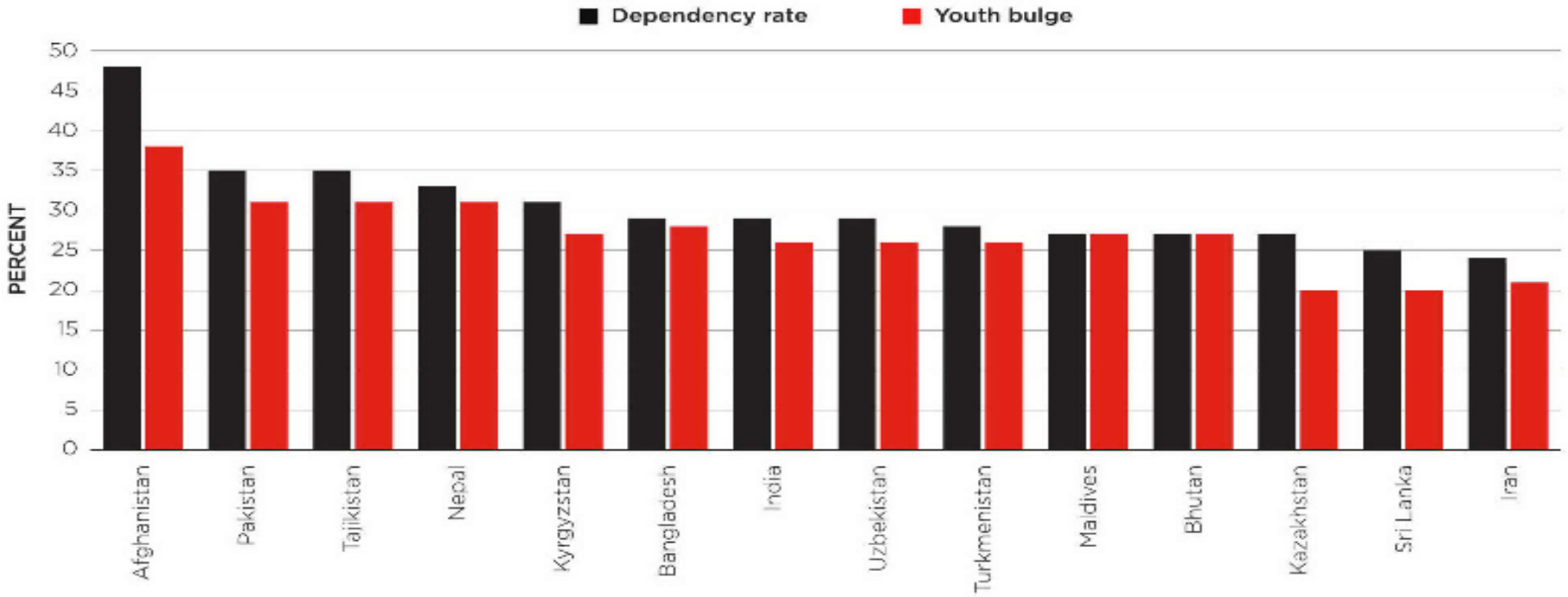
youth dependency ratio: 84.1 (2015 est.)

elderly dependency ratio: 4.7 (2015 est.)

potential support ratio: 21.2 (2015 est.)

U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base, Afghanistan, accessed 22.4.2019.

Afghanistan: Youth Bulge (15-24 years of age) and Employment



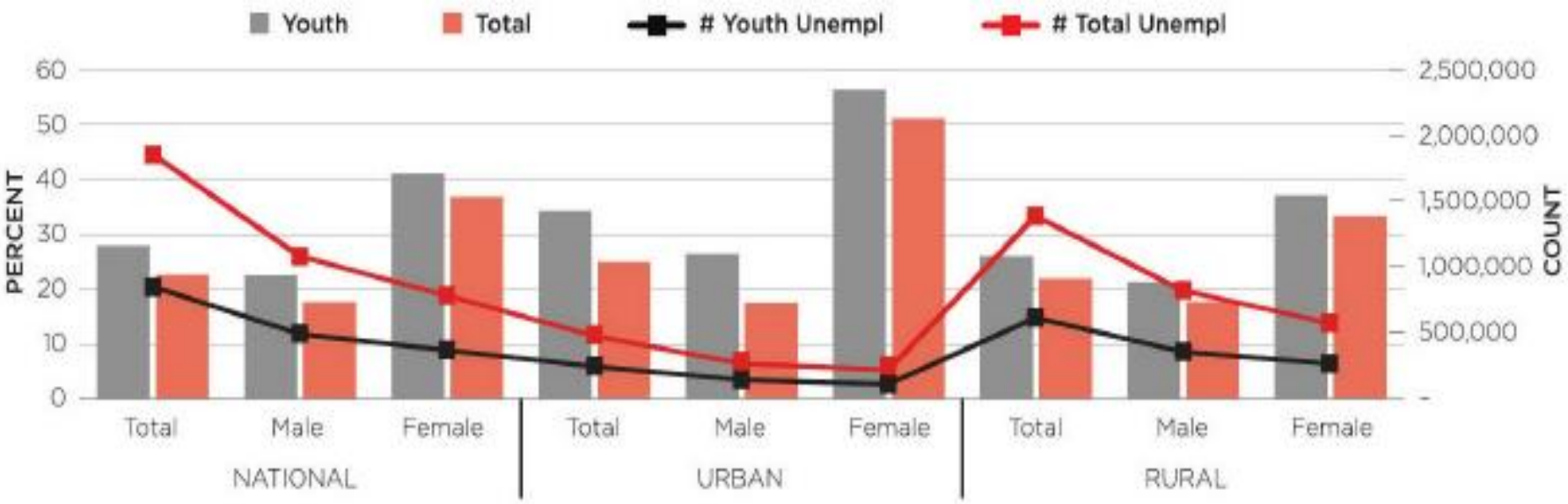
Notes: Dependency rate defined as (0–15)/(Total Population); Youth bulge defined as (15/24)/(15+).
Source: ALCS 2013–14 (Afghanistan); UNDESA (2015)

The Afghanistan economy struggles to create enough jobs to accommodate its fast growing labor force. Slowdown in economic growth has focused attention on Afghanistan's chronic excess of labor. With a fertility rate steadily above five children per woman 24 , Afghanistan has the fastest growing population, the highest dependency rate, and the biggest "youth bulge" in South Asia. Afghanistan's demographic profile poses tremendous challenges to public finances and the labor market. In particular, high dependency rates squeeze private savings, which hampers investment and growth while straining spending on social services, notably health and education. In the labor market, an estimated 400,000 jobs need to be created every year to accommodate new workers; this is a daunting challenge in the absence of economic growth and with constrained budgets for public investment.

the Total Fertility Rate in Afghanistan is 5.3 children per woman (DHS, 2015). Together with Timor-Leste, Afghanistan remains the only country outside Africa where the TFR is above 5children per woman (UNDESA 2015). 25 According to UNDESA (2015), Afghanistan is endowed with the third largest youth bulge in the world, after Uganda and Chad, as more than one fifth of the population is aged between 15 and 24. The Afghan population is expected to double in size from 28.4 million in 2010 to 56.5 million in 2050. It is estimated that, even under optimistic growth and labor-intensity of growth scenarios, the Afghan labor market will not be able to match labor supply growth until 2027

World Bank, Rahimi, Ismail; Redaelli, Silvia, AFGHANISTAN POVERTY STATUS UPDATE. PROGRESS AT RISK, World Bank and Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Ministry of Economy, February , 2017, http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/667181493794491292/pdf/114741-WP-v1-P159553-PUBLIC.pdf.

Afghanistan: The Urban Rural Youth Employment Gap



"Unemployment" and "poor economy" are the biggest problems cited by Afghans in the most recent opinion polls. Evidence supports these perceptions of a bleak labor market. According to ALCS data, in 2013-14, 22.6 percent of the Afghan labor force was unemployed. Almost one in every four people participating in the labor market, or 1.9 million individuals, are either working less than eight hours per week or do not have a job and are actively looking for one.

Unemployment was particularly severe among youth (27.9 percent) and women (36.8 percent). Nationwide, almost half of the unemployed are below the age of 25 (45.6 percent), reflecting Afghanistan's struggle to create jobs for its growing labor force amidst the economic recession that accompanied the transition phase.

As of 2013-14, approximately 877 thousand youth were unemployed; two-thirds were young men, about 500 thousand, and four in five of these unemployed young men lived in rural areas (Figure 14).

There are stark differences in the education profiles of unemployed youth; while unemployed male youth in urban areas are more likely to be educated-54 percent have secondary education or above-the opposite holds in rural areas, where 54 percent of unemployed male youth have no formal education and 37.1 percent are illiterate

World Bank, Rahimi, Ismail; Redaelli, Silvia, AFGHANISTAN POVERTY STATUS UPDATE. PROGRESS AT RISK, World Bank and Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Ministry of Economy, February , 2017, http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/667181493794491292/pdf/114741-WP-v1-P159553-PUBLIC.pdf.