Peacebuilding: Lessons for Afghanistan

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Indexing terms

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Preface to this edition

From October 2001 major changes were taking place in Afghanistan resulting in the defeat of the Taliban regime and the eventual establishment of a new interim government with international support. Reflecting the importance of these events and the dearth of readily available background material for decision making, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on short notice commissioned the Chr. Michelsen Institute to produce two reports that would provide insights relevant to the extremely complicated peacebuilding process facing Afghanistan.

The first report, submitted in January 2002, reviewed previous efforts by the international community within Afghanistan to address issues central to peacebuilding. On this basis, the report made several strong recommendations for international support to the present phase of transition to peaceful reconstruction and development. The report became available just in time for the Tokyo conference on international assistance to Afghanistan.

The second report, submitted in April 2002, reviewed a range of experiences in other countries relevant to the tasks of reconstructing the state and the economy in Afghanistan. Emphasis was put on the political framework for peacebuilding, security sector reforms, and early economic recovery.

While both reports have been circulated openly as Commissioned Reports and have been accessible at the CMI website, the two papers are joined here more conveniently as one CMI Report. The original text has not been changed, but the executive summaries and the bibliographies have been merged. Part I refers to the first report, while Part II refers to the second report. Some references in text may nevertheless still refer to the "first" and "second" report, rather that Part I and II.

The first report (Part I) was prepared by Astri Suhrke, Kristian Berg Harpviken and Arne Strand, while the second report (Part II) was written by Astri Suhrke, Are Knudsen and Arve Ofstad. Astri Suhrke has also been overall responsible for these reports. We would like to thank the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the opportunity to work on these extremely important and challenging issues, and hope that the reports have been useful.

Bergen, August 2002

Abbreviations, Acronyms and Afghan Terms

ACBAR	Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief
ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination (UN)
ADA	Afghan Development Association
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ANCB	Afghan NGOs Coordination Bureau
APB	Afghan Programming Board
ASG	Afghan Support Group
BBC	British Broadcasting Company
CAP	Consolidated Appeal Process
CCA	Cooperation Centre for Afghanistan
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CDAP	Comprehensive Disabled Afghans' Programme
CHA	Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
CoAR	Coordination of Afghan Relief
CRC	Convention of the Rights of the Child
DACAAR	Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees
DHA	Department for Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council (UN)
EPI	Expanded Programme on Immunization
ExCOM	Executive Committee (UNHCR)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (UN)
FFW	Food for Work
FoodAC	Food for Asset Creation
HFES	Household Food Economy Studies
HMA	Humanitarian Mine Action
IAM	International Assistance Mission
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee (UN)
ICC	Islamic Coordination Council
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGO	Inter-Governmental Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
Koochie	Nomad
Loya Jirga	Grand Council
MADERA	Mission d'Aide au Dévéloppement des Économies Rurales en Afghanistan
Maharam	Males from whom a Muslim female do not need to keep *purdah*
MAPA	Mine Action Program for Afghanistan
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoPH	Ministry of Public Health
MMR	Ministry of Martyrs and Repatriation
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

NOVIB	Netherlands Organisation for International Development Cooperation
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
OI	Ockenden International
PCP	Principled Common Programming
P.E.A.C.E	Poverty Eradication and Community Empowerment (UNDP)
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PROMIS	Programme Management Information System
PRSG	Personal Representative of the Secretary General (UN)
Purdah	Gender segregation
QIP	Quick Impact Project
RCB	Regional Coordinating Body
RCO	Regional Coordination Officer
SCA	Swedish Committee for Afghanistan
SCF-US	Save the Children, US
SF	Strategic Framework
Shura	Council
SMU	Strategic Monitoring Unit
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary General (UN)
SWABAC	South West Afghanistan and Balouchistan Association for Coordination
UN	United Nations
UNCO	United Nations Coordinator's Office
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (Habitat)
UNDAC	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDCP	United Nations International Drug Control Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programmes in Afghanistan
UNOCHA	United Nations Organisation for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (replaced UNOCA)
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Centre
UNSMA	United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
WB	The World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme (UN)
WHO	World Health Organisation of the United Nations

Executive summary

1. Purpose and scope of Part I

Part I of this report reviews the experiences of the international community in Afghanistan that are most relevant to future peace-building tasks. It focuses on the 1990s but refers to broader historical and social factors where instructive.

The analysis starts with the most fundamental questions facing the Afghans and the concerned international community at present, namely how to
- sustain a political framework for peace-building
- support structures in Afghanistan that strike an appropriate balance between national, regional and local authorities
- develop strategies for assessing needs and identifying policy priorities.

The subsequent section looks at experiences in particular sectors that are central to peace-building:
- standards of governance and human rights
- organising the transition from relief to reconstruction and longer-term development
- some key issues in the transition phase (drug control, mine action, return of refugees/internally displaced persons).

Some security issues are examined in chapter 2, but peacekeeping will mostly be discussed in an accompanying report (Part II) that examines lessons from UN operations elsewhere.

What is peace-building? A poorly defined term, it is used to denote at least two kinds of activity:
- strategies to develop trust and build confidence among communities, particularly at the local level
- a package of activities undertaken in so-called post-conflict situations, typically coordinated by the UN or through other common mechanisms. In this sense, the concept evolved during the 1990s and presently entails a broad range of activities designed to establish public order, undertake economic recovery and reconstruction, and develop institutions in the judicial, administrative and political sectors (state and civil society).

"Peace-building" in the first sense has been undertaken at the local level in Afghanistan by non-governmental organisations and a few UN agencies. Plans for "peace-building" in the second sense have not been prepared by the UN and the international aid community until now, after the fall of the Taliban and the establishment of a transitional government in Kabul. Yet the international community was previously involved on many levels and in various aid capacities. The 1990s consequently offer a set of rich experiences that are relevant to the current phase, ranging from micro-level projects to attempts by the UN to coordinate aid policy in a difficult political context.

2. Principal conclusions

Afghanistan's future is deeply uncertain. The fragility of the peace-building process must be recognised at the outset. Beyond that, the report identifies three fundamental approaches as most appropriate at the present time.

A: *Emphasise national structures and national solutions*
The viability of a peace-building process depends ultimately on the establishment of a legitimate Afghan state, responsive to the demands of the population, and able to resist threats from regional military groups within the country as well as pressure from external parties.

Afghanistan had functioning national institutions in the 1960s and 70s, but the central state has traditionally been weak vis-à-vis local, tribal forces. This strengthens the argument that the most feasible alternative at present is to acknowledge the regionally based groups in a decentralised or even federal state structure. However, this approach would legitimise warlords who have emerged from the military conflicts of the past two decades and sustained themselves through a political economy based on smuggling, drug production, plunder and external assistance. Some have an appalling human rights record.

To reduce the militarisation of politics and break the regional economies of war, the international community should support national institutions at the central, provincial and district level, as well as local-level authorities such as the *shura*.

Sensitivity is required when it comes to international expectations regarding Western, secular concepts of human rights and democratic development. These areas cover traditionally contentious questions that will probably remain so for the foreseeable future.

B: *A careful start and a long-term perspective*
The high visibility of the Afghan conflict has generated widespread international interest in the recovery phase. Massive funding is on the horizon. As a large number of aid actors seek to participate, there is a danger that the country's weak transitional structures will be overwhelmed and marginalised in the decision-making processes.

To this end, it is particularly important to

- resist the temptation in the aid community to rapidly provide large-scale funding and quick-fix solutions to demonstrate that "peace pays". Setting authoritative policy priorities requires serious inputs from the Afghan side. A prominent international role in shaping recovery and reconstruction policy could undermine the rationale for having a national transitional government all.
- make haste slowly and take a long-term perspective. Civil wars that end in a stalemate may require rapid, reintegrative measures lest the belligerents resume fighting. The situation in Afghanistan is different; the major potential for conflict lies rather in how to divide the spoils of peace. To discourage such fights, the aid community should focus on existing relief and high priority recovery until the transitional political process has developed further, along the lines specified in the Bonn Agreement.

- reverse the legacy of the 1990s and turn foreign aid into development co-operation. International assistance has until now been organised by agencies based in Pakistan. Afghan institutions were barely involved. Much of the aid was distribution of relief supplies. The aid community did little capacity building and, after 1998, had minimal contact with Afghan authorities.
- establish reasonably effective coordination on both the Afghan and the international sides. The present UN-centred structure developed around the Strategic Framework seems to have outlived its usefulness.

C: *A supportive international environment*
For the past two decades, divisions among Afghans have combined with competitive external interference to produce a self-sustaining conflict. To break this dynamic, peace-building must be situated in a broader regional context, and states in the area should be encouraged to participate in joint efforts and common institutions.

Leadership by the UN Secretariat in the present peace process requires sustained support. Unless UN member states uphold the Bonn Agreement on the understanding that peace and stability in Afghanistan are important objectives in themselves, events may slip back into the pattern of the early 1990s with well-intentioned, but ineffectual, UN leadership.

3. Specific conclusions regarding policy and project areas

Working with national, regional and local authorities

Rebuilding Afghan national institutions is of immediate concern and can start from the skeletal state administration that continues to exist at the central, provincial and district level.

To facilitate the transition from relief to reconstruction, aid agencies should seek out *actors with a development orientation* among Afghan NGOs and in state institutions, and work with community councils (*shura*). Assistance in the past has tended to reinforce rather than counteract the war economy; there is now an opportunity to reverse this trend if organisations make it a central aim of their operations.

Assistance programmes must make maximum use of *local capacity* in terms of personnel and institutions. To this end, inventories of existing capacity within the country and abroad would be useful, and could be started almost immediately.

Assessing needs and setting policy priorities

Some UN agencies worked with national and local authorities for data collection purposes in the late 1990s, Afghans participating mainly as respondents and data collectors. *Greater involvement of the Afghan administration* in assessing needs and collecting basic social statistics would be an important part of capacity building in the public sector. Activities in this area could start early in the recovery process.

Collecting basic socio-economic and demographic statistics on a national basis is central to the peace-building process. There is at present little data of national coverage to inform decisions regarding resource allocations among geographic areas and population groups. The last census was in 1979. In the absence of better national

data, unsubstantiated claims and politicised statistics are likely to be used in regional, ethnic and political rivalries.

UN agencies and NGOs have during the past decade amassed a substantial quantity of data that is relevant to recovery and reconstruction. However, the quality of these data is uncertain, and large parts are fragments that may not be easy to aggregate. A stock-taking of existing data from needs assessments and other surveys is a first step to improve the statistical base, and should be undertaken before large new data collection initiatives are launched.

Promoting standards of governance and human rights

UN efforts in the late 1990s to promote respect for human rights in Afghanistan by aid conditionality and strategic distancing had limited results. Nevertheless, a principled stand combined with some flexibility to produce signs of change before being cut short by the events of September 11. With the installation of a more UN-responsive government, a policy relying more on capacity building to generate change - and less on conventional conditionality thinking - might prove most effective.

From relief to reconstruction

With a large number of actors preparing to assist in Afghanistan's recovery, *a measure of authoritative coordination* among donors and agencies is essential for effective programming and to avoid overburdening the Afghan government. The structures established under the Strategic Framework to streamline humanitarian assistance with human rights considerations may not be suitable to a more complex reconstruction phase. At the same time, *national Afghan coordination capacity* should be created to enhance national responsibility, control and ownership of the assistance processes.

The regional coordination structures established by the UN inside Afghanistan should be modified to *correspond to the organisation of the new transitional government*, which has a national, provincial and district level, but no regional component. The de facto regional administrations that currently exist in Afghanistan are run by warlords and military-based groupings, and are not necessarily supportive of the transitional government.

With new aid actors on the Afghan scene - including the co-chaired ministerial meetings and the UNDP/World Bank/ADB collaborative arrangement - the Afghan Support Group, composed of major donors and working out of Islamabad, might find it useful to redefine its role. The option implied by its name is to form a group of states that would support the new national authorities of Afghanistan in the *spirit of the "like-minded" tradition*. The complexity of the emerging aid scene makes this a particularly important function.

Over time, *a relief mode of assistance* based mostly on foreign NGOs to implement projects must be replaced with *a reconstruction and development mode* in which the Afghan government and civil society organisations play a key role. In the meantime, basic social services provided by NGOs should be maintained. Establishing a national development training institute would help build national capacity.

There is limited experience in Afghanistan with local *peace-building strategies to develop confidence among communities.* When tried in connection with small reconstruction projects, however, the experience has been positive. Peace-building in this sense should be integrated into assistance programmes where appropriate.

Urgent rehabilitation issues

The study examines in some detail three issues that will remain important in the transition period: control of drug production, mine action, and repatriation of refugees.

Following the Taliban's effective ban, there is now an *opportunity to carry forward the ban on drug production* before production is re-established at previous levels. While countering drug production is difficult, experiences gained over the past years in Afghanistan indicate that a combination of enforcement and general reconstruction is the most constructive way to proceed.

In dealing with the serious problem of landmines and unexploded ordnance, *an expansion of the mine action capacity should be rooted in the existing programme.* The programme is one of the best of its kind. The staff is largely Afghan. As a well-established and effective programme, it is a candidate for early transfer to national government control.

The existing programme for the return of refugees is also elastic in the sense that it can readily be expanded to meet the expected demand for increased repatriation. Current approaches for *facilitating and encouraging repatriation* are likely to work for many, but will need to be complemented by innovative approaches to meet the needs of those still hesitant to return.

4. Purpose and scope of Part II

Part II of this report examines lessons from peacebuilding efforts during the past decade which are relevant to the current challenges of reconstructing the state and economy in Afghanistan. It follows a previous study (Part I) that analysed past experiences of the international community in Afghanistan.

The report does not review all sectors usually included in contemporary peacebuilding activities. Some issues have been covered in previous CMI reports and have been cross-referenced; others were selected because they are central to the situation in Afghanistan and lend themselves to comparative analysis. This volume focuses on

- the political framework for peacebuilding
- security sector reform
- economic recovery and reconstruction

5. Principal conclusions in Part II

International peacebuilding became an increasingly institutionalised set of activities in the 1990s. Standard procedures and aid packages were introduced. Yet,

- approaches to peacebuilding have differed according to type of conflict and the nature of the peace agreement

- there is no obvious country model for peacebuilding in post-Taliban Afghanistan
- the effectiveness of particular strategies varies from one country context to another
- the lack of a tried-and-tested blueprint justifies innovation, risk-taking and flexibility in formulating strategies for peacebuilding

At present, the international community is simultaneously waging war and building peace in Afghanistan. The only comparable case from collective peacebuilding missions in the 1990s is Somalia (1993). That experience, as well as the logic of conflict resolution, suggests that war-related activities will undermine efforts to build peace.

In the absence of good blueprints or obvious models, the report has adopted a macro-perspective designed to provide general insight from the history of peacebuilding since the early 1990s. The review helps to answer some central questions regarding peacebuilding strategies for Afghanistan at present:

1. Is the structure and mandate of the mission being prepared for Afghanistan in early 2002 appropriate?

A large international presence for peacebuilding purposes can severely distort the economy and politics of the country in question. In poor and divided countries the effect is magnified. Large missions with ambitious agendas typically have a magnet-like effect on local politics as the various factions compete for foreign support. The economy typically develops in a dual and unsustainable fashion. The dynamic has been repeatedly observed (Somalia, Cambodia, Kosovo, East Timor). To dampen the distortion effect, a low-visibility, limited presence and a long-term perspective are essential.

The modest UN mission planned for Afghanistan therefore suggests the UN is doing the right thing, but not for the right reasons. The decision is not primarily a result of institutionalised learning about the appropriate size and scope of peacebuilding missions, but reflects security considerations and the continued military campaign. The general lesson therefore has to be reiterated in the UN and to other actors.

2. What are the criteria for success in peacebuilding and what are realistic expectations?

"Peacebuilding" is usually understood as a transitional activity designed to prevent the recurrence of past violent conflict and to lay the foundation for (re)building political, economic and social systems that in the longer run will prevent new wars. To assess what works therefore involves several criteria. A minimal test is that past violence does not recur. A more ambitious threshold is that democratic processes are seen to take hold, that economic recovery financed by donors gives way to self-sustained growth, that divided societies start to deal collectively with memories of the past as well as visions for the future, and that a state of law emerges.

Democratisation, observance of human rights and economic development are long-term and complex processes. Progress or lack thereof cannot be easily traced to a set of distinct activities in the immediate post-war period.

Historical evidence suggests that poor countries emerging from long and costly wars are most difficult to launch on a path of peace, let alone a democratic peace. A massive infusion of international aid and an international security presence can buy short-term peace and artificial economic growth, but by itself not democratisation and development. The nature of the political system before the war will also influence progress towards Western-style democracy after the conflict. Realistic expectations for Afghanistan must take this into account.

3. Are some factors more important than others in determining the success of peacebuilding?

The so-called *"ripeness factor"* is important. The genesis of success or failure in peacebuilding lies in the nature of the peace settlement itself, and of the conflict from which it springs. Some conflicts are "ripe for resolution", and the peace settlement provides an agenda for the peacebuilding and sustains it. When this is not the case, sustained international efforts to mediate and build mutual confidence are particularly important.

The situation in Afghanistan is different. The main political challenge is to ensure that the current victors – who are also recent enemies – do not start a war over the spoils of peace. Since a power-sharing formula has not yet been agreed to, and various factions are flush with weapons and money supplied in the war against Al Qaida and the Taliban, the situation appears to be riper for conflict rather than for resolution.

Regional developments are critical. Neighbouring states can break and make a peace process by affecting the supply of arms, regulate trade routes and provide sanctuary to dissident factions. The rule clearly applies to Afghanistan, underlining the need for concerned actors to pay particular attention to the regional context.

4. Are some sectors more important than others in peacebuilding?

Establishing a legitimate political authority and civilian control over the police and armed forces is fundamental. Most peace agreements deal with both issues in detail. In the Afghan case, the Bonn Agreement only sets out a schedule for political transition. Solutions to the twin problem of dealing with local leaders, especially the warlords, and of establishing legitimate control over the various armed forces and police, therefore remain to be negotiated.

Standard procedure thus suggests that the first step in Afghanistan would be to negotiate a political agreement among the Afghan parties on restructuring the armed forces, i.e. an accord similar to those obtained in most peace settlements. The agreement would serve as the framework for sustained attention to implementation, and possibly enforcement.

Progress in other economic and social sectors may serve as confidence-building measures that could help deal with the critical issues of sharing political power and restructuring the military.

Monitoring of human rights in the immediate post-war phase is essential to reintroduce standards of law and humanity, particularly in societies traumatised by violence. It can limit a violent settling of scores or fighting to shape the evolving peace. An international human rights presence can also lay the foundation for a local human rights structure. The role of UNTAC in Cambodia is exemplary in all respects.

5. Can hard trade-offs in peacebuilding be softened?

Three customary trade-offs are discussed in this report:

- quick-fix solutions in the security sector vs. a long-term perspective on institution building and reintegration

In most peacebuilding situations there is pressure to find rapid solutions in the law and order sector. Yet there is overwhelming evidence that effective police reform involves long-term institution building. This requires not only trainers, monitors and recruits of acceptable quality, but, above all, the establishment of legitimate local authorities to which the police will be accountable. Institution building in this sector must be in step with broader political development.

Programmes to facilitate *demobilisation and reintegration* (DPRs) are very costly, but can be successful in the short run. Longer-term integration of ex-combatants requires follow-up programmes and is dependent upon the extent of general economic recovery.

Programmes to *collect small arms* (cash-for-arms) are likely to have little impact if illegal arms are easily available in the region, if soldiers are part-time militia rather than professionals, and if a traditional (or modern) gun culture prevails. Buy-back programmes may be counterproductive by encouraging an inflow of weapons. Control of small arms under these conditions requires a broader and longer-term approach.

- macro-economic stability vs. financing the peacebuilding agenda to sustain the peace process

The logic of the IFIs' concern with prudent macro-economic management frequently clashes with the political logic of peacebuilding to finance certain programmes deemed necessary to sustain the peace. Compromises have been found; to sustain this means that decision-making for economic policy needs to take peacebuilding issues into account, while policy in other areas must recognise the importance of economic sustainability in the longer run.

- Promoting national state structures vs. relying on existing power configurations of local-regional forces

In sharply divided or failed states, establishing common, national structures has been a political priority of the UN or the international community concerned. However, imposing common state structures on uncooperative entities has proved a slow and difficult process (Bosnia), and the prospect of a provisional government has exacerbated factional in-fighting (Somalia). Yet the Somali case suggests that a more sensitive approach towards elections, and a more inclusive attitude towards clan leaders and other segments of civil society, could have helped marginalise the warlords.

6. Will a high volume of aid promote peacebuilding?

Poor countries like Afghanistan may be in great need of external resources, but are very vulnerable to distortions produced by sudden or "bulky" aid, and have great difficulties in turning externally funded projects into sustainable activities. Beyond this, the type and modality of aid is more significant than the volume.

A funding "gap" between relief and development might have existed in the early 1990s. At present, there is more of an overlap than a gap. This is particularly so in high-visibility cases (like Afghanistan), which attract large funds and many aid actors.

Experience from a long decade of peacebuilding suggests five conclusions are particularly relevant for Afghanistan:

- The volatile nature of post-war situations demands *flexible responses.* Special needs may require *risk taking*, and *innovation.* Some peacebuilding missions in the early 1990s demonstrated that it was possible to take risk and be innovative.
- External budget support may be necessary to maintain core state functions and provide minimum services until regular revenue collection resumes. Donors are often reluctant to finance recurrent expenditures, but there are precedents for the current UNDP fund to finance the Interim Authority of Afghanistan.
- Employment generation is an essential but neglected aspect of peacebuilding. Employment is critical to reintegrate particularly volatile groups (ex-militia/soldiers), and to create a sense of confidence in the future that will help to demilitarise politics.
- While specific forms of assistance is necessary in the transition period, a large infusion of funds can easily overwhelm the capacity of both state and civil society, gravely distort the economy, and generate new in-fighting among local factions.
- International aid can undermine the principle of sustainability. Post-war governments must be encouraged to raise tax revenues as soon as possible. The Cambodian case shows that an aggressive taxation policy can produce significant results even when the country is destitute.

7. How can the legacy of a war-dominated economy be overcome?

Previous peacebuilding cases offer few ready lessons, except that transformation of a war-related economy to peacetime structures takes time. Economic and legal reforms are necessary to restore confidence in economic institutions. A context that favours economic growth and employment alternatives will speed up the process.

8. How can local authorities and interest groups participate in setting priorities for reconstruction?

Donors and aid agencies typically make their own needs assessments that only allow for *pro forma* local participation. Yet exceptions show that inclusive approaches are possible even under difficult situations (Mozambique, Angola and East Timor). This evidently goes against standard operating procedures of most agencies, however, and requires deliberate policies to plan ahead and permit sufficient time for the assessment process.

PART I: Lessons from past experiences in Afghanistan

1. Introduction to Part I

1.1. Purpose and scope of the report

This report reviews the experiences of the international community in Afghanistan that are most relevant to future peace-building tasks. We will focus on the 1990s, but will refer to broader historical and social factors where instructive. While emphasising the lessons noted by the international aid community, the diplomatic efforts of the United Nations to promote peace in this period - and the reasons for their failure - will also be discussed.

The analysis starts with the most fundamental questions facing the Afghans and the concerned international community at present, namely how to

- sustain a political framework for peace-building
- support structures in Afghanistan that strike an appropriate balance between national, regional and local authorities
- develop strategies for assessing needs and identifying policy priorities.

The subsequent section looks at experiences in particular sectors that are central to peace-building:

- standards of governance and human rights
- organising the transition from relief to reconstruction and longer-term development
- some key issues in the transition phase (drug control, mine action, return of refugees/internally displaced persons).

Insofar as the international community has no prior experience in peacekeeping in Afghanistan, this issue will mostly be discussed in an accompanying report that examines lessons from UN operations elsewhere. Only security issues relating to protection for humanitarian assistance and public order will be addressed in this volume (chapter 2).

Each chapter is organised as follows:

- identification of major challenges and current status,
- analysis of relevant lessons in the 1990s, contextualised in terms of broader social and historical trends where appropriate, and
- policy implications for current peace-building activities.

1.2. Background

What is peace-building? A poorly defined term, it is used to denote at least two kinds of activity:

- strategies to develop trust and build confidence among communities, particularly at the local level

- a package of activities undertaken in so-called post-conflict situations,[1] typically coordinated by the UN or through other common mechanisms. In this sense, the concept evolved during the 1990s and presently entails a broad range of activities designed to establish public order, undertake economic recovery and reconstruction, and develop institutions in the judicial, administrative and political sectors (state and civil society).

"Peace-building" in the first sense has been undertaken at the local level in Afghanistan by non-governmental organisations and at least one UN agency. Plans for "peace-building" in the second sense have not been prepared by the UN and the international aid community until now, after the fall of the Taliban and the establishment of a transitional government in Kabul.

Previously, continuous violence had made it impossible to develop a comprehensive package to rebuild the state and the economy. Yet, the UN attempted at various times during the 1990s to negotiate a political framework for peace, and international aid agencies as well as bilateral donors provided relief and limited reconstruction assistance. Numerous international and national NGOs had projects on the ground. Towards the end of the 1990s, the international aid community developed fairly elaborate mechanisms to coordinate assistance and integrate political, aid, human rights and peace considerations within a common framework. The result was known as the Strategic Framework and Principled Common Programming.

The 1990s consequently offer a set of rich experiences that are relevant to the current phase, ranging from micro-level projects to attempts by the UN to coordinate aid policy in a difficult political context.

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[1] As social scientists have pointed out, conflict is endemic to most social processes. The task of peace-building is not to eliminate social conflict, but to ensure that it is resolved in non-violent ways. While "post-crisis" is a more appropriate term, "post-conflict" has been widely used in the international aid community and has been institutionalised by the World Bank and other agencies. See e.g. *Post-Conflict Reconstruction: The Role of the World Bank*, Washington: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 1998.
(www.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/1998/04/01/000009265_
3980624143531/Rendered/PDF/multi_page.pdf) and other publications prepared by the Post-Conflict Unit of the World Bank.

2. Negotiating and sustaining a framework for peace

2.1. Status

The Bonn Agreement (5 December 2001) is the current framework for peace-building activities in Afghanistan. Once negotiated, a framework for peace must be actively maintained. This is especially important in the Afghan case since the post-war order does not rest on a formal peace agreement, only a UN-brokered agreement among various Afghan groups to share power in a transitional governing structure.

The transition process is fragile in both its internal and external dimensions. The key Afghan parties to the Bonn Agreement are political-military groups that at one time or another opposed the now defeated Taliban regime. Most claim to represent a particular regional identity group, as defined by ethnicity, religion,[2] and geographical divisions. Yet there is little popular identification with the regionally based groups that shaped the internal conflict in the 1990s. The groups and so-called parties are primarily military organisations (led by warlords, commanders, or military groupings) that were able to offer a minimal level of security to the people in their areas, but apart from this appear to have little legitimacy or popular support.[3] They are sustained by a war economy based on smuggling, drug production, plunder, and foreign support. Some have appalling human rights records. These regional groupings constitute a new phenomenon, distinctly different from the tribal formations and other local entities that traditionally counterbalanced the influence of the central state.

The Bonn agreement soundly prescribes a process in which the current transitional government in Kabul will not directly set up the next cabinet.[4] Simultaneously, the survival of the new central authority requires building down the military capability of the regional armed groups - or carefully co-opting them - and establishing a security force controlled by the state.

Several states in the area, especially the neighbouring ones, have major and mostly conflicting stakes in the future Afghan polity. The current distribution of power inside Afghanistan and in the transitional government bears evidence of this. The strong position of the Northern Alliance, and the young generation from the Jamiat-e Islami party in particular, is a direct result of support from Russia, Iran and India. In a different capacity, the United States designated Northern Alliance forces as its main local ally in the military campaign against bin Laden and the Taliban. The Northern Alliance claims to represent the smaller ethnic and religious groups in Afghanistan.

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[2] The most significant distinction here is between *shia* and *sunni* Muslims.

[3] There are significant differences between the groups. Whereas some are pure warlords whose power depends on a combination of military force and war-related business, other groups do have some level of popular support within particular geographic areas, or in certain segments of the population. Based on these differences, achieving a seemingly equal treatment of the various groups will be difficult.

[4] "No person serving as a member of the Interim Administration may simultaneously hold membership of the Special Independent Commission for the Convening of the Emergency *Loya Jirga*." (III (A.4)). The Bonn Agreement further provides for an Interim Authority to rule for 6 months from 22 December 2001, during which time *a loya jirga* will be called to establish a Transitional Authority. This authority must call a constitutional *loya jirga* within 18 months of being formed, and has itself a sunset clause of 2 years.

The largest and historically most powerful ethnic group, the Pashtuns, traditionally backed by Pakistan, has been given a less prominent role in the transitional structure.

The Bonn Agreement formally commits the UN Secretary-General to assist in implementing the transitional structure, but does not obligate foreign states to undertake or refrain from any actions.[5] In formal legal terms, this is a weak starting point given Afghanistan's position in the vortex of competitive international politics in the region.

Some states and international agencies have a more general interest in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan. Such interest covers two, quite different positions: (i) a minimalist concern to support just sufficient change in the country to ensure that it will not harbour militant movements that pose a threat to other states, and (ii) a more ambitious commitment to help modernise, develop and democratise the country. The modernists seem currently to have the edge in the international aid community, partly because militancy was associated with anti-modernity during the Taliban period. While finding some ready allies inside Afghanistan, the modernists will also encounter a varied body of traditionalist and conservative sentiments. The latter will have some foreign support as well. Managing the tension between the minimalist and modernist positions - and their Afghan counterparts - will be a major challenge in the transition period.

A second, fundamental tension stems from the contradiction between the desire for quick results and the slow process of empowering representative Afghan institutions. There is an obvious temptation for the international aid community to rush in with funds and quick fixes to demonstrate that peace pays, and to pre-empt the many destabilising forces at work.[6] However, the present Afghan regime ("the Interim Authority") is only a weak caretaker government, installed by external forces. Authoritative decisions about governing structures and economic reconstruction must await the next Afghan cabinet, which will be nominated through a traditional form of indirect elections (*loya jirga*) and thus be more legitimate and representative.[7] According to the Bonn Agreement, this cabinet will be nominated in mid-2002. The time schedule gives Afghanistan and the international community a much-needed window of opportunity to prepare for reconstruction. For international donors to move ahead of the political transition process with their favoured peace-building projects

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[5] The Agreement only records a request by the Afghan participants that foreign countries observe the principle of non-interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs. These and other requests to the international community are stated in the Annex. The Agreement is signed by the Afghan participants and witnessed by the UN/SRSG.

[6] A similar dilemma was noted by the World Bank representative in Islamabad who "watches" Afghanistan. His presentation to the meeting of aid actors in November 2001 called by UNDP/World Bank noted that "[t]here will be a great temptation to 'do whatever it takes' to get results in the short run. This understandable tendency must be tempered by a longer-term perspective and vision of what Afghanistan's institutional structure and public sector will look like…" The challenge is to "[a]void inadvertently putting in place institutional arrangements which will become a problem over the longer term." William Byrd (2001), *Aid Management During Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Lessons from International Experience*. www.pcp.org…/Aid Management.

[7] A broadly representative nomination is essential to establish legitimacy. The Bonn Agreement contains some ambiguities regarding the composition of the Emergency *loyal jirga* that will nominate the next two-year cabinet. These may be clarified with reference to the 1964 Constitution, which provides the constitutional framework for the present transition and codifies the traditional *loya jirga* process.

could well undermine the restoration of a representative and independent Afghan authority, which is fundamental to sustaining the peace.

In managing these and other dilemmas in the early peace process, the international community can draw several lessons from the history of its past involvement in Afghanistan.

2.2. Earlier UN peace initiatives

The UN-brokered Geneva Accords of April 1988 that prepared the ground for Soviet withdrawal did not include a mechanism for the internal settlement of the conflict. Neither was there a commitment by foreign governments to cease arming their respective Afghan protégés.[8] Large-scale repatriation and reconstruction plans were prepared in the expectation of a rapid collapse of the Kabul government, but the regime survived thanks to continued Soviet support as well as infighting among the mujahedin.

The memory of events that followed has cast a shadow over the present peace process. The UN/SRSG, Benon Sevan, tried from 1989 onwards to forge an agreement between incumbent President Najibullah and a coalition of mujahedin groups supported by Pakistan (the Afghan Interim Government). The plan was to gather 150 Afghan representatives in Vienna, and select a core group to organise a *loya jirga* that would appoint an interim government. The process fell apart in early 1992 when Najibullah suddenly indicated he would step down, which served as a signal for other contenders to scramble for power. Complex internal alliance-building ensued - crossing the previous political divide of communists vs. mujahedin and largely following ethnic lines. The UN was rapidly outmanoeuvred. Various mujahedin groups took control of different parts of the country and divided Kabul among themselves. Moving into a power vacuum at the centre, Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara forces took most of the capital.[9] Four years of civil war among the mujahedin followed; fighting was particularly focused on gaining control over the capital, Kabul, which was nearly destroyed.

What went wrong? Most importantly, neither the major powers nor the regional states actively supported the UN peace process. The US had effectively disengaged from Afghanistan, and the regional powers fuelled the conflict. Seeking to establish their influence in the country, or at least spheres of control, Russia, Pakistan, Iran and, from farther afield, Saudi Arabia, supported their favoured Afghan groups in the civil war.[10] Only the UN Secretariat seemed actively committed to restoring peace, and the

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[8] See Barnett R. Rubin (1995), *The Search for Peace in Afghanistan: From Buffer State to Failed State*, New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 84-91. In the words of leading Pakistan negotiator Riaz Khan "…the primary interest of the United States and other Western Nations was reversal of the Soviet military advance." Riaz Mohammad Khan (1991), *Untying the Afghan Knot: Negotiating Soviet Withdrawal,* Durham: Duke University Press, p. 294.

[9] Rasul Baksh Rais (1994), *War without Winners: Afghanistan's Uncertain Transition after the Cold War*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, pp. 155-161.

[10] The main pattern was for Russia, Tajikistan and India to support the Tajiks led by Ahmad Shah Masood and for Uzbekistan to support the Uzbek warlord, General Dostum, both based in northern Afghanistan, while Iran supported the (largely Shia Muslim) Hazara in the central region, the powerful Ismael Khan in the West and Masood in the North. Saudi Arabia aided the eastern-based followers of Abdul Rasul Sayyaf and different *wahabi* groups, and Pakistani assistance was instrumental in the rise of Taliban in the South.

SRSG undertook a lone, one-man performance. While Pakistan also actively engaged in the negotiations, Islamabad had strong partisan interests and gave massive support to its own client faction. A transition agreement brokered in Pakistan in mid-1992 provided for an elected government in 18 months, but lacked mechanisms for settling disputes between the parties and provisions for asserting state control of the commanders and regionally based armies. The domination of the new cabinet by one party, the Jamiat-e Islami, alienated other groups, which boycotted the next transition phase. The peace process was effectively dead.

By mid-1995 the situation on the ground changed dramatically as the new Taliban movement gained control over most of southern and western Afghanistan, and in 1996 captured Kabul. At the UN, Lakhdar Brahimi took over as SRSG in late July 1997 and tried to confront the destructive logic of competitive foreign interference by calling the relevant states into a joint forum - the so-called 6+2 group (neighbouring states plus USA and Russia).[11] An expanded UN peace mission (UNSMA) brought Afghans other than the armed factions into the peace consultations, particularly Afghans in exile. However, with the Taliban in control of most of the country, and the Northern Alliance riven by internal tension, neither the Afghan parties nor their regional backers were ready to engage in serious peace talks. In February 2000, Brahimi resigned.

As a recent evaluation of UN engagement in Afghanistan has pointed out, the diplomatic side in the coordinated Strategic Framework launched in 1998 worked on the assumption that only isolation would be effective in relation to the Taliban. The aid community, by contrast, tended to advocate constructive engagement (see chapter 5 below).[12] The difference in perspective was reinforced by mistrust between the diplomatic and the aid communities, precluding efforts to link assistance to peace-building in a constructive manner. Yet, some positive developments were noted, including UNSMA's recognition of the need to engage Afghan civil society more broadly in the consultations.

At the same time, a discussion emerged in the aid community of possibilities for starting reconstruction as a step towards peace, rather than following the conventional sequence of peace first, reconstruction second.[13] Innovation was supported at the highest level in the UN: in August 2001, Kofi Annan called for a new approach to promote peace in Afghanistan.[14] As it turned out, the initiative was overtaken by the events of September 11 and their aftermath.

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[11] Matthew Fielden & Jonathan Goodhand (2001), "Beyond the Taliban?: The Afghan Conflict and United Nations Peacemaking ", *Conflict, Security and Development*, vol. 1, no. 3.
[12] Mark Duffield, Patricia Gossman and Nick Leader (2001), *Review of the Strategic Framework for Afghanistan* (final draft), Islamabad: Strategic Monitoring Unit.
[13] Promoting peace-building through reconstruction was a major theme at the Afghan Support Group meeting of donors and aid organizations held in Islamabad in June 2001. The ideas inspiring the current initiative for a massive reconstruction package to solidify the peace process are in fact closely related to those underlying the discussions in Islamabad.
[14] United Nations General Assembly, Security Council (2001), *The Situation in Afghanistan and its Implications for International Peace and Security*, Report of the Secretary-General, A/55/1028-S/2001/789. www.un.org/Docs/sc/reports/2001/789e.pdf.

2.3. Critical issues in peace-building

The conflict dynamic of the 1990s was characterised by the mutually reinforcing effects of internal and external divisions: divisions among the Afghans virtually invited competitive foreign interference, while external conflicts locked into and hardened internal splits. In essential respects, this picture remains the same today.

Nothing much has changed on the Afghan side – except that one faction (Taliban) has been deposed and has evidently disappeared (at least in its original form). The internal divisions between various regional military groups persist; the groups and their leaders are largely a carry-over from earlier periods. In a new development, some of the representatives in the present Interim Authority in Kabul do not have a basis in the military groups. This was possible due to concerted international insistence, which shows that such pressure can be effective.

Regional power interests in Afghanistan also remain relatively unchanged, although affected by Pakistan's changing role and worsening relations between India and Pakistan. Most have retained their links with local Afghan groups, or, in Pakistan's case, seek to adjust to the declining fortunes of a previous client. The negative dynamic of interlocking conflicts poses several critical issues for sustaining the framework for peace-building:

Regional engagement

An implicit goal for the UN peace efforts of the 1990s was to re-establish Afghanistan as a united buffer zone between neighbouring states. The establishment of the 6+2 group in 1997 was a positive step in this regard, although significant actors not bordering on Afghanistan, notably Saudi Arabia and India, were excluded. In relation to Afghanistan, each neighbouring country has particularist interests in the country that are mostly connected to national security agendas but do not in all cases affect the other countries involved. This raises the question as to whether a forum for cooperation of a more permanent character should be established. There is growing realisation that continued unrest in Afghanistan easily generates continued instability in the larger region, and that some of the conflicts played out in Afghanistan do not originate there but reflect unresolved issues within or between other states in the region.[15]

International commitment

The current, massive international interest of states beyond the region in rebuilding Afghanistan politically and economically is the most significant change from the developments in the 1990s. To sustain the framework for peace-building, this commitment must not only endure; specific interests pursued by various external actors in Afghanistan need to be balanced by a commitment to the peace process per se. Already, the signals from some key states, including the United States, are mixed.[16] Concerted support from states for the UN-brokered peace process may help

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[15] See for instance Martha Brill Olcott, *In Preventing New Afghanistans: A Regional Strategy for Reconstruction*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C., January 2002. www.ceip.org.pubs.

[16] The US, for instance, has, indicated a reluctance to support Afghan recovery economically in the longer run, claiming it has covered its part of the cost through the military campaign ("USA vil ikke betale gjenoppbyggingen", *Aftenposten*, 6 December 2001). Moreover, liberally provisioning eastern

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modify both the internal Afghan dynamic and the consequences of competition among regional states.

The need for international pressure to sustain the transitional process provided for in the Bonn Agreement is potentially in conflict with another key objective: to make peace-building a primarily Afghan process rather than alienating it from the polity it is designed to serve by giving it a heavy foreign imprint.

A range of substantive issues has further been identified as critical to the peace-building process:

Civil society

As noted above, a legacy of the past two decades is that Afghan politics are currently dominated by a handful of parties whose power is based primarily on military force, developed in a war economy fuelled by external support. Yet despite the war and the militarisation of ethnic divisions, social networks and basic norms have not broken down fundamentally, and a civil society does exist (see chapter 3 below). Given the limited representativeness of the so-called parties, and equally their moral responsibility for the continued war, there is now an opportunity to bring forward the tentative efforts started by UNSMA in the late 1990s to involve people with a different background in the peace process. The Bonn Agreement has taken some appropriate steps in this regard.

Security

With the long absence of an authoritative or functioning state, regional or locally based military groups have entrenched their positions. Founded on a well-established economy of war, these parties currently represent all military power in Afghanistan. To forge a national army out of these disparate groupings, or to establish a degree of central control over the security apparatus, is a formidable challenge.

The experience of the 1990s has taught the warlords and the parties that military-based control over territory is necessary to generate economic and political power locally, which in turn may secure a position at the national level. Enlisting their support during the vulnerable transition phase will largely depend on what benefits the parties and their fighters see in the peace process. Apart from the ability of the new state and its external supporters to distribute tangible benefits, there is also a question of legitimacy. As noted above, the present Interim Authority in Kabul may not have much legitimacy, but the next transitional authority - to be installed in mid-2002 by a *loya jirga* - will have considerably more. That body may be able to deliberate authoritatively on the formation of a national army and decide on sensitive issues such as regional composition, control and salary structure, and compensation for armed groups that will be disbanded.

Given the complexity and significance of these issues, it would be unwise for the international community to get out ahead of the Afghan political process in reforming the military structure. More appropriate at this point would be a commitment to

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Pashtun tribes to continue the hunt for bin Laden in late December effectively strengthened regionally based military groupings at the very moment when the first post-war national authority was being installed in Kabul.

support, financially and otherwise, an arrangement that the Afghans themselves can agree upon, and that satisfies a minimalist position in the international community regarding order and stability.

In the meantime, who is to provide security? The international peacekeeping force deployed in late December is important symbolically in demonstrating international backing for the peace process. A clear lesson from the period 1992-93 is that the absence of a neutral force at a critical time in the capital permitted the mujahedin to fight undisturbed. The most critical function of the present international force is probably political, that is, to secure a neutral space in the capital until the next transitional cabinet is well established and the constitutional process well under way. Possibly, it may be extended later to other major cities.[17] This leaves open the question as to how basic security should be provided for a) people outside the major urban areas, and b) humanitarian convoys and other major inter-regional traffic.

Regarding (a), there seem to be few alternatives to building on the existing regionally based armed groups or local warlords, while gradually integrating them in to the new national security force. The integration formula needs to recognise that amongst the ethnic Pashtun no sizeable professional military groups exist at present. An eventual national force should probably have a certain ethnic proportionality.[18]

Regarding security for humanitarian convoys and other traffic, the pattern from the mujahedin period in the early 1990s is that the humanitarians made deals with local commanders, sometimes as a last resort, to obtain security (see chapter 3 below). Commanders that were strategically well placed on major access routes got a large share of the assistance as they were prioritised by the aid organisations. Taxation of aid transport (at gunpoint, if needed) was common as well. The result was a skewed distribution of aid, which undermined all principles of sound assistance by demonstrating that military power ultimately determined aid priorities and channels. Then, as now, security for convoys was mainly an economic issue. Relief supplies were valuable to the military-based groupings for economic reasons, and were only used as an instrument of warfare (i.e. to be denied rival forces) in specific battle situations.

At present (December 20001), major security problems have appeared along principal arteries, notably the Kabul-Kandahar and Kabul-Jalalabad roads. The source is turf warfare among local armed groups to collect "taxes" and assert their control, aggressive tax-collection, or unpredictable banditry. There are no easy alternatives to a renewed militarisation of aid distribution. A national authority must somehow be established, with incentives for local military leaders to co-operate. It should be made clear that a new national security force will be based on existing capacities. Ensuring security in the home area thus becomes a prerequisite for inclusion in a national

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[17] United Nations Security Council, *Resolution on the Situation in Afghanistan*, S/RES/1386 (2001) www.un.org/Docs/scres/2001/res1386e.pdf. The ministers of Interior, Foreign Affairs and Defence in the Interim Authority appeared to disagree on the size and role of the international force. The Defence Minister, General Fahim, reportedly favoured a small force with limited functions. The equivalent to a status of forces agreement negotiated in Kabul in late December reflected Fahim's influence, especially by permitting Northern Alliance forces to remain in the city, although in cantonment areas. *New York Times*, 1 January 2002.

[18] Quotas based on ethnicity or other criteria are not advisable. Quota systems tend to reinforce difference, and would in this case strengthen the role of existing military regional organisations.

security force. The alternative of deploying international forces to protect the main highways in an interim period appears even more complicated.[19]

Demobilisation

Any demobilisation scheme must recognise the particularities of the Afghan situation. Useful estimates of the number of fighters are not available, but much of the Afghan male population clearly has some sort of fighting experience. The war in the 1990s was not fought by large standing armies with professional soldiers. The fighting had a seasonal aspect, and the soldiers were mostly men who maintained close ties with their families and home communities, and who had an established social role as well as potential income-generating activities to return to. The rapid decline of the Taliban illustrates this point as well. Once the movement seemed unlikely to survive, its fighters and field commanders disengaged militarily to take up social roles in their communities.

Conventional concepts of demobilisation and reintegration consequently have little relevance in the Afghan context. To a large extent, demobilisation can be expected to be spontaneous, and the most effective means of preventing further violence (fighting or armed crime) is to promote general economic recovery. As to the relatively small contingent of more professional soldiers, many of them would probably be absorbed in a future national security force.

Constitutional framework

Drawing up a new constitution is an essential part of the transition. Establishing principles of political representation and laying the foundation for a functioning judiciary is essential. Constitutional developments in Afghanistan date back to the early 1920s. New constitutions have often sparked political unrest, and significantly different principles have been promoted and codified.[20] The tension between minimalist and modernist positions in the international aid community, and their Afghan counterparts, is especially likely to manifest itself in the constitutional process.

The Bonn agreement has established the 1964 Constitution as the legal framework during the transition. It is widely seen as a liberal document, particularly compared with the 1977 Constitution promulgated under President Daud.[21] While the socialist principles espoused by Daud have since been discredited - both in Afghanistan and the world at large - the process of drawing up a new constitution will still be a delicate

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[19] Foreign deployment would deny local warlords economic and political power without offering incentives to participate in a national structure, and additionally introduce the sensitive foreign dimension.

[20] When Daud Khan was overthrown by the communists in April 1978, and when king Amanullah in 1929 lost power to Habibullah Kalakani ("Bacha-e Saqqao"), the shifts in power were triggered by the implementation of new constitutional provisions.

[21] The 1964 Constitution was a liberal breakthrough. It limited the power of the King's family, including their participation in the administration, strengthened the role of the parliament, and affirmed individual rights, including private property rights. A significant element in the new constitution was the right to form political parties. By contrast, the 1977 Constitution established during the rule of President Daud Khan gave significant power to the President, including the right to dismiss the national assembly and veto any legislation. It opened the way for the collectivisation of agriculture and land reform, threatening private property rights. Ludwig Adamec (1992), *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan,* Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, pp. 57-60.

balancing act. Questions that have triggered unrest in previous constitutional processes remain contested, e.g. the distribution of power between the national and local levels (see chapter 3 below), the role of women, and the nature of the judiciary (secular versus religious courts).

To reduce tensions around these issues, a broadly consultative Afghan process to draft a new constitution as provided for in the Bonn Agreement will be essential, although quite time-consuming. The modernists should recall that previous efforts to modernise have met resistance when launched in a manner that was imposed (whether by king, president or communists), rather than reflecting an inclusive, deliberate process. If the future constitution does not meet the ambitions of modernists in the international aid community, a major lesson from the 1990s is that sustained engagement is more effective than confrontation in encouraging change (see chapter 5 below).

Power-sharing

With a new constitution to be drafted after two decades of war, fundamental questions have arisen about the structure of the future Afghan state. The degree of centralisation vs. decentralisation is at the core. Advocates of radical decentralisation argue that the 'ethnification' of the conflict over the past decade has led to strong regional identities, and that the only viable solution is to establish a federal structure that grants considerable power to a new regional level of administration.[22] An associated claim is that Afghanistan has never had a strong state, and attempts to establish one have always been associated with resistance and power abuse; hence a new formula that reflects ethnic lines and the existing distribution of power is needed.[23]

Against this it is argued that existing parties and warlords have manipulated ethnicity but do not enjoy broad popular support. A federal system would legitimise existing regional groupings dominated by old-style warlords - of which the ethnic Uzbek, General Dostum, is the most infamous - and sharpen ethnic divisions.[24] The consequences might well be continued war and eventually a division of the country.[25] An underlying claim in this respect is that ethnicity has not taken firm root amongst common Afghans, and that introducing a regional level of administration is not only without precedent, but has little relevance for a population whose primary identity is with the local community.

Both views hold some merit. The critical question is whether the major risks to peace-building emerge from centripetal or centrifugal forces. At present, moderately strong regional identities have a parallel in regional military groups, most of which have little popular support even amongst their own, supposedly constituent population. Essentially warlord structures, they invite continued foreign interference. Their military character makes them unattractive as a constitutive base for the country's

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[22] See for example M. Nazif Shahrani, 'Not "Who?" but" How?": Governing Afghanistan after the Conflict', pp. 6-7, in *Federations*, special issue on Afghanistan, October 2001.
[23] See Marina Ottaway and Anatol Lieven, *Rebuilding Afghanistan: Fantasy versus Reality*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C, January 2002. www.ceip.org.pubs, and "Break Up Afghanistan? Why Not?" *New York Times,* 1 December 2001.
[24] Other examples are Haji Qadir of the Eastern Shura based in Jalalabad, Ismael Khan, based in Herat although influential in most of the North-West and Gul Agha Shirzai in the Kandahar region.
[25] See for example S. Frederick Starr, "A Federated Afghanistan?", *Central Asia Caucasus Biweekly Briefing*, 7 November 2001.

long-term political future. Arguably, the challenge for peace-building in Afghanistan is to demilitarise the political process, not invite its militarisation as federalism might do.

Current realities in Afghanistan suggest that considerable power be vested in bodies below the level of the central state, but this can be done without going down the risky path towards a federation. Reviving the former administrative structure at the province and district level seems wiser. This structure opens the way for considerable self-organisation at the village level as well, such as that represented by village councils (*shura*). Reinvigorating the old, civilian administrative structure also reduces the risk of making the political process hostage to military power.

International assistance

International aid is essential to provide alternatives to the war economy, and eventually to undermine it. Yet massive and sudden aid may exacerbate conflict rather than dampen it. The aid may be appropriated by military groups, or generate new conflict if authoritative political institutions have not been established to decide on distribution. In the past, aid has become an integral part of the war economy by directly or indirectly nurturing armed groups. The dilemma of disbursing aid without exacerbating conflict is particularly relevant for emergency assistance, which in the present transitional phase should be provided in ways that do not undermine longer-term reconstruction and peace-building efforts.

2.4. Policy implications

What are the principal lessons of the last decade with respect to maintaining a political framework that can sustain peace-building in Afghanistan?

Recognise the fragility of the process

The current change inside Afghanistan was brought about essentially by the military actions of the US, which had been a marginal player in the 1990s and at the present juncture has not expressed a strong interest in "nation-building" in Afghanistan. Rather, US policy has been driven by a particularist interest, i.e. to crush Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. This initial disjunction between military and political logic suggests that the peace process will be slow and difficult. The situation is made more fragile by the position of the regional powers with the most direct interests in Afghanistan. During the 1990s, as before, they pursued goals that sharpened internal conflict rather than seeking to establish Afghanistan as a unified, stable buffer state.

Counter divisive regional forces

More distant actors, including some European states, possibly the US, and international aid agencies, have a more general interest in promoting stability and peace in Afghanistan. Effective peace-building requires that these actors firmly support the development of Afghanistan as a stable buffer state and, if possible, mobilise other states behind this goal. Without a broad international commitment to the transition envisaged in the Bonn Agreement, there is a real danger of events slipping back into the pattern of the 1990s with well-meaning but ineffective UN leadership.

To break the cycle of interlocking internal and external conflict, regional states must transfer their competition to the economic and diplomatic realm, and participate in a common framework for reconstruction. Regional states should be invited to accept the principle of non-interference, to assure transparency in the provision of military aid (if such aid is to be given at all), and to work through common institutions. The UN should consider imposing an arms embargo during the transition period.

Within Afghanistan, divisive regional forces are represented by the military groupings. Both centrifugal and centripetal forces may endanger the peace process - regional forces may splinter it, and excessive centralisation of state power will invite resistance. Yet legitimising the present regionally based structures is tantamount to inviting foreign interference and a repeat of the destructive dynamic that prevailed in the 1990s.

Give primacy to the Afghan political process as specified in the Bonn Agreement

While reconstruction aid can help sustain the peace process, a dominant international role in setting policy priorities could be counterproductive by undermining the rationale for having a national transitional government at all. The international aid community should recognise the importance of letting the Afghan political process mature before promoting reforms and policy priorities that have long-term implications or affect especially sensitive political areas. That applies both to military reform and priorities for economic reconstruction (see chapter 6 below).

The foundation for a stable political system is that policy priorities emerge primarily from a national process, rather than the credit lines of international donors. The present Afghan cabinet is a weak caretaker government installed by foreign forces. It can hardly speak authoritatively or forcefully vis-à-vis powerful international aid agencies. The next transitional authority will be nominated through a traditional, national process and have a greater measure of legitimacy. Serious deliberation of reconstruction priorities should await its appointment in mid-2002.

Make haste slowly

While parts of the country and the state apparatus are in ruins, a well-established international system of emergency relief has resumed operation. Local authority structures that address essential issues of justice and security function in much of the countryside. The rehabilitation of some relatively non-controversial basic services and state infrastructure (e.g. rebuilding ministries in Kabul) can be done immediately, some existing activities essential to recovery should continue (e.g. demining and return of refugees), and a unique opportunity to reduce poppy cultivation may still exist (see chapter 7).

Apart from this, there is little reason to show that "peace pays" with massive and immediate injections of foreign funds. In some civil wars ending in a stalemate there is a real danger that one or the other belligerent may resume fighting unless rapidly integrated into a system of rewards (see Part II of this study). Afghanistan is different. With a clear victory and defeat in this round, the potential future conflict is rather about dividing the spoils of peace. In the absence of a reasonably legitimate and established transitional cabinet, placing a large economic package on the table might be an incentive to fight rather than a stimulus to peace.

Until Afghan priorities for reconstructing the state and economy are authoritatively clarified, whatever aid is given must be distributed equitably among the parties. As four men representing the country's main ethnic groups (Pashtun, Hazara, Tajik, Uzbek) told a reporter recently: "If you give us four loaves of bread, we will all eat in peace. But if you give a loaf to just one of us, then the other three will fight to get it."[26]

Realistic expectations about conflict and the future Afghan state

While the US-led offensive is drawing to an end without, so far, provoking a military response from Pashtun groups, small-scale violence among Afghans is likely to be a continuous facet of the political process. Low-intensity conflict of this kind is not necessarily a threat to the state. Violence between local groups may build on the traditions of the tribal feud, and is governed by codes regarding legitimate reasons for taking up arms as well as the methods of warfare.

The state in Afghanistan has, historically speaking, survived only in a delicate *modus vivendi* with strong social forces, such as those represented by tribal or religious networks, or by local communities. Successful peace-building hinges on realistic assumptions concerning the future role of the state as an integrating force. This probably lies somewhere in the middle of the minimalist-modernist spectrum noted at the outset: that is, an agent capable of offering a framework for security, facilitating access to basic welfare services, and providing rules for aggregating interests and setting policy priorities on a national basis.

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[26] "Afghan Leaders' Limited Goal: Proving They Can Cooperate", *Washington Post,* 30 December 2001.

3. Working with national, regional or local authorities

3.1. Status

Afghanistan has a long history of power struggle between national authorities and various local bodies. While national structures have intermittently been strengthened, local organisation has remained strong, and a new regional level of military groupings has emerged during the last two decades. Establishing an appropriate and balanced division of power between these various levels will be a major issue in the future Afghanistan, and will affect virtually all peace-building activities.

The idea of a unitary state and modern state institutions (a national police, army, educational system, etc) are embodied in Afghanistan's constitutions of 1931 and 1964. The 1964 Constitution will be the legal framework for the state until a new constitution is promulgated (around late 2004 according to the Bonn Agreement.) However, there has always been a distinct gap between the theory of unitary structure and the practice of decentralised power. Given the high stakes involved, defining the reality of centre-local relations will be an arena of intense competition, both as part of the coming constitutional process and as the defining element of politics in the transitional period. The fact that the signatories to the Bonn Agreement do not fully represent regional factions with power on the ground is likely to enhance the contestation.

For Afghans, divisions of administrative responsibility at the central, regional and local levels will affect major issues of power (e.g. taxation) and principle (e.g. religious versus secular courts and the role of women). To some extent, the modernist-traditionalist divide runs parallel to central-local divisions.

The structure of Afghanistan's administration is significant to external parties as well. Some states, notably the US, prefer a strong national authority for security reasons (e.g. to control borders, outlying areas, crime and drug trafficking). Other external institutions, notably the IMF, see strong, national-level institutions as a prerequisite for sound macro-economic policies.[27] Surrounding states, however, have stronger ties to regionally based power constellations and less interest in a strong government in Kabul unless it is run by their favoured faction.

Some development actors also focus on sub-national levels. The UNDP maintains that while reconstruction policies optimally require the presence of an effective national government, aid can move from relief to reconstruction with the formation of 'a regional administration'.[28] In line with its previous experience in Afghanistan, the

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[27] From the outset, the IMF has urged the restoration of the Ministry of Finance "to its full capacity" to generate revenues and manage expenditures, establish a Central Monetary Authority, and develop an economic database (presumably national), including the institutional framework to manage it. While warning against "a bloated federal bureaucracy", Fund officials warned against a situation where "local leaders impose taxes or lay claim to natural resources in ways that escape transparency and governance." Statements by IMF officials at the UNDP/World Bank/ADB conference 'Preparing for Afghanistan's Reconstruction', Islamabad, 27-29 November 2001.

[28] *Afghanistan Crisis, UNDP Strategy,* UNDP, 30 October 2001, p.4.

agency also emphasises a local or community level focus during the rehabilitation period, in both project and policy orientation.[29]

When engaging in aid or peace-building activities, external actors will necessarily influence the balance of national versus local authority, whether directly or indirectly. Foreign assistance will probably be the main source of revenue for Afghanistan in the near future, and the choice of local partner will be a critical determinant of power in Afghan politics.

3.2. Working with national versus regional and local level authority in the past

Two distinct and partly competing politico-administrative organisations currently exist in Afghanistan (see Fig I). One is the national administrative structure as provided for in the 1964 Constitution. The structure has survived two turbulent decades of war - indeed, one of the first tasks of the ministers in the Interim Authority that was installed late last year was to meet employees who demanded back payment for some of the time they had served under the Taliban. The national administration extends down to the provincial, district and sub-district level.[30]

The other structure rests on military power rather than constitutional legitimacy. Based on geographic regions, it evolved from the rule of the warlords in the early 1990s and now seems to have been re-established by the various military commanders. The UN adopted a similar regional structure when the aid community in the late 1990s moved towards a more intrusive role under the Strategic Framework mechanism and divided the country into regional "zones", each with a UN-appointed international Regional Coordinator.

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[29] The agency cites as a main lesson applicable to reconstruction in Afghanistan "the establishment of viable governance based on stronger community and local participation rather than on the basis of a western 'democratic' model." *UNDP and Recovery in Afghanistan: Strategies, International Experience and Lessons Learned in Recovery, Post Rehabilitation [sic] and Development.* Paper presented at the Islamabad Conference, 27-29 November 20001.

[30] The 1964 Constitution divided Afghanistan into 24 provinces (*wilayat)*, each headed by a governor (*wali*), reporting to the Ministry of Interior in Kabul. Representatives of the various Ministries were attached to the provincial administrations, reporting directly to their own ministries in Kabul. The province was further divided into districts (*woluswali)* with an administrator (*woluswal*) reporting to the provincial governor. Larger districts were divided into subdistricts (*alaqadari*). The smallest division was at the village or rural subdivision level, while the cities were divided into wards. At this local level there was a middleman function, a locally recruited person who stood between villagers and the administration. In the countryside, this function was called *arbab, malik* or *mir*, in the cities it was known as *wakil-e-gozar.*

Fig 3.1. Politico-administrative organisations in Afghanistan

National Government

Governor

Provincial Administration

Woluswal

District Administration

Arbab/Wakil e Gozar

Local Communities

Regional units, incl. several provinces

Controlled by military Commanders or Commander Councils
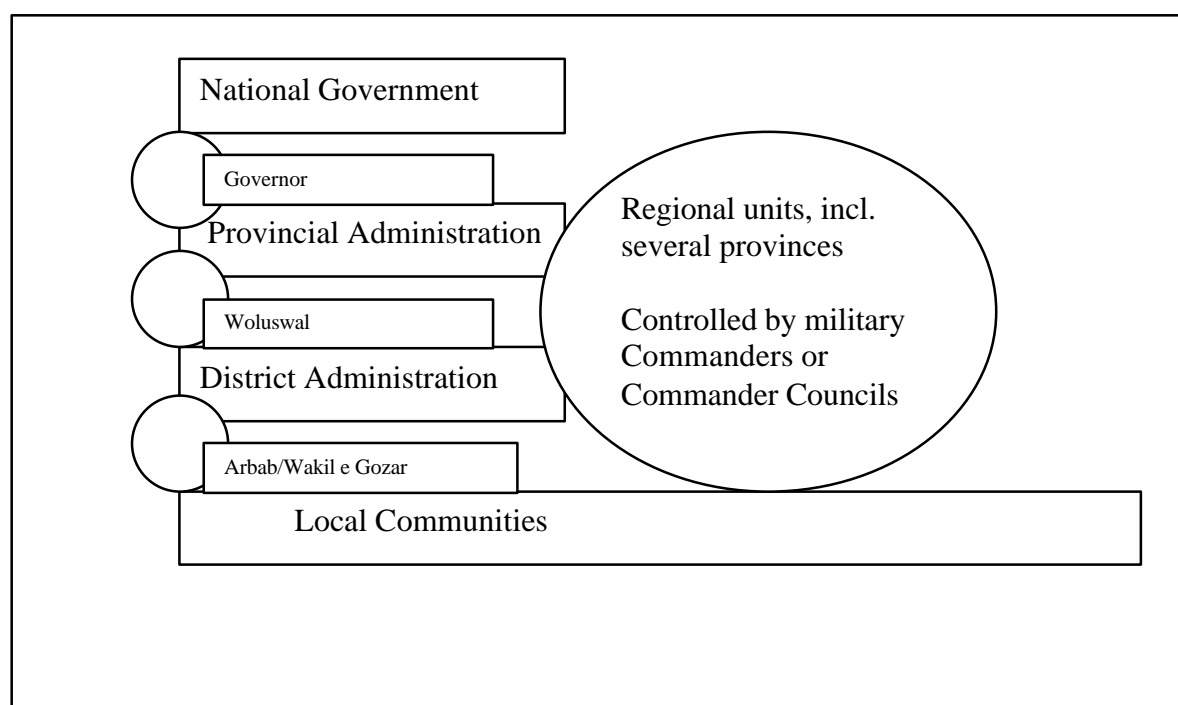
For many Afghans, the period from the 1950s to the mid-1970s stands out as a "golden era". A mix of bilateral collaboration and balanced superpower competition ensured a degree of independence and modernisation. Both the US and the Soviet Union assisted (mainly through loans) with building airports, roads and hydroelectric plants, though in different parts of the country. Other countries assisted as well (France sent constitutional experts; Germany trained the police, etc). However, by the early 1970s the government was heavily dependent on foreign assistance, and relied on superpower competition to maintain its credit line.[31] With the US disengaging and no other large donor to fill the gap, the Soviet Union assumed a dominant role.

After the Soviet invasion in 1979, the superpowers engaged in a proxy war where humanitarian assistance complemented military aid. For the next two decades, international assistance played a major role in shaping and supporting various Afghan groups. A common feature of the humanitarian organisations - UN agencies and NGOs alike - was that they largely avoided working with Afghan official structures, and UN agencies maintained their head offices in Pakistan rather than in Kabul.[32]

In the 1980s Western emergency aid, often in the form of cash, had mainly been channelled through the mujahedin groups. Assistance was designed to strengthen the mujahedin operating inside Afghanistan and excluded people in areas controlled by the Kabul regime. Although a mujahedin government was installed in Kabul in 1992, competing groups opposed each other on both the national and the regional levels, there was no unified governmental structure and civil war continued. Most

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[31] A full review of this period is found in Luis Dupree (1980) *Afghanistan* (second edition), Princeton, Princeton University Press

[32] The exception was the ICRC, the Swiss registered NGO, the International Assistance Mission (IAM) and some smaller NGOs.

humanitarian actors avoided formalising relations with the new government, preferring continued co-operation with individuals of military groups with whom they had worked during the 1980s.[33]

This pattern of interaction was above all a *partisan and negotiable relationship*. Linking diverse humanitarian actors to their preferred Afghan counterparts, the relationship was prone to corruption and political favouritism. Most assistance went for emergency relief, although increasingly it included infrastructural projects such as the rebuilding of roads and irrigation systems. The early 1990s strengthened regionalisation and further weakened the central state apparatus, especially when regional warlords behaved like quasi-states by generating income from trade, receiving arms and other support from neighbouring countries, and inviting humanitarian agencies to provide basic health, education and relief services for their populations.

The Taliban's gradual ascent to power from 1994 onwards entailed a clear shift towards a more unitary and repressive governmental policy. The movement's strict traditional- conservative national view, rooted in village traditions as well as a particular interpretation of religion, reduced the room for negotiation with foreign actors, above all those representing 'modern', Western values and development. This mostly applied to the humanitarian aid agencies as well. While restoring the governmental structures of the 1964 Constitution, the Taliban also reduced the importance of the Kabul ministries and gave more authority to religious networks and institutions.

The humanitarian community responded with a dual policy. The UN Strategic Framework (SF) and the Principled Common Programming (PCP) limited interaction with "any presumptive Afghan authority" and capacity building, but many organisations recognised the need to work with the authorities to provide relief and implement projects. In contrast to the partisan and negotiable relationship formed with individual mujahedin leaders, the common aid policy formally adopted under SF/PCP in 1998 was characterised by a *strategic distancing* from the de facto national authorities. This was accentuated by the UN General Assembly denying Afghanistan's seat in the UN to the Taliban regime, and the introduction of UN sanctions against the regime in1999.

On the whole, humanitarian assistance during the past two decades has reinforced power structures at both the regional and the local levels. This made it possible to register some local development, but did not modify a regionalised political economy of war that made leaders more dependent upon - and responsive to - outside forces rather than their own people, and where control of trade (legal and illegal) was a major source of revenue. Fragmentation of political control also hampered Afghanistan's vital transit trade, facilitated competitive foreign interference, and made internal divisions rather than national boundaries the relevant lines of confrontation.

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[33] There are two notable exceptions here. The UNCHS/Habitat worked consistently with municipal structures in Kabul, and devised a strategy for these to resume a larger degree of responsibility in the provision of services for the urban population. The IAM, based in Kabul since the 1960s, maintained a policy of collaborating with the government and its various ministries. IAM activities included joint projects with the authorities in the health sector.

Most aid organisations accepted their role as somewhere between "strategic distancing" and that of a compliant partner in a regionalised economy of war. However, at the local level some made a point of demanding that the authorities take more responsibility by contributing to projects and programmes.[34]

The fragmentation of political control in Afghanistan and the localised focus of aid activities had further consequences for assistance. It encouraged the dilution of standards, laid the basis for waste, and inhibited the development of a coherent or transparent system for setting priorities among regions, provinces and districts.[35]

The present situation in Afghanistan is similar to the 1992-1996 period in that the national authority is challenged by competing warlords, locally designated commanders and governors, who are all seeking external support. A more detailed review of past experience of working with different actors and levels in providing humanitarian assistance is therefore useful.

National level authorities

For security and political reasons noted above, the international aid community has very limited experience of working with Afghan national authorities during the past two decades. By the time the Taliban regime was toppled, the cumulative effect of this practice was that the most competent governmental employees had been employed by the international humanitarian agencies (whose budgets often far exceeded that of the Afghan ministries). This further weakened Afghan institutional capacity at the central level and reinforced an image of a dysfunctional apparatus that had better be bypassed if anything were to be achieved. The type of aid further strengthened this trend. Since most of the UN-channelled assistance was for humanitarian and emergency purposes rather than reconstruction, it was easier to ignore the de facto national authorities.

Nevertheless, some aid actors found it both possible and useful to work with the national administration in this period. For instance, UNCHS/Habitat worked with various ministries and the Kabul Municipality throughout the 1990s. An NGO, the International Assistance Mission, has even longer, formalised collaboration at the ministry level. During the Taliban period, the UN-led Regional Coordinating Board in Kandahar, the *de-facto* Afghan capital during that period, organised collaboration among UN agencies, NGOs and Taliban ministries. UNICEF worked with the (Taliban) Ministry of Health, paying the salaries of governmental health workers to maintain vaccination programs in the provinces, and with the Ministry of Planning to develop statistics on child development. In the second half of the 1990s, UNHCR had what it deemed indispensable logistical assistance from the Ministry of Martyrs and

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[34] For instance, the UNDP-led P.E.A.C.E. programme required local authorities to be involved in the decision-making process. An NGO working out of Herat, Ockenden International, had representatives from the Taliban administration present during needs assessments and used it to clarify the Taliban's responsibility towards the community.

[35] The limits of a predominantly local-level approach were evident in the experiences of the international aid community during the 1990s with respect to both relief and small-scale development. Typical problems were the lack of central statistics, an overall sense of need, multiple standards, an unclear or controversial setting of priorities, etc. For details see *Assessing Needs and Vulnerability in Afghanistan*, Report commissioned by OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP. Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute, August 2001.

Repatriation to organise the repatriation of refugees. The office of the UN Coordinator for humanitarian affairs (UNCO) helped the Central Bureau of Statistics to undertake a census of Kabul in 2000.[36]

Provincial level

Provincial administrations have been important within their respective areas, with a core of civilian administrative staff surviving changing regimes. Provinces such as Nangarhar (Jalalabad), Herat, Kandahar and Balkh (Mazar-e-Sharif) that lie astride major trade routes with neighbouring states traditionally had their own branches of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and generated tax revenue from the transit trade. Provincial leadership varied in the early 1990s, ranging from military commanders who appointed themselves as governors (Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif) to governors appointed by a local council of mujahedin parties (Nangarhar). To a larger degree than in Kabul, agencies depended on local authorities to issue travel permits and secure road travel outside the cities. During the Taliban period a more unified governing structure developed, with more income from customs and tax collection being forwarded to the central state apparatus. Yet considerable authority remained with the provincial level of administration.

Throughout the 1990s most UN humanitarian agencies and their implementing NGO partners sought to bypass the formal authorities at the provincial as well as the national level. Self-appointed military governors occupied an intersecting role in the two politico-administrative organisations (see Fig. 3.1), and in their capacity as warlords or members of a military group could not so easily be bypassed. However, agencies that collaborated with the government at the national level did so at the provincial level as well. Afghan NGOs established a closer relationship with the authorities than did their international counterparts and the UN agencies, thus decreasing the conflict that many of the international agencies experienced.

*The s*hura

The village council, the *shura,* lies outside the formal state apparatus. Ideally it consists of all free men, and makes decisions by consensus. By tradition it is not a permanent structure but a reactive body, called upon to solve a particular problem or conflict. As such, the *shura* is traditionally not a village development body with a capacity to plan or implement policies. Furthermore, a *shura* does not necessarily represent a particular geographic division, but rather a particular network, such as a clan, with members dispersed over a larger area.

Searching for representative counterparts to implement aid projects, UN agencies and NGOs started to focus on the *shura*. Some insisted on the existence of a *shura* as a precondition for project implementation at the village level. The *shura* that emerged on demand were often less representative than the traditional ones. At times their only function was to gather in the face of aid agencies. In the early 1990s, many commanders utilised their military standing to appoint loyal followers to *shura* formed for rehabilitation or reconstruction purposes. Individual organisations often wanted to establish their own *shura*, rather than dealing with the traditional one or

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[36] For a wider discussion on how the UN agencies related to the Taliban administration see Nick Leader, (2000). *Negotiating the 'governance gap': The UN and Capacity-building in Afghanistan*. Islamabad, UN Capacity-building Task Force.

those established by other agencies.[37] Overall, it was a highly fragmented humanitarian assistance scene.

Despite these shortcomings, the *shura* is recognised as a local-level institution in Afghan society and has successfully been transformed into village development associations when appropriate investment in institution building has been made.[38] More development oriented NGOs, for instance, have devised strategies to establish separate male and female *shura*, as well as mechanisms to aggregate interests, set priorities for development purposes, and implement projects.

The warlords

Main recipients of humanitarian assistance in the 1980s, the warlords and the military groups continued to influence aid delivery in the early 1990s by blocking access and demanding their share of supplies. The general experience of the humanitarian organisations was that control over the aid process was lost if they had to rely on a commander for the delivery and distribution of assistance. They were all experienced in negotiating with aid agencies and international donors, and well rehearsed in the game of maximising outside resources for their own military and political interests. With the country divided into local fiefdoms the mobility of agencies was limited, enhancing their dependence on the commander in the area of existing operations.

The popular support of the warlords varied, depending on their previous social standing in the area, their behaviour towards the local population, and their willingness to share available resources. Most humanitarian agencies were at the mercy of these commanders unless they managed to establish relations with local communities, or maintained a purely humanitarian profile, refusing (as far as possible) military escort and guards for their offices. Many 'bought' security by maintaining co-operation with the commanders they had supported during the war against the Soviets. By the second half of the 1990s, the ascent of Taliban meant improved security for humanitarian convoys and other traffic in large parts of the country.

With the fall of Taliban, most of these old commanders returned to power as self-appointed governors or regional warlords.[39] With their political positions re-established, they are likely to expect to be rewarded for services rendered to the international community. Unlike in the 1980s, however, rising concern about the human rights violations of some commanders, and declared international support for a national government, suggests more difficult negotiations than previously. We shall return to the question of conditionality (see chapter 5 below).

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[37] For instance, one medium-large village in Herat had two NGO *shura* in addition to one established by the village. The latter was headed by the village *arbab,* who maintained the relationship with the District Administration. Among the members was the village *maulawi,* who attending meetings of the Province *ulema shura.*

[38] See Kristian Berg Harpviken., Muhammed Suleman and Merete Taksdal (2001), *Strengthening the Self-reliance of Returnee Communities: The Enjil Community Development Program, Herat Province, Afghanistan*, Report from an Independent Mid-term Review, Woking, UK: Ockenden International, May 2001.

[39] Many who now reclaim control of provinces in their capacity as previous governors were in exile during the Taliban period. This includes Haji Qadir of the Eastern Shura, based in Jalalabad, General Dostum, based in Mazar-e-Sharif with control of neighbouring provinces, and Ismael Khan, based in Herat although influential in most of North-Western Afghanistan. In the South, the warlord Gul Agha Shirzai returned from Quetta (Pakistan) to re-establish his rule in Kandahar.

3.3. Institution building

For the past two decades, the international aid community has done little to build local capacity in either the public sector or civil society. To the extent this issue is now on the aid agenda, the agencies will have little country-specific experience or networks to draw on. Instead, they have a legacy of a virtual UN shadow administration in the social sector, run from Pakistan and often using local Afghan employees and selected NGOs to implement projects (see chapter 4 below). There is, however, a rich and varied Afghan capacity that can be mobilised. To illustrate: the massive growth of Afghan NGOs in the early 1990s was largely a local response to a UN invitation in 1989.[40] Some municipalities and *shura* that have been encouraged to take on a larger responsibility have done so effectively and become predictable suppliers of services to the local population.

Afghan human resources

While many educated Afghans have left the country, very significant Afghan human resources remain or are in neighbouring states. Many skilled Afghans are engaged in the UN and NGO sector; there is also a range of professionals in the health and education sector and in the business community. As a World Bank report of 2001 notes, the business sector within Afghanistan increased in areas enjoying relative security during the 1990s.[41]

A useful starting point is to discard the prevailing myth that there is little or no Afghan civil society, and then identify the strengths and weaknesses of the relevant groups and sectors. Many seem invisible to the aid agencies because they have been peripherally involved in either the provision of humanitarian assistance or the UN-led peace negotiations. Moreover, the international aid community has tended to focus on vocal diaspora groups rather than those working quietly inside Afghanistan or in the neighbouring countries. This tendency seems to be persisting in the post-Taliban phase: at the recent United Nations Development Programme/World Bank/Asia Development Bank-sponsored meeting in Islamabad, called to start planning for reconstruction, only a couple of some 200 Afghans invited had Kabul as their address; the rest were from the diaspora.[42]

A variety of civil organisations appeared in Afghan cities during the communist regime, including women groups, labour and trade organisations. Discarded as "communist" structures by the mujahedin government and humanitarian agencies alike, they represent at least a tradition that may be revived.[43] In the countryside, tribal structures and the village middleman were sidelined first by the commanders and later by the *shura* established by the humanitarian agencies.[44] The tribal structures remain

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[40] When the UN announced it would support the establishment of Afghan NGOs in 1989, the number increased from around 20 to 250. Many were formed by political parties, military commanders, UN employees, and Pakistani and Afghan businessmen.

[41] For details see World Bank (2001) *Brief Overview of Afghan Economy*, 5 October 2001. Islamabad, World Bank.

[42] Similarly, the list of consultants suggested to undertake the initial needs assessment in December 2001 revealed Western predominance.

[43] The NGOs mainly recruited their staff among Afghans residing in Pakistan who had fled from the Soviet invasion. They were closely related to the mujahedin parties.

[44] This middleman function was termed arbab, malik or mir in rural areas and wakil-e-gozar in the cities. They represented the population vis-à-vis the government and were to inform the villagers on

intact, although they are evidently less influential than before. The religious networks gained prominence and became better organised during the Taliban period, but their future role is difficult to judge in the present situation.

Afghan Islamic groups that include prominent and respected religious leaders were involved in the peace process during the 1990s, as were civic groups that attempted to negotiate between the warring factions. However, this proved a dangerous occupation as several leaders of such civic associations (including the father of Hamid Karzai, Chairman of the Interim Authority) were assassinated in Pakistan. Moreover - and very importantly in relation to present peace-building efforts - when these groups felt excluded from the UN-led peace processes, they gradually lost momentum and popular support.

In general, Afghan NGOs established in Pakistan earned themselves a negative reputation as several were affiliated with "conflict entrepreneurs", had more of a business approach and lacked solid roots in society. Setting these aside, several innovative and successful NGOs have gained both national and international credit for their work. Moreover, staff members of such NGOs have gained popular respect and trust. They represent a significant source for future development, whether in the state administration (from which many were recruited) or in civil society.[45]

During the past two decades there has been a massive work-migration outflow of Afghan men to Pakistan, Iran and the Gulf countries, where they have acquired advanced skills in construction and other industries that are central to the reconstruction phase. The exile period has also strengthened regional networks of trade and capital flows. Afghans have become prominent businessmen in neighbouring countries, many maintaining the legal trade network between Afghanistan and the Middle East and the West. Earlier proposals to mobilise these resources have re-emerged and are being promoted by the World Bank.[46]

The greatest scarcity concerns people with higher education and administrative skills. Resources within the diaspora community are here highly relevant. An initiative to establish a database of Afghan professionals in exile who could be called on to assist in the reconstruction period appeared in 1998, and has also been incorporated in the World Bank's first *Approach Paper* for the reconstruction. [47]

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governmental decisions and regulations. Ideally, they were appointed jointly by the government and the villagers and not regarded as government employees.

[45] The Afghan demining NGOs have a worldwide reputation as being professional and innovative, and several of the development oriented NGOs are of international standard.

[46] The World Bank "Approach Paper" presented at the Islamabad meeting in November 2001 emphasised mobilising Afghan entrepreneurial skills from the exile community (para. 64). There was less mention of Afghans inside the country, who have very considerable entrepreneurial and survival skills. *Afghanistan. World Bank Approach Paper*, available at http://lnweb18.worldbank.o.../7AA687A0D 8FE2 99985256 AFB00742B6D?OpenDocument.

[47] "Approach Paper", para 11, Executive Summary. For earlier proposals, see Haneef Atmar, Sultan Barakat and Arne Strand (1998). *From Rhetoric to Reality. The Role of Aid in Local Peace-building in Afghanistan*. Workshop report, York: The University of York.

3.4. Policy implications

Restore national institutions

Central institutions of the modern state, first launched in the 1920s, became progressively more established under the modernising monarchs in the 1960s and 1970s. There was a national police, a national bank, a national army, and national ministries with provincial branches. These institutions continued to exist to some degree into the 1980s - even a skeletal structure was restored by the Taliban. Admittedly, the structure had limited reach and was gravely weakened during years of warfare. But the idea of a national state and institutions does not have to be invented.

The problems posed by the existence of regional and local warlords should not be underestimated. As power structures that have developed over two decades, they represent strong vested interests, and most have foreign support. There are basically three approaches to building them down. The warlords can be politically starved through exclusion, tamed by inclusion in a national structure, or reformed *in situ*. Experience from the past two decades suggests that the last alternative is unlikely to succeed. A precondition for the second is the existence of a reasonably strong national authority that can shape the inclusion process. The first alternative entails the development of national institutions at the central, provincial and district level that can break the regionalised economy of war. The two most promising approaches, then, both require a strengthening of national institutions.

Because of weak existing structures, a national focus for aid distribution may initially lead to programmes and projects that are less than effective. On the other hand, working at the national level is necessary to set overall policy priorities and to facilitate making them transparent.

Choose local partners that support a development orientation

While traditionally having limited functions, the *shura* may become development bodies that function on the local level, provided they receive support to take on this role. By contrast, working with military commanders at the regional or the local level only serves to strengthen the political economy of war. Working more closely with local, traditional authority structures might mean the aid agencies will lose influence over the assistance process, yet the gain would accrue to civil society institutions with a degree of representativeness rather than the warlords.

Use local resources

The principle of using local human resources is generally emphasised by the international community in post-conflict situations; practice does not necessarily follow. As noted above, there are many skilled Afghans both inside and outside the country. The international aid community has so far, emphasised the exile community. To rectify this, aid actors need to identify, co-operate with, and develop relevant Afghan groups and institutions. The knowledge and networks of the humanitarian organisations that have long experience of working inside Afghanistan are particularly valuable in this respect.

Given very limited capacity building in the past, this clearly must be a main priority for rehabilitation and broader peace-building strategies.

4. Assessing needs and setting policy priorities

4.1. Status

A needs assessment process is an urgent first step towards reconstruction. This was the recommendation emerging from the Islamabad meeting called by the UNDP, World Bank and Asia Development Bank in November 2001 to consider reconstruction plans for Afghanistan. Agencies consequently instructed their staff to develop an initial assessment of needs and identify policy priorities in preparation for the Tokyo donor meeting in mid-January. This raises two key questions:

- are further needs assessments necessary in a country where humanitarian and other aid agencies have worked for decades?
- how far should the process of assessing needs and setting reconstruction priorities proceed in advance of the political transition in Afghanistan, which alone can ensure an orderly and legitimate Afghan input?

Past experience is relevant in both respects.

4.2. Assessing needs and setting policy priorities in the past

During the past decade of international assistance, the Afghans have played a very limited role in identifying needs and setting priorities within the relief and reconstruction sectors. The international humanitarian community has functioned as almost a shadow government by providing basic welfare and social services in a country whose rival groups prepared for, or engaged in, warfare. Aid priorities were mostly determined by donor interests, agency mandates, NGO objectives, and access or networks in the field. The Afghans had little influence on these processes, either as individuals or through institutional channels. With agency practice - elevated to formal policy after the Taliban came to power - of minimising contacts with the Afghan national and provincial authorities, and a limited engagement with Afghan civil society, assistance became a one-way process. Strikingly, Afghans were not represented in the common structures set up under UN/donor auspices in 1997/98 to streamline the aid process (the Strategic Framework). The result is a database, aid culture and structure dominated by external actors. To reverse this trend and change foreign aid into development co-operation is a major challenge.

Current nation-wide statistical data sets for Afghanistan are quite weak. UN agencies admit that much of their information is only at the level of "guesstimates". Basic social statistics on demography, health and education are incomplete. A few baseline studies exist, but are geographically confined. The last census was in 1979.[48] The UNDP Human Development Index has not included Afghanistan since 1996. There are no national institutions capable of compiling the information, and the 1996 data used in the HD Index are highly questionable as well.[49] Attempts by UN agencies to generate a common database have not proved very successful due to incompatible

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[48] The census undertaken by the Afghan Central Statistics Authority gave a total population on 23 June 1979 of 13 051 358, excluding a nomad population estimated to be 2,5 million.
[49] The 1996 figures were only an upgrading of figures provided by the Kabul government in the early 1990s and are hardly valid on a national basis.

standards, agency rivalry and the limited involvement of various coordination bodies.[50]

Ongoing conflict and strained relations with successive Afghan authorities in the 1990s generally limited the ability of the humanitarian agencies to undertake comprehensive needs assessments. Another main reason was the understanding in many agencies that given the overwhelming and mostly self-evident needs of the Afghan population, extensive assessments were unnecessary and might raise expectations that the humanitarian community could not meet. Limited funding reinforced this view.

Yet the picture is not entirely bleak. Aid organisations have over the years compiled at least partial data on the perceived needs of the Afghan population, and their priorities for rehabilitation and restoration of rights. Agencies have collected various sets of information relevant to their mandates. There have been some attempts to generate general databases, agree on common standards and verify the information generated by individual agencies.[51]

Despite the official distance between the UN agencies and the Taliban - and the difficulty of working with national ministries in the chaotic civil war period that preceded the Taliban - some collaboration in collecting data did occur. For instance, the Afghan Central Bureau of Statistics undertook a census of Kabul in 2000 with the assistance of staff from the UN Coordinator's office. UNICEF worked with national (Taliban) line ministries to develop comprehensive statistics on the health and education of children (MICS).

Existing data

A recent evaluation of UN needs assessment in Afghanistan, undertaken by the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI), identified several data collection initiatives in the humanitarian sector (see box 4.1).[52]

Recent needs assessments by UN humanitarian agencies have relied on three main mechanisms: (i) micro level assessments undertaken by implementing partners, mostly NGOs using methods ranging from "light" to more fully participatory, (ii) monitoring processes and broader surveys to inform situation analyses and capture trends, and (iii) a mandate- and rights-based approach, whereby the needs of the population are given by agency mandates and/or international norms. The CMI

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[50] There are numerous coordinating bodies, such as the Islamabad based Afghan Programming Board (UN agencies, NGOs and Donors) and the regionally based Regional Coordination Bodies initiated in 1998 through the PCP process. There are a further four NGO coordinating bodies, where ACBAR, ANCB and ICC are based in Peshawar and SWABAC in Kandahar. At present they are all struggling to maintain their activity level, as funding has sharply decreased over the last years.

[51] For instance, the Programme Management Information System (ProMIS) was developed in 1998-99 by UNDP/UNOPS/FAO as a document and project database and an online mapping service with statistical tables. It is still, however, in an early stage of development. UNICEF worked in 2001 to establish a common standard for measuring malnutrition. Herat based NGOs established in spring 2001 a common methodology and criteria for assessing needs for those affected by the drought, and the UN-led Drought Task Force in Islamabad enabled agencies to make use of situation analyses and special surveys in a consolidated way.

[52] CMI evaluation (2001), op.cit.

evaluation found weaknesses in the needs assessment process that led to significant gaps in the existing data on socio-economic conditions and perceived needs:

- the views of women have been inadequately covered,
- some vulnerable groups, including ethnic minorities, forced returnees and nomads, are covered less well than others, and
- the UN agencies and their implementing NGO partners have focused on short-term needs, primarily immediate relief, rather than assessing longer-term rehabilitation and reconstruction needs.

Box 4.1. Needs Assessment Initiatives in Afghanistan

The *World Food Programme* has since 1997 used its global food assessment tool, Vulnerability and Analysis Mapping (VAM), for identifying food insecurity in most parts of Afghanistan. VAM is a set of data, maps and special studies to monitor food supply, food deficit and socio-economic variations.

The *United Nations Children's Fund* has developed a Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS) to obtain data on several dimensions on child development, including child mortality, education, water and sanitation, child health, child rights, child labour, and disability. A limited survey was undertaken in 1997 and a much more comprehensive data collection process is now in progress.

The *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* has conducted systematic interviews with a sizable sample of returnees to most parts of Afghanistan, mapping needs and socio-economic conditions.

The *United Nations Development Programme*-led P.E.A.C.E. programme has undertaken a comprehensive needs assessment in a limited number of project areas, working through rehabilitation *shura* at the village and district level.

The *United Nations Centre for Human Settlement* (Habitat) has mapped information on conditions in the largest cities, working with municipal structures.

A number of other agencies have undertaken limited assessments within their scope of work. These are typically geographically limited, e.g. the *Comprehensive Disabled Afghan Programme* (CDAP), a UNDP/UNOPS-established organisation, on disability; various surveys by WHO on morbidity and mortality; and FAO on seed distribution and animal husbandry.

The UN-appointed *Regional Coordinators,* a structured established by the UN in the late 1990s to help streamline donor policies (Strategic Framework), have assessed particular socio-economic problems or sectors in their regions, often in collaboration with NGOs.

The small *Strategic Monitoring Unit*, also established as part of the Strategic Framework, has so far established baseline data within one geographical area (Hazarajat).

The *NGOs* have rich though fragmented information from geographical areas where they have worked, some for decades. The surveys are limited to particular regions or sectors of organisational specialisation (e.g. sanitation, education or health). Demining NGOs have since 1989 collected information on the mine problem through a range of surveys. Much of the NGO data cannot easily be aggregated due to incompatibility problems, and figures used for 'funding generation' should be verified.

The World Bank and UNDP have kept a "Watching Brief" on Afghanistan, which has led to half a dozen studies on specific problem areas (e.g. trade, food security and mine impact).

The focus on short-term humanitarian aid during the 1990s reflected funding constraints, security conditions in the country, and the deliberate decision of donors and the agencies not to engage with Afghan authorities unless they respected UN-codified human rights and refrained from using aid for war-related purposes. The result is that needs assessments have also been limited to short-term objectives.

The consequent gap with respect to data for reconstruction purposes is not absolute, however. Some of the basic data collected for humanitarian purposes are also relevant to rehabilitation/reconstruction. Moreover, UNDP prepared a reconstruction plan in

1993, when there was some hope that the post-communist phase would lead to sustained peace. By early 2001, major donors and aid organisations in the Afghan Support Group (ASG) signalled a change by authorising a working group, led by the World Bank/Islamabad, to explore longer-term strategies for rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Setting priorities

Most needs assessment during the past decade has been undertaken by NGOs as part of their project development process, i.e. preparing proposals for UN agencies and international donors. Their degree of interaction with the local communities in defining and prioritising needs varied greatly, ranging from rapid visual assessments during a village visit to extensive participatory processes, including both male and female populations in the village. However, the needs assessment processes did not seek to capture the wider range of needs, either at the village level or - with the partial exception of food security - on a national scale. The framework for prioritising projects was mostly set by agency mandate, donor interests, or NGO expertise. Within this largely supply-driven process there was no common UN mechanism to further prioritise projects according to a sense of need informed by the distribution of existing projects.

The UN Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) is illustrative of this practice. While designed to be an instrument for a coordinated, needs-oriented aid process, CAP rapidly became just a list of projects, prepared according to a specific format, and divided into five categories of assistance.[53] Donors could freely select projects for funding without any authoritative guidelines regarding priority with respect to sectors or regions from either a joint external body or the Afghan authorities. The other structures established to implement the Strategic Framework and Principled Common Programming - thematic and sectoral working groups of the aid community based in Islamabad, and UN-appointed regional coordinators and boards of aid organisations inside Afghanistan (RCO/RCB) - functioned unevenly and were of little help in this regard.[54]

Another development that influenced the assessment of needs and priorities was the rights-based approach introduced by the UN agencies towards the end of the 1990s to link assistance with the promotion of human rights in Afghanistan. The rights of women were particularly emphasised, and projects that did not meet the requirements of gender-balanced assistance were not to be funded.

With a fragmented database, numerous service providers, and no common mechanism for authoritative resource allocation, there was no way to set priorities systematically among regions, provinces and districts. Allocation of very limited resources and choice of area were often influenced by political or ethnic considerations. This was most obvious in the bilateral aid system, but the multilateral aid system orchestrated

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[53] The five "thematic areas" are: alleviation of human suffering, protection and advancement of human rights, return of refugees, sustainable livelihoods. The Strategic Framework, including the CAP process, has recently been evaluated, see Mark Duffield, Patricia Gossman and Nick Leader (2001), *Review of the Strategic Framework for Afghanistan* (final draft), Islamabad: Strategic Monitoring Unit.

[54] CMI evaluation (2201), op.cit.

in the SF/PCP after 1998 also experienced intense rivalry among UN agencies, donors and NGOs over priorities in resource allocation.

4.3. Policy implications

Allow a central role for Afghan national authorities

The most basic lesson of the 1990s is that if the political transition in Afghanistan is to have any meaning, the process of assessing needs and setting policy priorities must not only be expanded to include Afghans, but centrally involve a range of Afghan actors. With the Afghan Interim Authority in place and a new transitional cabinet to be formed in June 2000, at least a formal locus exists for involving Afghans in setting policy priorities and assessing the needs that inform such priorities.

Involve Afghans at all levels

A crucial part of the needs assessment process will be to involve Afghans at all levels and in all stages. The process can become a gradual and important part of institution building if external agencies work with ministries at the national and provincial level, as well as civil society organisations. As noted, this was done to a limited extent even under the Taliban. Systematically involving Afghan institutions and organisations may help generate a common understanding between the interim government, the Afghan people and the humanitarian agencies of needs, priorities, and ways of meeting them.

National needs assessment

Establishing a national data bank relevant to relief and reconstruction needs would help establish transparency and make criteria for resource allocation explicit. Competition over aid allocation, especially as among regions, has been a major source of conflict in the past, and is particularly important in the present phase given the tension between national and regional authorities, and their various external supporters. The re-establishment of the Afghan Central Bureau of Statistics, possibly within the Ministry of Planning where it was located before, should be a priority for international assistance.

Assess and supplement existing data

While preparing for a comprehensive national needs assessment, existing data can be readily be improved. First is the need to simply make an inventory of the very large number of studies that do exist, and assess their quality. Basic demographic and socio-economic data should be compiled at an early stage, particularly a census (which has not been undertaken since 1979). Ways to systematise and improve existing data sets should be considered. For instance, fragmented sectoral data can be aggregated (e.g. NGO data for particular sectors such as water, sanitation and unexploded ordnance), national surveys already started could be resumed (e.g. MICS), and surveys undertaken for certain geographic areas can be made comparative (e.g. those of national NGOs such as Afghan Development Association (ADA) and Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA) in Western Afghanistan or the RCO in Hazarajat). Guidelines for further data collection will help ensure greater uniformity in their reporting and use.

Build on previous plans for rehabilitation and reconstruction in an interim period

Reviewing existing or preliminary assessments for rehabilitation and reconstruction, such as the UNDP 1993 plan, current drafts by the ASG working group and the World Bank's *Approach Paper*, should precede the development of new plans. Existing documents can provide the aid community with approximate figures and priorities while awaiting representative input from the Afghan transitional authority. The CAP has identified relief needs that will remain a priority at least until the present Afghan Interim Authority is scheduled to hand over power. As noted in chapter 2, to elaborate recovery and reconstruction priorities before June 2002, when a more representative authority is scheduled to take over in Kabul, would give disproportionate influence to the views of the international agencies and donors, and could undermine the rationale for a national transitional structure.

Assess implementation capacity

In general, assessing the implementation capacity of relevant actors is as important as assessing the needs of the beneficiaries. Assessing and strengthening Afghan institutions - in both the public and the private spheres - is clearly an integral part of a broader reconstruction and development process.

5. Promoting standards of governance and human rights

5.1. Status

The UN has affirmed that it will play a central role in supporting the transition to a new government in Afghanistan (SC Res. 1378, 14 November 2001), and has laid down specific criteria for the composition of the government. When endorsing the Bonn Agreement, the Security Council reiterated its long-standing demand that the new government should be "broad-based, gender sensitive, multi-ethnic and fully representative" (Res.1383 6 December 2001). Standards for governance were only indirectly articulated, in that the Council promised to support "national reconciliation, stability and respect for human rights," as well as co-operation in controlling terrorism. The Bonn Agreement includes these goals; additionally, it specifies that Afghanistan will be governed in accordance with "the principles of Islam, democracy, pluralism and social justice".

Collectively, these principles provide a frame of reference for groups both inside the country and in the international aid community that wish to hold the Afghan authorities to certain standards of governance. In declaratory terms, at least, the UN has rejected a minimalist position (see chapter 2) in favour of more ambitious goals for Afghanistan. The question of means consequently has to be addressed. How can the international community promote these principles nationally as well as at the local level?

In theory, the UN and the aid community have considerable leverage. Massive funding for reconstruction is on the horizon, starting with a Donor Alert of 662 million dollars in early December. The UN has both a military and a diplomatic presence in the capital, and the humanitarian aid agencies have resumed operations. Yet the broad-based government envisaged in Kabul will represent numerous internal divisions, will be likely to have limited control over large parts of the country ruled by various warlords, and may itself be at their mercy. The situation invites formalism, where the national government has the power to endorse but not to implement either principles or rights.

Conflicting aims in the international community will accentuate the difficulties. The division between minimalists and modernists has been noted earlier (chapter 2). States pursuing particularist interests in Afghanistan may undermine the position of even the minimal central authority necessary to maintain order, let alone observe principles of governance. A case in point is the assistance given by the US to local warlords in the South-East to enlist their support in the war on foreign terrorists and their Afghan allies.

Locally, leverage by foreign supporters on local commanders is limited by the element of mutual dependence. Aid agencies may be both dependent and relatively powerless. That applies above all to humanitarian agencies. They find it difficult to withhold relief supplies and lack sanctions against commanders who appropriate a good share of the supply convoys, as was recently reported from Jalalabad. To note that plundering relief supplies violates both the principles of social justice and

international humanitarian law, as specified in the Bonn Agreement, is important for affirming standards, but obviously insufficient.

The UN has previously made a significant effort to promote standards of governance and human rights in Afghanistan. While discouraging, the record is not entirely bleak.

5.2. Strategic framework and principled common programming

Until the late 1990s, the UN or the international aid community did little to promote standards of governance in Afghanistan. During the 1980s, the overriding goal of Western states and aid agencies was to empower the mujahedin to fight the Soviets. When the victorious mujahedin turn their weapons on each other, their remaining external supporters sought to promote the power of their factions rather than modify their principles of rule. UN aid agencies and other aid actors provided humanitarian relief to the civilian population; *qua* emergency assistance it was not linked to political or human rights conditionality.

Over time, however, the humanitarian aid community became increasingly concerned that it was contributing to the war by providing relief and social services to the people, thereby freeing up resources for the warlords to continue fighting. Direct appropriations of supplies deepened the concern. A discussion on conditionality gradually emerged in the aid community. Some argued for negative conditionality, i.e. that only minimal life-saving assistance be provided unless the fighting stopped. Others advocated making assistance a reward for good behaviour (such as a truce) or linking it to participation in desired projects in the logic of positive conditionality.[55]

The critical rethinking in the aid agencies eventually matured in the form of the Strategic Framework. The initiative was approved at the highest agency level by a decision in the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) in early 1997 to integrate political strategy and humanitarian assistance in a coherent framework. Relief and aid for recovery in the longer run would be linked to a joint effort to promote peace. An inter-agency mission with NGO representation, and led by the UN Department of Political Affairs, followed to mobilise support in the aid community working out of Pakistan and in Afghanistan. A parallel initiative among the donors had reached a similar conclusion at the Ashkabad meeting in January 1997. When the Strategic Framework and Principled Common Programming were launched the following year, the initiative consequently commanded broad agreement in the aid community.

As a UN-centred initiative, the Strategic Framework rested on certain overarching goals. The UN would promote peace and human rights in Afghanistan, and simultaneously "increase the capacity of the Afghan people to determine their own priorities."[56] To this end, the aid actors would subscribe to seven guiding principles

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[55] For reactions in the aid community, see Paula R. Newburg "Politics at the Heart. Organizing International Assistance to Afghanistan." Carnegie Endowment for International peace. Washington D.C. February 1999. Unpublished paper. Positive conditionality was tried in a small way in the early 1990s under the first UN coordinator for assistance (UNOCA), Sadruddin Aga Khan. Distribution of wheat, for instance, was in some areas tied to a dialogue or truce among local rivals.
[56] The UN would:
- promote political negotiations within Afghanistan and with neighbouring states aimed at ending hostilities

and agree to "speak with one voice on all issues of principle", as the final document of 15 September 1998 affirmed.[57] The seven principles made it clear that except for "life-sustaining humanitarian assistance", aid would be subject to human rights conditionality and considerations of peace. Rehabilitation and development assistance would be provided only if no direct political or military advantage accrued to the warring parties. Support for institutions and capacity-building was closely tied to full observance of human rights as codified in UN declarations and conventions.

The last principle was specifically directed at "any presumptive state authority", and thus applied to the newly established Taliban regime, which was not recognised in the UN as representing Afghanistan (the seat was occupied by the ousted Rabbani government).[58] It soon became clear that the Strategic Framework, while originally developed as an instrument for peace, had become a tool for pressuring the Taliban to observe standards of human rights. In principle and practice the policy actually departed from the logic of conditionality. There was little aid to be cut off (negative) or allocated to areas where change was desired (positive). There was little or no dialogue with the authorities that held out promise of aid as a reward for changing behaviour. Rather, it was a strategy that articulated preconditions in the imperative form of "shall", "will" and "must". The principles invoked made no concessions to Islam or to Afghan culture (the words do not appear in the seven principles at all). Rather, the Framework cited rights and principles codified by an assembly of states that did not recognise the Taliban, but its rival, and subsequently imposed a one-side embargo against it.

The tactic was based squarely on pressure rather than concession. Given the worldview and social origins of Taliban, a confrontation was inevitable. The key question here is to what extent it worked, and if this "most difficult case" has lessons for dealing with current Afghan partners.

Concerned to protect their projects in Afghanistan, the aid organisations tended to argue that pure pressure tactics were counterproductive. More could be gained, they found, by combining principled goals with circumspection, patience, flexibility and pragmatism in choice of means. An often-cited case was the WFP's Kabul bakery in 2000.[59] A conflict between the Taliban and the agency over women working for the bakery prompted the Taliban to issue an edict prohibiting Afghan women from working for foreign aid agencies altogether. The WFP then threatened to close the

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- engage all Afghan parties through dialogue and advocacy to respect human rights and international humanitarian law
- increase the capacity of the Afghan people to determine their own priorities
- continue to address humanitarian needs while planing development seeds
- reinforce its presence inside the country, especially in Kabul.

Strategic Framework for Afghanistan. Towards a Principled Approach to Peace and Reconstruction. 15 September 1998. www.pcpafg.org/assist…strategy/ sfa/strategic%20framework.html, para 14.

[57] Ibid., para 15.

[58] The relevant principle (no. 5) reads: "Institution and capacity-building activities must advance human rights and will not seek to provide support to any presumptive state authority which does not fully subscribe to the principles contained in the founding instruments of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and International Humanitarian Law." Ibid.

[59] Matthew Fielden and Sippa Azerbaijani-Moghadadam, *Female Employment in Afghanistan: A Study of Decree # 8*. Islamabad: Inter-Agency Task Force Study on the Decree and its Implications, 2000.

shop, which supplied a sizeable number of women in the city with daily bread. After a stand-off, a compromise was reached whereby the women would be employed by a Taliban ministry, which in turn would second them to the WFP. Similar examples are cited in the education sector. While the top leadership formally denied secular education to girls, Taliban leaders in some areas declared that girls could attend school if the aid agencies would provide separate facilities. According to a UNICEF estimate in early 2001, some two thousand girls were going to school in the Taliban heartland of Kandahar.[60]

Anecdotal evidence of this kind led significant parts of the foreign NGO community that worked inside Afghanistan to advocate "constructive engagement", arguing that this was compatible with the overall goals of the seven principles. The view was also gaining ground in the UN aid agencies. Yet important donor states committed to isolating and pressuring the Taliban, above all the US and the UK, could in retrospect also argue that their tactic had worked.

There were clear signs in 2001 that at least some Taliban factions were advocating an accommodation with Western states. Despite doctrinal insistence on the Taliban's own principles, and spectacular demonstrations of defiance such as the demolition of the Buddha statutes, other actions signalled a desire to co-operate with the UN and its leading members. Most significantly, the UN verified early in the year that the regime had enforced a total ban on poppy cultivation in areas under its control (see chapter 7). The action followed repeated UN Security Council resolutions demanding an end to drug production and trade. About the same time, the regime sent a delegation to visit the US and requested invitations to meet with the governments of some European countries as well. In Islamabad, the changes were noted in the important donor group, the ASG, which was exploring the possibilities of a positive response when the events of September 11 occurred.

The record is thus inconclusive. A study completed in 1999 - before the bakery compromise and the poppy ban - concluded that nothing had worked.

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[60] CMI evaluation (2001), op.cit.

Two years later, a combination of pressure and accommodation appeared to have produced some results. The main weaknesses of the SF/PCP strategy was that it was given little time to work, changes in behaviour were not rewarded (the ban on poppy cultivation did not result in funding for alternative agriculture, which evidently had been expected), and the command approach was not balanced by efforts to promote standards by developing institutions and capacity in the logic of positive conditionality. The SF/PCP appeared as a tool to impose standards unconditionally and assertively. Partly as a result, divisions appeared in the aid community that further weakened the effectiveness of the common approach.

Media strategies to promote standards

Strategies to promote standards need not focus only on the authorities, but equally on civil society. A successful initiative in this regard in the 1990s was the BBC's imaginative use of radio programmes. In Afghanistan access to reliable information is often a problem, illiteracy is almost the norm, and women's access is often limited by tradition. But the BBC's half-soap, half-education programme *New Home New Life* is listened to by almost half the population. Produced by local Afghan staff, it has demonstrated success in affecting people's actions (see box 5.2).

Box 5.2. *New Home New Life*

Fully 81% of Afghans in a 1998 survey either owned or had access to a radio. To most, BBC broadcasts in Dari or Pashtu are the most reliable source of information. This is largely the result of three decades in which national radio has been used to present the propaganda of shifting regimes, but also the ability of the BBC to appear more balanced than other foreign channels.

The radio soap opera *New Home New Life* has been broadcast by the BBC Afghan Education Project since 1994 in both Dari and Pashtu. The series uses drama to convey messages on social and economic recovery, covering themes from health and education to conflict resolution and gender equity. Scripts are based on ideas and data collected by project researchers who travel throughout the country, and are developed in close consultation with professionals in the substantive areas selected. In terms of listeners' preference, *New Home New Life* is at 60%, second only to News at 65%.

A 1997 evaluation of mine awareness projects found the BBC programme to be widely popular. The regular listener audience was 47% of the sample population. The study further found that both direct training and radio listening had a significant impact on behavior, but the impact was much greater among those who received mine awareness information through both channels. The conclusion has wider application: reinforcing messages through popular programmes in widely accessible media is relevant for promoting human rights and standards for governance as well.

Sources: Andrew Skuse, *Radio, Politics and Trust in Afghanistan: A Social History of Broadcasting*, unpublished manuscript, Social Development Department, UK Department of International Development; Neil Andersson, Charles Whitaker and Aparna Swaminathan, *Afghanistan: The 1997 National Mine Awareness Evaluation*, November 1998, CIET International

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Gender issues

The rights of women were a major element in the SF/PCP approach. Of the three specific UN sources of human rights mentioned by the seven principles on which the approach is founded, two concern women and children (CEDAW and the CRC) - the third is the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The attention paid to women in the overall spectrum of human rights would seem disproportionate were it not for the flagrant violations of the Taliban regime in this area.

The role of women in Afghan society has been a sensitive issue for at least three decades. Two extreme policies have been adopted. The communist regime went far in the direction of asserting the rights of women and bringing them into the public realm. Women were encouraged to get an education, take employment outside the home, become professionals, and join Party organisations - even the army. Afghanistan under the Communist Party signed the UN convention on the rights of women (CEDAW), which the UN later held up to the Taliban. The extreme "open room" policy of the communists contrasted with the "closed room" for women imposed by the Taliban. While women in Taliban controlled areas were not exposed to female-specific physical violence such as rape, they were systematically excluded from the public realm and had limited access to basic services. Thus they were the victims of massive discrimination. [61]

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[61] UN Gender Mission. *Report of the UN Inter-agency Gender Mission to Afghanistan*. New York: Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. 1997.

With both the Taliban and the communists defeated, the policy extremes they espoused may be equally discredited. The present phase may therefore present opportunities to promote reforms along a middle way when it comes to women's rights in society.

5.3. National reconciliation

International human rights organisations have urged that those guilty of war crimes and other massive human rights violations must be held accountable.[62] The Bonn agreement endorses the principle of "national reconciliation" and commits the Interim Authority to establish an independent Human Rights Commission to monitor and investigate human rights violations with the assistance of the United Nations. In legal terms, this opens the door for the investigation of past abuses.[63]

Throughout Afghanistan's past 23 years of conflict, injustice, violence and power abuse has been the practice of all parties. Most recently, the repressive practices of the Taliban made them widely unpopular, also amongst their own supposedly core supporters in traditional Sunni religious networks within the Pashtun areas. Initially, however, the movement was welcomed by many Afghans, in large part because the mujahedin government that it replaced had an established record of massive human rights violations, including massacres of civilians, support to international terrorism, as well as large-scale crime and corruption.[64] The communists during their reign (1978-1992) were also guilty of gross human rights violations.

With violations widely committed by all parties, holding those responsible accountable will be difficult. The political transition arrangement is built on the co-optation of several leaders who themselves carry considerable guilt, and the success of the transition may hinge on the ability to keep these individuals aboard. A second issue concerns equity in the justice process if the Americans are arresting and trying Taliban members (although not for human rights violations committed against Afghans), while Northern Alliance leaders are not held accountable. Thirdly, an eventual trial process would need to consider the weaknesses of the Afghan legal system.

As for reconciliation, whatever processes will eventually be decided upon should reflect Afghan notions of right and wrong. The Afghans can in this respect draw on a repertoire of relevant cultural traditions, including a strong sense of justice, but also a historic tradition of broad consultation and a pragmatic attitude to settling old conflicts and moving on.

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[62] 'Interview with head of Amnesty International, Irne Khan', IRIN, 12 December 2001.

[63] Paragraph III.C.6 states: "The Interim Administration shall, with the assistance of the United Nations, establish an independent Human Rights Commission, whose responsibilities will include human rights monitoring, investigation of violations of human rights, and development of domestic human rights institutions. The Interim Administration may, with the assistance of the United Nations, also establish any other commissions to review matters not covered in this agreement."

[64] Arne Strand, Kristian Berg Harpviken and Abdul Wasay Najimi, *Afghanistan: Current Humanitarian Challenges*, CMI Report R 2001:5, Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute.

5.4. Policy implications

Move towards positive conditionality and accept diversity of approach

Unlike in the SF/PCP period, the international aid community is considering channelling very large amounts of money to Afghanistan's recovery. Further, there is a commitment to engage in a way that to makes it possible to balance demands for standards with positive incentives to develop Afghan institutions and forces that in the longer run can promote the desired norms. The SF/PCP experience suggests that this may be more productive than simply announcing standards and threatening sanctions. Aid agencies have come to similar conclusions in other post-conflict cases (see Part II of this report).

The standards articulated in connection with the transitional government (democracy, Islam, social justice, human rights) are more general and diverse than those elaborated by the SF/PCP. As such, they hardly constitute a clear basis for common action in the aid community. Even the SF/PCP, which had more precise principles and an internationally condemned adversary, found it difficult to make all aid actors "speak with one voice on issues of principle", as the SF basic document required. Thus, while there is a case for linking political and human rights conditionality to reconstruction aid, uncertainty about which strategy will work best in Afghanistan - and has worked best in the past - is an argument for a diversity of approaches in the aid community.

With the transitional government, opportunities may open to affirm human rights standards in certain areas. Afghan and aid actors may find it possible to
- move ahead on gender issues in line with UN/CEDAW principles
- make innovative use of the media to promote awareness of human rights and standards of governance in the population at large.

With respect to transitional justice, political considerations suggest proceeding with caution. As for eventual reconciliation processes, to be effective and credible they must reflect Afghan traditions.

6. From relief to reconstruction

6.1. Status

The existing international structures for providing assistance to Afghanistan are well established - which is both a plus and a minus. The international aid community collectively commands considerable country-specific knowledge and expertise that is highly relevant also to the reconstruction phase. Yet as providers of mainly humanitarian assistance, the organisations are steeped in a relief mode of assistance. Over the past two decades, institutional culture and vested interests have developed around an aid model that is essentially external to the recipient state: the aid organisations have mostly operated from neighbouring Pakistan, and strategies have been formulated by donors and implementing agencies, with little or no consultation with Afghan authorities and civil society. To make its expertise relevant to the reconstruction phase, this aid community must reorient itself to work more closely with development actors and Afghan authorities and civil society.

As a high-visibility conflict with prospects of massive funding in the near future, the Afghan situation is attracting a large number of aid actors. Strong coordination mechanisms are required to prevent waste and duplication, and to ensure that the presently weak Afghan central authorities are not completely overwhelmed by having to deal with a succession of foreign aid representatives. The prospect of large funding also raises the concern that aid, if unwisely implemented, can undermine the peace-building process.

The present coordination mechanisms in the international aid community were developed to deliver effective and "principled" humanitarian assistance in the late 1990s and are not obviously relevant to the present phase. The Islamabad-based Strategic Framework initiative is being overtaken by a series of aid-defining events organised by donors and agencies elsewhere (in Washington, Brussels, Tokyo and Islamabad).

On the Afghan side, there is limited administrative and absorptive capacity. This calls for innovative approaches to capacity and institution building, accommodating a recognised role for the new Afghan authority, while ensuring coherence among external initiatives. The re-establishment of central coordinating institutions on the Afghan side is important, and is already being discussed in the aid community.[65]

A brief review of past practices will help towards understanding the organisational challenges facing the international aid community as it moves from relief to reconstruction.

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[65] See discussion at the UNDP/World Bank Islamabad meeting in November 2001. The World Bank "Approach Paper" includes the idea of a central Reconstruction Agency in Kabul.

6.2. The relief mode of past aid

Preliminary rehabilitation efforts in the early 1990s were stopped by renewed warfare. By mid-decade the Taliban was disarming the areas they controlled and fighting was reduced in large parts of the country, permitting trade and other economic activities to increase.[66] But from 1998 onwards the country experienced several devastating earthquakes and large areas were hit by a prolonged drought.

Thus, throughout the entire decade aid agencies focused primarily on shorter-term relief projects to aid victims of war and natural disaster. Neglect of institution- and capacity-building was reinforced by a rights-based approach, and by restrictions on development activities and engagement with the authorities required by the Strategic Framework introduced in 1998. In the latter part of the 1990s, a large part of the assistance in fact was surplus wheat (around 40 % in 2000).[67]

Planning tools in the international aid community such as the Consolidated Inter-agency Appeal (CAP) had a one-year funding horizon. Many donors operated with even shorter project cycles for their emergency relief operations. This discouraged the NGOs from identifying the longer-term needs of the Afghan population and from strengthening their own capacity to handle more complex and development-oriented programmes. Capacity-building generally received low priority. Most Afghan NGOs ended up as contractors for short-term emergency projects, often cutting corners in project implementation to sustain the organisation until the next contract came through.

While quantitatively minuscule in the overall aid flow, some assistance projects went beyond the relief mode.[68] These were mostly undertaken by UN agencies and the larger NGOs with a funding base that allowed them to take on such activities (see box 6.1).

In their rehabilitation/development activities these agencies usually employ Afghan ex-government officials or other local professionals, and many Afghan NGOs are run by a generation of younger Afghans with technical education and subsequent training by aid organisations.[69] Many of the Afghan NGOs run good projects on the ground, but lag behind the international ones when it comes to writing good proposals in English. The prevailing notion among relief-oriented agencies is that there are few local institutions to work through and that foreign staff are necessary to manage the projects.[70]

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[66] The World Bank Report *Brief Overview of Afghanistan's Economy* of 5 October 2001 observes that "[t]here was a modest economic recovery in the mid-1990s in areas that became largely free of conflict."

[67] See Pledges/Contribution for Assistance to Afghanistan in 2001, in OCHA/UNCO (2000). *Afghanistan 2001 Appeal*. Geneva/Islamabad, OCHA/UNCO.

[68] These mostly fell in the "sustainable livelihood" category in the CAP. In 2000, such projects constituted only 6 % of the total funding channelled through the CAP, see summary of 2000 Appeal for Afghanistan in OCHA/UNCO (2000). *Afghanistan 2001 Appeal*. Geneva/Islamabad, OCHA/UNCO.

[69] Donor NGOs and agencies such as Christian Aid (UK), Novib (the Netherlands) and Norwegian Church Aid have consistently have engaged in organisational and human development schemes for Afghan NGOs.

[70] A typical feature of the international emergency-oriented aid agencies is a European male in his mid-twenties, directing senior Afghan staff with higher degrees and several years of aid experience. Even

Box 6.1: Rehabilitation and development oriented activities

In 1997, UNDP introduced the Poverty Eradication and Community Empowerment (P.E.A.C.E.) initiative, which has as its overall objective: "to contribute to the restoration of peace in Afghanistan through poverty alleviation, good governance building, and community empowerment in both rural and urban areas." The programme consists of five main components:
- Comprehensive Disabled Afghans Programme (CDAP – implemented by various NGOs)
- Livestock Development for Food Security (implemented by FAO)
- Strengthening Community Self-help Capacities in Rural Afghanistan (implemented by UNOPS)
- Rebuilding Communities in Urban Afghanistan (implemented by UNHCS-Habitat)
- Food Security through Sustainable Crop Production (implemented by FAO)
The programme has relied heavily on community mobilisation, particularly through *shura* (also for women), which a recent evaluation finds has encouraged new coping mechanisms and enhanced resilience.

Other UN organisations have also developed programmes pointing beyond a narrow relief mode:
- UNHCR has encouraged return and reintegration through small-scale reconstruction aid
- WFP has encouraged Food for Assets Creation (FoodAC), where food is distributed to people working on basic reconstruction projects, with a minor share being distributed to vulnerable members of the community, priorities being set by a local community body
- The UNOCHA Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA) has interpreted its mandate to include preparation of the ground for basic reconstruction and development projects.

Amongst the larger NGOs, some have specialised in certain sectors and become implementing partners for UN agencies or for major donors, such as the EU:
- The Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR) has specialised in water supply and sanitation
- The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) has a large education engagement
- Save the Children (US) has a large education engagement

Several NGOs (Afghan and international) have worked in community development:
- The Afghan Development Association (ADA),
- The Afghan Rehabilitation and Environmental Agency (AREA)
- Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA)
- Coordination of Afghan Relief (CoAR)
- CARE International
- Ockenden International
- Mission d'Aide de Development des Economics Rurales en Afghanistan (MADERA)

Sources: The UN Assistance Afghanistan site: www.pcpafg.org/; Bernt Bernander, Alexander Costy and Farhana Faruqi (2000), *A Thematic Evaluation of the UNDP P.E.A.C.E. Initiative in Afghanistan*, Stockholm: Stockholm Group for Development Studies.

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senior aid workers may promote their own agencies over local institutions and downplay the latters' usefulness in planning and implementing projects. The advantage of the foreign aid community is their ability to generate projects acceptable to donors, and identify Afghans with the required technical skills. While important in its own right, this has inhibited a development orientation and discouraged optimal utilisation of Afghan resources

Some organisations have brought a peace-building perspective into their activities. This was also part of the rationale behind UNDP's P.E.A.C.E. initiative. An evaluation of this programme in 1999 found that development *shura* introduced at the district level had helped resolve disputes and deflect recruitment to the Taliban army, and recommended that the agency integrate "peace-building strategies (...) such as conflict analysis, conflict-sensitive targeting and active risk reduction" into its development strategies more generally.[71] A few Afghan NGOs have worked along these lines, such as the Afghan Development Association (ADA). Working in zones with potential conflict between Pashtun and Hazara populations, ADA has established joint project management and indirectly used its projects to build relations of trust. Another Afghan NGO, Co-operation for Peace and Unity (CPAU), established in 1996, has sought to integrate a peace perspective with aid activities more generally by offering training courses in peaceful conflict resolution for agency staff as well as community representatives.

6.3. Aid coordination structures

Before 1997, there were few structures of coordination in the intergovernmental aid community, and the NGOs were divided by religion, nationality and geographical location.[72] The introduction of the UN Strategic Framework (SF) and Principled Common Programming (PCP) established a superstructure for Afghan aid coordination working out of Islamabad. Together, they represented a set of principles to guide the joint aid effort, and institutional mechanisms to facilitate coordination.

As discussed in the preceding chapter, the principles linked the provision of most aid to observance of human rights. The institutional centrepiece was a new Afghan Programming Board (APB), consisting of UN agencies, NGO coordinating bodies and the major donor countries. The APB, it soon became evident, was a consensus-oriented forum for sharing information rather than an authoritative body for decision-making, but it expanding international aid presence inside Afghanistan by establishing Regional Coordination Boards in seven designated regions. The boards consisted of both UN agencies and NGOs, and were serviced by UN Regional Coordinators that reported to the UN Coordinator's Office as well as to UN/OCHA. The previous year (1997), humanitarian coordination among the UN agencies had been streamlined with the appointment of a designated office for this purpose, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator based in Islamabad. The entire structure operated alongside and in close consultation with the Afghan Support Group (ASG) of donors, which had been formalised after a Dutch initiative in early 1997.[73]

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[71] For details see Bernt Bernander, Alexander Costy and Farhana Faruqi (2000), *A Thematic Evaluation of the UNDP P.E.A.C.E. Initiative in Afghanistan*, Stockholm: Stockholm Group for Development Studies.

[72] There were five NGO coordinating bodies, of which three were national and based in Peshawar, and two regional with one based in Kandahar/Quetta and one in Herat. Although membership was overlapping, one body had members from Islamic countries, one had only Afghan NGO members, while another included all types of NGO. There was no formalised cooperation between them, but rather competition for funding and joint participation in meetings and workshops.

[73] The Ashkabad conference that took place in January 1997 formalised these arrangements. A driving force in much of the preparation was the Dutch Minister, Jan Pronk.

The idea of establishing a trust fund to give the coordination structure more teeth was introduced as well. While the World Bank at present is a strong advocate of a trust fund for reconstruction,[74] it appears that the earlier idea was part of the initial Strategic Framework concept as developed in UN/New York. However, despite their agreement on the major principles that would guide the joint aid effort, major donors and NGOs alike feared that a trust fund would undermine their freedom to make decisions to an unacceptable degree. Since the Strategic Framework was a UN initiative, it was assumed that UN agencies would use it to control project prioritisation and, some NGOs feared, secure funds for themselves.

By 2001, evaluation reports concluded that while the SF/PCP process had created greater interaction among the humanitarian actors, there had been little joint planning and prioritisation of tasks, and hardly any joint needs assessments or capacity development.[75] Coordination efforts were further hampered by NGO coordinating bodies being at the brink of collapse due to sharply decreased funding. The UN Regional Coordinators based inside Afghanistan were operating on a shoestring budget.[76]

While the Afghan Support Group (ASG) of major donors was not formally a part of the UN-centred coordination structure, it emerged as the more influential element. The biannual ASG meetings, often attended by senior officials, served as a forum for serious policy discussions, and the revolving leadership of three country missions in Islamabad (known as the *troika*) maintained the momentum on a daily basis. The donor-based ASG thus overshadowed the broader APB structure where UN agencies and NGOs were also present.

The fall of the Taliban and international support for a successor government have altered the central premises of the previous coordination structures:

- The establishment of an Afghan national government, as provided for in the Bonn Agreement, means that there must be one more seat at the table. While the UN and the international financial institutions will clearly have an important role in planning and coordinating aid, there is now a formal obligation and a strong political rationale for including Afghan authorities and civil society.

- Previous coordination mechanisms were emergency oriented and had a one-year timeframe, as exemplified in the Consolidated Appeal Process administered by OCHA. Plans for rehabilitation and reconstruction are likely to have a multi-year framework, with UNDP, the World Bank and the Asia Development Bank already taking a lead role.

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[74] "Approach Paper" presented at the Islamabad meeting, 27-29 November 2001.

[75] UN/OCHA (1998). *Making a Reality of Principled Common Programming*. Islamabad, UN OCHA. The document envisages a solid investment in needs assessment, strong Afghan involvement at all levels and extensive capacity-building as crucial components to further the PCP process. That did not materialise, as two evaluations concluded. CMI (2001) *Assessing Needs and Vulnerability in Afghanistan*. A report commissioned by OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP. Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute, August 2001, and Mark Duffield, Patricia Gossman and Nicolas Leader, *Review of the Strategic Framework for Afghanistan*, Final draft, Islamabad: Strategic Monitoring Unit, 2001.

[76] The regional coordinator based in Mazar-e-Sharif reported in March 2001 that she did not have a budget to hire a translator and depended on other agencies to provide transport if going outside of the city centre. See CMI (2001), op.cit.

- Needs assessments were previously undertaken by individual aid agencies in accordance with their mandate and expected funding ability. A national framework for rehabilitation and reconstruction would require a more coherent and comprehensive approach to needs assessment.

Simultaneously, groups and institutions that want to partake in the reconstruction of Afghanistan have proliferated and the competition to stake a claim for either specific roles or coordination has intensified. An initial list of the main intergovernmental actors is suggestive (see box 6.2.) The multiplicity of actors calls for careful coordination on both the international and the Afghan sides.

Box 6.2. Main intergovernmental actors in reconstruction and peace-building in Afghanistan

- The Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG)
- The UN Coordinator for Rehabilitation and Development
- The UN Humanitarian Coordinator
- The World Bank/UNDP/ADB collaborative arrangement for reconstruction and development
- The Afghan Support Group (ASG)
- The 6+2 group (neighbouring states + Russia and USA)[77]
- Group of 21 states in the UN that take a particular interest in Afghanistan. Norway was recently included. The Organisation of the Islamic Conference is an observer.
- Ministerial-level meetings for reconstruction of concerned states (international steering committee of the US, Japan, Saudi Arabia and the EU)
- The UN Development Group (most UN humanitarian and development agencies)

6.4. Policy implications

Adjust coordination structures

A measure of authoritative coordination is clearly necessary to streamline the aid scene, although it difficult at the present time to make detailed suggestions. The limitations of the Strategic Framework concept, including the role of Afghan Planning Board (APB) and the Regional Coordinating Officers (RCOs), are generally recognised, suggesting that these now be modified. The UN regional structures inside Afghanistan, for instance, should probably be altered so as not to legitimise regional divisions based on military groups as discussed above (see chapter 2). With a central government taking form in Kabul, international coordination structures should seek to complement a national structure of administration (on the central, provincial and district level) rather than the regional divisions.

With new aid actors on the Afghan scene - especially the co-chaired ministerial meetings and the UNDP/World Bank/ADB collaborative arrangement - the Afghan Support Group might find it useful to redefine its role. The option implied by its name is to form a group of states supporting the new national authorities of Afghanistan in the spirit of the "like-minded" tradition. This includes the task of assisting the Afghan government in dealing with powerful international aid agencies and donors.

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[77] Neighbouring states include China, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Collectively the ASG possesses much country-specific knowledge and experience that is invaluable for such a role.

Effective coordination of external assistance can be a powerful tool of policy that leaves the recipient government with little room to question conditions. The weakness of the Afghan central authorities makes the potential imbalance especially obvious. It seems appropriate to balance the need for coordination with a measure of diversity that gives the Afghan government some autonomy vis-à-vis the international aid community. The consideration is particularly relevant to the current discussion of establishing a Trust Fund for reconstruction, possibly managed by the World Bank.

Strengthen Afghan counterparts for coordination

On the Afghan side, the only aid coordination during recent years has been participation in Pakistan- or Kandahar-based frameworks of NGOs. Creating Afghan counterparts to international coordination structures could be based on the old Ministry of Planning or be established as a special coordination unit directly under the Chairman of the Interim Administration. Since all Afghan political and civil groups will want a share in the massive aid now on the horizon, it might be useful to establish a broader forum, for instance an Afghan Reconstruction Council where prominent persons from all provinces are brought in to advise on policy priorities and geographic allocations. A similar arrangement has been used with good results elsewhere.[78]

Utilise but coordinate the NGO sector

At present, foreign and Afghan NGOs provide a considerable part of the Afghan population with basic services in health, education, demining, sanitation and drinking water. To avoid disruption of services to a vulnerable people, mechanisms must be found to ensure that these projects continue in a transition phase and be integrated with plans for longer-term reconstruction. Eventually, these services might either be transferred to the Afghan government or continue to be operated by civil society within a framework of public regulation.

Emphasise a developmental orientation

Relief or transitional activities are likely to continue (e.g. providing seeds and organising water supply). With major rehabilitation and reconstruction being planned, it is particularly important that relief agencies adopt a development orientation by including Afghans in project planning and management. This applies to the local as well as the national level. While not discounting problems of local capacity and, in some areas, legitimacy of leadership, efforts by the humanitarians in the past have shown that partnership is possible. An equally important stumbling block has been the relief orientation of the humanitarians.

Develop a national centre for capacity building

The idea of an Afghan training institute for NGO staff repeatedly surfaced in the 1990s. The time now seems opportune to revive the initiative and make it a National Institute for Development Administration to include both government employees and

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[78] A similar coordination arrangement was established for the reconstruction process in Lebanon.

others.[79] The institute could retool existing civil servants and train new ones, including women. Such an institute would need to be located in Afghanistan and possibly linked to the existing university structure, but could work closely with foreign institutions, e.g. in supportive twinning arrangements.

Integrate peace strategies with reconstruction

As noted, peace promotion activities, including confidence-building measures and conflict resolution strategies, were pursued by Afghan and foreign aid agencies on a small scale in the 1990s. Experiences on the local level have been positive, including strategies that encourage and reward people for working together on rehabilitation projects. There should now be opportunities to integrate peace promotion strategies more consistently in reconstruction and development programmes.

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[79] This was also one of the recommendations from a 1999 evaluation of NGO coordinating bodies. See Arne Strand, A.W. Najimi and Nicola Lander (1999), *NGO Coordination in Afghanistan: An Evaluation Report*. Peshawar, ACBAR, ANCB and ICC.

7. Urgent rehabilitation issues

7.1. Background

With signals from donors that significant funding would be pledged for recovery and reconstruction in Afghanistan, aid agencies started already in November-December 2001 to identify priorities and draft schedules of proposed activities. The typical format was a comprehensive list of tasks grouped by sector and a time schedule (short, medium and longer-run). Given Afghanistan's desperate poverty and widespread destruction from war and natural disasters, any list of this kind would be relevant.[80]

This chapter will review a few sectoral issues on which aid agencies might usefully focus in the early recovery period. We have selected only three; there are probably other equally deserving areas. Demining and repatriation of refugees were selected because they have well-established programmes and their importance in the transition is self-evident. Drug control is of particular interest because of its links to larger political and economic issues in the transition.

7.2. Drug control

Cultivation of poppy, and processing and smuggling the product, has long constituted a major income for Afghan farmers, traders, warlords and ruling groups. Requiring limited amounts of water, opium is suitable for cultivation in most parts of Afghanistan. Production expanded throughout the 1990s, making poppy cultivation a source of income for an increasing number of families. Afghans do not receive the bulk of the income derived from this activity, which accrues to regional and international drug cartels. An estimate from 1999 indicates that the Taliban only earned 45 million US dollars from drug production that year, Afghan producers even less.[81]

Attempts to curb production in the 1990s yielded little result. Rewarding those who stopped cultivation proved largely counterproductive, as new farmers started producing to benefit from opening in the market. Similarly, attempts to encourage commanders and regional governors to curb production resulted only in some symbolic gestures. Farmers and commanders alike argued that they needed to be compensated for their loss of income in order to finance the cultivation of alternative crops with comparable income potential, or find new jobs.

As drug production expanded in the 1990s, the concern of humanitarian actors led to a "poppy clause" in agreements between agencies and local communities.[82] This was meant to ensure that assistance was not used to increase production, and equally as encouragement to communities that wished to refrain from production for religious

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[80] An early example was a *Draft Working Paper for a Preliminary Strategy on Recovery for Afghanistan,* prepared by the UN Development Group, 20 November 2001.
[81] See Barnett R. Rubin (2000), The Political Economy of War and Peace in Afghanistan, in *World Development*, Vol. 28, No. 10, pp. 1795-1796.
[82] The Norwegian Government made this a precondition for assistance provided through the Norwegian Church Aid.

reasons.[83] While the overall impact was negligible, not the least due to severe limitations in funds for reconstruction projects, there were several examples where a negotiated "poppy clause" gave a positive result.[84]

The UN International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) undertook annual surveys of poppy production, produced several strategic studies and engaged in negotiation with the respective authorities.[85] The aim was to encourage them to refrain from production and to use force to destroy poppy fields and heroin factories. Proposals were developed for projects to be implemented if and when the production came to an end. Their success was negligible.

When drugs came up as one of three major issues in the sanctions imposed on the Taliban by the UN Security Council in late 1999, UNDCP gained new leverage in negotiations with the regime. In July 2000, an edict banning the cultivation of poppy for religious reasons was issued by Taliban leader Mullah Omar. The edict was enforced with great effectiveness by the Taliban. By contrast, the international follow-up was indecisive. UNDCP wanted to launch projects on alternative production, but donors were reluctant. For many Afghan farmers, the poppy ban came on top of two years of drought, and was a severe economic blow. The failure of the UN to assist seemed to prove that the international community was unwilling to abide by its promises for projects in drug-free communities. This also undermined confidence in international assistance more generally. As soon as the Taliban regime fell, there were reports of new poppy planting.[86]

The experience with the Taliban ban indicates that the best way towards eradication is through a government that is willing to enforce a ban. A weak Interim Authority may find it difficult to challenge a significant part of the population as well as powerful commanders by prohibiting a key source of income. It may also lack the capacity to enforce a ban, and the international force would not risk an involvement in this area.

The experiences from rewarding farmers who cease cultivation are not very positive, yet these programmes have also suffered from a shortfall in funds and undermined confidence. Keeping aid back from poppy-producing communities may have yielded slightly better results, but the disadvantage is that it closes off opportunities for establishing a dialogue on the issue. The major obstacle lies in international drug cartels in the area. These are often closely integrated with the warlords and regional military groups inside Afghanistan. The latter have a major interest in promoting production. The links illustrates both the complexity and the importance of the issue.

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[83] The UNDCP had a large information campaign to emphasise this point. The problem was that the campaign seemed to be directed towards donors rather than the Afghan farmers; many of the sign boards erected inside Afghanistan had Koranic quotations in English.

[84] A donor NGO such as the Norwegian Church Aid was consistent in discussing drug eradication with local communities and their Afghan NGO counterparts. There are examples of Ockenden International convincing communities to abandon poppy cultivation when they had the prospects of obtaining a community development programme for that area. Attempting to eradicate drug production was not without risk. For instance, the French NGO MADERA faced problems after documenting heroin production and smuggling in Eastern Afghanistan. Their efforts obviously were not welcomed by Governor Haji Qadir or influential drug smugglers in Pakistan.

[85] For more on UNDCP's mandate and activities, see: www.pcpafg.org/Organizations/UNDCP/.

[86] 'Afghanistan: War heightens risk of renewed poppy cultivation', *Integrated Regional Information Network*, UNOCHA, 16 November 2001.

Drug production is an integral part of the war economy, which nurtures warlords and regional military groups that often have little popular support, and whose power may threaten the consolidation of a national authority. Curbing cultivation, production and trade of the drug is therefore essential to peace-building in a broad sense.

Policy implications

Response: Following the Taliban's enforced ban on poppy cultivation in areas under their control, most of the country has not been producing poppy for the past year. This suggests that a rapid and comprehensive response is warranted, combining moderate enforcement with a commitment to the reconstruction of agricultural infrastructure and the production of alternative crops and, further, massive job generation schemes in rural areas.

Long term perspective: The production of drugs is an integrated part of an elaborate economy of war, which nurtures illegitimate leaders and poses a potential threat to stability. Henceforth, successfully addressing the issue may be essential, and while the strategies may be open for discussion as well as continuous revision, a long-term commitment is of the essence.

International perspective: The main profit of the drug trade goes to transnational organisations rather than to the Afghan farmer or commander. This implies that a successful strategy to counter the trade will need to be regional, including efforts to curb the smuggling of drugs and the trade in chemicals for heroin processing.

7.3. Humanitarian mine action[87]

The Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA) is often considered the best in the world.[88] Dating back to 1989, the programme has developed new operational procedures and techniques. A major strength of the programme has been a strong survey capacity, which has served as the foundation for a nation-wide database.[89] Existing surveys have generated rough measures of the impact of landmines, informing priorities and resource allocation within the programme. The Afghan programme also pioneered a nationwide post-clearance survey in 1998, applying a crude economic model. The programme is presently implementing a nation-wide general impact survey, which will further strengthen the programme's ability to concentrate resources in areas where impact is likely to be highest.[90]

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[87] Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) is a concept covering the variety of activities aimed at alleviating the impact of landmines and unexploded ordnance, including survey and marking; mine awareness; demining; victim assistance; and advocacy.

[88] A recent evaluation states: "A combination of sound strategic and operations planning, good management, good fortune, and hard work on the part of MAPA organizations has attracted consistent financial assistance and support from the donor community. This has contributed to the development of what is internationally recognized as the most successful UN coordinated programme in the world." Khan Mohammad, Ted Paterson, Qadeem Tariz & Bill van Ree, *Report on the Review of UNOCHA's Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan*, Islamabad: Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Department of International Development (DFID) & Government of Japan, March 2001, p. 1.

[89] Kristian Berg Harpviken, Ananda S. Millard, Kjell E. Kjellmann and Arne Strand, *Sida's Contributions to Humanitarian Mine Action*, Evaluation Report, Swedish International Development Authority (Sida), 5 March 2001, chapter 3.

[90] The General Impact Survey is to be implemented in collaboration with the Survey Action Centre (SAC), a consortium of mine action NGOs, and will apply a modified version of their standard format.

MAPA is run by UNOCHA and implemented by a total of fifteen organisations. Eight Afghan NGOs constitute the larger share of the implementing capacity.[91] The low expatriate ratio in the programme is another significant quality – currently less than 10 out of a total staff of 5000 are expatriates. MAPA has been able to continue its work throughout the 1990s despite the problems associated with the war. The social and economic impact of the programme has been considerable. A recent evaluation, applying a cost-benefit model, estimated that in 1999, each dollar invested in the programme had resulted in 4,6 dollars on average in return.[92] MAPA estimates that with a full engagement of its existing resources, Afghanistan's high priority minefields would be cleared in seven years.[93]

MAPA provides a solid foundation for continued mine action in Afghanistan. One immediate challenge is to supplement the overview of landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) in the country. Some mine-affected areas have not been accessible due to fighting, and there is also a need to assess the impact of the recent military campaign, particularly in terms of UXO. In the expectation of large-scale reconstruction plans, as well as new funding opportunities, expansion of the programme is advisable. In this case, building on existing capacities is preferable to bringing in new organisations.[94] In terms of reorienting the programme, a major challenge is to combine the expansion with the need for building up a new type of demining capacity that can tackle minor tasks in a more flexible manner, particularly clearing small-scale landmines and UXO. Such a capacity, preferably attached to an existing institution at local or district levels, will be necessary in the longer term.[95]

The future of the mine action programme in relation to the new government should be considered as well. As a well-established programme with a large Afghan component, MAPA may be a first candidate for transfer to the new government. Such a move would boost the credibility of the transitional Afghan authorities, and the uncertainties regarding the management transfer are unlikely to impact negatively on the programme.

Policy implications

Survey new areas: There is an immediate need for surveying areas that have been inaccessible, or that have been affected by the recent military campaign, in order to assess capacity needs. This emergency survey should be kept simple, and be followed by full-scale impact surveys.

Expand the programme: A moderate expansion of the Afghan mine action programme seems appropriate. Given the high levels of quality achieved so far, in terms both of

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[91] Some of the Afghan organisations have also taken on international contracts in mine action, both in clearance and survey, which bears evidence of their standard. UNOCHA may be criticized for its unwillingness to loosen administrative and financial control over the organizations as they have matured.
[92] Khan Mohammad, Ted Paterson, Qadeem Tariz & Bill van Ree, *Report on the Review of UNOCHA's Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan*, Islamabad: Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Department of International Development (DFID) & Government of Japan, March 2001.
[93] UNOCHA Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan, *Mine Action Thematic Sector: UNDP/WB/ADB Needs Assessment for Afghanistan*, Draft, 16 December 2001, p. 2.
[94] MAPA claims it has the capacity to double its capacity, employing up to 5000 new personnel (*ibid*).
[95] Bill van Ree (1995), 'A Concept for Demining of Low Priority Areas in Afghanistan.' Islamabad: UNOCHA.

technical performance and of socio-economic impact, the expansion should be rooted in existing capacities, rather than bringing in new entities.

Safeguard long-term Afghan capacity: While expanding the programme, there is simultaneously an opportunity to establish a long-term capacity to conduct small-scale demining and UXO demolition at the local level. Given the viability of MAPA and its predominantly Afghan staff component, the programme also stands out as a strong candidate for handing over to the government at an early stage.

7.4. Return of refugees

UNHCR has assisted the repatriation of Afghan refugees since 1990, with especially large operations in 1992-94. By the end of the decade, almost 4 million refugees had returned, mostly from neighbouring Pakistan and Iran.[96] The UNHCR estimated that by the beginning of 2001, 3.5 million refugees still lived in Iran and Pakistan (in addition to about 1 million internally displaced inside Afghanistan).[97] The exodus to Pakistan after 11 September is estimated at 150 000 to 200 000.[98] The new arrivals are either living in refugee settlements of a temporary character, or have simply moved in with relatives. By early January 2001, people were still crossing into Pakistan.

In relation to repatriation, the UNHCR has developed standard guidelines and procedures for screening and registering returnees, as well as for protection. In terms of economic support, the agency has a standard aid package that is handed over at border crossings from both Pakistan and Iran. In an interesting development over the past few years, UNHCR has started focusing on contact between exiles and their home communities, including visits by exiles to assess the feasibility of returning home.

Many more refugees are likely to want to return in the near future. If the peace process holds, significant repatriation may be expected in the spring, both from Iran and Pakistan. In both countries, forced expulsion has been intensifying over the past couple of years. As a result, some Afghans may have to leave even if they know they have little to return to. It is also to be expected that the latest arrivals will be amongst the first to return. As to the larger group of long-time refugees, the picture may be more complex. They chose not to join the repatriation stream of the 1990s, and the standard repatriation package is unlikely to be sufficient encouragement. Contact-facilitation may be more productive. More fundamentally, security considerations have previously been a major obstacle to return; the onset of a severe drought in 1998 forced out large numbers as well and discouraged many from returning. Hence, security and economic conditions at home will be critical factors in determining future interest in repatriation.

Unlike the demining programme, the UNHCR repatriation programme is elastic in that it could easily expand if more funding were provided. Limited funding has been one factor that may have slowed down repatriation in recent years. The agency was

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[96] This section draws on the section dealing with UNHCR in the CMI evaluation of UN needs assessment in Afghanistan (CMI, op.cit. 2001).

[97] http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/afghan?page=facts.

[98] Jeff Crisp and Elca Stigter, *Real Time Evaluation of UNHCR's Response to the Afghan Emergency*, Bulletin No. 2, 6 December 2001, www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/ opendoc.pdf?tbl= RESEARCH&id=3c0f84084&page=research.

forced to suspend several programmes in 1997-98, and by the end of the decade it had only around 5 million US$ for operations (not including central administrative expenses).

Sample surveys conducted by the agency have shown that most refugees return to their areas of origin. During the Taliban period, relatively few of those tracked by the agency appeared to experience security problems upon return, although the minority Hazaras evidently had some difficulties. Similarly, land and property issues that typically complicate repatriation after long-term exile were rarely a source of conflict between returnees and the community members who had remained. This pattern may not necessarily continue in the future. It is possible that the prospect of reintegration difficulties has deterred some people from returning. On the other hand, political settlement at the national level may reduce the conflict potential related to repatriation as well.

Refugees who returned in the late 1990s typically cited lack of schools, health facilities and income generating activities as critical problems. Many found social services to be better in the camps in Pakistan, and employment opportunities more available in Iran. Should rapid large-scale repatriation occur - whether spontaneously, assisted or forced - this could place immense pressure on aid agencies and the new Afghan administration to deliver services. Timely assistance would both reduce the potential for conflict and help revitalise the economy in the return areas.

Policy implications

Expand the programme: UNHCR has a standardised approach, including a repatriation package, which permits rapid expansion. Additionally, UNHCR has established co-operation with more development-oriented actors (including UNDP) for reintegration purposes. The agency has a relatively good track record of working with the Afghan authorities. In the short term, an expansion based on the existing approach is therefore advisable.

Diversify the programme: Future repatriates are likely to encounter more difficulties in social and economic reintegration than previous ones. New approaches, such as contact facilitation, can be used to ease the process.

Monitoring: Given the risks of forced repatriation from neighbouring states, as well as potential reintegration problems, there is a need for continuous monitoring both in exile and among those who have returned.

8. Conclusions Part I

Afghanistan's future is deeply uncertain. The fragility of the peace process must be recognised at the outset. By reviewing past experiences of international involvement in the country, this report has sought to identify approaches to assist peace-building in the future.

Three fundamental strategies appear to be most appropriate at the present time.

8.1 Emphasise national structures and national solutions

1. The viability of a peace-building process depends ultimately on the establishment of a legitimate Afghan state that is responsive to the demands of the population and that is gradually able to resist threats from regional military groups within the country as well as pressure from international actors.

2. The Afghan central state has traditionally been weak vis-à-vis local forces. At present, this is even more so, given the growth of powerful regionally based groups. It may seem tempting to recognise this fact by supporting a heavily decentralised state and channelling support to regional leaders. Arguments are being advanced in favour of establishing a federal structure. This approach, however, would strengthen local-regional groups that are based on military power rather than traditional social ties or other forms of legitimacy. Essentially, these are warlord structures that originated in the military conflicts of the past two decades and have sustained themselves through a political economy of war based on drug production, smuggling, plunder and foreign aid. Some have appalling human rights records.

3. To reduce the militarisation of politics in the transitional structure, and to break the country's regional economies of war, the international community should support national institutions at the national, provincial and district level, as well as local-level authorities such as the *shura*. Central institutions of the modern state (a national army, police, educational system, etc) were first introduced in the 1920s and progressively strengthened by the modernising monarchs of the 1960s and 70s. While severely weakened during the past two decades of war, a skeletal structure remains. The idea of a central state does not have to be invented.4. Sensitivity is required when it comes to international expectations regarding Western, secular concepts of human rights and democratic development. These areas cover traditionally contentious questions that are likely to remain so in the foreseeable future.

5. To make reconstruction and peace-building an Afghan process requires mobilising Afghan human resources and supporting local capacity- and institution-building on a large scale. The international community has done little in this regard in the past. Most assistance has been in the form of relief, organised by an international aid community based in Pakistan. For the past two years, the rights-based approach of the UN-centred Strategic Framework and Principled Common Programming meant that there was little or no support for institution-building in Afghanistan, and minimal contact with the Afghan authorities. A principal challenge at present is to overcome this legacy and turn foreign aid into development co-operation.

6. The high visibility of the Afghan conflict has generated widespread international interest in the recovery phase. Massive funding is on the horizon. As a large number of aid agencies, NGOs and donor governments converge on Kabul, there is a real danger that the weak transitional structures will be overwhelmed and marginalised in the decision-making processes. Constructive international support requires great care so as not to undermine the Afghan transitional government.

8.2 A careful start and long-term perspective

7. Bringing Afghan society, polity, and economy to some state of normalcy will clearly take time. The Bonn Agreement has a sensibly slow schedule for the transition process that respects Afghan traditions of time-consuming consultation. Institution- and capacity-building requires a long-term perspective as well.

8. The international community should resist the temptation to move in rapidly with large-scale funding and quick-fix solutions to demonstrate that "peace pays". Setting authoritative policy priorities requires serious inputs from the Afghan side. Most funding decisions to rebuild the state and economy will necessarily affect the distribution of political power by benefiting some groups and regions more than others. Until the political transition envisaged in the Bonn Agreement has solidified, the international community should limits its investments to strategic support for that process and for meeting the more immediate recovery needs.

9. The need for relief operations will continue for many months to come. Recovery can focus on some urgent and relatively non-controversial sectors that have well-established programmes (e.g. demining and repatriation of refugees), where basic infrastructure is lacking (rebuilding administrative offices in Kabul, restoring water and power supplies in the cities), or where unique opportunities may present themselves (possibly in alternatives to poppy cultivation).

10. Injecting large funding into the early phase of a peace-building process may be an incentive to fight rather than a stimulus to peace. In civil wars that end in a stalemate, there is a danger that one or the other belligerent may resume fighting unless rapidly integrated into a system of rewards. Afghanistan is different. With a clear victory and defeat in this round, the potential for conflict lies rather in how to divide the spoils of peace. To discourage such fights, the aid community should make haste slowly.

8.3 A supportive international environment

11. For the past two decades, the Afghan conflict has been characterised by the mutually reinforcing effects of external and internal divisions. Divisions among the Afghans virtually invited competitive foreign interference. By supporting their respective Afghan factions with arms and money, these states fuelled the conflict and intensified the violence. To break the cycle of interlocking conflicts, peace-building in Afghanistan must be situated in a broader regional context. States in the area should be encouraged to participate in joint efforts and common institutions to support a peace-building agenda. An appropriate regional forum may be explored in this connection, perhaps building on the 6+2 group.

12. A more general lesson from the 1990s is that leadership from the UN Secretary-General's office may be a necessary but certainly not a sufficient condition for

success. UN efforts to negotiate a peace agreement in Afghanistan from 1989 to 1992 received only token support from member states, particularly those that previously had been most involved in Afghanistan. Unless UN members actively support the Bonn Agreement with the understanding that peace and stability in Afghanistan is an important objective in itself, events may slip back into the pattern of the 1990s with well-intentioned but ineffectual UN leadership.

13. On the assistance side, it appears that the institutions developed in the late 1990s to coordinate aid policies in a common political and human rights perspective (Strategic Framework and Principled Common Programming) have outlived their usefulness. In part they have been overtaken by other structures and actors. Moreover, after two years of operation it became evident that the framework did not significantly help to set common aid priorities, and efforts to streamline policy encountered resistance within the aid community.

14. Numerous organisations and agencies are at present preparing to participate in the massive recovery and reconstruction activities being discussed for Afghanistan. Some authoritative coordination structures clearly are necessary, both on the international side and at the central administrative level in Afghanistan. In this connection, the Afghan Support Group, the Islamabad forum composed of donor governments, may usefully redefine its function in line with the literal meaning of its name, that is, primarily to assist the Afghan government in dealing with numerous and powerful foreign actors. For Norway, which this year has taken over the chairmanship of the ASG, this would appropriately be in the "like-minded" tradition as well.

PART II International experience

9. Introduction to Part II

9.1 Purpose and scope of report

This report examines lessons from peacebuilding efforts during the last decade that are relevant to the current challenges in Afghanistan. It follows a previous study commissioned by the Ministry that analysed past experiences of the international community in Afghanistan (Part I).

There is by now a large literature on what are typically considered peacebuilding activities: managing the transition from relief to economic recovery and longer-term development, return and reintegration of refugees and displaced persons, security sector reform (demobilisation, reintegration and reform of the militaries, demining, reform/development of police and the legal sector), (re)constructing social and economic infrastructure, (re)building political institutions for democratic rule and promoting human rights and accountability for past violations in a system of transitional justice.

This report will not provide a comprehensive overview of all these areas.[1] Rather, we have selected themes that are central to the situation in Afghanistan and lend themselves to comparative analysis. These are

- the political framework for peacebuilding
- security sector reform
- economic recovery and reconstruction

The discussion will draw on the experience of missions organised under the UN and other international organisations, as well as bilateral activities. To anchor the analysis in a historical context, the report starts by identifying patterns of peacebuilding missions in the 1990s and criteria for – as well as determinants of – success.

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[1] Important rehabilitation issues in Afghanistan, particularly demining and refugee return, were discussed in the previous CMI report on peacebuilding strategies (Part I above) and will not be addressed here. Issues of transitional justice are analysed in a report recently prepared for the Ministry by CMI, Siri Gloppen, *Reconciliation and Democratisation*. Outlining the Research Field. October 2001.

Extensive rehabilitation in the social sector of the country (especially health and education) will depend on progress in the political and security sectors, as well as economic recovery. Failing such progress, rehabilitation in the social sector will probably fall back to the pattern of long-term relief mixed with rehabilitation that the aid community has undertaken in Afghanistan for the past twenty years. For a recent review of these activities, see *Assessing Needs and Vulnerability in Afghanistan,* CMI 2001.

A more comprehensive format that covered all issues was used in UNDP's seminar on lessons in peacebuilding for Afghanistan, New York, 4-5 February 2002. However, the result was occasional lack of relevance to the problems facing aid agencies in Afghanistan. *Learning from Experience for Afghanistan,* UNDP, New York, 2002.

9.2   The problem of comparison: How special is Afghanistan?

As of early 2002, the situation in Afghanistan is changing rapidly, presenting a moving target for aid agencies. Strategies developed today might turn out to be appropriate to yesterday's problems. Moreover, when considering lessons from other peacebuilding efforts, it is essential to recall that Afghanistan differs in some important respects from other war-torn societies where the international community has supported peacebuilding activities.

As the term 'peacebuilding' progressively came into use in the 1990s, it typically referred to activities to implement peace agreements after civil wars. Most of these conflicts had ended in a compromise of sorts, and the fundamental task of peacebuilding was to develop institutions that could reintegrate former enemies. Economic recovery and repair of infrastructure of all kinds were of course important, but equally central was the need to rebuild institutions that could serve all citizens and ex-belligerents regardless of class, ethnicity or political affiliation, help them to come to terms with the past, and create confidence in a common future. Reintegration in this broader sense was the main post-war challenge in Central America, southern Africa and Cambodia in the early 1990s, just as it is in Bosnia and Sierra Leone today. In many cases, the peacebuilding agenda was suggested by a peace agreement that addressed the causes of the conflict, enumerated provisions for reform, and set out the rights and obligations of the parties concerned, including international organisations. The UN-mediated peace agreement in El Salvador (January 1992) and the Dayton Agreement for Bosnia (December 1995) are cases in point.

Afghanistan in 2002 is different. The Bonn Agreement, which provides a legal and political framework for post-war activities, is not a peace agreement between belligerents. It is merely a statement of intended power-sharing among the victors to a conflict in which their erstwhile common enemy, the Taliban, was suddenly deposed by the intervention of a *deus ex machina*. While economic recovery and some reintegrative tasks are similar to the typical peacebuilding scenarios of the 1990s – the present victors in Afghanistan were at war with each other a few years ago, and there are numerous scores to be settled – the starting point for international assistance differs sharply, as does the political context. The central political task of peacebuilding is not to overcome the past, but to establish institutions that will prevent *future* conflicts among the victors.

In this respect, the peacebuilding agenda in Afghanistan resembles the Kosovo and East Timor cases, where the international community helped establish institutions of state and economy for the winning side in a conflict which ended in total (or near-total) victory. As a result, political, military and economic reintegration was much less problematic, and issues of accountability for war crimes could be dealt with according to standards of international justice. The transferability of lessons from these two cases to Afghanistan is limited, however, not least by the fact that the UN assumed *de facto* trusteeship in Kosovo, and a *de jure* protectorate in East Timor, governing both territories by direct rule in a transition period. By contrast, the UN mission being planned for Afghanistan (UNAMA) in early 2002 was a small operation designed to

leave "a light footprint", in the words of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Lakhdar Brahimi.[2]

The preparations for a UN mission in Afghanistan inevitably recall the UN experience in Somalia in 1993-95. While a war between Afghan militias and the international peacekeeping force (ISAF) does not seem imminent, other aspects of the Somali situation are similar. In Somalia, state structures were weak or non-functioning, and military force was controlled by competing clans or warlords. After a year and a half of international efforts to establish a national transitional government, the UN abandoned the plan and aid agencies scaled back their activities to support local institutions in a "building-block approach". To the extent that aggregate models are useful, Somalia rather than East Timor and Kosovo seems most relevant to Afghanistan.

Lessons from history rarely contain precision instruments that can be unpacked to solve current problems. Still, a review of previous peacebuilding missions provides general insight that will help assess the suitability and consequences of pursuing various strategies.

9.3   Clarification of terms: What is peacebuilding?

As a contemporary policy term, "peacebuilding" has a general but imprecise meaning. The most succinct definition was given by the UN Secretary-General exactly a decade ago. In his *Agenda for Peace*, Boutros Boutros-Ghali distinguished between peace*making*, which aimed to resolve conflicts, peace*keeping*, which was to preserve the state of peace in the first phase after fighting had halted, and peace*building*, which entailed "rebuilding institutions and infrastructures of nations torn by civil war and strife…."[3] The definition has survived a decade of increasing use in UN and aid circles. The term has been elaborated – at times coming to mean all good causes that deserve funding in a post-war situation – but the essence remains. It was restated recently in the Brahimi Report,[4] has been incorporated by aid agencies such as IDRC,[5] and is generally accepted in academic circles.[6]

For policy purposes, then, peacebuilding is mostly understood as a set of transitional activities designed to lay the foundation for other developments such as democratisation, economic development and social justice. Each of these, in turn, represents complex social processes, and activities undertaken under standard

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[2] "United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA): Mission Structure," UN/IMTF, Working Paper No. 2, 14 January 2002.

[3] A/47/277-S/24111, 17 June 1992, para. 15. Overcoming international wars was also included.

[4] "…activities undertaken on the far side of conflict to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war." A//55/305 – S/2000/009, 21 August 2000, para.13.

[5] "Peacebuilding is the pursuit of policies, programs, and initiatives that seek to create the conditions war-torn countries need to transform or manage their conflicts without violence so that they can address longer term development goals." IDRC, "Peacebuilding and Reconstruction", www.idrc.ca/peace.

[6] Academic definitions include "supporting the political, institutional, and social transformations necessary to overcome deep-seated internal animosities and strife" (Doyle, et.al., 1997, p.2), and, more broadly, " external international help for developing countries designed to support indigenous social, cultural and economic development and self-reliance, by aiding recovery from war and reducing or eliminating resort to further violence." (Pugh, 1999, p. 187).

peacebuilding missions constitute only parts of the total. Elections, for example, is a typically undertaken by peacebuilding missions, but democratisation is a much larger process and more difficult to engineer.

While useful to denote a set of generally agreed-upon activities, the term has limited analytical value. It is not connected to a broader theory that identifies which activities are necessary or sufficient, or their sequencing. The relationships between particular peacebuilding activities and the broader processes of democratisation, economic development and social justice are numerous, complex, and often appear contradictory. Elections soon after a war, for instance, may enhance conflict and set back democratic processes (e.g. Bosnia in 1996); they may also have the opposite effect (Cambodia 1993). There is no clear agreement on criteria for success, except the obvious and minimal one that fighting (at a certain level) does not resume. Some analysts argue that the best peacebuilding starts before the violence ends and seeks to prevent its return; others argue that peacebuilding proper consists of activities undertaken for a limited time after the war has ended in order to launch the peace.

"Post-conflict" is widely used in the international aid community in this connection, and the term has been institutionalised by the World Bank and other agencies. Conflict, however, is endemic to most social processes. The task of peacebuilding is not to eliminate social conflict, but to ensure that it is resolved in non-violent ways. In order to mark this distinction, the term "post-war" or "post-crisis", rather than post-conflict, will be used in this report.

10.   Trends in peacebuilding missions and approaches

There has been a wide variety of challenges and responses in peacebuilding during the past decade. Nevertheless, a few trends are discernible.

10.1   Types of conflict and response

Assistance missions to existing states

During the first half of the decade, peace agreements were concluded in several conflicts that had previously appeared intractable. These were mostly the "regional conflicts of the cold war" in Central America, Southern Africa, and Southeast Asia – local conflicts that had been exacerbated and prolonged by the superpower rivalry of the 1980s. The new international context now favoured a resolution, while protracted violence and an enduring stalemate had created internal incentives to settle as well. Given the external links of the conflict, international involvement in the peace settlement seemed natural. Reinvigorated by the end of the Cold War - and having just completed a successful transition mission in Namibia - the United Nations became the principal institutional actor to assist in the implement of peace agreements. In some cases the UN had been centrally involved in mediating the peace as well.

Apart from Namibia, these were "simple" civil wars in the sense that the conflict concerned the distribution of power within existing states, rather than the boundaries of the state itself. The main task of peacebuilding was to rebuild and reform state structures, and to reintegrate the former combatants and a divided people. A standard procedure soon developed: the peace agreement typically laid out the agenda for transition and recovery, planning proceeded for a UN mission with a civilian and a military component, a donors' conference was organised to mobilise funds, and the UN umbrella was placed over intervention. Most missions had a short, fixed timeline, limited objectives and a standardised package of assistance, although there was some variation.[7]

Most operations succeeded in the sense that the original war did not resume, and most mission objectives were completed. The clear exception is Angola, where the UN mission to implement the 1994 peace agreement was aborted when war resumed in 1997, and the UN mission (UNAVEM III) as well as its successor mission (MONUA) were terminated.

In terms of timing and the dynamic of conflict resolution, Afghanistan fits into this category of early settlements. It was the first of the "regional conflicts of the cold war" to be concluded with a peace agreement (1989). The agreement brought an end to the Soviet invasion, but there it stopped. There was no simultaneous power-sharing

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[7] The mission in Mozambique (ONUMOZ, 1992-1994) was of the more limited kind, with respect both to objectives and to schedule of implementation. The second mission in Cambodia (UNTAC) had a shorter duration (1992-93), but in some respects a more ambitious agenda, especially in the human rights sector and in monitoring the administration of the Cambodian government. The mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL, 1991-95) was the most comprehensive of these early missions; indeed, it was officially described as a "second-generation" peace operation because of its emphasis on monitoring and assisting in rebuilding post-war structures. *The United Nations and El Salvador*, 1990-1995, New York: United Nations, DPI, 1995, p. 3.

agreement among the Afghan factions, and only a fledgling UN peacebuilding mission in the form of a small humanitarian mission and an SRSG. A more formidable UN peacebuilding mission would not necessarily have succeeded. Yet it is striking that while all the other regional conflicts of the Cold War were given intense peacebuilding attention, Afghanistan in 1989 was not.

Assistance missions in failed states

The term 'failed state' is sometimes used for states whose policies we disapprove of. A more appropriate definition is a state that simply ceases to function and cannot execute the most fundamental tasks associated with a state (maintain law and order, establish a framework for providing basic needs and protecting its citizens). In this sense, Somalia in the early 1990s was a genuinely failed state.

When national structures of power and authority imploded in 1990-91, giving way to anarchy and civil war, the UN responded first with a diplomatic and military observer mission (UNOSOM I). The Security Council subsequently authorised the US to dispatch a military force to protect humanitarian supplies (UNITAF). When in March 1993 the Somali parties agreed to a UN peace plan and the establishment of a transitional national government, the UN dispatched a peacekeeping and peacebuilding mission in the, by then, standard format (UNOSOM II). Its mandate was comprehensive, including assistance to economic recovery, return of refugees, and – importantly – the establishment of political structures in a transition period that was to end with national elections. The military component was given a "robust" mandate to create a secure environment in all of Somalia, which was interpreted to include disarming Somali militias if necessary. Aggressive pursuit of this mandate undermined the UN military mission in October 1993, but the peacebuilding component limped along until UNOSOM II was formally terminated in March 1995.

Both Somalia and the peacebuilding mission were widely regard as having failed. The UN has not again intervened with such ambitious peace operations in a still unsettled "failed state", unless one includes Afghanistan today.

Assistance and "nation-building" missions in new states

Conflicts over the identity of the state and its boundaries – rather than the distribution of power within it – pose different challenges for peacebuilding. The task is not only to broker a formula for post-war power-sharing and to return the economy to peacetime conditions, but to establish the basic structures within which these processes are to take place. Hence the term "nation-building" mission came into use. There were three major international missions of this kind in the 1990s. Noticeable differences among them suggest that the package for peacebuilding after conflicts of state formation was less standardised than after civil wars.

In Bosnia – arguably the most difficult case of state formation of the decade – the international community established elaborate and intrusive mechanisms to oversee the implementation of the Dayton Agreement (1995). Unlike the earlier peacebuilding missions, however, the Bosnia operation was not placed under a UN umbrella, but took the shape of an *ad hoc* and enormously complex multi-agency structure that had two common institutional points of reference: the Office of the High Representative,

and a 55-member Peace Implementation Council of states to which the Office reported.

The peacebuilding missions in Kosovo and East Timor followed. Both were under a UN umbrella, although the Kosovo operation had an institutionally separate NATO force to keep the peace. Both missions had a comprehensive mandate, including provisions for direct rule in a transition period. The latter point followed essentially from the separatist nature of the conflict and the need to negotiate a new sovereignty. Because sovereignty remained contested or ambiguous (Kosovo), or was reluctantly accepted by the former ruler (Indonesia in East Timor), the entry of a third-party institution to rule in a transitional period was a pragmatic solution. The argument that the UN needed to assume direct rule in East Timor because the Timorese lacked the capacity to do so is more questionable (see section 3 below).

The wars that erupted in the Caucasus when the Soviet Union dissolved were also conflicts of state formation. However, for political reasons, the international response in these cases was mainly bilateral or channelled through UN aid agencies operating without a common political mission.

Looking back at the 1990s, then, we see a mixed collection of mission models. Yet there are some trends in the evolution of responses, and in the relationship between types of conflict and response. As historical patterns, they constitute points of departure for what may be possible and desirable peacebuilding operations in Afghanistan.

10.2   Trends in missions and approaches

Reduced risk-taking in the UN

Peacebuilding has increasingly taken the form of a collective and institutionalised international response, but not always under a UN umbrella. Regional organisations or *ad hoc* institutional groupings became more prominent in the second half of the 1990s, as in post-genocide Rwanda and Bosnia. Part of the reason is the recognised failures of the UN in earlier phases of the conflicts in Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia, and a concern that the organisation had become overstretched by the sudden expansion of peace operations in the early 1990s.

The growing sense in the UN that the organisation must not risk failure by accepting an unrealistic mandate – as Lakhdar Brahimi noted when the Afghan mission was discussed in late 2001 - had implications for the overall structure of international peacebuilding operations. It opened the way for innovative institutional arrangements, although these could become extraordinarily complex (as in Bosnia). More fundamentally, a predisposition for the UN to limit its presence in high-risk cases may leave greater room for partisan actors that are more concerned to pursue national interests than to promote a UN peacebuilding agenda, even if these conflict. The point is clearly relevant to Afghanistan, where the UN is planning a modest mission in the context of very active bilateralism by states.

"Nation-building" missions as exceptional cases

Because the UN recently established *de facto* or *de jure* protectorate missions in two cases (Kosovo and East Timor) – and the international community assumed a near-protectorate role in Bosnia – the question has been raised whether "nation-building" missions of this kind represent a trend of the future, and constitute an appropriate reference point for a peacebuilding mission in Afghanistan as well. In fact, all three cases were cited as possible models in the early discussions about an Afghan mission.

Upon reflection, however, these cases appear to be poor models, although for different reasons. In the Balkans, the US and Europe had long-standing strong strategic interests, as demonstrated by heavy involvement even before the Dayton Agreement. In East Timor, the high-visibility conflict that followed the 1999 referendum put considerable pressure on the UN to act, while simultaneously appearing to be a manageable operation that promised a longed-for UN success. Afghanistan clearly does not fall in the last category, and is a doubtful fit with the first.

More fundamentally, the type of conflict that has engulfed Afghanistan for over two decades has historically not been followed by a protectorate or a highly intrusive "nation-building" mission. As noted, such missions are above all associated with conflicts over state formation where sovereign identities have been redefined and new entities have to be eased into a world based on the principle of state sovereignty. Nor have "failed states" invited ambitious and comprehensive missions, probably because the task seems too daunting. In "simple" civil wars, by contrast, sovereign identity is fully established, and claimants to state power typically want assistance missions only.

The experience relating to costs, open-ended timelines and other problems associated with two of the three intrusive peacebuilding missions (Kosovo and Bosnia) have left a critical legacy as well, and have generated increasing realism about the limits of international "nation-building" missions.

In short, the lesson of a decade of peacebuilding missions is that comprehensive and intrusive collective operations appear feasible only in exceptional cases, and mostly those associated with conflicts of state formation. The mission currently being planned for Afghanistan is in line with this trend.

Ideological framework

The ideological trends of the 1990s are quite clear. Strengthening human rights have increasingly become a central objective of both peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations, with missions structured accordingly. In the political sphere, Western democratic institutions such as multiparty systems and elections are typical benchmarks of a peacebuilding process. Strengthening civil society is a central agenda item, as is reforming the security sector by establishing civilian, democratic control over the military and police, and changing institutions of law to conform with international standards of justice and human rights. In the economic sector, the so-called "Washington consensus", represented by the international financial institutions (IFIs) and major Western donors, has shaped the framework for reconstruction in virtually all cases, ranging from Mozambique to East Timor, with particularly heavy roles played by the IFIs in Bosnia and Kosovo. The consensus includes a transition to

market forces, downsizing the public sector, and reducing the civilian state administration. Indeed, the latter principle spans virtually the entire decade of international peacebuilding, from UNTAC in Cambodia to UNTAET in East Timor.

The fit between these principles and the local political and cultural dynamic has varied greatly, both within and among countries. Insofar as peacebuilding appears as a conflictual process, it is essentially because of tension over the implementation of this ideology. The tension is familiar from all countries where aid agencies and powerful donors seek to promote reforms in the economic, political and human rights sphere. The difference in post-war situations, however, is that the international community initially, at least, has more leverage because the recipient country is politically divided, devastated by war, or both, and state authorities are often weak and overwhelmed by the reconstruction task.

The tension does not follow a simple national-international divide. Nations are typically divided internally, in political and human rights issues often along wartime alignments (e.g. in Guatemala and El Salvador). In the economic sphere, new alliances often develop as groups are set to benefit unequally from the reforms. Complex alliances between the national and international community typically develop as the various actors seek supportive partners.

A similar conflictual process may be expected in Afghanistan. An additional complication arises from the religious dimension. It will be the first time the international community seeks to assist in (re)building the legal system in a society with a strong conservative Islamic traditions. It will require particular care by all parties concerned to manage the potential for conflict between modernists and traditionalists.

10.3   Identifying strategies and assessing results

The 1990s produced a rich inventory of strategies in peacebuilding, but also a record of considerable unpredictability. As a comparative analysis of sixteen cases demonstrates, the willingness of the international community to invest varies significantly from one situation to another (Stedman 2001). Local environments differ greatly in their response to international peacebuilding efforts. Some environments are benign and responsive – others less so. The effectiveness of strategies differs as well: what may be possible, and effective, approaches in one situation may not be so in another. Implementation policies must be designed accordingly. In some situations, the international contribution can be limited and specific, in other cases a more comprehensive strategy will be necessary.

A further concern is what Stedman (2001) calls "incentive incompatibility." "Tough cases" require more resources, greater international involvement, and more coercive strategies, but tough cases will often deter the UN from engaging itself unless some members have particular interests in the area. Risk-aversion is part of this tendency.

Gunshot approach or single-sector focus?

There is no clear agreement on what constitute sequences and priorities in successful peacebuilding. As "peacebuilding" in the 1990s became an increasingly attractive label for mobilising funds, NGOs and aid agencies typically claimed that a particular

subgoal, be it disarmament, elections, human rights or refugee repatriation, was critical to the peacebuilding effort.

One school of thought in the "diffusion versus concentration" debate emphasises the need to focus on a particular sector, and that security must come first. "Priority should be given to demobilisation of soldiers and demilitarisation of politics, that is, the transformation of warring armies into political parties."[8] Alternatively, some claim, establishing institutions of the political authority that gives legitimacy to the use of force has priority. Other experts find, however, that in difficult cases something else must happen first in order to establish either authority or security. As Woodward (2001) notes in the case of Bosnia, structures or processes must be created that generate a sense of security, which in turn makes demilitarisation possible.

The latter view is indirectly supported by a large and diverse literature that claims conflict resolution requires building mutual confidence and ease of communication.[9] In its absence, the logic of the "security dilemma" will prevail to produce mutual escalation (i.e. defensive positioning or rearming by one party is interpreted as a threat by the other party, which reacts similarly, etc). Both military and non-military measures can reduce the security dilemma. The presence of international peacekeeping forces can decrease uncertainty and improve communication. Joint participation in reconstruction projects, a start-up of reforms in the justice sector, a functioning local administration and other measures may help create the sense of security which makes demobilisation and demilitarisation more attractive.

The implication for post-war reconstruction is that peacebuilding strategies in various sectors may be a road to eventual demobilisation and demilitarisation. This was the case in Cambodia (see below). In these difficult cases, a diffusion of strategies is more promising than concentration on key security or political sectors. In practice, moreover, the very presence of numerous and relatively uncoordinated aid actors tended to produce this result.

The relationship between security and other sectors is more straightforward. For example, a sense of physical security and some progress towards demilitarisation of the conflict appears as a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for a large-scale return of refugees. This has been observed in the Balkans, in southern Africa, Central America, and in the fluctuations of refugee flows in and out of Afghanistan since 1989.

The time perspective is also important. Some problems must be addressed "upstream" in order to prevent complications "downstream". Repatriation of refugees, for instance, has always been an early peacebuilding activity, and not only because refugees usually want to go home when the war is over. Repatriation demonstrates that peace has indeed returned, and prevents a population in exile from being used by "spoilers" to undermine the peace agreement. Hence, early refugee return before the scheduled elections was important in Cambodia, and return of displaced persons from West to East Timor remains a concern.

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[8] Stedman, 2001, p. 738.
[9] For a recent analysis related to reconciliation, see J.P. Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, D.C. United States Institute of Peace, 1997.

In the social sector, some issues can have an immediate urgency as well as being a long-term task. In the educational sector, for instance, restoration of schools was an immediate priority in Mozambique because Renamo had systematically destroyed government schools as part of its military campaign. In other countries, rewriting text books to narrate the past in a non-partisan way is more important than rebuilding schools, although more difficult. Bosnia is a case in point.

What determines success or failure?

Analysis of the dynamic of peacebuilding based on statistical evidence from 124 cases after World War II led Doyle and Sambanis (2000) to conclude that "success" (as defined) depended on a) the nature of the war, b) the economic level of the country, and c) the nature of the peacebuilding effort. Success was most likely when the wars had not been fought in ethnic terms, had not been very costly (although they could have lasted a long time), taken place in countries with relatively high development level, and when the UN peace operations and "substantial" financial assistance were available. Robust peacekeeping and peace enforcement were critical to end the violence, thereby reaching a "lower order" peace. Military action by itself, however, did not ensure that democratic institutions, or a "higher order" peace, would follow.

Poor and undemocratic countries, in other words, are unpromising candidates for achieving the democratic kind of peace. Based on this analysis, the prospects for peacebuilding in Afghanistan do not look very promising. At best, and in the short run, it suggests an undemocratic peace.

The model has certain weaknesses that slightly improves the prospects. First, it assumes that international capacity can make up for lack of local capacity to create peace, and neglects the counterproductive and conflict-generating effects that an international presence can have. This applies both to military presence (e.g. Somalia 1993) and to foreign missions that are large, dominating and intrusive (as especially noted in Cambodia, Kosovo and East Timor). In other words, a mission with a 'light footprint', like the one being designed for Afghanistan, can have more *effective* capacity than a large one.

Moreover, the model ignores the importance of individual leaders such as the SRSG. This factor (the "idiosyncratic variable") has proven critically important in virtually all UN peacebuilding missions, from Aldo Ajello in Mozambique to Lakhdar Brahimi in Afghanistan at present. Taking these two considerations into account slightly brightens the prospect for the present mission in Afghanistan, as Doyle recently noted.[10]

Is peacebuilding easier when the task is to rebuild within an existing state rather than establish a new state structure? During the past decade, there were two spectacular failures to rebuild in existing states (Angola 1997-98, Somalia 1993-95), and many that were relatively more successful. However, some difficult cases were not taken on or aborted (Rwanda). Of the two separatist cases handed to the UN for peacebuilding in the late 1990s, one was relatively easy (East Timor), the other much less so (Kosovo). This suggests that factors other than the purpose of the original conflict are

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[10] Michael Doyle, presently advisor to the UN Secretary-General, in informal discussion, New York, February 2002.

more important, as Doyle and Sambanis (2000) also indicate. At times, the designation of the nature of the conflict is itself at the heart of the strife, as in Bosnia.

What is success?

At one level, the objectives of particular projects or programmes are points of reference for assessing success (e.g. has demobilisation been implemented as planned?). Beyond operational goals of this kind there is little agreement about what precisely constitutes success in peacebuilding, although some benchmarks have become increasingly common (e.g. holding of elections on schedule). Most observers consider the resumption of violence a key indicator. As Cousens (2001) notes, a minimal threshold for success is that the armed conflict just settled does not recur even without foreign peacekeepers present ("self-enforcing cease-fire"); a somewhat higher threshold is that new violence does not develop ("self-enforcing peace"). Beyond that is a set of objectives relating to democracy, justice and economic development.

While many of the objectives are shared in the aid community, judgements regarding what constitutes thresholds of "success" necessarily differ. Some argue that peacebuilding in Cambodia failed because the country is still far from being a democracy, as demonstrated by the fraudulent elections in early 2002 and the failure to bring the perpetrators of the genocide to justice. However, this is setting the threshold so high that peacebuilding becomes synonymous with democratisation. If peacebuilding is defined as a set of finite activities in a transition period, as suggested at the outset of this report, the threshold for success is not only lowered, but a disaggregation of the various processes and their cause and effect becomes more feasible.

More generally, comparing indicators of change against necessarily arbitrary measures of success and failure is less meaningful than acknowledging that peacebuilding – like peace – is a process. This means above all ascertaining that the process is moving in the right direction, and analysing why it may be stalling or reversing.

One common explanation for lack of progress is that not enough time has passed. Yet, the problem might also be underlying structural problems that time itself cannot solve, as Woodward (20001) claims with respect to Bosnia after Dayton.

Lessons at the operational level

The recommendations of the Brahimi Report (S/2000/809) reflect a series of lessons learned in peace operations during the 1990s that by this time were increasingly recognised in the UN and aid community. Apart from the calls for early warning and preventive diplomacy, arguably the most important point concerned resourcing the operations. The UN needed to strengthen its peace operations, but missions should have resources – included political support - commensurate with their mandate. The importance of incorporating human rights and international humanitarian law in all peace operations was also stressed.

On the operational level, the panel emphasised integrated and early planning at Headquarters, better leadership and more autonomy in the field missions, rapid and

more effective deployment, higher standards for personnel recruited for missions, and modern management practices to ensure that staff worked effectively and were held accountable. Similar conclusions were expressed in various parts of the UN system regarding lessons from the operations in Kosovo and East Timor.

The Brahimi report did not mention the distorting effects of introducing large, foreign, externally supplied missions into countries where war, at times in combination with natural disasters, had devastated the normal economy. The distortion was particularly pronounced in very poor countries, such as Somalia – where the economy had collapsed along with the state – and Cambodia. Both became infamous for the rapid development of dual economies that had colonial overtones.

The dualism is inherent in the enterprise, although it can be modified by the introduction of smaller missions, greater emphasis on local procurement, and regimes to regulate local hiring and salary practices. Some lessons in this regard are being incorporated into the planning of the Afghan mission.

As noted, the UN was in early 2002 indeed planning a small mission that would leave only a "light footprint" in Afghanistan. This did not result from a straightforward learning from the past. The main reasons for a light and non-intrusive mission were security concerns (which limited the size and hence the intrusiveness of the mission), and the wishes of the US not to be encumbered by a large UN peace operation while its own forces were fighting a war in the country.

To reduce distortion in the human resources sector, UNDP has proposed that all agencies and NGOs operating in Afghanistan observe a ceiling on salaries for local employees commensurate with local wage levels.[11] If implemented, this should reduce the tendency for locally scarce skills, especially administrative and professional, to be pulled away from the local public sector and economy to fill non-skilled positions for foreign agencies (e.g. as drivers or interpreters because they speak English and are offered high wages). The importance of mobilising skilled Afghans in exile for the reconstruction effort has also been stressed in principle. If implemented, this would mean a deliberate change from the practice of other missions, such as by UNTAC in Cambodia, where the hiring of nationals from the diaspora was discouraged for fear they would be too political.

Observers close to the planning of peacebuilding missions in the UN system claim there has been a change in the process over time. In the early 1990s, planning was supply driven, typically starting with an inventory of strategies and resources in the assistance community. Increasingly, according to Cousens (2001), the planning process has becoming more demand driven by incorporating analysis of the needs of the country concerned. By the time of the planning of the Afghan mission, both the UN aid agencies and the World Bank were undertaking needs assessments, although within the restraints of security on the ground, time pressures, and the institutional priorities or mandates of the agencies.

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[11] UNDP seminar, New York, February 2002.

11. Maintaining the political framework for peace

11.1 Genesis of peacebuilding : the ripeness factor

The genesis of success or failure in peacebuilding lies in the nature of the peace settlement and the conflict from which it springs. The notion of "ripeness" is often used in this connection. A conflict is ripe for resolution, Zartman (1965) argued in a seminal work, if the parties have reached a "hurting stalemate", perceive only worse ahead, and are offered a way out. The concept of "ripeness" can also be applied to indicate the commitment of the parties to (re)build institutions and engage themselves to sustain peace after the violence has ended.

The readiness to enter into a formal peace agreement is in itself an indication of "ripeness". Peacebuilding processes are more likely to succeed when conflicts end with a formal treaty than when this is not the case (Doyle and Sambanis 2000). While parties may sign peace agreements with less than full commitment to implement them (compare the Paris treaty for Cambodia in 1991 and the Dayton peace agreement for Bosnia), a treaty is at least a starting point for the parties to settle their differences peacefully, and a point of reference for others to persuade them to do so.

The peacebuilding efforts of the early 1990s that turned out to be relatively successful - in the sense that substantial violence did not resume and the main provisions of the peace treaty were implemented within a reasonable time – followed conflicts that were ripe for resolution. El Salvador and Mozambique are cases in point. The war had reached a mutually "hurting stalemate": both parties were becoming increasingly convinced that they could not win at an acceptable cost, if at all. At the same time, the international context favoured a resolution. Both the superpowers that had directly or indirectly aided the local protagonists decided to reduce their support, mainly for reasons related to the winding down of the Cold War.[12]

The confluence of internal and external international factors favouring peace made it possible to sign a final peace agreement for El Salvador (Mexico City, January 1992), and laid a solid groundwork for implementation. In Mozambique, the confluence factor was reflected in the relative ease with which the Rome Agreement (1992) was implemented, above all the demobilisation. Memory of the failure of a similar agreement in Angola created considerable international apprehension at the time that the demobilisation programme might unravel in Mozambique as well. As it turned

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[12] The end of the Cold War greatly reduced the strategic significance of El Salvador to the United States, which had previously been a principal supporter of the government, both militarily and politically. The MFLN, for its part, lost an important conduit of support when the Sandinistas in Nicaragua lost the 1990 elections after a peace agreement had ended the civil war in that country. Meanwhile, important regional states, including Costa Rica and Mexcio, had persistently sought to bring an end to the devastating civil wars in Central America. Already by mid-decade, the devastating economic and political costs of the war had made the government of Mozambique started reorienting its economy and, later, political system, towards the West. But the Soviet Union was still its main military supporter and a major source of economic aid. Towards the end of the 1980s, however, the accelerating political disintegration of the Soviet system made it clear that the Mozambican government could no longer "bank on the Soviet political and military umbrella in regional conflicts" (Msabaha 1995).

out, the soldiers eagerly entered the assembly areas, tired of war and lured by the prospect of two years salary under a donor support scheme.

Regional developments are particularly important in the confluence of factors that create the "ripening" peace process. The evidence from several cases is clear: "[T]he success of a peace settlement is inextricably tied to the interests of neighboring regional powers and their overall commitment to the peace process," Hampson (1996) concludes. Neighbouring states can, if not make, then certainly break a peace agreement. They are uniquely positioned to undermine a core element of the peacebuilding process – the ability of the state to have a legitimate monopoly of armed force - by providing sanctuaries and secret conduits of arms, training etc to rebels. Hence even if regional actors do not actively support joint peacebuilding efforts, their acquiescence in a given agreement is essential.

Regional factors clearly facilitated a peace settlement and peacebuilding in the two cases cited. In El Salvador, the rebel movement, MFLN, lost an important conduit of support when the Sandinistas in Nicaragua lost the 1990 elections after a peace agreement had ended the civil war in that country. Meanwhile, important regional states, Costa Rica and Mexico, had persistently sought to bring an end to the devastating civil wars in Central America. In the Mozambican peace process, the Renamo rebels lost their external lifeline when South Africa's new leadership in 1989 agreed to end its longstanding support. Regional diplomatic efforts moved in the same direction, especially from Kenya and Zimbabwe. The presidents of Kenya and Zimbabwe supported what became the first important negotiations in Nairobi in 1989. With additional mediation in Rome, a comprehensive peace agreement was signed in 1992.

A more uncertain process characterised the Cambodian peace efforts. The "end of the Cold War" logic that had facilitated peace in Central America and southern Africa was sufficient to bring the Cambodian parties to the table in 1991, but all three parties harboured significant reservations, as did their respective supporters in Vietnam and Thailand. Regional support structures helped the Khmer Rouge renege on the Paris agreement by withdrawing their forces to a northwestern enclave on the Thai-Cambodian border. Their refusal to demobilise was a pretext for the Vietnamese-supported State of Cambodia to do the same, a decision supported by Vietnam. As a result, warfare continued, although at a seasonal pace. But the implementation of the Paris treaty had faltered in an important respect, and related peacebuilding activities suffered.

The regional factor also was decisive in moving the process forward in 1997-98, when the government faction shattered the power-sharing formula with the remaining coalition party with a coup. The states in the regional organisation ASEAN essentially refused to accept the coup and succeeded in restoring the coalition. The alternative of supporting the ousted party in a new round of fighting was this time rejected. Thailand as well as other states in the region had come to recognise the value of relative peace in Cambodia.

The regional point applies with particular relevance to Afghanistan. To sustain the framework for peace, regional states must be convinced that relative peace in

Afghanistan is a collective good that can reduce cross-border problems of all kinds, ranging from drugs and refugees to the export of violence.

11.3 Structure and strategy of peacebuilding missions

When internal and external factors do not fully converge in favour of peace, there may still be a settlement. The hard part then lies ahead; "ripeness" must be obtained through the peacebuilding process itself.

Sustained third party attention to implement the agreement or promote peace in other ways is critically important in these cases. Various forms of attention are needed. Third parties should try to *anticipate* future problems that the peace agreement did not address and which may undermine implementation. *Monitoring* events and providing reliable channels of information can help build confidence, reduce uncertainty, improve communication and defuse alleged violations. Attention *at all three political levels* – internal, regional, and the wider international system – is essential. Hampson (1996) even concludes that "third party interventions that focus exclusively on one level to the exclusion of the other are doomed to failure." (p. 24).

Sustained third party attention is particularly important in internal wars that end with a negotiated compromise rather than total victory and capitulation. Statistically speaking, these wars are more likely to restart as one or the other party seeks to undo the compromise in their own favour (Licklider 1995, Steadman 1998). The finding is based on a review of all internal wars in the past century, most of which ended in total victory/defeat. Several of the internal wars in the 1990s, by contrast, ended in a negotiated compromise. It follows that sustained peacebuilding attention by third parties is particularly important in these cases. Where defeat and victory results, the framework for peace has already been set by the victor.

The relatively easy peacebuilding mission in East Timor fits the pattern. The UN did not enter until it had the permission of the erstwhile adversary, Indonesia, to do so, and the UN mission (UNTAET) was not established until a "coalition of the willing" had sealed the defeat of the opposing forces on the ground. The Indonesian Army, the Timorese militia and their sympathisers had fled across the border to West Timor. Effectively only one party remained, the pro-independence movement and the vast majority of the Timorese people that supported them, and who welcomed the UN mission with open arms. Reintegration of the defeated party was still an issue, but more of a social and economic problem precisely because the challenger was defeated. In this perspective, the situation in East Timor might have required a lesser international presence than what it got, especially on the civilian side.

As noted at the outset (ch.1), Afghanistan in early 2002 did not clearly resemble any of the classic peacebuilding cases of the 1990s. There was a defeated party – the Taliban – at least in the short run. But instead of a clear victor there were numerous contenders. Hence the situation had elements of both the half-hearted compromise to be carefully nurtured into a sustained peace, and of peacebuilding made easy by proceeding within the framework of the victor.

There are no formulas suggesting which mission structure and strategies are most appropriate to sustain a framework for peacebuilding in different kinds of situations. Three cases reviewed below have elements that are, or may become, relevant to the

Afghan situation. In Cambodia, there was fundamental disagreement about the formula for power-sharing in the national government. One party withdrew to establish a de facto autonomous enclave in one region of the country. The two remaining parties fell out as well. Yet, ten years later, the enclave had been worn down and the feuding parties had largely returned to the political arena. In Bosnia, the international community struggled to establish the common institutions that were stipulated by the Dayton peace agreement, but met with consistent "local obstructionism". In Somalia, political and military power was highly fragmented when the UN entered with an ambitious peacebuilding mission to "restore the country", as the US ambassador to the UN put it.

Cambodia

In Cambodia, the UN moved in with a heavy presence but a short timeframe. Approximately 20 000 foreign military and civilian personnel tried to run the country for two years. At the time, Cambodia did have a strong central government, but the Vietnamese-supported regime lacked international legitimacy. The essence of the peace agreement was to establish a transitional structure in which the UN would monitor the administration, facilitate the return of refugees, oversee demobilisation, and ensure that the power-sharing formula in the transitional government remained intact until the UN could conduct national elections, scheduled for 1993.

Not unexpectedly, UN monitoring of the daily workings of the administration of the government proved a futile exercise. But, apart from the Khmer Rouge, the other parties were kept in the transitional coalition until the elections. The mission's major success was holding the elections, which had enormous positive significance in a society traumatised by war and genocide. UNTAC also made a significant contribution in monitoring human rights violations – equally significant given Cambodia's past – and in supporting the growth of a local infrastructure for promoting human rights.

UNTAC's main failure was not to hold the two principal Cambodian parties (Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese-supported State of Cambodia, SOC) to the provisions in the agreement to disarm and demobilise. UNTAC chose not to confront the Khmer Rouge militarily when the movement abandoned the Paris agreement and consolidated its forces in a *de facto* autonomous region in the northwest. As a result, the elections were held in an atmosphere of violence and uncertainty. Despite the unresolved issues, the UN mission was terminated immediately after the election.

International attention did not end, however. Bilateral donors and UN agencies continued to provide assistance to typical peacebuilding activities, some of which had originated in the UNTAC period. Members of the regional organisation, ASEAN, assumed major responsibility for holding the two Khmer parties that remained in the coalition to a power-sharing formula and the principle of elections. When SOC sought to monopolise power in 1997 by ousting its coalition partner in a coup, the decision by the ASEAN states not to support the defeated party through a military comeback ensured that the contestation again took political form.

By about the same time, the Khmer Rouge had effectively been neutralised by a combination of the amnesty policy offered by the Cambodian government, internal attrition, and waning international support from states in the region and beyond.

Cambodia today is not a democratic state, nor have the perpetrators of massive violence in the past been brought to justice. By this test of peacebuilding, the case is a failure. By the less ambitious test of peacebuilding, Cambodia is a success in that the original conflict has not returned, and large-scale new violence has not erupted.

It is improbable that prolonging the presence of UNTAC would have produced better results unless different strategies had been adopted. The main question in this regard, is whether demobilising the Khmer Rouge would have required major military action by UNTAC, or whether a demonstration of force would have sufficed. The question remains conjectural. The UN decided it would not accept the risk of enforcement action, and the peacekeepers never crossed the "bamboo line" drawn by the Khmer Rouge around its enclave.

Bosnia

As in Cambodia, the peace agreement that ended the civil war in Bosnia marked a relatively "unripe" foundation for peacebuilding. The 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement was "little more than a cease-fire, its premise was that it would only work if the agreement represented the mutual interest of the three Bosnia parties to cooperate in building a new state and peace" (Woodward, 200, p. 74).

Five years later, there is still no functioning central government. The Bosnian parties have consistently been unwilling to establish common institutions. Repeated demands from the 55-member Peace Implementation Council (PIC) to this effect have gone unheeded, and PIC willingness to finance salaries for state officials has not helped (PIC 2001). Lack of common regulatory institutions has also inhibited self-sustained economic growth, the PIC noted at its May 2001 meeting. A massive infusion of aid (more than US$ 5 billion over a six-year period) has created much physical reconstruction but little sustained growth (ICG, 2001). Reconstruction funds have been the driving force behind the growth that has taken place. The security situation has made it necessary twice to renew the mandate of the international peacekeeping force. The last time the initial fixed time limit was replaced by a more open-ended mechanism of semi-annual reviews to assess progress towards "sustainable peace". The Bosnian parties have undertaken some demobilisation, but little disarmament, and scant cooperation in joint military institutions.

The ultimate objective of Dayton is to transform Bosnia into a "modern, prosperous European nation", as the international community affirmed at the 1998 Madrid meeting of PIC. What that will require is uncertain. Some observers argue that the key problem lies in the structure of the international presence in Bosnia. It is an ad hoc and enormously complex structure to monitor and implement the peace agreement. "[R]ecalibrating the international community (IC) presence is vital if the peace process is to have a successful outcome" (ICG 2001, p. 1). Part of this "recalibration" is the demand that the international community deal more forcefully with "local obstructionism" by enforcing the political conditionality that the PIC routinely and repeatedly affirms. Others argue that the enormous leverage that the international community wields by virtue of billions of dollars for reconstruction, a civilian administration and a peacekeeping presence in Bosnia is in reality a blunt instrument of persuasion.

Peacebuilding must start by establishing confidence and justice at the local level, particularly in connection with the return of refugees (Bringa 2001), or, more fundamentally, through a recognition that the "unripe" nature of the peace accords requires long-term confidence building at all levels (Woodward 2001). In the meantime, a sustained international presence in the economic and military sector seems necessary to prevent backsliding.

Somalia

The UN peacebuilding mission in Somalia has often been forgotten in the publicity over the military debacle in 1993. Yet it contains several lessons that are relevant to Afghanistan. In Somalia, as in Afghanistan, the political scene was fragmented, military power dispersed, battle lines unclear, the economy shattered, and the political framework for peacebuilding rested on a hastily produced document signed under UN auspices in a foreign capital. The main difference in the situation confronting the UN is that the state in Somalia was non-existent, while in Afghanistan it was merely weak.

The US-led military-humanitarian intervention in December 1992 was followed by a UN-engineered peace agreement concluded in Addis Ababa in March 1993, where all but one of the Somali factions agreed to a cease-fire and disarmament within ninety days, and to create a Transitional National Council. The agreement was the result of a Conference on National Reconciliation for Somalia, convened by the UN Secretary General, which made it possible for the Security Council to authorise a comprehensive peacekeeping-cum-peacebuilding mission at the end of the month.

Resolution 814/1993 empowered the UN to "assist the people of Somalia in rehabilitating their political institutions and economy and promoting political settlement and national reconciliation." (A(4)). To this end, the resolution specified a number of tasks in institution building. Most importantly, the UN mission (UNOSOM II) would help establish district and regional councils that would elect members to the national transitional government. More generally, the mission would promote reconciliation and create conditions for the growth and effective participation of Somali civil society. UNOSOM II would also rebuild the judicial system and the police, starting effectively from zero by appointing and training candidates. It would coordinate international assistance for economic recovery and rehabilitation, facilitate "assessment of clear, prioritised needs" for economic recovery, assist refugees and displaced persons to return, and promote demining. On the military side, the mission would promote a "comprehensive and effective programme for disarming Somali parties (814/preamble), and oversee the arms embargo imposed by the Security Council the previous year.

It was an ambitious agenda. The US ambassador to the UN at the time, Madeleine Albright, proclaimed that "with this resolution, we will embark on an unprecedented enterprise aimed at nothing less than the restoration of an entire country" (S/PV. 3188). It was also a large mission, including 28 000 military and numerous civilian staff of the UN aid and humanitarian agencies. UNOSOM alone employed about 3 000 Somalis, mainly in Mogadishu.

UNOSOM's decision to neutralise militarily one of the main Somali factions destroyed its claim to be a neutral broker and undermined its remaining peacebuilding

agenda. Nevertheless, as Ameen Jan (2001) argues in a careful recent analysis, the strategy for peacebuilding in the political and institutional area was fundamentally flawed and would probably have had few chances of success even if the UN had not become a party to the intra-Somalian fighting.

Throughout, the *time factor* had a negative effect. The US had been in a hurry to terminate the preceding mission (UNITAF), which led to great pressure on the Somali parties to produce an agreement in Addis Ababa that would permit the UN to replace the US force with a multinational contingent. In a virtual sign of protest against being rushed, the Somali leaders convened only three days later to produce a new agreement, which significantly contradicted the first.

The time factor also constrained UNOSOM efforts to establish a national police force. The US, in particular, wanted to limit the time for deployment of a large international peacekeeping force in Somalia (for which the US was paying the single largest percentage of the assessed contribution). To permit rapid withdrawal, the Security Council called for the immediate establishment of a Somali police force to fill the "security gap". In practice, police candidates were rapidly assembled, initially for a force of some 5 000 to serve in Mogadishu. The main requirement was that the police officers had served at least two years prior to January 1991 (when Siad Barre's regime collapsed).

Reforming and rebuilding the police is essentially a long-term project (see ch. 12). The police units that appeared (mainly in Mogadishu) had little authority or power, and no means of addressing the problem of armed militias roaming different parts of the city and the country. More fundamental was the absence of a *political authority* to which the police would report and be held accountable. The new Somali police force was formed in advance of the establishment of the transitional government, and at a time when the district and regional councils were not yet functioning. The force was paid by and in practice accountable to UNOSOM. Its legitimacy and power was thus closely bound up with the UN mission, suffered when UNOSOM became a party to the local conflict, and effectively collapsed when the mission withdrew in March 1995, two years after it was established.

Efforts to develop the judicial sector encountered similar problems. UNOSOM appointed judges upon the recommendation of a 13 member judicial committee based in Mogadishu. The commission travelled infrequently to the regions, consulted minimally with clan leaders, and its appointments created tension in the delicate inter-clan balance. There was no design to build on the existing legal system that functioned throughout the country, although on a rudimentary level, and which was based on local institutions applying the *shari'a*.

The core of UNOSOM's approach was to help establish a national political authority for Somalia. The mission adopted a grassroots, bottom-up approach, which involved establishing district councils that would nominate candidates for regional councils which in turn would nominate a Transitional National Council. Subsequently, but within a two-year period, elections would be held for a national government. It was the first time the UN had engaged itself in a grassroots political campaign of this kind. The process requires considerable knowledge of the local scene, as well as great diplomatic skill, and it soon became evident that newly arrived UN staff members

dispatched to establish district councils all over the country mostly had neither. The councils became formal structures with little relation to the actualities of power on the Somali scene (Gundel 2001).

The alternative top-down approach, which the Somali faction leaders favoured, was viewed in the UN as undemocratic and as reinforcing the power of warlords who had little legitimacy. Yet, as Jan and others have argued, there was a third option of working more closely with the clan leaders, most of whom were distinct from the military factions. Through them it would have been possible to promote local mechanisms for reconciliation and cooperation. This would have required a smaller but more knowledge-intensive mission, working within a longer timeframe, and leaving the question of participation in the national government in abeyance.

As it was, the large UN mission, armed with huge sums of money (by local standards) and an ambitious agenda of reconstruction, had a monopolising effect on politics. All factions turned their attention to competing for resources controlled by the UN. It placed a lid on local mechanisms for conflict resolution. The effect was accentuated by the discrepancy between the vast economic resources that the UN mission represented and the abject poverty in Somalia.

After the UN mission withdrew two years later, the local political dynamic again surfaced. The result was not only continued low-level conflict but significant cooperation on the regional level. New structures of cooperation emerged in Puntland, existing structures in Somaliland were formalised, and positive signs of collaboration appeared in the central region (Rahanweigh and Hiiraan). Observers took it to mean a growing commitment by clan leaders to put their own house in order by establishing de facto regional governments. The UN diplomatic mission for Somalia and donors have been cautiously supportive, with the donors adopting a so-called building block approach to a national state structure. In the meantime, civilian social and economic life has resumed, and estimates of battle-related deaths have sunk to 200-600 a year (Jan 2001).

Some close observers (Doornbos 2002) consider the building block approach a dynamic process that holds most promise of delivering civil order to Somalia. Recent efforts to restore a national provisional government (the Arta process) appear in the short run to conflict with this regional process. The national government is seen by some as an instrument for one clan to take power at the expense of others. The competing interests of regional states in asserting their influence by promoting favoured clients has made the situation more volatile.

Some national structures are clearly necessary to realise a minimum of public goods (in Somalia, for instance, to control animal disease and certify cattle for export). National structures may also reduce external interference of the patron-client kind by exercising more control over cross-border transactions and placing a greater premium on transactions with national as opposed to local power structures. The question is whether a building-block approach is likely to prevent or promote such national structures, and whether it is as promising in the Afghan case as it might be in Somalia.

The Siad Barre experience, when one clan firmly monopolised the state to the exclusion of all others, has created profound scepticism towards a central state

apparatus in Somalia. Intra-regional mechanisms based on civilian clan leadership for solving conflicts have shown themselves to be partially effective. Arguably, Afghanistan differs somewhat on both accounts. Somalia's warlords are hardly as entrenched as their counterparts in Afghanistan, where they have had more time to develop, more resources and stronger foreign patrons. Thus, a building block approach in Somalia may be more likely to produce cooperation towards national structures than would be the case in Afghanistan, where competing warlords currently constitute most of the blocks (CMI 2002).

Other lessons would seem to apply in a more straightforward sense, namely
- the need for a long term perspective
- the problems of building institutions in the police and judicial sector without a political authority
- the dangers of getting too far ahead of the local political dynamic
- the magnet-type distorting impact of a large international presence on local politics
- the premium on international staff having local knowledge and diplomatic staff when operating in the essentially political realm of peacebuilding, i.e. establishing political institutions.

12. Security Sector Reform

Reforming the coercive arm of the state, and restructuring the military forces of those who rebel against it, are central peacebuilding tasks. The peace agreements that terminated the civil wars of the 1990s usually had detailed provisions for demobilisation and the composition of a new, central army. Elsewhere, the process evolved as a result of negotiations between the parties, prodded by aid agencies and concerned foreign governments. Events in Afghanistan have followed the latter path.

The Bonn Agreement only establishes the principle that all armed forces and groups in the country "shall come under command and control of the transitional government" (V(1)). Actually getting to that point is recognised as the most difficult but important part of the entire peacebuilding process. By early 2002, military force remained highly decentralised and under the command of self-appointed military leaders. To counteract this, the United States and others had started training units designated to form a national army under the control of the Afghan Interim Authority headed by Karzai. At the same time, new police units appeared in Kabul and other main cities, partly, it seemed, composed of rehatted ex-militia members.

As noted in the previous chapter, the UN has never before tried to forge a national army out of various warlord factions. To do so in the absence of a peace agreement that represents at least a preliminary consensus among the opposing factions is difficult in the extreme. Nevertheless, when and if the Afghans reach that point they can draw upon a substantial body of experience regarding demobilisation, reintegration of ex-combatants, and control of small arms

Security sector reform is defined variously. OECD/DAC uses a narrow definition, adopted in 2000, which covers "state institutions that have a formal mandate to ensure the safety of the state and its citizens against acts of violence and aggression (e.g. the armed forces, the police, the intelligence services and similar bodies)" (OECD 2000). Many experts use a broader definition in which the security sector includes not only the military and police, but also the penal and justice system, and institutions to ensure civilian supremacy over the armed forces (Ball 2002). In practice, the wider sector has increasingly been targeted for reform in post-war situations, although so did some of the early peace agreements of the 1990s, notably in El Salvador.

There are several studies of security sector reforms in specific areas such as programmes to demobilise and reintegrate ex-combatants. Assessment of the security sector as a whole is more complicated. Reform programmes have differed in scope, and progress has often been uneven as between sub-sectors. For instance, the focused programme of demilitarisation, demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants in Namibia is generally considered a success, although the Mozambican equivalent less so (Ginifer 2001). Modest attempts to disarm warlord factions in Somalia made some progress in 1992 and early 1993, but a more aggressive policy in this regard failed disastrously in the second half of the year. Early attempts to reform the police in Haiti after the restoration of President Aristide (1994) failed. The programme for demilitarisation and weapons collection in Mali (1996) was a success. The comprehensive security sector reforms specified by the peace agreements in Nicaragua, El Salvador and, more recently, Guatemala, have been more successful in

some areas (e.g. reforming the army) than others (transitional justice). The comprehensive peace agreement for Angola (Lusaka 1994) unravelled *in toto* three years after it was signed, rendering the provisions for security sector reform irrelevant.

This chapter will focus on the experience within the security sector as narrowly understood, particularly with respect to

- collection and control of small arms
- demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants
- reform/rebuilding of the police

All have clear relevance to the Afghan situation.

12.1   Collection and control of small arms

A common scenario after civil wars is where two ore more actors (armies, militias, factions, rebels) have agreed to establish a common national army. In this case, downsizing the respective armies is done by demobilising a given number of soldiers on both sides, and decommissioning the surplus arms. However, lack of trust among the demobilising actors usually remains, making the downsizing a volatile process. The danger of reversals is particularly acute if small arms are readily available.

The successful collection of arms collections in a demobilisation/decommissioning programme requires that this aspect is carefully built into the programme. The point is not only to get the soldiers out of the uniforms, but also for international or other appropriate agents to collect their weapons. This elementary point was insufficiently stressed in some of the early demobilisation programmes, particularly in Mozambique. When the war ended in 1992, there were millions of uncontrolled arms in the country, but the UN mission (UNOMOZ) paid insufficient attention to verifying arms depots and caches and to collecting and destroying small arms. The failure to collect weapons contributed to the proliferation of illegal arms in the southern African region as a whole (CMI 1997, Kingma 2000).

Mutual mistrust and fear of being attacked often make the protagonists stockpile arms for future use. They may also attempt to rearm by purchasing weapons. Weapons collection in a post-war situation is made more difficult by the ease with which guerrilla and armies can rearm themselves through legal and illicit arms purchases. Programmes to collect arms after a war, or when a conflict is winding down, must therefore be seen in relation to the broader problem of the proliferation of small arms. People in war-torn regions typically have easy access to the accumulated stores of illegal weapons. In southern Ethiopia, for example, the rural population has picked up arms drifting across the border from the civil war in southern Sudan. Prolonged conflict, although at varying levels of intensity, has left Somalia awash with weapons.

Many developing countries have become dumping grounds for "surplus weapons", thereby compounding the problems of disarming ex-belligerents or factions that remain opposed, as Gros (1996) shows with respect to various phases of the conflicts in Somalia, Rwanda and Liberia. There has been a rapid growth of international arms dealers following the off-lifting of huge surplus of weapons from the former Warsaw Pact countries. Attempts to halt the illicit weapons trade, which often violates UN

embargoes and principles of international law, have so far had little effect. In some cases, Western governments supply guerrillas or insurgent forces; in Afghanistan and Angola, sophisticated weapons (Stinger surface-to-air missiles) were covertly supplied to the Afghan *mujahedin* and the UNITA rebels.

Socio-cultural norms can be a serious barrier to arms collections. In some regions like the Horn of Africa and South Asia, the possession of weapons is not only culturally accepted but an integral part of a local "warrior culture" (Kingma and Grebreworld 1998). In the Pakistan-Afghanistan border area, carrying arms is a central element in the constitution of male identity and masculinity. In older times weapons were less readily available and mostly limited to simple bolt-action types such as the .303 Lee Enfield. In recent years the term "Kalashnikov culture" has come into use, reflecting the proliferation of arms and common resort to violence in the Pashtun belt straddling the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

Twenty years of warfare in Afghanistan have flooded the Pakistani border areas with weapons. Pakistan became a major conduit for the supply of arms to the Afghan *mujahedin*, as Smith (1993) carefully documents, but a large part of the arms supply was siphoned off en route. A lucrative illegal arms trade developed in the regions straddling the border. In particular, it flooded the North-West Frontier Province with automatic arms and reinforced the local "Kalashnikov culture". Attempts by the Pakistani authorities to disarm the population by force have failed, as have weapons amnesties. Under these circumstances, the overall impact of even a successful arms collection programme in Afghanistan, such as a UNDP cash-for-arms scheme, will be limited.

The proliferation of small arms fuels conflict and increases the likelihood of violence. In the Pakistan-Afghanistan border region, easy access to lethal arms tends to reinforce male status rivalry and aggravate lethal conflict. Weak or absent police authority often makes the development go unchecked. Detailed studies from Uganda and Ethiopia likewise demonstrate how the proliferation of light arms in the countryside escalates ethnic and regional conflict and increases local animosities. Attempts to disarm villagers have been ineffective, as Mirzeler and Young (2000) and Abbink (1993) have shown for Uganda and Ethiopia respectively.

Other socio-cultural issues complicate programmes to demobilise armed civilians and *ad hoc* militias, such as those in Afghanistan. Instead of being full-time soldiers in a regular army, many soldiers are armed civilians who are part-time members of irregular forces and militias. They represent a fluctuating force that can be called out on short notice, and hence are difficult to demobilise on a permanent basis. Because of the cultural affinity with weapons ("warrior culture"), they resist surrendering their arms, which are stockpiled rather than decommissioned. In this situation, the collection of small arms is most effective if targeted towards the individual ex-soldier, and provides an economic incentive to surrender the arms.

Even such "buy-back programmes" are not unproblematic, however. Schemes to pay individual soldiers a cash amount for surrendering their arms have been effective in an immediate sense in some countries (Mali, El Salvador), but their overall utility has been questioned (Kühne et al. 1998). The United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) decided not to launch a buy-back programme because the spread

of weapons on the hands of individuals, and a thriving black market, made it administratively too complicated. Buy-back schemes, moreover, can reinforce existing black-market trade in arms by increasing the demand for weapons. Rather than remove arms, it may simply move arms from one region to the other and encourage an influx of new arms.

The Somali case exemplifies the problems of arms collection. Launched in 1992 under UN resolution 794, Operation Restore Hope (December 1992–March 1993) was the most costly (US$ 1.5 billion) peacekeeping and humanitarian operations ever (Ahmed and Green 1999). It was also a foreign-imposed attempt to disarm unwilling factions, undertaken as part of an intervention without permission from the government, which had ceased to exist. Initially, there was sharp disagreement over whether the factions should be disarmed. UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali wanted the US-led Unified Task Force (UNITAF) to disarm the factions, while the government did not consider it essential to the principal objective of the mission, which was to protect humanitarian supplies. Nevertheless, UNITAF collected almost 1.3 million rounds of ammunition, 2,255 small arms and 636 heavy arms. While often forgotten in the debacle that followed, this was a substantial haul. It is nevertheless true that the figure pales in comparison with the almost half a million light weapons presumed to be present in the capital Mogadishu alone (Weiss 1999).

The proliferation of arms in Somalia was the result of extensive illegal arms transfers to Somalia from Ethiopia and Eritrea. Moreover, despite the fact that some weapons were confiscated, the social conditions that would make their continued use superfluous were never created in Somalia.[13] The presence of numerous humanitarian organisations indirectly contributed to this state of affairs as well by having to buy "protection" and other services from the militia leaders.[14]

The Somali intervention underwent what is known as "mission creep" whereby the limited objective of feeding starving Somalis was superseded by others, such as disarming certain factions. Trying to disarm the forces loyal to Farah Aideed, even putting a bounty on Aideed's head, made the UN/US forces take sides in a local conflict. In a simplistic reading of the events, the lesson later became known as "don't cross the Mogadishu line", i.e. that the UN should never again attempt aggressively to disarm paramilitary groups. The UN mission was terminated in March 1995.

12.2 Demobilisation

Demobilisation forms a key part of the post-conflict phase. A major World Bank study claims that demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants are essential for the effective transition from war to peace (Colletta et al. 1996). Demobilisation is generally easiest to realise when the warring parties have reached a peace settlement, and, ideally, is followed by reintegration into the civilian economy. Internationally

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[13] There was also a large number of heavy weapons left over from the ousted president Siad Barre period, (Luling 1997).
[14] For instance, the insecurity and proliferation of weapons forced the International Red Cross (IRC) to pay in the order of US$ 100,000 per week as "protection money" to factional militias in order to safeguard the distribution of emergency relief. CARE, which was responsible for distributing emergency relief, spent the same amount per month. The lesson from these two cases is that when "warlordism" prevails, it incurs huge financial costs that inadvertently contribute to the formation of a war economy where factions and commanders thrive (Ahmed and Green 1999).

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supported demobilisation programmes in the 1990s typically involved a package of assembly, disarmament, administration and discharge of former combatants, who receive some form of compensation package or other assistance such as re-training (Jensen 1999).

The most extensive approach is known as Demobilisation and Reintegration Programmes (DRPs). DRPs provide information/counselling skills training, cash payments and micro-credit facilities tailored to the special needs of rural and urban ex-combatants. The main ingredients of a standard DRP are presented schematically below:

Demobilisation and reintegration programmes (DRPs)

Targeting Categorisation	Demobilisation Assembly	Reinsertion Safety net package	Reintegration Rural/urban integration
Target groups	Pre-discharge orientation	Severance pay	Employment
Targeting mechanisms	Transition allowance	Cash benefits	Education
Discharge certificate	Transportation	Health benefits	Training
	Post-discharge orientation	Education/housing support	Economic reintegration

In most cases, the DRPs function as add-ons to larger peacebuilding processes and must be integrated with these. DRPs are complex, time-consuming and, because of this, very costly. In fact, the costs associated with DRPs have undermined the claim to an economic post-war "peace dividend". DRPs require significant external aid, and the most successful programmes have been those receiving the most foreign donor assistance and funding (Ball and Campbell 1998, Jackson 2001). Despite the recognised importance of demobilisation for peacebuilding, many DRPs are severely underfunded, as case studies from the Horn of Africa have shown.[15]

The World Bank's detailed review of the DRP process in Ethiopia during 1991–92 shows that the total cost for the Ethiopia programme was US$ 195.5 million, of which the Government of Ethiopia paid US$ 67.6 million (35% of total), and the donors (including NGOs) US$ 127.8 million (64%) (Colletta et al. 1996). The biggest donor contribution came from the EC and its member states (US$ 30.4 million), amounting to 16% of the total. About 170,000 of the about 455,000 demobilised soldiers, were selected for a rural integration packet, while about 100,000 were selected for the urban integration packet. Among the latter, about 6,000 were included in the new national army. Overall, the cost per demobilised soldier was about US$ 400, thus significantly lower than those in Namibia (US$ 1,200) and Uganda (US$ 1,100).

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[15] During the 1990s, the World Bank increased its involvement in demobilisation efforts and operations, but did not become a major donor to demobilisation programmes. In Ethiopia and Uganda, World Bank funding was respectively one and seven per cent of the grand total, see (Kingma and Grebreworld 1998). The Bank has, however, played an important role as co-ordinator of aid and of the many NGOs involved in the demobilisation exercises.

Some demobilisation programmes require additional "downstream" financing to make them effective, thus pushing up the cost further. This was the case of the land-for-arms deal in El Salvador (see chp. 5 below), where it was found that soldiers-turned-farmers required additional credit and training in order to be effective. In the absence of such support, they became impoverished and indebted.

The economic reintegration of ex-combatants has proved difficult in almost all cases. This is due to low level of skills and formal education among ex-combatants, as well as the poverty in their home region. Ex-combatants return to their original communities, where they rely on informal networks for finding work, establishing contacts etc. Externally assisted retraining or other support programmes can supplement these resources but are often insufficient. In Mozambique, where a major reintegration support programme was established, 71 per cent of all demobilised soldiers were still unemployed five years after the 1992 cease-fire (Ginifer 2001). Comparable studies from other Namibia, Uganda and Ethiopia show a much lower unemployment rate, suggesting that the Mozambican programme suffered from a particular tension between short-term pacification and long-term reintegration. The programme did achieve its main goal of rapidly demobilising close to 100,000 ex-soldiers. Economic and social integration among ex-combatants, however, which depends heavily on macro-economic conditions and general development programmes (See ch. 5).

Apart from the economic obstacles to reintegration, there are social and psychological barriers. Some of these can be overcome through the exercise of traditional social rituals, as Jackson (2001) argues in the case of Mozambique. Other studies claim that ex-combatants in Mozambique were much less alienated from their communities of origin than often assumed (Schafer 2001). Contrary to popular belief, there was little evidence of a systematic brutalisation of ex-combatants, many of whom retained their moral beliefs and community codes of conduct. This is consistent with the general conclusion drawn from World Bank reviews of the demobilisation of ex-combatants: economic, rather than psychological problems, are key to reintegration.

A main difficulty of demobilisation programmes is to correctly identify beneficiaries for assistance. Typical problems include:
- paying inadequate attention to vulnerable sections of soldier families, especially women and children and the disabled;
- determining the number of ex-combatants, which may be inflated as non-combatants try to pass for soldiers in order to obtain the benefits package. Some ex-soldiers try to register twice for assistance;
- targeting ex-combatants at the expense of non-combatants can create resentment and unrest among the local population;
- DRPs generally target "foot soldiers", less attention is given to officers and other military staff.

A separate debate concerns the relative merits of cash vs. material assistance to demobilised soldiers. Some observers argue that the money received in such packages often is spent "unwisely" and that the beneficiaries would be better served by in-kind and material assistance. Studies from Mozambique contradict this claim, showing that demobilised soldiers not only invested the money in small-scale business and housing, but that more than 50 per cent of the beneficiaries had been able to save some money

(CMI 1997). In order to extend benefits over time, payments were disbursed bi-monthly rather than as a lump sum and paid locally to encourage beneficiaries to settle in their home areas.

Demobilisation programmes depend heavily upon the outcome of the war itself. Conflicts of state formation that result in new states are at times followed by substantial demobilisation on both sides, leaving only the core required for defence in peacetime. Thus, after gaining independence from Ethiopia in 1993, Eritrea undertook an oft-cited, successful demobilisation. A new national army was created from a large contingent of Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) forces. The remaining EPLF soldiers were demobilised and their weapons collected. In Ethiopia, the conditions for demobilisation differed in some respects, but because also the soldiers of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) could consider themselves victors in the war, the soldiers benefited from large-scale support for demobilisation. This facilitated the process of reintegration. One study found that half a million demobilised soldiers were generally well reintegrated in the rural economy (Dercon and Ayalew 1998).

The Ethiopian case is especially important considering the fact that it was by far the largest demobilisation effort to have taken place in Africa, and much larger than that in Mozambique (90,000), Eritrea (48,000), Uganda (36,000), Namibia (43,000) and the approximately 73,000 government and UNITA soldiers in Angola.[16] In Ethiopia, Namibia and Uganda, most ex-combatants joined their old communities and most were treated fairly although stigmatisation did occur. More fundamentally, it suggests that social reintegration is a long-term process and – in divided societies – part of a broader reconciliation process.

12.3 Reforming the police

A "security gap" with respect to internal policing often occurs in an immediate post-war situation. The police may have been militarised during the conflict, have lost all credibility among opponents of the state, and/or be associated with human rights violations. If the conflict has resulted in a new state, it is more a question of creating a new police force than reforming the old, which is de-legitimised by the separation or has departed.

While not a new state, Afghanistan falls in the last category insofar as the police of the previous Taliban regime were instituted to enforce Islamic law (hence popularly called "Vice and Virtue"), and departed with the regime. By early 2002, some local police had appeared, evidently composed of new recruits and rehatted militia members. Foreign governments prepared training programmes, with Germany taking the lead in Kabul.

As a rule, police reform is a complex and long-term process, whether the new units are recruited afresh from civilians and demobilised soldiers, or selected by vetting and retooling members of the previous force. It not only requires technical training and supervision, but involves institution building that entails commitment and monitoring over a long period. As noted in the Somalian case (ch.3), institution building in the

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[16] Renewed war between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1998 led to rearmament and, possibly, to a reversal of the demobilisation efforts of 1992 (Jackson 2001).

police sector also requires establishing a legitimate political authority to which the new force is accountable, or it risks rapid failure.

While police reform is now recognised as an essential part of peacebuilding, experience from many cases underlines the difficulties involved.

Donors do not always have the staying power required, preferring projects that yield immediate results, or change their mind for political reasons. In Haiti, for example, donors pledged US$ 2.8 billion in 1995 for political and economic restructuring after a UN-authorised intervention had restored the elected government of Aristide. When the government failed to comply with the requirements for economic reform, donors withheld more than half of the funds committed. The cutback also affected the establishment of a new Haitian police force.

The high cost of international peacekeeping personnel is an incentive for intervening states to fill some of the "security gap" by rapidly establishing a local police. Quick-fix solutions of this kind rarely work, however, as demonstrated in both Haiti (see below) and Somalia.

The formalities of UN funding penalise the development of local police capacity. International police (UN/CIVPOL) are covered by UN assessed contributions when part of a peacekeeping mission, but local police reform is financed by voluntary contributions. In East Timor, this resulted in the UN prolonging the presence of an expensive CIVPOL force, while plans to deploy Timorese police were delayed due to lack of funds for training.

Turning demobilised soldiers into police can work well and solve two problems at once in the transition period. The experience of Namibia a decade ago is a case in point. However, it may also go disastrously wrong, as the initial experience in Haiti demonstrated (see below). The screening and training of new police members are especially important when they are recruited from demobilised soldiers or paramilitary forces of varying quality.

Shaping an old police force into a new and reformed body requires a clear commitment by the parties concerned. Even so, the task is hampered by the legacy of violence that typically reproduces itself in widespread criminality in the post-war phase. In El Salvador, the peace treaty specified comprehensive reforms, including disbanding the old police force and creating a new civilian force. Disbanding the old force proved difficult and was delayed. The new police force received adequate training but the violent environment limited its operational efficiency, as did political meddling in the reform process. The new and old police forces were monitored in the field by UN/CIVPOL, but still committed human rights violations.

By contrast, reconstituting the police in Bosnia has been problematic, partly because remnants of the old political and police system remain to block change. International supervision of police reform is specified in great detail in the Dayton Agreement (Annex 11), and the task was given to an international force under UN command (IPTF). Yet, authorities at various levels in the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which control the respective police force, were slow to cooperate with the UN mission. The Republika Srpska did not sign a framework

agreement with the UN mission to this effect until late 1998, at which time similar negotiations with the Federation were still ongoing.

The quality of the international instruments of reform has also been an issue. In the past, UN/CIVPOL has often provided on-the-job training as well as monitoring of the local police. However, the institution of CIVPOL has recognised weaknesses that repeatedly surface. Staffed by police forces from different countries, it takes time to deploy. Language and social barriers usually compromise operational efficiency. Varying standards of police conduct in the home country produce unreliable monitoring and at times questionable role models. Growing awareness of these problems has not led to radical improvement, as suggested by the recent CIVPOL mission in East Timor (see below). Similarly, the ITFP charged with reforming the police in Bosnia has had a mixed record, marred by low administrative efficiency and highly publicised cases of corruption (IPA 2001).

The formal training part of police reform (through police academies) has typically been aided through bilateral channels or a "coalition of the willing" (e.g. in both Haiti in 1994-95 and East Timor currently). The model seems to be of growing interest for implementing police reform. When the mandate of the UN's ITPF mission in Bosnia expired last year, it was replaced by an EU mission. In Afghanistan, as noted, individual donors rather than a UN mission are set to train the police.

Recognising that reforming or establishing a local police is a long-term task makes it more pressing to find solutions for the "police gap" in the short run. The main options are a) adequate monitoring or mentoring of a local interim force, and/or b) improving CIVPOL or an equivalent institution.

A related security gap concerns border control. This was a major concern in Bosnia. With Bosnia having no common police and no common army, the international community pressed for the creation of a common Border Service to curtail smuggling, human trafficking and other crime. So far, it has been an uphill battle (see below), and leaves a discouraging lesson for Afghanistan where border control is also a major issue.

These problems, and some progress, are illustrated by four cases: Haiti, El Salvador, Bosnia and East Timor.

Haiti

The US-led Multinational Mission (MNF) that intervened in Haiti in September 1994 immediately started to demobilise the military as part of the mission to restore the civilian, elected government of Aristide. The demobilised soldiers were not given pensions and back wages, however. Dissatisfaction and violence ensued. To deal with the problem of unemployed, angry soldiers, as well as the deteriorating law and order situation, the MNF and its successor mission (UNMIH) hastily put many of the former soldiers into an interim police force. The new force proved unreliable and, with its members having served a repressive regime responsible for massive human rights violations, had no credibility among the population.

For a short while, UN peacekeeping troops under UNMIH filled part of the "security gap", but the force was scaled back in mid-1996 and changed to a mission that would

be financed by voluntary contributions. By late 1996, the successor mission counted only 600 persons, compared to the original 6000. International efforts to establish a Haitian National Police (HNP) continued, mainly with bilateral aid in cooperation with the UN mission. Despite considerable funding to recruit, train and equip the new force (the US alone contributed $70 million) and an increase in numbers (the HNP in 1998 had 6,500 men), there were serious problems of discipline, corruption, and human rights violations.

The problem was partly the composition – the force was largely made up of former soldiers – but, more fundamentally, the lack of institutions or traditions to support a professional police force. Haiti's previous police had been the notorious "tonton macoutes". Both the police and the military had traditionally been used as instruments of political violence by the ruling elite. By 2000, critics charge, the HNP had become a partisan instrument of the Aristide government (Maguire et al. 1996, Fagen 2001).

El Salvador

The 1992 peace accords that ended the civil war in El Salvador stipulated that the notorious National Guard and Treasury Police should be abolished, and the National Police (PN) phased out over a two-year transition period to give way to a new National Civil Police (PNC) that would be institutionally separated from the armed forces. The transition was made difficult by the fact that the PN was composed of soldiers who would soon be retrenched, and who blamed the UN for their predicament. While the PN was gradually reduced, violent crime (executions, torture) and other illegal activities increased.

CIVPOL, established under the UN mission for El Salvador (UNOSAL), was to monitor the PN in the phasing-out process. The UN Police Division, which included a Human Rights Division, had inadequate systems for guiding the police observers and cataloguing violations by the PN. CIVPOL's mandate was vague, and there was nothing in the peace accords specifying exactly what "accompanying" the PN meant. CIVPOL officers were unarmed and lacked arrest authority. This limited their role in the heavily armed and violent environment, but also underlined their impartiality and allowed them to mediate in conflicts (Stanley and Loosle Online).

The new police force (PNC) was to be trained in the National Public Security Academy. The limited timeframe for setting up the Academy, only 10 weeks, made it difficult to find enough suitable recruits. Many former members of the security force concealed their affiliation and covertly applied for admission. To counteract this, recruitment was intensified and the benefits and salaries of the PNC improved to make it more attractive. Shortly after its creation, the academy was staffed with 2,200 cadets. By February 1993 the first recruits graduated. As the PNC began to deploy, ONUSAL (CIVPOL) provided on-the-job training.

The institutional organisation of the Academy involved ONUSAL in cooperation with individual donor states, which provided technical experts, and national advisory commissions of El Salvador. Establishing the Academy is considered a successful part of the peace process and a role model for Latin America. Still, as McCormick (1997) notes, other aspects of the police reform were hotly contested and suffered serious setbacks.

In 1993-94, human rights violations by the PNC increased, and, at the same time, the demobilisation of the PN was temporarily stopped in order to combat the soaring crime rate. In 1995, the police reform process was again questioned, and the PNC came under increasing criticism for its worsening human rights record. There was also concern that the PNC was being militarised as former soldiers found their way into the Academy. The government's decision to increase the size of the force (to a final strength of 20,000) may have worsened the problem. In order to continue monitoring the security reforms, the UN mission to El Salvador was extended to April 1995.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Restructuring, reform and democratisation of the police in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) was an important part of the Dayton Agreement. Because the various police forces had become militarised and had participated in the war, the international community considered police reform vital to establish public order and instil sufficient confidence for refugees to return.

The international police force (IPTF) assembled by the UN mission in Bosnia (UNMIBH) to oversee police reform encountered a host of problems. Police salaries were low and corruption high. Almost half of the police lived in somebody else's property, which did not instil much confidence in public order or for the refugees to return (UN 2001). Local authorities frequently did not want to decertify members of "their" police that the IPTF required. The absence of a common ministry in charge of police for all of BiH was a fundamental structural problem because it relegated police authority to lower-level institutions that accommodated nationalist rather than pluralist interests.

With no common police and no common army, border control in the new state was a major issue for the international community. The 55-member Peace Implementation Council demanded in 1997 that a common, multiethnic Border Service be established to curtail smuggling (of drugs, people, money etc) and prevent crime. The Council pledged initial financing and asked the international Office of the High Representative (OHR) to initiate the process. The first unit was to be operational by the end of 1999. By the time the Council met in June 2000, however, there had been little progress. The (common) parliament had made its stand by rejecting the draft legislation prepared by the OHR. The vote reflected strong opposition to common institutions at many levels in the new state, as well as vested interests in a porous border.

East Timor

The UN peacekeeping force deployed to East Timor in the wake of the 1999 referendum included a CIVPOL unit of 1,640 officers from 41 countries. Their mandate was to keep law and order in an interim period, and to help set up a new Timorese police force (the East Timor Police Service, ETPS).

A number of factors compromised CIVPOL operational ability. This included language barriers, low motivation in the force and, in some cases, failure to complete their duties, or professional misconduct that went unpunished. The contingent had little knowledge of local culture, traditional justice or the Indonesian/Timorese penal code. These shortcomings also affected the quality of the on-the-job training given by CIVPOL to the new Timorese police.

The formation of a new Timorese police force was a relatively smooth process compared with other cases. Yet the problems that surfaced are indicative of structural constraints that under less favourable conditions might have far more negative consequences. A recent evaluation (Mobekk 2001) lists several:

- A new Timorese police academy (assisted by bilateral donors) planned to recruit and train 3,000 police officers, but the schedule was delayed due to lack of funding.
- The cadets received minimal training (3 months) and the curriculum was weak.
- The recruitment process was potentially subject to political considerations since the political wing of the Timorese resistance movement, the CNRT, participated in the vetting process to ensure that candidates had not served in a compromised position in the previous Indonesian-controlled police.
- The ETPS did not carry arms. Together with the timidity and inexperience of the cadets, it was feared this could make them instruments of local vested interests.

The more general lesson from East Timor, according to the evaluation, is that judicial and penal reform must be conducted concurrently with police reform.

13.   Economic recovery and reconstruction

Financial support for economic reconstruction after a war is not only considered a moral obligation towards civilians who suffered during the conflict, but may also be necessary to stabilise the country and strengthen the peace process. However, according to a recent review (Woodward 2002) there has been no systematic analysis of the contribution of economic factors to success or failure in implementing peace agreements. One explanation may be that economic aspects of the peace process take a back seat to security concerns. Some studies claim that peace agreements are achieved at the cost of ignoring the economic issues that led to war, as in Namibia and South Africa. In neither case were major issues of land and income inequality included in the peace process. Some peace agreements do not address economic reconstruction at all.

Economic resources nevertheless matter. It is not only the volume of aid and internal resources that can make or break a peace process; the kind of resources, the purposes for which they are released, channels, timing and conditionalities can be equally important. Crucial issues include how to fund core government functions; whether the revived economy is contributing to implementing the peace accords and addressing some of the root causes of the conflict; and under what conditions a revived economy will generate sufficient employment and income to counteract the legacy of the war economy. The international debate on whether there is a financial "gap" between humanitarian assistance and development activities, however, seems less important.

13.1   Economic recovery policies must respond to basic country conditions

Just as political reconstruction has to take into account specific country conditions and the characteristics of the war, economic reconstruction has to start from the basic conditions of the economy in question. While some countries had a relatively developed economy before and even during the conflict, other countries were very poor and aid-dependent; some sustained heavy war damage, and some were dominated by an illegal war economy. The following characteristics must be taken into account when assessing the type, speed and volume of post-war recovery:

1. *Level of development:* El Salvador, Kosovo, Bosnia & Herzegovina, as well as Namibia and Palestine, were middle-income countries, with GDP per capita between USD 1000 and 2000 at the starting point of the recovery process. This implies a considerably higher capacity to absorb aid than in very poor countries such as Afghanistan, Cambodia, Mozambique, East Timor, Sierra Leone and Liberia, with GDP per capita closer to USD 200 or below, i.e. five or ten times less than the former group. Poor countries may be in greater need of external resources, but they are much more vulnerable to distortions produced by sudden or "bulky" aid, and have greater problems in turning externally funded projects into sustainable activities.

2. *Level and type of war damage:* Some countries, such as Afghanistan and Angola, have sustained enormous wartime destruction as well as human displacement and suffering. In other countries, such as El Salvador and Mozambique, the extent of physical damage was less but human suffering was considerable and economic development stalled. These and other differences mean that proper country-oriented

needs assessments are required. In Afghanistan, the widespread damage to physical infrastructure such as buildings, roads and irrigation systems may be an argument for prioritising rapid (and employment-intensive) reconstruction of these structures.

3. *The economy of war and alternative opportunities:* Some countries survived years of violent conflict on a subsistence economy, some were supported by international aid (Mozambique), while East Timor received extensive official transfers from the Indonesian occupying power. However, a parallel illegal war economy often developed, partly as a result of people's "coping strategies", and sometimes based on smuggling and/or drugs production and trafficking (Afghanistan, Cambodia, Colombia, Kosovo), or on extraction of natural resources (timber and diamonds in Angola, Cambodia, Sierra Leone). To reverse lucrative war economies in peace has proven extremely difficult, especially if employment generation and alternative opportunities in the regular economy are few and slow to develop.

4. *The capacity of the state apparatus:* Very poor post-war countries have limited public sector capacity to handle major reconstruction programmes and an influx of foreign aid. There are variations, however. Mozambique had a basic administration that functioned through the years of war and could continue after the peace accord. So did the regime that ruled Cambodia during the war of the 1980s. In other cases, the state administration had to be (re)constructed after the conflict (Kosovo and East Timor) and this is also the case in Afghanistan, although for different reasons. Limitations on state capacity in East Timor and Kosovo were partially compensated by the strong UN presence, but this is not contemplated in Afghanistan.

5. *Special needs of the peace process:* Some peace processes may require special economic measures to address the underlying causes of the conflict. In El Salvador a major land redistribution programme was initiated (while no such land redistribution took place in Namibia or South Africa). In Mozambique substantial funds were spent on the first elections and support to the transformation of Renamo into a political party (or in reality: a slush fund to "buy over" Renamo leaders). In most post-war situations, demobilisation is a costly but important exercise.

How do these dimensions apply to Afghanistan? Clearly, it is a very poor country with little public capacity to absorb and direct a reconstruction effort. Yet the need for reconstructing physical infrastructure is huge, while the challenge of generating employment and alternative economic opportunities to the prevailing war economy is enormous. It may be possible to start major employment-intensive reconstruction of infrastructure engaging the Afghan private sector, and the reintegration of armed militia and ex-soldiers is a priority here as in most post-war settings.

13.2   Bridging the gap between relief and development

The concept of transition from relief to development figured prominently on the reconstruction agenda in the early 1990s. The peace settlements in Central America became almost a laboratory for developing techniques for relief-to-development, exemplified by the CIREFCA/PRODERE programmes (del Castillo and Fahlen 1995). These experiences were followed up in Mozambique and Cambodia with a relatively high level of success. (see i.a. Crisp et al 1996 and Crisp and Mayne 1993) Other cases were less successful, however. Collaboration between humanitarian

agencies, development agencies and the government was difficult in Rwanda. In the Caucasus few donors were willing to fund the transitional phase, leaving the consolidated appeals practically without funding.

By the second half of the 1990s, UNHCR claimed there was a serious shortfall in funding for the reintegration and rehabilitation of returning refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs). At the same time the World Bank became increasingly involved in "post-conflict" rehabilitation, although without a full clarification of its mandate and financial basis for such operations in countries that were not eligible for regular credits and loans. Together, the two agencies initiated in late 1998 a series of consultations known as the "Brookings process" in order to seek new institutional and funding mechanisms for what they saw as a "transition gap".

It is doubtful, however, whether a "transition gap" actually exists. Agencies such as UNICEF and WFP cover all phases of a transition. During the 1990s most humanitarian agencies expanded dramatically in terms of both size and mandate to extend humanitarian relief far beyond immediate life-saving needs. This applied especially to the rehabilitation and reintegration of refugees and IDPs, which carried over into reconstruction and transition to development. At the same time, many development agencies expanded from the other direction to take on programmes for rehabilitation, reintegration and reconstruction, even reconciliation. The result is typically overlap and competition between humanitarian and development agencies, rather than a "gap".

In a review of UN agency experiences in several countries, including Central America, Mozambique, Cambodia, Rwanda and the Caucasus region, Ofstad et al (1999) concluded that "when a transition from conflict to peace is taking place with the full support and participation of national government institutions and with donors' backing, there is no real transition gap." They added, however, that when collaboration with the government is weak or lacking, or when donors for political or other reasons show little interest, it is difficult for the operational agencies to work out the mechanisms for transition.

Box 5.1: Bridging the transition "gap" in Mozambique

Mozambique is probably the best known case where a relatively smooth transition from relief to development occurred. The donors maintained their level of regular development funding during the later war period (1990-91), through the years of peacekeeping and elections (1992-94) into the period of peace consolidation (1995-99). The level was around USD 1,000 million annually. In addition, emergency humanitarian assistance of some USD 300-400 million annually was provided from 1987 to 1994, not counting the costs of the UN peacekeeping mission itself, which amounted to USD 493 million from UN assessed funds. As the special funding for humanitarian assistance as well as peacekeeping and elections ended, development funding for Mozambique did not increase to "take over" from these special programmes. It was nevertheless maintained at a relatively high level close to USD 1 billion. Higher levels might have been difficult to absorb effectively, and would have pushed Mozambique even deeper into aid dependency.

Bureaucratic and institutional hurdles nevertheless hamper the smooth funding of a relief-to-development transition. In Mozambique there were two parallel pledging processes: one for regular development purposes, and one for humanitarian needs. At the time, some donors found it controversial that the UNOHAC appeal for the humanitarian assistance programme included a developmental medium-term approach for the restoration of basic services and reintegration of war-affected populations. There was also some disagreement about the differentiation between humanitarian programmes and the special needs of peace implementation. Nevertheless, donors were quite willing to find the funds necessary to sustain the peace efforts, and to fund humanitarian needs as well as special needs for peace implementation and transition towards medium-term and long-term development. This should also be possible in Afghanistan, given the high level political interest in supporting the peacebuilding process there (Ball and Barnes 2000, Barnes 2001, CMI 1997.)

Rather than a "gap", the main problem is that the tasks during the transition period are often different from regular humanitarian and developmental operations, as is the political context (Ofstad et al 1999, Woodward 2002). There is a major gap between the mode of operation of the humanitarian and the economic development agencies. The humanitarians still have a short-term approach (and often one-year funding), and they place too little emphasis on local involvement, sustainability and institution building. In a post-war situation, they are less concerned about the larger political issues of peacebuilding, despite the tremendous recent growth of various "conflict resolution" and "peace" projects. At the same time, the standard policy models of the IFIs and the major donors – whether designed on the basis of post-war Europe, or the newer "Washington consensus" – have often failed to accommodate the weak institutional basis of post-war governments and the need to stabilise a typically fragile post-war settlement.

Some observers conclude that the relief-to-development "gap" represents the vacuum in financial *mechanisms* to facilitate the transition between emergency relief and long-term development (Forman 2000, Woodward 2002). The argument is that special

funding sources and mechanisms are needed for this purpose, otherwise the financing is voluntary and *ad hoc*. The argument is not convincing. All funding for humanitarian as well as development purposes is likely to remain voluntary and to a large extent *ad hoc*. A new mechanism will not solve that problem, and an additional mechanism raises the thorny question of which agency should control it. Naturally, the UN SRSGs and others in charge of supporting a peacebuilding operation wish to have access to special and flexible funding for priorities as they see them. However, many bilateral agencies as well as UN agencies are flexible when necessary and politically expedient, as demonstrated in the Mozambican case discussed above.

The World Bank has raised the issue of when the period of "post-conflict" ends and a situation of full "normalcy" has been restored. Some countries, such as Uganda, Mozambique and El Salvador, were able to complete this process in 3-5 years. The Bank's (1997) *Framework* paper defined the return to "normalcy" rather vaguely as "when the emergency phase is over and operations are once more carried out under normal lending procedures, and the consciousness of conflict begins to wane." A later study (1998) suggests the following indicators for return to regular Bank operations: a) macroeconomic stability and its likely sustainability, b) recovery of private sector confidence, as measured by the investment ratio, c) the effectiveness with which institutional arrangements and the political system are coping with the tensions, schisms and behaviour that lay behind the conflict to begin with.

These indicators for "normalcy" may be too demanding, given the weakness of the economic and institutional structures in many post-war countries, including Afghanistan. Better indicators may be a high rate of return and settlement of refugees and internally displaced people, and sharply reduced need for emergency aid such as free food. However, clear cut-off points may not be very important insofar as peacebuilding is a process that interacts closely with other development processes.

13.3 Funding for specific peacebuilding purposes can be crucial

Funding for peacebuilding implies contributing to reducing tensions and lowering the risk of renewed fighting, and often addressing some of the root causes of the conflict. Both humanitarian assistance and development programmes have paid increasing attention to these issues, and, as noted in previous chapters, some standard categories were identified early in the decade. By the end of the 1990s, the list typically included support for governance programmes, transitional justice, and security sector reform. Some innovative or politically sensitive projects, however, typically require dedicated donor funding and political courage.

Box 5.2.: Land reform as peacebuilding in El Salvador

The demobilisation programme in El Salvador was particularly designed to ease the transition and cement the peace process. It involved a transfer of land to former combatants of both sides and to supporters who had occupied land during the years of war. The highly unequal land ownership had been a major cause of the conflict, and the land programme was the main vehicle for reintegrating those most closely involved with the conflict into productive life. It was implemented as an arms-for-land exchange, by which the beneficiaries were to receive a low-cost credit to purchase land in return for their weapons.

According to the 1992 programme, some 47,500 families were to benefit: 7,500 ex-combatants from the FPML, 15,000 from the armed forces, and 25,000 land-holders in the former zones of conflict, at a cost of around USD 3000 per family. The first phase, to cover some 15,000 beneficiaries, was funded by the USAID. A second phase covering 4,000 families was funded by the EU, but under the conditions that only ex-combatants from FMLN and the army were to benefit, implying that the third important group was excluded from EU funding. The third phase became open-ended because of insufficient land and funding, and by the end of 1995 only some 31,000 families (60 per cent of target) had received their titles. The programme was further complicated by bureaucratic hurdles to entering these titles in the national land registry, as well as by conflict over land rights and unwillingness to be transferred.

Providing initial credit to purchase a small plot of land was insufficient, however, to make the beneficiaries self-sufficient. Given the lack of agricultural experience and the very small plots, even the maximum of agricultural credits and technical assistance contemplated under the programme was insufficient to enable to new farmers to produce enough to repay their loans. A one-time land programme such as this requires other factors and policies to make it sustainable and successful in the longer term. Despite delays and problems, however, the programme underlined the importance of addressing the root causes of the conflict by integrating ex-combatants and previously marginalised groups.

The Salvadoran experience also illustrates the difficulty of sustaining preferential treatment of one group over a period of time. While politically expedient immediately after the ceasefire agreement, over time the programme became a liability since others groups were equally poor but not benefiting. (del Castillo 1997, 2001)

In Mozambique, an important and innovative peacebuilding instrument was the "*Special fund for Renamo*". There were actually two trust funds established and supervised by the UN SRSG (Aldo Ajello) and the Italian ambassador. One was intended to facilitate the transformation of Renamo into a political party; the other provided funds for all registered political parties participating in the electoral campaign. While the latter received only USD 1.88 million, the Renamo Trust Fund ultimately received a total of USD 13.6 million. (Ball and Barnes 2000) The Renamo fund was essential to keep the former guerrilla movement on the peace track, despite – or because of – the fact that it mainly served as "slush money" for Renamo's leader

Dhlakama to keep the peace and for the leaders to enrich themselves. (CMI 1997). Some version of this Trust Fund may well be relevant in Afghanistan, to achieve the transformation of some of the commanders and local armies into more regular political and social entities.

Many observers and actors underline the importance of ensuring that the distribution of "peace dividends" be *equitable*. Otherwise, old or new divisions can easily be mobilised by dissatisfied parties to undermine a newly signed peace accord. Moreover, if equal access to land, education, health, etc is not addressed initially, then macroeconomic policies and growth patterns may easily institutionalise such inequalities and make them more difficult to change at a later stage (Woodward 2002).

The World Bank's (1998) case studies revealed several examples where the Bank either did not address emerging distributional imbalances or missed a significant opportunity to promote equitable development. The Bank cites concern that doing so may conflict with the Bank's mandate, which inhibits the Bank from addressing "political issues". Of course, this distinction is blurred when the Bank continually addresses a series of de facto political issues, including an increasing number related to governance. The study nevertheless recommends that the Bank recognise its potential to reduce the risk of a return to violence. In particular, it recommends that "economic and distributional policies and programmes that can avoid a slide into conflict within deeply divided societies should be pursued".

During the late 1990s the World Bank created special funds for demobilisation, de-mining, budgetary and recurrent expenditures, a political risk guarantee facility, "peace technology" and other peace projects. In his analysis of changes made between 1995 and 2000, Stevenson (2000) nevertheless concludes that the Bretton Woods Institutions "have not critically explored the connection between structural adjustment and peace, have only circumspectly approached the sensitive issue of security-sector conditionality, and have not optimally synchronised structural adjustment and development strategies with political efforts aimed at consolidating fragile peace agreements following protracted periods of armed conflict."

The most important lesson for Afghanistan is that donors need to be responsive to funding requests critical to the peace process, even if politically difficult or risky. The equity lesson obviously applies, given the risk of infighting and distrust among various faction leaders and other interest groups. The Salvadorian land distribution programme underlines the necessity of following up initial aid interventions, and the Mozambican experience of support to political transformation of armed guerrillas is worth considering.

13.4   Funding of core state functions – with caution

Donors are normally reluctant to allocate development aid to budget support for governments, and even more reluctant to fund recurrent expenditure on salaries for public workers – except as part of an IMF-supported structural adjustment and debt rescheduling. Humanitarian assistance is never provided as budget support, and governments involved in civil wars are less likely to receive direct funding. However, in the immediate aftermath of a peace settlement it is crucial that a credible and legitimate state apparatus is (re)established and that it can provide core government

services to the population. Experience has shown that external funding may be essential until the state can collect revenue from its regular sources.

The lessons from Cambodia in this respect are relevant to Afghanistan. When UNTAC arrived following the 1991 Paris peace treaty, the government was in the middle of a fiscal crisis. There had been practically no international aid apart from very substantial military assistance from Vietnam and the Soviet Union throughout the previous decade, and printing money had resulted in hyperinflation reaching 150% in 1991. By not raising civil servant salaries to match inflation or simply not paying salaries at all, government morale and effectiveness had been steadily eroded. Public sector capital investment had sunk to practically nothing (Kato 1997).

During the transitional period under UNTAC, programme and budget aid to Cambodia was almost completely absent. Only USD 18 million out of the USD 112 million appeal had arrived by the end of the transition period, and most of this at the end, just after the elections. Apart from general donor reluctance to provide budget and balance of payments support, Western governments did not trust the Vietnamese-supported, senior partner in the transitional coalition (SoC), and the US regarded it as an adversary. To prevent a new round of hyperinflation in 1992, the SoC reached an agreement with the IMF to stop printing money and place cash limits on wages and salaries, under UNTAC supervision. In the absence of budget support, by early 1993 average civil service salaries had fallen to less than 25 percent of their value in early 1992 and were paid less and less regularly. This prompted UNTAC to induce the SoC to introduce new taxes and improve the collection of existing ones. New taxes on hotel services, vehicle licensing and revised customs duties improved revenue dramatically after July 1993. By the end of the year, the government was able to pay government salaries (albeit low ones) out of revenue for the first time in decades.

The importance of budgetary support for recurrent costs has nevertheless been accepted, and such support has been forthcoming, as in the case of the Johan Jørgen Holst Fund for the Palestine Administrative Authorities, and the World Bank supported fund for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Palestine budget has not only run large deficits, however, but has also generated serious allegations of corruption. This case illustrates the importance of public accountability and transparency during peacebuilding processes, but also indicates there is a difficult trade-off between the politics of peace processes and democratic accountability (Sørbø et al 2000).

Efforts to (i) reduce the size of the public sector and (ii) raise revenues beyond the exigencies of the situation may, however, be counterproductive to peacebuilding efforts. For example, in Uganda pressures by the IMF and World Bank for an increased tax effort had a "chilling" effect on private investment, driving economic activities into subsistence and the informal sector, or abroad, according to the Bank's own evaluation (World Bank 1998). This was attributable in particular to a history of "predatory" government tax policy during the years of conflict.

In Cambodia the World Bank continued to push for a downsizing of the civil service even when the political coalition arrangement under the peace accord was based in part on raising the size of the civil service to absorb the large number of incoming parties' functionaries. The Bank's 1998 evaluation found that this position was clearly not politically realistic from the outset.

The story was nevertheless apparently repeated in East Timor, where the IFIs pushed for a small public sector as a matter of principle. One consequence was the sharp reduction in state agricultural extension services. In an overwhelmingly agricultural economy that was dependent on a functioning extension service, this policy had potentially very serious implications (Fox 2001).

It is nevertheless important for post-war governments to maintain a curb on their public expenditures and initiate new budget revenues to strengthen the public sector and basic services to the population. As argued by Vito Tanzi of the IMF, the initial lack of institutions should be taken seriously, for example in the design of taxation that does not require sophisticated systems of collection and revenue management, as are required for income taxes. Countries should be urged to begin simply, such as with excise taxes, which are the easiest to raise, and not add complexity until the state is able to manage that complexity (Woodward 2000). In East Timor, UNTAET considered taxing NGOs and other aid-funded activities and imports, as there were few other options.

For Afghanistan, it is crucial for government stability and credibility that wages and salaries are paid during the fragile post-war transition period. Given the limited national sources, donors will have to provide budget support even to cover running costs, at least in the short term. Donors are often reluctant to provide budget support unless there are strong political reasons and trust. Some donors have already provided budget support, which shows that this issue is being confronted in Afghanistan.

However, it is of equal importance that the new post-war regime finds a national revenue base to fund its running costs. Caution is needed to find a balance between the long-term revenue base, and public expenditures. Experience has shown that standardised packages from the IMF and World Bank will not necessarily be optimal, and all concerned donors therefore have to consider options with the government.

13.5   Stimulate the regular economy and generate employment

Economic conditions often worsen in the immediate post-war period, although positive exceptions exist, such as Mozambique. Growing inequalities and hardship may fuel increased violence from crime or social crises after a peace agreement. According to one analyst, these outcomes have tended to be judged as regrettable but inevitable, rather than as a result of policy choice (Woodward 2002). As discussed above, Afghanistan has a poor war-related economic base, which includes production of drugs (opium), smuggling and other irregular economic activities. It will be a major challenge to create a sound basis for normal economic activity. In the meantime, conditions seem ripe for a major effort using external funding for employment-intensive reconstruction of damaged physical infrastructure.

The World Bank evaluation (1998) confirmed that rebuilding *physical infrastructure* is a critical need in most post-conflict countries, and an area where the Bank found it had a comparative advantage. The sectors typically most important for facilitating recovery are well-known areas such as roads, transportation, power, telecommunications, basic housing, water and sanitation. However, in these sectors too the Bank usually insists on policy and institutional reforms. Policy reforms may well also be required in Afghanistan, but timing and sequencing is important given the

desperate need for repair of infrastructure and employment creation. Basic works should not be delayed by the anticipation of policy reforms.

The repair and reconstruction of physical infrastructure have often been combined with food-for-work programmes. The payment of wages should be monetised as soon as possible, however, as soon as regular markets for food become available. WFP follows similar policies, that food-for-work should be implemented only where food markets do not function, and projects should primarily focus on improving food security.

Interestingly, restoration of *human and social capital* has not been a priority for World Bank support in post-war contexts, despite the general emphasis given to these sectors in overall Bank policies. The Bank study (1998) finds, however, that in countries where the conflict has practically eradicated the whole education system, as in Rwanda, a case can be made for international aid to secondary and tertiary education, as well as to basic education. This is contrary to the Bank's conventional wisdom at present, which argues that secondary and tertiary education should be self-financing and privatised, while only basic education is worthy of aid. In post-war countries an additional rationale for paying attention to the secondary level is to enhance employment opportunities for young ex-combatants who left primary school to take up arms. Both of these arguments are very relevant to Afghanistan.

According to the World Bank study (1998) the Bank supported policy reforms in all post-war cases, aiming at macroeconomic stability. In most cases, the study found, the negotiated *monetary and fiscal stabilisation packages were essential* for reducing the rate of inflation in the post-war period. However, the Bank's performance in support of fiscal and other structural reforms, such as *privatisation and tax policy*, has been mixed. According to their own appraisal, the Bank's pursuit of such reforms in post-war settings has not always been appropriate and timely.

In Mozambique, as in several other post-war countries, the Bretton Woods institutions were criticised for imposing unrealistic economic conditionalities (Hanlon 1976). However, according to Ball and Barnes (2000), these issues were *muted* during the peace process, "probably because so much attention was focussed on implementing the Rome Agreement and concerns that the peace might not hold."

Likewise in El Salvador del Castillo (2001) argued that the IMF made the fiscal targets for 1993-94 (and later years) *more flexible* so as to incorporate the financial needs of the National Reconstruction Plan. The financial implications of the NRP nevertheless had to be reconciled with the fiscal restrictions imposed by the economic stabilisation programme. This is contrary, however, to Wood and Segovia (1995), who concluded that the macro-economic policy environment of austerity impeded the timely implementation of the peace agreements. In their view, a greater interest on the part of the IFIs in the implementation of the peace accords, rather than a dominant emphasis on economic reform, might have contributed to the reconciliation of the apparently conflicting priorities of macroeconomic stabilisation and peacebuilding.

The potential contradictions between the macroeconomic policies favoured by the IMF/World Bank and the political tasks of implementing peace agreements and maintaining a fragile peace process were identified in the now classic article by de

Soto and de Castillo (1994), and have later been discussed *inter alia* by Woodward (2002). Woodward argues that the macroeconomic constraints imposed by the IFIs prevent the very public expenditures that are essential to peace, and that orthodox stabilisation policies also tend to exacerbate economic inequalities and create more unemployment, at least in the short run. This points to an underlying tension between the economic and political "logics" of reconstruction. In practice, however, the IFIs have demonstrated a certain flexibility in implementing conditionalities, which will also be relevant in Afghanistan.

Of equal concern is the experience that many post-war economies are dominated by barter trade, the informal sector and illegal trafficking, and are often characterised by divided loyalties, civilian destruction, informal or illegal networks of cross-border trafficking in arms and other supplies, limited local production but extensive theft and looting, and no rule of law but many local and regional warlords. The case of Kosovo may illustrate many of the issues confronting Afghanistan:

Box 5.3: Difficult transition from a war economy in Kosovo

Promoting economic development is UNMIK's "fourth pillar", led by the European Union. It aims at establishing a functioning market economy based on the rule of law and at attracting foreign investors. Since the arrival of UNMIK and KFOR in June 1999, internal investment and reconstruction have boomed and small businesses (mainly family enterprises with small shops or restaurants) have mushroomed. External investment and donor funds have been slow to materialise, but initial activities for reconstruction and enterprise have drawn their resources from private savings, remittances and other family sources. Progress has also been made in creating a functioning tax collection system and a banking sector. At the beginning of 2002, the Euro became Kosovo's main currency.

The general conditions for economic growth nevertheless remain weak. Labour is abundant and cheap, and a sizable part of the population continues to endure conditions of severe hardship. A World Bank report from December 2000 found that 12 per cent live in extreme poverty. Most current agriculture is small-scale and subsistence farming which cannot compete with imports. Exports are negligible and neighbouring countries are poor and unstable. As a result, many engage in trade related to imported goods. UNMIK has yet to begin the process of privatisation and market reform that is critically necessary to restart the economy and channel investment into legitimate activities. This has been further hampered by controversies over property rights and ownership, and potential investors are deterred by the unsettled jurisdiction over Kosovo's future. Long-term investment is unlikely as long as this issue remains unsolved.

The growth of the "grey" economic sector was an inevitable side effect of Belgrade's previous policies in Kosovo, practically excluding ethnic Albanians from legal economic activities. By the time UNMIK was deployed, the KLA-dominated "Provincial Government of Kosovo" had put themselves and their supporters in control of as many businesses as they could. As the same political force dominates today's PDK party, any international effort to build a legal institutional framework for a functioning market economy and to promote the restructuring and development of healthy enterprises has to deal with these forces. In reality, Kosovo is split among the warlord-controlled regions which arose during the conflict and which rested on earlier power structures.

In the absence of effective legal structures, and with cross-border links and parallel trading systems developed over the years, criminal elements are better organised and better placed than legitimate enterprises to seize opportunities. The lawless borders have become an international crossroads for drugs and arms smugglers, and for trade in illegal immigration. Furthermore, there is considerable anecdotal evidence that the civilian successor to the KLA, the Kosovo Protection Corps, supplements the slender funds provided by international organisations with donations raised locally either directly or through the organisation "Friends of the KCP".

Opportunities for corruption also pose a serious threat, and are based on the network of connections

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forged between political and criminal groups with a shared interest in arms smuggling during the armed struggle. There is also evidence of corruption among civil servants, for example taking money to expedite applications for public sector jobs or other documents such as travel papers. The attitudes of international officials towards such activities seem to vary from total non-acceptance to greater tolerance, based on experiences in their home countries. As a consequence, confidence in the legal system is lacking, further deterring international investment (all the above is based on ICG 2001, UN 2001 and 2002).

So far, Kosovo is not yet a success story, and the challenges are equally big in Afghanistan. While extraordinary efforts have to be made towards enabling and stimulating the regular economy, an accelerated programme to create employment opportunities is also warranted, even as a short-term effort that may help steer people out of illegal economic activities. As pointed out by Woodward (2002), employment is the most obvious lesson, and the most neglected.

Even in the short term it is nevertheless crucial for stabilising a peace process that there is prudent macroeconomic management in order to avoid hyperinflation and restore confidence in economic institutions such as the local currency and the banking system. It will be counterproductive, however, to impose the same strict macroeconomic conditionalities as those imposed on other highly indebted developing countries in the immediate post-war period of peacebuilding. A reasonable flexibility will be necessary to balance short-term and long-term interests.

13.6 The volume of aid: Too much and too little

One major recommendation of the previous CMI report on peadebuilding strategies for Afghanistan (CMI 2002) is for "a careful start and a long-term perspective" in reconstruction. The main reasons are to allow for Afghans themselves to plan, prioritise and own their reconstruction programme, and to reduce the risk of new conflicts based on how to divide the spoils of peace. Past experience in this regard is ambiguous. In Angola, there may have been insufficient financial incentives for peace, while in Mozambique, the volume of aid overwhelmed the national capacity to absorb it. In Cambodia and Kosovo, a heavy international presence and a policy of channelling aid through central institutions created economic and political distortions, while aid for rural development was insufficient.

In Angola international donors pledged USD 1 billion at the Brussels Round Table in 1995 to rebuild war-damaged infrastructure and kick-start the economy, centred on a Community Rehabilitation Programme (CPR). This was intended by the donors to provide the means to smooth the way for implementation of the Lusaka Protocol. The programme was well conceived and provided an excellent consensus between local communities, the government, opposition parties and the international donor community. However, as the government and UNDP, which were responsible for implementation, failed to deliver, only a portion of the total funds was actually disbursed. This again provoked a lack of confidence by the local actors and NGOs, and became one of several broken promises that eventually led to a breakdown of the whole peace accord (Cain 2000).

A prominent US participant in the Angolan peace negotiations, Ian Spears (2000), argues that in Angola there was in reality little opportunity to buy off the "spoilers" to prevent them from undermining the peace process (the "Haitian solution"). The oil

and diamond incomes were very large, much beyond what the UN or any donor funding could offer, and the two armies were well organised with leaders who had a personal interest in continuous insecurity. As expressed by Spears, "it is difficult to pacify any leader or well-institutionalized movement in a war economy when they already have access to more wealth than the international community or political system could ever legitimately offer."

In Mozambique, already on the eve of the 1992 donors' conference in Rome, the Norwegian ambassador Bjørg Leite warned that the donors might have designed a capital-intensive peace process which would exceed the administrative capacity of Mozambique (CMI 1997). Mozambique had a size of population and level of poverty at approximately the same levels as Afghanistan, but a slightly better equipped government structure, and received an annual average of USD 995 million in grants and loans in the post-war years 1993-96. Less than one-third of this was spent on direct peace implementation costs such as the demobilisation and reintegration of soldiers, de-mining, refugee repatriation, resettlement and national elections. The remaining two-thirds were allocated for economic stabilisation and reactivation of the economy (Ball & Barnes, 2000).

In Cambodia, aid volumes were too high and too low at the same time, according to Kato (1997). The UN Secretary-General made a consolidated appeal for USD 595 million for the two-year rehabilitation phase (1992-94) that was to restore a sustainable degree of economic and social stability and establish the base for the broader long-term reconstruction effort by 1994. This included USD 200 million for repatriation and resettlement, USD 120 million for food aid, agriculture, health and education, USD 150 million for public infrastructure restoration, and USD 110 million for "programme support". As much as USD 880 million, far above the appeal, was pledged at the Tokyo conference in June 1992, but much of it was slow to materialise.

Slowness aid disbursement was also a consequence of donor project preferences. Donors in Cambodia – as often – ignored the priorities set up in the appeal for small grassroots projects and programme aid and focused instead on large-scale rehabilitation projects, which were slower in disbursement and more demanding on government counterpart time. Aid workers in the provinces claimed that the "limited absorption capacity" primarily applied to large projects that required central government involvement. No such limit existed for the small grassroots and small infrastructure projects.

While aid support for Cambodia was too little for grassroots projects and for programme aid, UNTAC spending in the capital Phnom Penh had distorting effects on the economy. In 1992 UNTAC alone spent over USD 200 million, equivalent to four times Cambodian exports for that year, or 10 percent of GDP. Although the spending was not the prime cause of inflation, it caused sharp price increases in some areas such as skilled labour and housing, corruption, and a shallow and imbalanced economic growth. UNTAC spending caused an urban boom in construction, trade and services for foreign consumption, notably beer and prostitutes, while the countryside still suffered from insecurity and lack of reconstruction. In addition, the cash injection led to a rise in ethnic tensions as thousands of Vietnamese construction workers and prostitutes poured into Cambodia.

Similar distortions were observed in Kosovo (UN 2000). Some 8,000 civilian staff on international salary scales had a general inflationary effect. There were diferent price levels for internationals and nationals in sectors such as property rents in Pristina. International organisations distorted the local economy by paying local employees – drivers, translators, cleaners, security guards, etc – on a scale beyond the reach of the local economy. By comparison, those civil servants paid out of the Kosovo budget, including teachers, judges, and members of the customs and police services, typically received only a fraction of this.

For Afghanistan, these and other international experiences provide ample arguments for the "slow haste" recommended in the previous report. Aid volumes need to be kept at manageable levels in line with the low capacity of the new Afghan administration, and to ensure Afghan participation in and management of reconstruction. The need to "buy off" various factions (as in Haiti and Angola) will require a different approach in Afghanistan, as discussed in other sections. However, there is room – and a desperate need – for greater aid efforts to rebuild infrastructure throughout the regions, provided it can be undertaken with maximum local participation and labour and minimal international involvement.

13.7 National participation is possible, even under difficult conditions

Another principal conclusion of the previous CMI report on peacebuilding strategies for Afghanistan was to emphasise national structures and national solutions. This would mean working with national and regional as well as local authorities, and involving these institutions in assessing needs and priorities as well as collecting basic socio-economic and demographic statistics. In practice, international donors, the UN and World Bank, as well as international NGOs, make their own needs assessments and only allow for *pro forma* national or local participation. This is not inevitable, however. Experience in other difficult post-war situations, especially Angola and East Timor, demonstrates that it is possible to engage larger sections of society in a national programme for reconstruction. Such a process requires some time, rather than rushing ahead with the blueprint plans of some international agencies.

Despite its extreme aid dependency, the Mozambican government participated actively in defining war- and drought-related needs during the years of war, and possessed some (though limited) capacity to deliver assistance through national and provincial structures. Mozambique even had the foresight to begin to plan for post-war reconstruction while the peace accord was being negotiated, including planning for demobilisation. Nevertheless, during the implementation phase many donors were eager to keep the peace process moving (as they saw it), and wanted to overcome all delays, whether caused by political tensions between Renamo and the government, by slow decision-making within government, or by other disagreements. Donors therefore became quite involved in planning and overseeing critical peace implementation programmes, in many cases effectively bypassing the government, the Commission on Reintegration, and/or UNOHAC (Ball & Barnes, 2000).

In Cambodia, national participation in the approval of international aid and in the actual coordination of rehabilitation projects was not utilised as fully as it could have

been, according to Kato (1997). In most cases, project proposals had been worked out before they reached the Technical Committee (where the four Cambodian factions were represented). In general, the factions were willing to accept any offer of assistance, but little effort was made to solicit their inputs. Documents were often not available in Khmer, the Cambodian parties were not informed in advance of important international meetings, and at least one of the Cambodian members of the Technical Committee felt that UNTAC discouraged Cambodian inputs for fear of politicisation.

UN officials and many international NGOs working in the Cambodian provinces admitted that they tried to avoid contact with local officials as much as possible. While local corruption may have made this necessary in some areas, as a general policy it detracted from the long-term effectiveness of rehabilitation work, and missed an opportunity to improve local administrative capacity (Kato, 1997).

Despite the very problematic setting in Angola following the 1994 Lusaka peace accords, the new government of national unity, with the support of UNDP, organised a countrywide consultation programme for developing the national Community Rehabilitation Programme (CPR). Teams were dispatched to all the 18 provinces, including those previously controlled by UNITA forces, to organise meetings with provincial and local officials, representatives of the political parties and the emerging civil society. On this basis, provincial plans with priority projects were drawn up for each province, and presented to the donors at the Brussels Round Table in 1995. According to the independent evaluation, CRP was conceived after an extraordinary process of consultation with the nation, and the principles of the CRP were an excellent consensual basis between the local communities, the Angolan government, opposition parties and the international community (Cardoso et al, 1998). The fact that this programme failed in its implementation phase was due to other circumstances and in spite of the participatory design process. However, the high expectations created during the consultation and design phase were even greater when hardly any results materialised.

In East Timor, the World Bank made a deliberate effort to include Timorese experts in the first assessment mission for economic recovery and reconstruction (Joint Assessment Mission). This was possibly partly because the Bank had started planning for recovery well in advance, and had identified Timorese experts among the diaspora and in the territory (Suhrke 2001). The trade-off between local participation and rapid assessment was therefore softened.

In Afghanistan, national participation and control in the reconstruction phase are extremely difficult, but equally important, to achieve. At the local level, communities, national NGOs and some provincial institutions have experience in needs assessment, priority setting and planning. Equally at the national level the core of national planning and policy-making exists, and the general setting and attitudes in Afghanistan favour national solutions. At the same time, many donors and implementing agencies have a history of giving preference to high visibility projects, rather than high priority activities. There is also a history of distrust, as well as misuse of funding, between international community and local institutions in Afghanistan. A balance therefore has to be struck which provides strong national participation as well as transparency and accountability. All donors, as well as implementing agencies, the UN and INGOs, will have to contribute to increased transparency by regular reporting

on plans, progress and expenditures, not only to their funding sources but also to the national Afghan authorities and the Afghan public.

13.8   Conclusions: Economic perspectives for peacebuilding

The above review of experiences in economic reconstruction within the framework of post-war peacebuilding provides several lessons relevant to Afghanistan. On a general level, economic factors are clearly important for the peacebuilding process. So is the need to reconcile the economic and political "logics" of peacebuilding. Economic policy must take into account political constraints and the objectives of peacebuilding, while policy in other sectors must equally consider economic realities and constraints, as well as economic sustainability in the longer run.

As we have seen, there is no "blueprint" for economic policy and reconstruction, whether in terms of priorities, sequencing or choice of instruments. Policies have to be formulated within the specific context of Afghanistan. Nevertheless, some lessons can reduce the risk of repeating mistakes made elsewhere, and which could have disastrous consequences given the country's vulnerable and volatile condition.

The four "lessons learned" from the World Bank evaluation of 1998 are relevant in this respect.

- *Demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants* into the civilian economy and society can be an essential element of both economic recovery and sustained peace. The success of these programmes depends on many factors, including the level of trust and commitment among the parties, the level of security, specific economic conditions such as the availability of land, and relations between ex-combatants and other needy persons.
- Some elements of "conventional wisdom" in terms of tax generation, emphasis on primary rather than secondary and tertiary education, may *not be feasible* in an immediate post-war situation. Policy must therefore be particularly sensitive to country-specific analysis of special conditions.
- The volatile and fast-changing circumstances in post-war countries demand a high degree of *flexibility* in speed, design and implementation. While good preparation and planning are important also for medium-term projects for rehabilitation, piloting funds for an early start can be crucial.
- Post-war operations require *more intensive monitoring and evaluation* to ensure their continued relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

Woodward (2002) further underlines the need for monitoring and evaluating the impact of projects and programmes *on the main peace process*. She adds four equally important issues, which all have been discussed in this chapter: That *employment generation* is the most neglected aspect of peacebuilding programmes; the need for much stronger emphasis on *budgetary support and national institution building*; that foreign donors have to think more clearly about *whom they assist*: and that large peace missions may have *strong distortional effects* on the economy, as well as on political relationships.

Keeping all of this in mind, this chapter has shown that Afghanistan must – and can – take responsibility for directing its own reconstruction programme, which needs to give emphasis to employment generation while stimulating the regular economic

sectors and paying attention to an equitable and transparent distribution of benefits. Donors will have to encourage and enable the Afghan planning and implementation process by not overwhelming it and by adjusting the volume of aid to national capacity and political realities. Meanwhile, donors will have to provide sensitive funding for budgetary support and to specific peacebuilding activities, while encouraging a massive labour-intensive programme for the reconstruction of social and physical infrastructure.

14. Conclusions Part II

International peacebuilding became an increasingly institutionalised set of activities in the 1990s. Standard procedures and aid packages were introduced. Yet, in reviewing the experiences that are most relevant to the launching of similar activities in Afghanistan, it is important to note that

- approaches to peacebuilding have differed according to type of conflict and the nature of the peace agreement
- there is no obvious country model for peacebuilding in post-Taliban Afghanistan
- the effectiveness of particular strategies varies from one country context to another
- the lack of a tried-and-tested blueprint justifies innovation, risk-taking and flexibility in formulating strategies for peacebuilding

In countries emerging after civil wars, issues of power-sharing, restructuring of the armed forces, and social reintegration of a divided people are critical. Conflicts that result in partition and new states, by contrast, raise major post-war issues of how to deal with neighbours and to move from a liberation movement era to democratic politics. In failed states, the international community typically seeks to re-establish a national state apparatus, while local factions try to capture it. Post-Taliban Afghanistan has elements of all three situations.

Arguably the most important task for peacebuilding in Afghanistan is not to overcome stable patterns of hostility from the past, but to establish institutions that will prevent future conflict among the victors. Hence, a preventive perspective has to be applied throughout.

At present, the international community is simultaneously waging war and building peace in Afghanistan. The only comparable case from collective peacebuilding missions in the 1990s is Somalia (1993). That experience, as well as the logic of conflict resolution, suggests that war-related activities will undermine efforts to build peace.

In the absence of good blueprints or obvious models, the report has adopted a macro-perspective designed to provide general insight from the history of peacebuilding since the early 1990s. The review helps to answer some central questions regarding peacebuilding strategies for Afghanistan:

1. *Is the structure and mandate of the mission being prepared for Afghanistan in early 2002 appropriate?*

Since the early 1990s, the international community has increasingly engaged itself in peacebuilding missions as a means of easing the transition from war to peace, and of sustaining peace processes in divided societies or new states. These have mostly taken the form of UN-led missions, although regional organisations have increasingly played an important part, as have *ad hoc* coalitions of member states, whether for

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particular tasks (e.g. to provide security) or to oversee the implementation of a peace treaty (e.g. the Peace Implementation Council for Bosnia). The mixture of a UN mission with ad hoc coalitions of states that was taking shape in early 2002 to implement the Bonn Agreement in Afghanistan is consistent with evolving practice in the UN system.

Plans for a UN mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA) being prepared in February envisaged a small, integrated operation to assist the Interim Authority. UNAMA was in the category of assistance missions rather than the more comprehensive "nation-building" missions undertaken by the UN in Kosovo and East Timor. This followed partly from the nature of the preceding conflict: Kosovo and East Timor emerged as new candidates for statehood, hence the UN could assume direct administration during an interim period. In Afghanistan, the political task was instead to assist various factions to form a government in an existing state.

Equally important were security considerations and concerns by the US not to have a large UN mission in the country that might restrict its freedom to pursue the war against Al Qaida and the Taliban. As the Kosovo and East Timor cases demonstrated, a comprehensive "nation-building" mission requires a large international presence throughout the country. UNAMA, by contrast, was to "leave a light footprint".

Experience from other peacebuilding missions shows that a large international presence severely distorts the economy and politics of the country in question. In poor and divided countries the effect is magnified. Large missions with ambitious agendas typically have a magnet-like effect on local politics as the various factions compete for foreign support. The economy typically develops in a dual and unsustainable fashion. The dynamic has been repeatedly observed (Somalia, Cambodia, Kosovo, East Timor). To dampen the distortion effect, a low-visibility, limited presence and a long-term perspective are essential.

The modest UN mission planned for Afghanistan therefore suggests the UN is doing the right thing, but not for the right reasons. Since the decision is not primarily a result of institutionalised learning about the appropriate size and scope of peacebuilding missions, the general lesson has to be reiterated in the UN and to other actors.

2. What are the criteria for success in peacebuilding and what are realistic expectations?

"Peacebuilding" is usually understood as a transitional activity designed to prevent the recurrence of past violent conflict and to lay the foundation for (re)building political, economic and social systems that in the longer run will prevent new wars. To assess what works therefore involves several criteria. A minimal test is that past violence does not recur. A more ambitious threshold is that democratic processes are seen to take hold, that economic recovery financed by donors gives way to self-sustained growth, that divided societies start to deal collectively with memories of the past as well as visions for the future, and that a state of law emerges.

Democratisation, observance of human rights and economic development are long-term and complex processes. Progress or lack thereof cannot be easily traced to a set of distinct activities in the immediate post-war period.

Historical evidence suggests that poor countries emerging from long and costly wars are most difficult to launch on a path of peace, let alone a democratic peace. A massive infusion of international aid and an international security presence can buy short-term peace and artificial economic growth, but by itself not democratisation and development. The nature of the political system before the war will also influence progress towards Western-style democracy after the conflict.

Realistic expectations for future development in Afghanistan suggest that minimalist criteria for peacebuilding are most relevant for the foreseeable future. These include reasonable control of violence, implementation of the political transition as scheduled in the Bonn agreement, monitoring of human rights violations, restoration of institutions of conflict resolution and political participation, and the beginning of economic recovery. Beyond that, progress towards democratisation, the rule of law, social justice and development require sustained efforts by Afghans and aid actors, a favourable international context, and a long time perspective. Establishing accountability for past war crimes and gross human rights violations will entail a sharp trade-off between peace and justice, at least in the short run.

3. Are some factors more important than others in determining the success of peacebuilding?

The so-called *"ripeness factor"* is important. The genesis of success or failure in peacebuilding lies in the nature of the peace settlement itself, and of the conflict from which it springs. Some conflicts are "ripe for resolution", and the peace settlement provides an agenda for the peacebuilding and sustains it. This applies to the success stories in the early 1990s (Mozambique and El Salvador). The Cambodia and Bosnia cases were much less "ripe" when their respective peace accords were signed; the ripening rather had to occur through the peacebuilding process. Sustained international efforts to mediate and build mutual confidence are particularly important in these cases.

The situation in Afghanistan is different. The main political challenge, as noted, is to ensure that the current victors – who are also recent enemies – do not start a war over the spoils of peace. Since a power-sharing formula has not yet been agreed to, and various factions are flush with weapons and money supplied in the war against Al Qaida and the Taliban, the situation appears to be riper for conflict rather than for resolution. For the international community to involve the same parties in a war that it tries at the same time to enlist for peace is thus fundamentally contradictory behaviour.

Regional developments have been critical in all cases. Neighbouring states have been able to break and make a peace process. Their unique importance lies in their ability to affect the supply of arms, regulate trade routes and provide sanctuary to dissident factions. The rule clearly applies to Afghanistan, underlining the need for concerned actors to pay particular attention to the regional context.

4. *Are some sectors more important than others in peacebuilding?*

Establishing a legitimate political authority and civilian control over the police and armed forces is fundamental. Most peace agreements deal with both issues in detail. In the Afghan case, the Bonn Agreement only sets out a schedule for political transition. Solutions to the twin problem of dealing with local leaders, especially the warlords, and of establishing legitimate control over the various armed forces and police, therefore remain to be negotiated.

A formal agreement to reorganise political and military structures does not, of course, ensure implementation. The most direct approach to dealing with non-compliance is through international enforcement action. The UN chose *not* to do this when the Khmer Rouge reneged on the Paris Agreement by refusing to demobilise. Some 6-7 years later, the problem had been solved by a combination of external pressure (the Khmer Rouge lost its regional and broader international support), the government's policies of co-optation and amnesty, and internal strife in the movement itself. In Somalia, in 1993 the UN and US had taken enforcement action against a particular militia, but in the absence of an agreement among the parties on military restructuring. The result was a spectacular failure that still haunts the UN.

Standard procedure thus suggests that the first step in Afghanistan would be to negotiate a political agreement among the Afghan parties on restructuring the armed forces, i.e. an accord similar to those obtained in most peace settlements. The agreement would serve as the framework for sustained attention to implementation, and possibly enforcement.

Progress in other economic and social sectors may serve as confidence-building measures that could help deal with the critical issues of sharing political power and restructuring the military.

Monitoring of human rights in the immediate post-war phase is essential to reintroduce standards of law and humanity, particularly in societies traumatised by violence. It can limit a violent settling of scores or fighting to shape the evolving peace. An international human rights presence can also lay the foundation for a local human rights structure. The role of UNTAC in Cambodia is exemplary in all respects.

5. *Can hard trade-offs in peacebuilding be softened?*

Three customary trade-offs are discussed in this report:

- quick-fix solutions in the security sector vs. a long-term perspective on institution building and reintegration

In most peacebuilding situations there is pressure to find rapid solutions in the law and order sector. *Establishing or reforming the police* is especially important when the existing government and its forces of order have collapsed or left (as in Afghanistan), or have been heavily compromised. At the same time, the cost of

maintaining international security personnel for this purpose encourages the search for quick-fix solutions.

There is overwhelming evidence that effective police reform involves long-term institution building. This requires not only trainers, monitors and recruits of acceptable quality, but, above all, the establishment of legitimate local authorities to which the police will be accountable. Institution building in this sector must be in step with broader political development. The negative lessons from Haiti and Somalia in this regard are particularly relevant given current efforts to establish a new police force in Afghanistan.

Programmes to facilitate *demobilisation and reintegration* (DPRs) are very costly, but can be successful in the short run. Longer-term integration of ex-combatants requires follow-up programmes and is dependent upon the extent of general economic recovery.

Programmes to *collect small arms* (cash-for-arms) are likely to have little impact if illegal arms are easily available in the region, if soldiers are part-time militia rather than professionals, and if a traditional (or modern) gun culture prevails. Buy-back programmes may be counterproductive by encouraging an inflow of weapons. Control of small arms under these conditions requires a broader and longer-term approach.

- macro-economic stability vs. financing the peacebuilding agenda to sustain the peace process

The logic of the IFIs' pressure for prudent macro-economic management, especially to avoid hyperinflation in the immediate post-war period, frequently clashes with the political logic of peacebuilding to finance certain programmes deemed necessary to sustain the peace (e.g. a large civil service in the transitional government in Cambodia, an expensive demobilisation programme in El Salvador). Compromises have been found at times (as in the above two cases), and the World Bank in particular has been increasingly prepared to acknowledge that the particular demands of the "post-conflict" phase justifies unusual procedures or flexibility. Conceiving of peacebuilding as a temporary activity helps to soften the trade-off. More fundamentally, it means that decision-making for economic policy needs to take peacebuilding issues into account, while policy in other areas must recognise the importance of economic sustainability in the longer run.

- Promoting national state structures vs. relying on existing power configurations of local-regional forces

In sharply divided or failed states, establishing common, national structures has been a political priority of the UN or the international community concerned. A national state apparatus is seen as essential in relation to the international system, to overcome the causes of past conflict, or to prevent renewed internal conflict. However, imposing common state structures on uncooperative entities has proved a slow and difficult process in Bosnia. The prospect of a transitional government exacerbated factional in-fighting in Somalia. Yet the Somali case also suggests there are alternatives. A more sensitive approach towards elections, and a more inclusive

attitude towards clan leaders and other segments of civil society, could have helped marginalise the warlords.

6. Will a high volume of aid promote peacebuilding?

Economic resources matter. But it is the type and modality of aid, rather than the volume, which can make or break a peace process. The requirements for external assistance will depend on the present level of the national economy and its absorptive capacity, the extent of war damages, the size of the illegal war economy, the capacity of the state apparatus and civil society, and special needs of the peace process. Poor countries like Afghanistan may be in great need of external resources, but are very vulnerable to distortions produced by sudden or "bulky" aid, and have great difficulties in turning externally funded projects into sustainable activities.

A funding "gap" between relief and development is often assumed to exist. This study found it doubtful that this is now the case. During the 1990s both humanitarian and development agencies expanded their activity to fill a possible gap, and donors provided funds when they had the political will to do so. Rather than a gap, there is now more often an overlap among the various aid agencies. This is particularly so in high-visibility cases like Afghanistan, which attract large funds and many aid actors.

Experience from a long decade of peacebuilding suggests three conclusions are of particular importance for donor funding in Afghanistan:

- The volatile nature of post-war situations demands *flexible responses.* Special needs may require *risk taking*, and *innovation.* Some peacebuilding missions in the early 1990s demonstrated that it was possible to take risk and be innovative (e.g. Renamo "slush" fund to demilitarise the rebel movement, and the land-for-arms deal in El Salvador).

- External budget support may be necessary to maintain core state functions and provide minimum services until regular revenue collection resumes. Donors are often reluctant to provide budget support for recurrent expenditures such as salaries for public officials. Yet this has become increasingly accepted (e.g. the Holst Fund for the Palestine Administrative Authorities, and the World Bank supported fund for Bosnia and Herzegovina). There are thus precedents for the current UNDP fund to finance the Interim Authority of Afghanistan.

- Employment generation is an essential but neglected aspect of peacebuilding. Employment is critical to reintegrate particularly volatile groups (ex-militia/soldiers), and to create a sense of confidence in the future that will help to demilitarisation of politics. In Afghanistan, the extent of damage to physical infrastructure invites employment-intensive reconstruction with maximum local inputs.

While specific forms of assistance is critical in the transition period, a large infusion of funds can easily overwhelm the capacity of both state and civil society, gravely distort the economy, and generate new in-fighting among local factions. The experience from numerous cases in this respect clearly supports the "slow haste"

approach recommended by the previous CMI report on peacebuilding strategies for Afghanistan.

International aid can undermine the principle of sustainability. Post-war governments must be encouraged to identify and tax potential sources of revenue (including excise tax on a large foreign aid presence) as soon as possible. As illustrated by the Cambodian case, an aggressive taxation policy can produce significant results even when the country is destitute.

7. How can the legacy of a war-dominated economy be overcome?

Like many countries experiencing prolonged warfare, Afghanistan has ended up with a strongly war-related economy (including drug production, smuggling, and other irregular activities to finance the war and the warlords). Creating a sound basis for normal economic activities is therefore a major challenge.

Previous peacebuilding cases offer few ready lessons, except that transformation of a war-related economy to peacetime structures takes time. Experience from Kosovo, Angola, Cambodia and Bosnia shows that comprehensive economic and legal reforms are essential. Prudent macroeconomic management is necessary to avoid hyperinflation and restore confidence in economic institutions, such as the local currency and the banking system. In themselves, however, these measures are rarely sufficient to create a strong peacetime economy. A context that favours economic growth and alternative employment is also required.

8. How can local authorities and interest groups participate in setting priorities for reconstruction?

International donors, the UN and World Bank, as well as international NGOs, typically make their own needs assessments and only allow for *pro forma* national or local participation. Yet exceptions show that alternative approaches are possible. A measure of local participation in initial needs assessment was realised under difficult situations in Mozambique, Angola and East Timor. This evidently goes against standard operating procedures of most agencies, however, and requires deliberate decisions to plan ahead and allow for sufficient time in the assessment process.

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Summary

This report examines lessons from previous peacebuilding efforts in Afghanistan, and from other countries, in order to highlight issues of central relevance for the present phase of peacebuilding and economic recovery. It consists of two papers commissioned by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The report argues that the most promising strategy is to strengthen national institutions. At the same time, the report warns against a rapid infusion of funds for reconstruction, and proposes a careful start with a long-term perspective. Placing a large assistance package on the table at the present time may encourage a fight over "the spoils of peace", and entrench the power of the warlords.

There is no blueprint for peacebuilding based on experiences from other countries, but relevant lessons are nevertheless found. Innovation, risk-taking and flexibility are important in formulating strategies. Most important in Afghanistan is to establish institutions that will prevent future conflict among the victors. Employment generation and external budget support to core state functions are essential, while security sector reforms will be difficult and require a long-term approach. The modest UN mission will leave a "light footprint", but other actors seem to counteract this positive feature.

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