



**Social Service Delivery
in Violent Contexts**

ACHIEVING RESULTS AGAINST THE ODDS

A REPORT FROM AFGHANISTAN, PAKISTAN, AND NEPAL

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Preface

This study has been a long time in preparation. We began in 2013 with the intention of looking at how the delivery of social services was affected by violent conflict in four countries—Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. We soon had to drop Sri Lanka because it proved difficult to get agreement to carry out research in the country. Still, in the three remaining countries the varying nature of the conflict offered a good laboratory to better understand how differing patterns of violence and of the “political settlements” that form around conflict had affected or were still affecting service delivery. We were able to look at how different modes of service delivery were able to adapt to and often surmount the challenges of violence. Our analytical framework enabled us to explore how political settlements at different levels of the state and different forms of violence shaped service delivery. We were also able to examine the role that bargains among elites played in the way services were delivered. Finally, we explored how certain modes of delivery were more effective than others in violent contexts.

Given the sensitive nature of this field of enquiry, it is important to understand what this study is not.

First, the case selection, and related research methodology, does not claim to be representative of the sectors or geographical regions in question. The research questions were developed to address important gaps in our understanding of how progress in service delivery happens in such difficult contexts. We recognize our findings rest on the investigation of a restricted number of sectors and projects, but our hope is that the case studies and new framework will stimulate further research to corroborate our findings. Indeed, generating a statistically representative sample in such contexts, given the security and financial implications, is a perennial challenge.

Second, we are not trying to offer an exhaustive view of all the possible factors that affect service delivery. The focus on forms of settlement, violence, bargains, and service delivery modality does not mean that other factors (such as beneficiary participation, service provider incentives, and the technical quality of services, among others) are unimportant. Rather, based on gaps in the literature (which fails to explain observed progress), we are offering a different perspective on why things work, or do not. As noted above, this should stimulate further debate.

Third, the study does not attempt to explore the impact of social service delivery on broader political dynamics such as peace-building and state-building. Our research focuses on the “how to” of delivering services on the ground when violence is present. In that respect, the report explores the delivery of services in their own right (to reduce poverty or for other humanitarian reasons) but does not address whether or how delivery may *cause* fragility or contribute to state-building. The link between social service delivery and state legitimacy is too indirect and too broad to provide granular, day-to-day guidance for policy makers and practitioners.

Finally, this report does not endorse the actions of the insurgent groups it describes nor condone the observed corruption or collusion between these groups and service providers.

Whatever views about armed groups are presented in the report come from key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and related literature. What the report does point to, however, is the need to accept that in many situations of violent conflict, “good governance” precepts are often an imperfect template for providing services, and local bargains are sometimes necessary in order to deliver humanitarian and development assistance.

We believe the report will play a timely and important role in sparking new research, debate, and practice in this critical, yet difficult, area.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

BEF	Balochistan Education Foundation
BESP	Balochistan Education Support Project
EQUIP	Education Quality Improvement Project
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FCHV	female community health volunteer
FCV	fragile, conflict, and violence-affected
FGD	focus group discussion
KII	key informant interview
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	nongovernmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PEP	Polio Eradication Project
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SHARP	Strengthening Health Activities for the Rural Poor
SSD	social service delivery
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Executive Summary

This report provides the foundation for a new approach to service delivery in violence-affected contexts that is more sensitive to the actual forms of violence, politics, and bargaining encountered in many conflict-affected states. The findings unearth sensitive issues about how development organizations should approach service delivery in contested settings. As many countries today are riven by conflict and internal division, some familiar rules of the game may be inadequate to deal with the mounting humanitarian and development challenges posed by complex conflict situations, particularly where affected people need access to social services. This raises dilemmas about the ethical and political judgments and trade-offs that development actors frequently have to make. A key challenge is whether development actors can adapt their procedures and ways of working to the fluidity, uncertainties, and risk taking that the new, conflict-riven landscape demands while preserving financial accountability, doing no harm, and ensuring aid effectiveness. This challenge cannot be ignored, as progress in basic service delivery in violence-affected contexts will make or break global efforts to end poverty and increase shared prosperity over the coming decades.

Study Rationale and Objectives

About 2 billion people live in countries where fragility, conflict, and violence make it difficult to achieve development outcomes. These countries have made the slowest progress toward the Millennium Development Goals. On average, the poverty rate of a country that experienced major violence between 1981 and 2005 is 21 percentage points higher than that of a country that saw no violence (World Bank 2011). By 2030 about 50 percent of the world's poor will live in countries affected by fragility and violence (World Bank 2016b). Violent conflict also has major effects that spill over national borders, as the refugee crisis affecting parts of Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa shows.

Delivering basic services in these settings is extremely challenging. Only one-fifth of fragile states are on track to achieve universal primary schooling (compared with nearly half of nonfragile developing countries) (OECD 2015); and, only 28 percent are on track to halve the number of their citizens who lack access to safe water (61 percent of nonfragile countries have reached this target) (OECD 2015).

In response to these issues, the international community has committed to improving development assistance in so-called fragile contexts. In September 2015, world leaders adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal 16 is to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels” (UN 2015). They also agreed to SDGs focused on improving access to and the quality of services. In addition, the World Bank Group committed to doing more and better in violence-affected contexts under the International Development Association’s 18th funding replenishment, which spans the years 2017–20. Finally, there is a growing consensus in the international community—as argued in the 2017 World Development Report (World Bank 2016)—that governance and institutional factors can make or break development and service delivery progress in violent contexts.

These ambitious global development goals are, however, unlikely to be achieved until critical knowledge gaps are filled and practice on the ground improves. This report addresses four critical gaps:

- It is not clear why some service delivery interventions in violence-affected contexts make progress and others fail.
- It is widely recognized that political economy dynamics matter for service delivery,

but there is limited evidence on how such dynamics influence daily programming, especially in violence-affected contexts.

- Ground-level research in violence-affected areas is rare; most studies are based on secondary literature reviews or, at best, interviews with key informants in capital cities.
- There is a consensus that practice on the ground urgently needs to become more differentiated, context specific, and systematically tailored to political economy and violence risks.

To address these gaps, the report synthesizes and builds on field research in Afghanistan, Nepal, and Pakistan on the delivery of health, education, and rural infrastructure services. This research inductively piloted a new research framework in order to answer the following questions:

- How and why do political economy factors and forms of violence shape the implementation and outcomes of social service delivery (SSD) in violence-affected contexts?
- What explains the varying success rates of service delivery within, and between, violence-affected contexts?
- What lessons can be learned from what worked, and what did not?

Main Findings

According to this research, four key interrelated elements—political settlements, forms of violence, elite bargains, and modalities of service delivery—help explain variations in success and results.

Political Settlements

Political settlements set the broad, often informal, rules of the game and create constraints, spaces, and opportunities for SSD. They provide a map of the ruling coalition: who the power brokers are; the balance of power between them; and what interests and norms they are defending or promoting in economics, politics, and service delivery. Settlements take different forms and can operate at different levels of a polity. Four interconnected dimensions of the settlement are found to matter:

- **Primary (or national) settlements** are power configurations at the central state level. They usually include elites from dominant groups that have traditionally held national political power. The stability/lack of stability of the settlement and the extent to which power brokers within the ruling coalition are supportive of some form of SSD influences outcomes.
- **Sectoral settlements** are linked to the national settlements but involve differing elite incentives, ideas, and power-sharing

arrangements related to specific sectors (such as health, education, and infrastructure).

- **National-subnational linkages** are relationships between national and subnational elites that influence service delivery by shaping the flow of sectoral resources to a locality and influencing the extent to which the state apparatus (and its public administration) can control insurgents and can influence the delivery of services at the subnational level.
- **Subnational and village-level settlements** arguably play the most decisive role in explaining subnational variation in delivery. This relates to the extent to which the local elites' balance of power is stable and oriented toward the delivery of social services, the incentives of local elites toward service delivery, and the local elites' negotiating power relative to insurgents.

Forms of and Motivations behind Violence

Violence takes different forms and is driven by different motivations, which affect the extent to which insurgents tolerate, seek to modify, or bargain over a service. In this regard, three dimensions of violence are key:

- **The extent to which violent actors are organized, disciplined, and homogenous.** This shapes whether insurgent

leaders can be identified for negotiating service delivery bargains, and whether such agreements can be upheld.

- **The ideologies, incentives, and motivations behind violence.** Specifically, the prospects for delivering services are influenced by the degree of alignment between insurgents' objectives and the objectives of the service delivery intervention, the extent to which insurgents (and their families and friends) need the service, and the extent to which insurgents can extract rents from the service.
- **The degree of localization of violence.** The degree to which insurgents are embedded in local communities and the extent to which they seek to secure local support shape their incentives to facilitate or block service delivery. As a general rule, the more fragmented, mobile, and ideologically antagonistic the violent actors, the more difficult it will be to deliver services and the more mitigation strategies will be needed.

Elite Bargains

Linked to the political settlement and form of violence, elite bargains—sets of rolling negotiations and agreements between powerful actors, armed or unarmed—are critical in explaining whether and how services get delivered.

This report goes beyond broad statements like “elite bargains matter” to identify the actual processes through which bargains were achieved and reproduced. It identifies four overlapping forms of bargaining:

- **Fostering dialogue and negotiations with armed elites and allied insurgents.** This entailed persuading powerful gatekeepers to allow delivery, building trust between providers and insurgents, and, in some cases, the co-delivery of services by providers and armed elites.
- **Enlisting the support of influential nonarmed elites.** Such elites helped mediate the relationship between armed elites and their allied insurgents and service providers in order to allow for some degree of delivery.
- **Striking concessions and compromises.** Various modifications were made in the way a service is delivered so as to make it more acceptable to insurgents and reduce the risk of violent backlash.
- **Sharing rents and tolerating corruption.** Certain rent-sharing practices were knowingly or unknowingly enabled to appease and buy off opposing armed and unarmed elites to sustain service delivery.

Such bargains, or their absence, are critical in explaining whether progress occurs. But they involve not insignificant trade-offs, as noted below.

Strategies and Modalities of Delivery

Even the broader context of politics, violence, and bargaining does not, however, seem to simply determine outcomes. Progress in service delivery is also shaped in diverse ways by different modalities and strategies of delivery. In terms of modalities, three main ways of delivering services were explored: state versus nonstate, centralized versus decentralized, and single sector versus multisector. Context influenced which modalities had greater prospects of success. In terms of strategy, service delivery interventions made greater progress when they were: (1) violence sensitive: by anticipating and mitigating some of the risks of violence; (2) politically sensitive: by reducing the influence of anti-service-delivery political coalitions; and (3) bargain sensitive: by creating space for and facilitating pro-service-delivery bargains, especially among subnational elites, armed and unarmed. These strategies helped foster progress in the cases presented in the report, but they were not magic solutions and all presented trade-offs.

Five Policy Takeaways

These findings have important implications for policy and practice, summarized here.

- 1. Better adapt to a new set of contextual factors.** Most practitioners recognize that “context matters” for service delivery, but there has been limited progress in understanding how. This report shows how contextual factors that remain underexplored—the specific characteristics of political settlements at various levels, the different dimensions of violence, the processes and forms of bargaining and strategies of delivery—can make or break service delivery. This is especially true at the subnational level. Development actors have no choice but to take these aspects much more seriously.
- 2. Recognize that some forms of violence are less bad for service delivery.** Mainstream approaches tend to view violence as simply bad for service delivery. But the research shows that different forms of and motivations for violence can be more or less amenable to SSD, and that these motivations can vary considerably within and between violence-affected contexts. There is therefore a need to go beyond overly simplistic classifications of violence, and to unpack how different forms of violence present different obstacles to and opportunities for service delivery, particularly at the subnational level.

3. Address the operational ways in which elites influence service delivery.

Clearly, elites influence development progress. Yet, in many ways, this assertion has frustrated service delivery practitioners, as it tends to yield a long list of broad recommendations and to present elites as actors who simply frustrate and subvert service delivery. Instead, this report suggests that the lens of elite bargaining offers a new frontier for social service policy design and implementation in violence-affected contexts. At least three policy insights are worth highlighting: (1) elites, armed and unarmed, are often (if not always) intimately involved in shaping SSD in such fluid, informal, and contested contexts; (2) elite bargains are critical and such bargains can take a range of different forms, which need to be considered in the program design; and (3) elites can play a more or less positive role in violence-affected contexts, and the extent to which armed elites facilitate or undermine a service depends on their varied incentives and ideologies.

4. Rethink the function of service delivery: rents matter.

A rethinking may well be needed of the widely held idea that service delivery is or should be a neutral intervention, and that rent-sharing must or can be entirely avoided in delivering services. This research points to a set of difficult and nuanced policy implications, which are: (1) service delivery generates rents, which can strengthen certain elites,

armed or unarmed, affecting (for good or ill) the balance of power and political order; (2) rents created or constrained by a SSD program may affect (for good or ill) the level of violence, because violence is often controlled by rent-sharing agreements in such contexts; and (3) rent appropriation of SSD resources by armed elites can in some cases be considered as a “cost of doing business” to ensure peaceful project implementation (the extent to which rent appropriation by armed elites is a cost worth bearing is as much a political as a technical judgment). These issues need further attention in programming in violent contexts.

5. Be realistic about good governance.

The report shows how governance, politics, and elites matter, but not in ways that are necessarily expected. The still-dominant “good governance” paradigm—centered on best-practice formal rules, liberal-democratic norms of transparency and accountability, and technocratic fixes—does not always emerge as a particularly useful guide to understanding progress in violent contexts. Instead, the report highlights two major policy implications: (1) there are a wider range of options for progress in the midst of far-from-perfect forms of governance than the good governance paradigm assumes; and (2) informal relationships, rent-sharing, far-from-perfect transparency or accountability, and deep politicization of service

delivery—through political parties or “unsavory” powerful actors—played critical roles in the change process on the ground. In short, the report adds to growing calls for a new paradigm for the governance of service delivery.

Toward a New Programming Approach

Building on the findings and policy implications outlined above, the report presents the foundations of an operational framework to help better tailor service delivery to context-specific forms of politics, violence, and

bargaining. It includes six mutually reinforcing recommendations (see figure ES.1):

1. Become better at diagnosing the real scope for progress.
2. Think and work more politically in violence-affected contexts.
3. Tailor interventions to different forms of violence.
4. Take bargaining dynamics more seriously.
5. Realign internal donor rules and incentives.
6. Explore new models of delivery and new research in this field.

Figure ES.1. Proposed framework for strengthening service delivery in violence-affected contexts



Recommendation 1: Better Diagnose the Risks and Scope for Progress

Service delivery practitioners could more systematically assess the issues surfaced by this research. As such, the report provides a new diagnostic tool that can be applied in different contexts, consisting of three main modules. Module 1 includes submodules on the basic features of the national settlement, the nature of the sectoral settlement, the relationship between central and subnational elites, and the subnational settlement. Module 2 focuses on the drivers behind and the organization, ideology, and localization of violence. Module 3 draws lessons from the implementation of different strategies for service delivery and bargaining. Key points to keep in mind in applying this diagnostic include that:

- The tool seeks to complement, not replace, existing diagnostics. Its questions can be adapted and included in existing analytical tools.
- The diagnostic does not need to be extensive but does require careful application. The process of ensuring organizational uptake of the findings is perhaps more important than the rigor of the diagnostic.
- The diagnostic is not a one-time exercise: given the fluid nature of violent contexts, the diagnostic needs to be regularly updated.

- Adequate organizational resources and incentives should be dedicated to addressing, and implementing, the findings.

Recommendation 2: Think and Work Politically in Violence-Affected Contexts

Tailor social service delivery interventions to different types of political settlements

Political settlements differ, particularly at the subnational and sectoral level. These differences have important implications for SSD. Table ES.1 briefly outlines the different types of settlements that can be found and their implications for service delivery programming.

Build coalitions for service delivery in very fluid contexts

Improving SSD is a technical challenge, but it is also a political one. Effective implementation requires the building of coalitions—however limited, fluid, or localized—that enable some degree of service delivery implementation. While development actors have limited tools to create and sustain coalitions, three golden rules on coalition-building emerge from the research:

- **Expect the unexpected.** Fluid and unstable politics are the name of the game, so practitioners will need to adapt and keep an ear close to the ground.

Table ES.1. Types of political settlement in violence-affected contexts and implications for social service delivery

Type of subnational/sectoral settlement	Example	Implications for social service delivery (SSD) programming
Relatively stable, with ruling coalition that has some incentives to favor SSD	Balkh Province, Afghanistan (organized around regional strongman with pro-SSD interests/incentives) Hill/mountain region of Nepal after large-scale violent conflict (organized around pro-SSD political party)	Reasonably good prospects for SSD, as incentives align. Stability in settlement potentially allows for planning over longer time horizon and the building of a pro-SSD coalition. However, SSD needs to align with the ruling factions' preferred mode of delivery (given their relative power in setting the rules of the game).
Moderately stable, with mixed SSD incentives (contested between state, disciplined armed insurgencies, and powerful traditional elites)	Wardak Province, Afghanistan, particularly before 2008	Medium prospects for SSD. Moderate stability allows for better planning and better coalition-building around SSD programs, but contestation can undermine delivery depending on the level of contestation at the front line of service delivery. Mechanisms of coordination between powerful elites may be needed.
Moderately unstable, but presence of pro-SSD incentives (contested between state and disciplined armed insurgency that favors SSD)	Nepal during large-scale violent conflict Balochistan, Pakistan	Some prospects for SSD, given pro-SSD ideology. However, active contestation between state and insurgent groups potentially undermines service delivery. Efforts, compromises, and bargains likely to be needed to reach consensus among contesting groups on "ring-fencing" services (to a degree).
Moderately to highly unstable, with some state penetration in areas controlled by relatively disciplined armed groups, with weak incentives for SSD	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan	SSD is likely to be challenging. Some state penetration offers a modicum of stability that may help with service delivery, but weak incentives as well as antagonism can undermine service delivery.
Highly unstable, with weak state penetration, less disciplined armed groups, and weak SSD incentives/ideology	Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Pakistan)	SSD is likely to be challenging. Weak SSD incentives as well as antagonism can undermine SSD.
Highly unstable, with marked fragmentation of power (and no monopoly of violence) and weak incentives for SSD (weak political organization and multiple centers of power controlled by armed criminal organizations)	Badghis Province, Afghanistan Tarai region of Nepal after large-scale violent conflict	SSD is likely to be very challenging. The lack of broadly agreed rules of the game as well as the presence of dominant ideology/incentives that seek short-term appropriation of SSD make progress difficult. Delivery needs to be flexible; practitioners need to learn by doing and (most likely) accept that bargaining strategies must be built in.

- **Be realistic about the role of spoils and rents.** Given that rents often play a role in sustaining coalitions, controlling violence, and allowing service provision to be functional, think carefully before attempting to constrain or redirect them.
- **Find “good enough” ways to support (or at least not undermine) pro-service delivery coalitions.** This may include: (1) helping pro-service delivery elites coordinate themselves and act collectively; (2) reducing information asymmetries between factions; (3) helping build trust across groups; and (4) increasing predictability in such contexts to enable longer time horizons.
- Small-scale interventions may circumvent sectoral elite networks and spark a slow-burning political demonstration effect, but scaling can be elusive.
- Bundling delivery into a suite of services—such as combining basic health services with access to other services—may increase the political feasibility of success by buying off and appeasing opposing elites, though implementation logistics are challenging.
- Decentralized multistakeholder approaches may create the space for, and facilitate, more inclusive delivery bargains at the local level, but this requires strong in-built mechanisms to reduce the prospects that local elites will entirely subvert service delivery.

Seek politically savvy modes of delivery

Different modes of delivery can help bypass, or reduce the power of, forces opposed to SSD. Depending on the local context, a multitude of potential strategies can make delivery more politically savvy. Whatever the mode of delivery, programs are likely to face trade-offs rather than win-wins; these trade-offs need to be recognized and managed, not wished away. Key lessons include the following:

- Semiautonomous delivery mechanisms may reduce the power of sectoral clientelist networks, but sustainability is a challenge.

Recommendation 3: Tailor Service Delivery to Different Forms of Violence

In order to help practitioners better tailor programs to the specificities of violence in their context, table ES.2 offers a stylized breakdown of the types of violence that emerged in this research, and the implications for SSD. The rule of thumb is that the more fragmented, mobile, and ideologically antagonistic the violent actors, the harder it will be to deliver services and the more mitigation strategies will be needed.

Form of violence	Implications for delivery of social services
<p>Well-organized, disciplined armed groups with incentives favoring social service delivery (SSD)</p> <p><i>Example:</i> dominant/organized strongman allied with ruling coalition, such as General Atta in Balkh, Afghanistan</p>	<p>Bargaining feasible (actors clear, incentives for service delivery aligned). Good prospects of direct state provision given alliance with ruling coalition. Resource transfer—from the center to the subnational level—may be substantial to maintain alliance.</p>
<p>Well-organized, disciplined <i>insurgent</i> armed groups with incentives favoring SSD</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> organized insurgency resisting or trying to capture the state but wanting some services, such as Maoists (Nepal), Balochistan (Pakistan)</p>	<p>Bargaining feasible (actors clear, incentive alignment). But poor relationship with the state means strategies are needed to mitigate risks such as nonstate provision and dialogue with insurgents to ensure that delivery of social services is not perceived as a proxy for state penetration.</p>
<p>Somewhat organized/disciplined <i>insurgent</i> armed groups largely opposed to SSD</p> <p><i>Example:</i> relatively organized insurgents who want to undermine delivery, for example of polio inoculation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan</p>	<p>High risks of violence targeting delivery. Insurgent leaders relatively clear in their antiservice ideology driven by their poor relationship with the state. Mitigation strategies could include bundling of services to increase insurgent incentives not to undermine delivery.</p>
<p>Somewhat organized/disciplined armed groups competing for regional power and legitimacy; positions favoring service delivery contested</p> <p><i>Example:</i> large parts of Wardak Province, Afghanistan</p>	<p>Complex scenario. Strategies for service delivery will depend on various factors: local contestation may lead to competition to improve services or to capture/undermine services. Competition may also be over who is seen to deliver the service.</p>
<p>Disorganized/fragmented, mobile/roving <i>insurgent</i> armed groups with some local roots creating incentives for service delivery</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> fractionalized, uncoordinated armed groups with some incentives for service delivery as in parts of Badghis, Afghanistan</p>	<p>A more difficult context (compared to the four previous ones). Leaders fragmented, power contested, and violence less predictable, with the result that bargaining is less feasible. Second-best solutions need to apply, such as using local implementers to increase safety and securitize delivery.</p>
<p>Highly disorganized/fragmented, highly mobile/roving armed groups with criminal (nonpolitical) motives</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> some parts of Badghis, Afghanistan; to a lesser extent, Tarai, Nepal, after large-scale violent conflict.</p>	<p>Most difficult context: leaders fragmented, power contested, and violence less predictable; incentives of violent actors are to undermine delivery of social services. Second-best solutions will be required.</p>

Recommendation 4: Take Bargaining Seriously

Building on the previous recommendations, three practical messages emerge from the findings on the role of bargaining in SSD:

1. We cannot simply ignore the role of bargaining. In all of the cases studied, forms of bargains with armed elites and allied insurgent groups were critical in enabling some progress in SSD. There was little evidence, however, that project implementers were aware of, or systematically considered, such dynamics. Making project choices without at least considering the role of bargains may put SSD at greater risk and lead to “shots in the dark.” Moreover, bargaining and compromises may not be a “first-best” option, but they may be the only way to make progress in some contexts (see discussions on road construction in Nepal and education in Pakistan in the report).

2. Carefully consider the trade-offs of both traditional and bargain-sensitive approaches to service delivery. In such difficult, violent contexts, trade-offs tend to be prominent across the board:

- *Trade-offs of traditional programming:* For example, a traditional program (that is, one that ignores the role of bargaining) might unknowingly create rents that sustain locally powerful elites and/or

armed elites, or the provided services might be accessed by insurgents and their allies, indirectly sustaining them.

- *Trade-offs of bargain-sensitive programming:* For example, bargains might help short-term, localized progress of service delivery, but little is known about if and how they might contribute to longer-term state or peace-building objectives. Using locally trusted actors and volunteers to deliver services may reduce the risks of attack and maintain service quantity, but such use may also hinder efforts to improve service quality (because volunteers may not be able to deliver complex services, for example). Also, service delivery may be maintained via bargaining, but resource flows may be diverted to areas and groups seen by powerful insurgents/elites as more important.

3. Think about what it would take to develop a “bargain-sensitive” service delivery program. As noted, the question of whether bargaining with armed elites and allied insurgents to deliver services is better than slower or no progress must be answered case by case. The report offers some preliminary ideas on mainstreaming bargain-sensitivity in service delivery design, which includes mechanisms to: (1) facilitate dialogue and negotiations with armed elites and allied insurgents; (2) enlist the support of locally influential

nonarmed elites; (3) make deliberate concessions and compromises in the way services are delivered; and (4) facilitate (or at least not undermine) some degree of rent-sharing if it might produce more service delivery benefits than costs.

Recommendation 5: Reform Donor Incentives and Mind-sets

Many of this study's implications challenge traditional approaches to the delivery of aid. In this regard, the report gives weight to the findings in the 2017 World Development Report (World Bank 2017), and adds a voice to two contemporary narratives around changing aid delivery: (1) advocacy for *doing development differently* and *thinking and working politically*,¹ which includes adaptive programming;² and (2) advocacy for a more context-specific approach in fragile settings that systematically considers risks and draws on lessons about what *really* works on the ground (IEG 2016; Marc et al. 2016).

This report goes further than these narratives by offering a more granular framework for addressing politics and violence in SSD operations. Furthermore, it pinpoints some specific measures—and internal dilemmas and risks—in order to further align the aid system with realities on the ground. These measures include the following:

- **Foster frank internal debate on elites and bargaining to change mind-sets.**

This may include setting aside internal budgets for the type of the diagnostics proposed here, and changing the vocabulary of programming. Indeed, this research suggests that bargaining issues are often unknown, brushed under the carpet, or painted in an overly simplistic light. Yet internal management culture may not always be conducive to discussing such challenges.

- **Mainstream strategies for bargaining in delivery programs.** Yet, fiduciary rules and financial accountability may run counter to this, and there are various trade-offs to manage.
- **Integrate incentives for adapting programs to subnational variation and regularly adapt programs as they unfold.** This would require improved incentives and systems for adapting to subnational variation and lessons learned along the way. Yet adaptation to subnational variation can be costly and complex, and linear results frameworks are often the dominant mode of planning and monitoring programs.
- **Modify human resource practices to adapt to these realities.** Steps could be taken to ensure that country offices have deep enough local, political knowledge, such as by recruiting and retaining knowledgeable local staff, or reducing the high

turnover of international staff who may serve only one or two years. Yet, attracting and retaining people in violence-affected contexts can be extremely difficult.

Recommendation 6: Pursue New Frontiers for Delivery and Research

Finally, the report offers the seeds of a new paradigm for SSD. There are different models for service delivery. This research is most aligned with an approach that views service delivery as profoundly embedded in, and shaped by, power politics. This differs from mainstream approaches to service delivery in the following ways:

- **No one service delivery modality is privileged.** Different models can be more or less effective depending on local political settlements, the form of violence, and the opportunities for bargaining, as outlined in chapter 6.
- **New actors are brought into much sharper focus.** The findings push us to analyze the central role, interests, and incentives of different elites in service delivery, such as landlords or warlords.
- **Political economy is not just about material power; it is also about ideas.** We show the important role of “ideas” (held by elites, armed or unarmed) in shaping the constraints and opportunities for SSD.

- **Service delivery is rarely politically neutral.** The research, by showing how SSD is a source of rents that differs by sector, undermines traditional approaches that suggest it can be technical, neutral, or ring-fenced from politics and power.
- **Bargains and trade-offs are part of the new normal.** Bargains, trade-offs, and compromises are integral to service delivery—an element scarcely treated by other service delivery paradigms.

Finally, the report gives way to a set of future research questions, which include the following:

- How can this report’s typology of violence be deepened and further tested in other geographical areas to strengthen its generalizability and applicability?
- How do development interventions create and sustain new bargaining structures? Are there other examples of or lessons from SSD cases in which bargaining was integrated and its risks effectively mitigated?
- How can donor agencies reconcile their fiduciary requirements (accounting and procurement procedures) with the need for some flexibility and bargaining in SSD? What aid instruments might be most appropriate?

Introduction

This report provides the foundation for a new approach to service delivery in violence-affected contexts that is sensitive to the actual forms of violence, politics, and bargaining encountered in such polities. It raises sensitive issues about how development organizations that work with recognized governments should approach service delivery in contested settings. As many countries today are riven by conflict and internal division, some familiar rules of the game may be inadequate to deal with the mounting humanitarian and development challenges posed by complex conflict situations, particularly where affected people

need access to social services. This raises dilemmas about the ethical and political judgments and trade-offs that development actors may have to make. A key challenge is whether development actors can adapt their procedures and ways of working to the fluidity, uncertainties, and risk taking that the new, conflict-riven landscape demands while preserving financial accountability, doing no harm, and ensuring aid effectiveness. This challenge cannot be ignored, as progress in basic service delivery in violence-affected contexts will make or break global efforts to end poverty and increase shared prosperity over the coming decades.



Community at discussion of water supply and sanitation. Kaski Nepal. SIMONE D. MCCOURTIE/WORLD BANK

The report has three parts. The reader is encouraged to read them all, but may find certain parts or chapters of more relevance for their purposes. Part I presents the overall approach and key findings from this study. Part II, for the more interested reader, presents a more detailed and rich ethnography of the main findings presented in Part I, including some of the stories behind the big messages. Part III draws conclusions and policy implications, and identifies avenues for further thought and research.

Part I has two chapters. Drawing on the critical gaps in our knowledge about the obstacles to social service delivery (SSD) in areas beset by violent conflict, chapter 1 presents a framework for research organized around four key elements, the interaction of which explains the success or failure of SSD: political settlements (mainly at the subnational and local levels but also at the national level); the varied forms of and motivations for violence at the subnational level; the potential for forging elite bargains to allow some degree of service delivery; and the extent to which the mode of delivering services is sensitive to the first three concerns. Chapter 2 applies the framework to conflict-riven areas in Afghanistan, Nepal, and Pakistan; and outlines the main research puzzles and findings from the research.

Part II, which delves into the rich ethnographic data, is divided into four chapters.

Chapter 3 explores how political settlements at various levels shape the spaces, constraints, and opportunities for different forms of service delivery. Chapter 4 focuses on violent actors—that is, armed elites, including insurgents and warlords—and explores how the varied forms, organizations, motivations, ideologies, and levels of mobility among these actors affect SSD. Chapter 5 examines the ways that elite bargains are critical to making or breaking SSD. The chapter explores how bargains occur and how they may permit progress, albeit with trade-offs. Chapter 6 concludes with an exploration of how certain modes of delivery seem to work better than others in navigating through regressive aspects of local politics and violence.

Part III, in two chapters, presents a set of policy takeaways and recommendations. Chapter 7 urges development practitioners to adapt to context, to recognize that not all forms of violence affect service delivery equally, to turn into action the knowledge that elites matter, and to be realistic about good governance. The six recommendations offered in chapter 8 echo the policy implications sketched in the previous chapter. They are: to regularly measure the actual extent of progress, to think and work politically, to tailor service approaches to the specific forms of prevailing violence, to take bargaining seriously, to revise donor rules in light of research and experience, and to be open to new frontiers of service delivery and research.

Part I.

Research Approach and Major Findings



Afghan children look from the window of their shelter in the former Soviet embassy, a huge compound amid the destruction of west Kabul, November 27, 2001. DAMIR SAGOLJ/REUTERS

1. Research Approach

“Fragility, Conflict and Violence remain among the most pressing global policy issues today and constitute major obstacles to achieving development objectives.”
(World Bank 2016b: 44)

“We now have to admit that the paradigms and frameworks that have guided our perspective on fragility and conflict may be less relevant than we had hoped.”
– Dr. Jim Kim, World Bank President, Fragility Forum opening remarks, March 2016.
(World Bank 2016c)

Fragility, conflict, and violence are among the most urgent global policy challenges, representing significant barriers to achieving global development objectives. About 2 billion people live in countries where development outcomes are affected by fragility, conflict, and high levels of violence, and where there is a clear correlation between fragility and poverty. These states have experienced the slowest pace of progress toward any of the Millennium Development Goals. The average poverty rate among countries that experienced major violence between 1981 and 2005 is 21 points higher than where there was no violence (World Bank 2011: 5). Over half of the population in these low-income violence-affected countries lives in extreme poverty, accounting for about 20 percent of the world’s extreme poor in 2012. By 2030, an estimated 50 percent of the world’s poor will live in a country affected by violence (World Bank 2016b).

The impact of fragility and violence spills across borders. Violent conflict has resulted in major displacement and has contributed to the so-called refugee crisis that has recently engulfed parts of the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe. According to the former Secretary General of the United Nations (UN):

“The world today is witness to higher levels of conflict than a decade ago, and the highest level of forced displacement since the Second World War . . . The drivers of violence and instability are more complex and more intractable than ever. Nothing emphasizes this reality more than the conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa. To address the scale and the nature of the conflicts, we need new approaches”

– Ban Ki Moon
(UN Secretary General 2015).

While the delivery of basic services in fragile and conflict-affected settings is critical, it is extremely difficult. For example:

- A mere one-fifth of fragile states are on track to achieve universal primary schooling compared with nearly half of nonfragile developing countries (OECD 2015).
- Only 28 percent of fragile states are on track to cut in half the number of citizens who do not have access to safe water compared with 61 percent of nonfragile countries (OECD 2015).
- A person living in a fragile or violent setting is almost three times more likely to be undernourished (Bread for the World Institute 2016).

Given that such services play a critical role in reducing poverty, it is no wonder that the development community is highly concerned.

The international community has responded with commitments to improve governance and development assistance in such contexts. Goal 16 of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals is to: “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels” (UN 2015). Many of the Sustainable Development Goals also focus on improving services such as agriculture,

health care, education, water and sanitation, and infrastructure.

This report explores the challenge of delivering social services in violence-affected contexts.

Background case studies from Afghanistan, Nepal, and Pakistan are synthesized with the latest global evidence to chart both a conceptual and operational path forward.³ In charting that path, the report attempts to fill some important knowledge gaps and to pilot a new analytical framework to answer unresolved questions, as outlined in the next section.

1.1. Knowledge Gaps and Practical Challenges

The Sustainable Development Goals are unlikely to be achieved unless we address important knowledge gaps and improve practices on the ground. For the purposes of this report, eight interrelated gaps can be highlighted:⁴

1. Differential rates of success in delivering social services in violence-affected contexts have been poorly explained. Progress in social service delivery (SSD) has been achieved in some violence-affected contexts, but the knowledge base is limited in terms of explaining:

- Why some SSD interventions succeed while others fail in the same country, and
- Why there is variation among violence-affected countries.

For example, World Bank–supported research has examined the nexus between conflict and development (World Bank 2011); explored the political dimensions of development in fragile contexts (Bain, Porter, and Watts 2015); unpacked the societal dynamics of fragility (Marc et al. 2013); and shown how institutions take root and services get delivered in difficult contexts (Barma, Huybens, and Vinuela 2014; Brixi, Lust, and Woolcock 2015). However, none of these studies have focused systematically on SSD or have explained how and why SSD progress occurs within and among different violence-affected contexts.

2. Prevailing technical approaches to service delivery have had limited success.

Failure to deliver basic social services in violence-affected countries is often attributed to technical deficits, such as weak capacity, limited resources, and a lack of expertise, but a body of evidence demonstrates that technical approaches tell only part of the story. Political economy dynamics also influence the functioning of service delivery agencies and underpin institutional capacity constraints (McCloughlin and Batley 2012; Leftwich and Wheeler 2011; Levy and Walton 2013; Unsworth 2010; Wild et al. 2015).⁵ Most recently, the *World Development Report 2007: Governance and the Law* (World

Bank 2017) puts governance and politics front and center. It shows how policy is made and implemented in complex political and social settings in which individuals and groups of unequal power pursue conflicting interests according to shifting rules.

3. While there is a growing consensus that governance and politics matter for service delivery, the devil is in the details:

- *The consensus breaks down rather easily.* Less agreement can be found regarding precisely how governance matters; what aspects of governance most affect SSD; and what can be done by development actors to influence governance. As one research consortium puts it, “Almost everyone agrees that ‘politics matters’ for development, but there is little consensus about what this actually means” (ESID 2016). Similarly, it is widely recognized that “context matters,” but there is limited clarity on exactly how it matters in violence-affected situations.
- *The good governance paradigm continues to dominate our understanding of what forms of politics matter.* It focuses on promoting formal rules; fostering liberal-democratic and best practice norms of transparency and accountability; and making technocratic fixes. Yet a growing number of observers question its utility in explaining the forms of governance that drive development progress in a number of countries (Andrews, Pritchett, and Woolcock 2012).

- *Alternative governance paradigms need to be fleshed out and mainstreamed.* In light of the perceived failings of the good governance paradigm, attempts have been made to develop new paradigms, such as “best fit” or “good enough governance” (Albrecht 2013; Levy 2014; World Bank 2017: 11–12).⁶ However, these alternative approaches need to be fleshed out, mainstreamed, and operationalized.
- *The evidence base is limited, especially in violence-affected contexts.* Systematic evidence on the way governance and political economy factors impact service delivery is growing, but it remains quite limited, especially in violence-affected contexts.⁷ As McLoughlin and Batley (2012: 30–31) note:

“Significant gaps in our understanding remain . . . [service delivery] research needs to give special importance to the point of implementation, where formal policies most often fail and where ‘real’ policies emerge from the interplay of interests and incentives . . . and adopt an essentially ‘bottom-up’ approach to the field research, working upwards in order to identify the key political factors that underpin [service delivery] performance. This would put the focus on those institutions, incentives and actors that are effective at the point of delivery—rather than

on those that in the formal scheme of things are supposed to set the institutional and policy framework governing implementation.”

4. An analytical approach based on “political settlements” has helped move the debate forward, but its full promise has not yet been realized. The approach explores how the underlying balance of political power among contending elites and political coalitions, and the negotiations and bargains between them, are critical in explaining development outcomes. However, there are at least two reasons why this approach has not fulfilled its practical potential. First, the approach can often fail to offer concrete policy recommendations. As Kelsall (2016: 1) notes: “despite its intuitive appeal, it seems difficult to use in practice.” Indeed, various aid agency officials believe it has strong potential but have complained that it does not offer enough granular detail to inform everyday programming.⁸ Second, there have been extremely few attempts to link political settlement thinking to service delivery, especially in violence-affected contexts (Hickey 2013: 11; Kelsall, Hart, and Laws 2016: 1).

5. The terms “fragility” and “violence” have not been sufficiently defined, analyzed, and applied to service delivery.

- Mainstream definitions of “fragility” have been found to be lacking. Fragile states are generally defined as those states without

the will or capacity to function in ways that reduce poverty, ensure development, or safeguard human rights. This definition does not distinguish between the particular conditions of “fragility” and the general conditions of “underdevelopment.” Indeed, the label “state fragility” has been applied not only to poor, poverty-stricken countries that experience large-scale political violence and warfare, but also to poor, poverty-stricken countries that have achieved long periods of peace (Putzel and Di John 2012). As one piece sums up:

“... fragility is not a static condition, nor is it an all-or-nothing experience. Fragility can best be understood as a continuum: societies can experience extreme state failure and violent conflict at one end and varying degrees of fragility at other points along the continuum.” (Marc et al. 2013: 2)

- *Fragile and violent contexts have too often been conflated.* The specific challenges of delivering SSD in the context of large-scale political violence have not been dealt with explicitly in policy and academic circles. One of the reasons for this is that World Bank classification criteria for “fragile and conflict-affected states” are not based on an assessment of the prevalence of violent conflict or on estimates of political fragility—that is, the likelihood that the political order will collapse (Moore 2014).⁹

- *Little is known about how different forms of violence impact SSD.* We also know that “violence” takes different forms, but there are no attempts to understand how these different forms might have different impacts on SSD. Indeed, how and why political violence affects SSD is poorly understood (Putzel and Di John 2012). Moreover, many studies focus on the negative impact violence has on SSD. Only a few studies have partially sought to explain progress in SSD in the face of violence (for example, Baird 2011; OECD 2015).¹⁰

6. There is a limited understanding of how different strategies and modalities of SSD might make a difference in violence-affected contexts. Important debates continue around what modes of delivery are most appropriate in violence-affected contexts. Ideas range from those inspired by *World Development Report 2004: Making Services Work for the Poor* (World Bank 2003), to community-driven development (World Bank 2011). Moreover, an important strand of literature on modes of delivery suggests that different sector characteristics—such as opportunities for rents and different ways of delivering services (for example, top-down versus bottom-up)—present different constraints and opportunities for negotiating the politics of delivery (Harris, Mcloughlin, and Wild 2013). Yet this assumption has rarely been tested in violence-affected contexts. Further, focusing on a sector’s characteristics does not explain

why SSD can perform so differently in the same sector within and across less-developed countries in general and violence-affected countries in particular.

7. There is a paucity of firsthand, primary data from violence-affected contexts. Research in violence-affected settings is more restricted, costlier, and riskier. As a result, many studies are at worst based on secondary literature reviews or at best on interviews with key informants from capital cities. These sources provide only a partial picture of the on-the-ground reality and a weak understanding of the dynamics of front-line delivery; and they fail to include perspectives of front-line service users, providers, and other stakeholders.

8. Improved policy and practice guidance are urgently needed. There are global calls to develop an improved set of practical tools to address development challenges in these difficult contexts (World Bank 2016b). Recent reports have pointed to a number of critical needs:

- *A differentiated approach.* The World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group recommends developing differentiated mechanisms for assessing and classifying fragile, conflict, and violence-affected contexts; tailoring to country context more systematically; and adopting more realistic approaches (IEG 2013).

- *Improvement in policy and operations in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.* These include mainstreaming enhanced risk monitoring and management; further identifying, building on, and integrating lessons about what works; and refining operational effectiveness and flexibility (World Bank 2016b: 44–45).
- *A better understanding of the actual mechanisms through which political settlements affect SSD.* A better grasp of this could lead to insights on what donors might do differently (DFID 2016).

1.2. Scope and Framework of Study

In order to address the above-mentioned gaps, this report addresses the following core questions:

- How and why do political economy factors and forms of violence shape the implementation and outcomes of SSD in violence-affected contexts?
- What explains the variation of SSD progress within and between violence-affected contexts?
- What lessons can be taken from this to inform future analysis, policy, and practice?

Inductive Approach, Case Selection, and Methodology

To answer these questions, the study inductively developed and piloted a new approach to thinking about service delivery in violence-affected contexts. Inductive reasoning is based on learning from experience. Patterns, resemblances, and regularities in experience (premises) are observed in order to reach conclusions (or to generate theory). As Bernard (2011: 7) puts it, inductive research “involves the search for pattern from observation and the development of explanations—theories—for those patterns through series of hypotheses.” As such, an analytical framework was developed and applied inductively—the framework is described in the next section.¹¹

The research focuses on service delivery in the health and education sectors in Afghanistan and Pakistan and the health and rural infrastructure sectors in Nepal. The research includes six projects from these sectors. Subnational field research sites within each country were selected for in-depth study and comparative analysis. Each of the subnational areas are violence-affected, but have different characteristics, as outlined in chapter 2.

The study methodology is qualitative and combines multiple methods. Main methods include a systematic meta-review of global evidence; a review of the country, sector, and intervention-related evidence; semistructured key informant interviews (KIIs), field visits,

and focus group discussions (FGDs); a systematic analysis of interview transcripts; and multistakeholder consultations. Case studies were selected based on research puzzles developed from gaps in the literature (see appendix A for a more detailed discussion of the methodology).¹² This, as with all research, carries certain caveats, as outlined in box 1.1.

The Analytical Framework’s Four Key Elements

To address the above-mentioned knowledge gaps and research questions, an analytical framework was developed. The basic premise is that SSD in violence-affected settings is shaped by the interaction between political settlements, forms of violence, the nature of elite bargains, and modes of delivery (see figure 1.1).¹³ A brief outline of these terms and key typologies follows.

Political settlements

A political settlement is a common understanding among elites that their best interests—in terms of access to property rights and positions within and outside the state—are served by a specific way of organizing political power. It is the “distribution of power between contending social groups . . . on which any state [or social system] is based” (Di John and Putzel 2009). Political settlements involve a specific combination of institutions and set of norms as well as power-sharing agreements that help achieve the

Box 1.1. Some research caveats

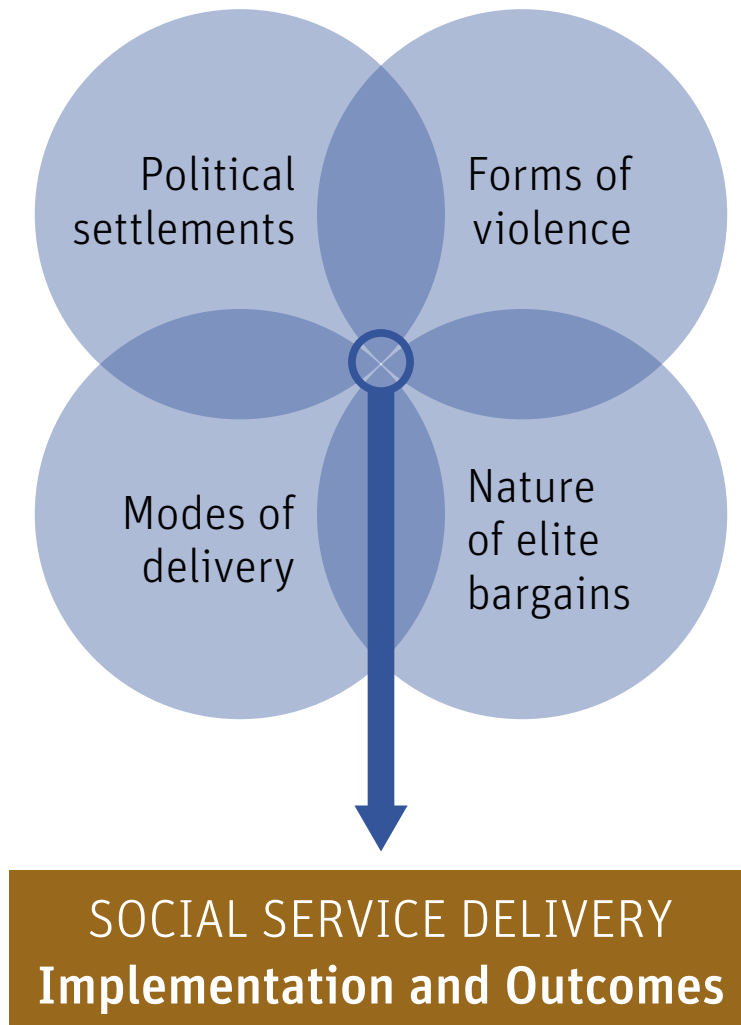
The case selection and research methodology do not claim to be representative: further research is required. This work can be considered a starting point. Research is based on a restricted number of projects and sectors. The case studies and research questions were developed inductively and aimed to address important gaps in the current understanding of how service delivery progress happens in the case study contexts (see chapter 2). The ultimate goal was to begin addressing these gaps and to identify patterns for further investigation and corroboration (see chapter 8). That said, the findings are triangulated with the national and global evidence base in order to increase the generalizability of the claims made. Indeed, generating a statistically representative (so-called “large N”) sample in such contexts, given the security and financial implications, is a perennial challenge.

The report does not claim to offer an exhaustive view of all the factors that affect progress in service delivery in violent contexts. The focus on forms of settlement, violence, bargains, and service delivery does not mean that other factors (such as beneficiary participation, service provider incentives, and the technical quality of services, among others) are unimportant. These four dimensions emerged as important for filling the gaps and inadequacies in the global and country literature. This offers a different perspective on why things work, or do not. As noted above, this should stimulate further debate.

The study does not explore the impact of SSD on peace- or state-building, or on the causes of fragility. The focus of this research is the “how to” of delivering services in the presence of violence, and it explores the delivery of services as a goal in its own right. It does not address the question of whether or how service delivery may contribute to, or undermine, state-building, peace-building, or conditions of fragility. As an aside, we think that the link between SSD and state legitimacy is too indirect and broad to provide granular, day-to-day guidance for policy makers and practitioners on the ground. The assumption that delivering basic services contributes to state-building outcomes appears with a striking degree of regularity in the literature even though on-the-ground empirical evidence supporting or undermining this link is very thin (Carpenter, Slater, and Mallett 2012; Haar and Rubenstein 2012).

The report does not endorse the studied armed elites nor does it necessarily condone the observed collusion between these groups and service providers. Whatever views about armed groups are presented in the report come from key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and related literature. What the report does point to, however, is the need to accept that local “unsavory” bargains are sometimes necessary to deliver humanitarian and development assistance in these contexts.

Figure 1.1. Study framework



minimum conditions needed for the society's economic and political viability (Khan 2010). They exist at two levels: horizontal negotiations between elites and vertical relations between elites and their followers.

A political settlement is not a single, clearly articulated agreement, such as a financial, peace, or legal settlement. It is a rolling agreement that is subject to continual renegotiation and contestation:

“... governance, stability, and the quality and pace of development are viewed as the outcome of struggles and ensuing arrangements among powerful elites. These struggles largely involve informal processes of conflict, negotiation, and compromise.” (Parks and Cole 2010: 5)

Political settlements are more unstable and fluid in violence-affected contexts than in nonviolent low-income contexts. The literature on elite bargains and political settlements attests that the outbreak of political violence represents a crisis—a situation in which at some level of the polity, the underlying elite bargain and broader political settlement is unable to manage social order or contain violent conflict (see Putzel and Di John 2012). In other words, this represents a breakdown of widely agreed-on formal and informal rules governing the allocation of resources and rents and the peaceful settlement of grievances, as well as often a challenge to the ruling coalition (North et al. 2007; North, Wallis, and Weingast 2009).¹⁴

Levels of instability of the political settlement across regions and sectors may vary within violence-affected polities. Civil wars do not always challenge the ruling coalition at every level of the polity (Kalyvas 2003). These variations could affect SSD because the more unstable the political settlement, the shorter the time horizon that power brokers and ruling coalitions have for calculating the political and material benefits of any action.

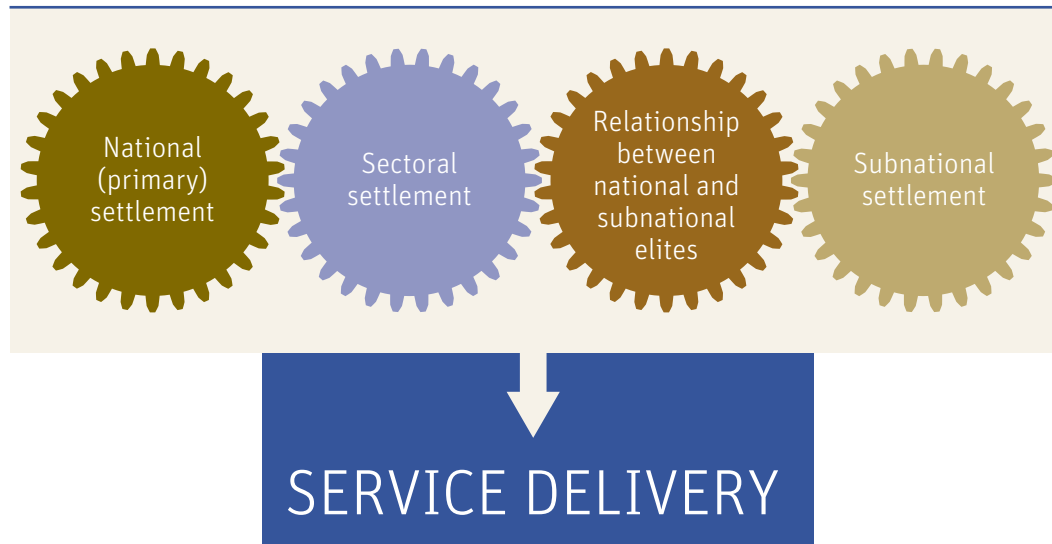
Political settlements in low-income and violence-affected contexts are likely to create and/or sustain rents, rent-seeking, patron-client, and corruption networks. In contexts characterized by weak and unstable ruling coalitions and a poorly enforced rule of law—common to violence-affected polities—the creation of mostly informal rent-sharing agreements among elites as well as their maintenance through restrictions on economic and political competition may be prominent (Haber, Razo, and Maurer 2003; North, Wallis, and Weingast 2009; Acemoglu and Johnson 2005; Khan 2010; Devarajan, Khemani, and Walton 2011).

In sum, political settlements set the broad, often informal, rules of the game and create constraints, spaces, and opportunities for SSD. They provide a map of the ruling coalition: who the power brokers are; the balance of power between them; and what interests and norms they are defending or promoting in economics, politics, and service delivery.

In order to explore the relationship between political settlements and SSD, four interrelated “levels” of the settlement are identified in the framework (see figure 1.2):¹⁵

1. National settlement. The national settlement is the configuration of power at the central state level. It usually includes elites from dominant groups who traditionally have access to political power at the national level. It can shape the overall

Figure 1.2. Dimensions of settlements that affect service delivery



constraints and space for service delivery at the level of policy and implementation.

2. Sectoral settlement. Linked to but distinct from the national settlement, a sectoral settlement involves elite incentives and ideas related to particular sectors, such as health, education, and infrastructure, as well as the dominant norms of power sharing between elites within the sectors. Sectoral settlements may influence SSD in various ways, such as elite rent-sharing in the sector or the offer of various opportunities for elite bargaining.

3. The relationship between central and subnational elites. The linkages and relationships between ruling elites at the national and subnational levels may shape service delivery in numerous ways,

including the degree of state penetration and control over insurgents, the flow of resources to localities, and the autonomy and control of subnational elites over service delivery policy and implementation.

4. Subnational settlement. Relating to the elite balance of power and the incentives, ideas, and power base among elites at the subnational (provincial/district and village) level, this is important. Arrangements among powerful elites who control political competition and resource allocation at the subnational level do not necessarily align with national settlement arrangements.

At the same time, “settlements” at all the above-mentioned levels can have different cross-cutting characteristics. These key characteristics are:

Type of subnational/sectoral settlement	Example from our case material
Relatively stable, with ruling coalition that has some incentives to favor social service delivery (SSD)	Balkh Province, Afghanistan (organized around regional strongman with pro-SSD interests/incentives) Hill/mountain region of Nepal after large-scale violent conflict (organized around pro-SSD political party)
Moderately stable, with mixed SSD incentives (contested between state, disciplined armed insurgencies, and powerful traditional elites)	Wardak Province, Afghanistan, particularly before 2008
Moderately unstable, but presence of pro-SSD incentives (contested between state and disciplined armed insurgency that favors SSD)	Nepal during large-scale violent conflict Balochistan, Pakistan
Moderately to highly unstable, with some state penetration in areas controlled by relatively disciplined armed groups, with weak incentives for SSD	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan
Highly unstable, with comparably weaker state penetration, less disciplined armed groups, and weak SSD incentives/ideology	Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Pakistan)
Highly unstable, with marked fragmentation of power (and no monopoly of violence) and weak incentives for SSD (weak political organization and multiple centers of power controlled by armed criminal organizations)	Badghis Province, Afghanistan Tarai region of Nepal after large-scale violent conflict

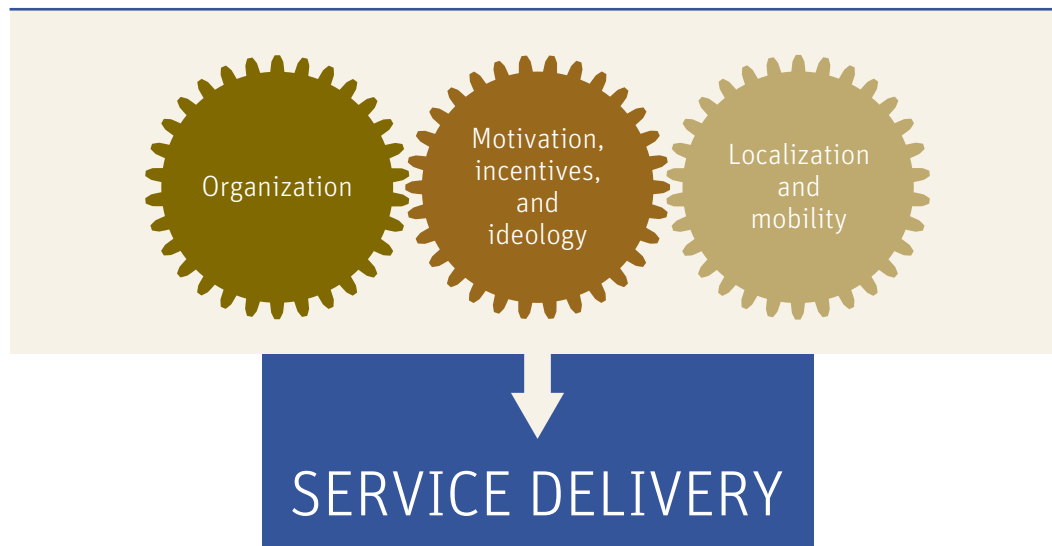
- The degree of stability and contestation in the settlement; The degree to which there is a developmental and/or SSD orientation (however limited) as part of the settlement;
- The degree to which the settlement is exclusionary or inclusive of the range of social or political groups; and
- The balance of power between unarmed elites and armed elites and allied insurgents.¹⁶

Taken as a whole, this led us to develop a sixfold typology (table 1.1) that relates to our case studies. More is said on this in chapters 2 and 4.

Forms of violence

The nature of a political settlement does not sufficiently explain how and why services are delivered in violence-affected contexts; forms of violence need also be considered. Violence can result from, as well as affect, the nature of a political settlement, and its influence is uncertain and variable. As noted above, an outbreak

Figure 1.3. Dimensions of violence that affect social service delivery



of political violence can represent a crisis where contending groups making up a particular political settlement are unable to share power and resources in a way that secures social order. That is, factions within or outside the ruling coalition—“excluded elites”—decide that it is in their interest to challenge the status quo through violence. This can occur at the national or subnational level.¹⁷

People take up arms for different reasons in different contexts, with varying objectives and organizational structures and hierarchies. The literature on violence shows how it needs to be disaggregated. For example, according to Kalyvas (2003), violent contestations at the regional or local level involve numerous differing agendas. Drawing inspiration from this and Olson’s (1993) discussion of banditry,¹⁸

our research framework suggests that three key dimensions of violence are important for service providers to consider: (1) its organization; (2) its motivations, incentives, and ideology; and (3) its localization (figure 1.3). These dimensions are fluid, interrelated, and evolving.

Organization of Violence

While important work has been done on how the nature of the political organizations pursuing violence affects a war’s duration, the durability of peace agreements, and prospects for postwar democratization (for example, Wood 2000), little is known about if and how differences in the organization of violence shape SSD. For the purposes of this study, the following dimensions of violence “organization” emerge as relevant:

- The degree to which violent actors are organized, so that leaders are identifiable and there is some recognised hierarchy of decision making.
- The degree to which which violent actors are disciplined, in the sense that decisions taken by the leaders can cascade down and be upheld.
- The degree to which violence is homogenous, as opposed to fragmented and contested.

Ideologies, Incentives, and Motivations behind Violence

The second key dimension relates to the motivations and incentives for and the ideologies behind violence. While violence certainly exacts large-scale costs, history is also replete with examples of political violence leading to improved developmental outcomes (Tilly 1990) and sometimes even more inclusive, pro-poor outcomes (Putzel and Di John 2012). As such, attention should be given to the motivations of organized armed insurgencies and to specific instances of political violence to determine if they might provide opportunities to reform SSD in more inclusive or pro-poor ways. Understanding what is motivating violence could also be important when thinking about the political risks associated with delivering social services. For example, armed groups may allow SSD if it aligns with their agenda or if they directly benefit from it. However, if armed insurgents

are resisting any or most types of central state penetration in peripheral/border territories, then determining who and how services should be delivered is a formidable challenge, and one that is not systematically examined in the literature.¹⁹ In sum, the specific dimensions of “motivations” for violence that can play a role include the following:

- The degree of alignment between the objectives and ideology of the armed elites and allied insurgents, and the logic, type, scope, and mode of the service being delivered.
- The nature of armed elite and allied insurgents’ ideological “policy” or position toward certain services.
- Armed elites’ and allied insurgents’ perception of service providers, that is, are they perceived as friend or foe?
- The extent to which armed elites and allied insurgents have an interest in maintaining a service for their own use or for rent extraction.

Localization and Mobility of Violence

The extent to which armed groups are embedded in local communities may affect the prospects of local bargaining around SSD during times of violent conflict. The degree of localization seems to depend on at least two factors:

Types of violence	Example from our case material
Well-organized, disciplined armed groups with incentives favoring social service delivery (SSD)	Dominant/organized strongman allied with ruling coalition, such as General Atta in Balkh, Afghanistan
Well-organized, disciplined <i>insurgent</i> armed groups with incentives favoring SSD	Organized insurgency resisting or trying to capture the state but wanting some services, such as Maoists (Nepal), Balochistan (Pakistan)
Somewhat organized/disciplined <i>insurgent</i> armed groups largely opposed to SSD	Somewhat organized insurgents who want to undermine the delivery of particular services, such as polio inoculation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan
Somewhat organized/disciplined armed groups competing for regional power and legitimacy; positions favoring service delivery contested	Large parts of Wardak Province, Afghanistan
Disorganized/fragmented, mobile/roving <i>insurgent</i> armed groups with some local roots creating incentives for service delivery	Fractionalized, uncoordinated armed groups with some incentives for service delivery as in parts of Badghis, Afghanistan
Highly disorganized/fragmented, highly mobile/roving armed groups with criminal (nonpolitical) motives	Some parts of Badghis, Afghanistan; Tarai, Nepal after large-scale violent conflict

- *The degree of reliance on local support.* When armed elites rely on some degree of local support and the local constituents want the service, such elites may be more willing to enable the service.
- *Extent of localization or mobilization of armed elites and their supporting armed insurgents.* Stronger links to local communities may better enable local service delivery compared with more mobile insurgents who move frequently across community borders and geographies.

Taken as a whole, the elements of violence outlined above led us to identify, using our case studies, at least six main types of violence and their relation to SSD. These are outlined in table 1.2 and explored more in chapters 2 and 5.

As a general rule, the more fragmented, mobile, and ideologically antagonistic the violent actors, the more difficult it will be to deliver services and the more mitigation strategies will be needed.

Elite bargains

Elite bargains, which are linked to but distinct from political settlements, are important in violence-affected contexts. They are the sets of rolling interactions and implicit or explicit agreements between powerful actors—armed or unarmed—that shape if and how things are done. Specifically, they involve the processes of conflict, negotiation, accommodation, compromise, and resource sharing that characterize governing (Parks and Cole 2010). Such bargains are processes through which elite actors (that is, actors with the ability to directly influence outcomes within a given sector or issue) and the organizations that support them coordinate and commit to one another to determine outcomes (World Bank 2017: 197). Political settlements describe the broad structure, but elite bargains involve agency, where national and local elites make deals according to the rules of the game, or they attempt to relax existing political constraints by persuading contending elites to change their interests or views regarding policies (Rodrik 2014). In this way, elite bargains are central to any policy innovations because they allow political agents to design their own strategies and policy spaces. As the 2017 World Development Report argues: “Policymaking and policy implementation involve bargaining among different actors (and their varying ability to influence others through control over resources, threat of violence, ideational persuasion, through existing rules)” (World Bank 2017: 7).

Bargains take different forms. It is difficult to know ahead of time what types of elite bargains will matter. At least four overlapping forms of bargain emerged as important for this research (figure 1.4):

- Fostering dialogue and negotiations with armed elites and allied insurgents,
- Enlisting the support of influential local nonarmed elites,
- Striking concessions and compromises, and
- Sharing rents and tolerating corruption.

Modes and strategies of delivery

The final piece of the framework aims to explore how different strategies and modes of SSD might make a difference. While political settlements, forms of violence, and the ability to forge bargains are important drivers of or barriers to progress, service delivery strategies and implementation modalities also seem to matter (as the above literature review suggests).

There are different modes for delivering services. Although this list is by no means exhaustive, three main modalities emerged in relation to the case material:

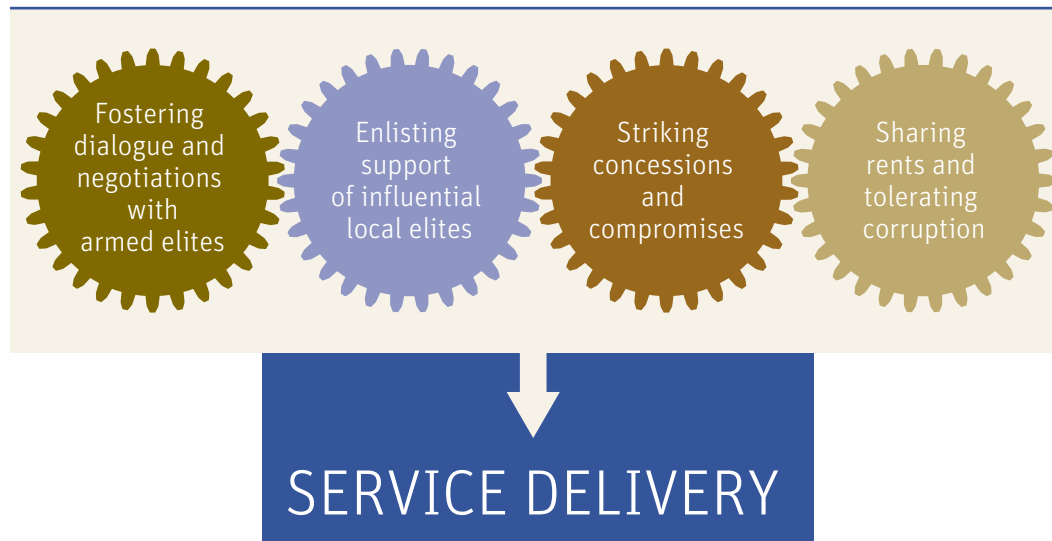
- State versus nonstate,
- Centralized versus decentralized, and
- Single sector versus multisector.

In addition to the modality of delivery, service delivery agents can undertake different strategies. Such strategies can be:

- More or less “violence sensitive”: by anticipating and mitigating some of the risks of violence;
- More or less “politically sensitive”: by reducing the influence of anti-service delivery political coalitions; and
- More or less “bargain sensitive”: by creating space for and facilitating pro-service delivery bargains.

Chapters 2 and 6 explore these issues in more depth.

Figure 1.4. Overlapping forms of bargaining to deliver services



2. Applying the Framework: Puzzles and Findings

Following is an overview of the main findings. It outlines the main research puzzles as well as a brief summary of how the framework was applied to generate answers. Part II (chapters 3–6) as well as the background country reports (World Bank and Akram

2016; World Bank and AREU 2016; World Bank and SSB 2016) provide a more thorough treatment of these issues. For quick reference, tables 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 sum up the puzzles and findings.

Map 1.1. Map of South Asia



2.1. Afghanistan

Afghanistan (see map 2.2) has been a violence-affected country for almost 40 years, resulting in complex rivalries with a variety of actors, interests, and informal institutions. During the 1978–92 jihad period, there was a massive mobilization of actors, such as religious and political counterelites, who opposed the Soviet regime. With several competing insurgencies involved, the mobilization was decentralized, with local fronts

enjoying a high degree of political autonomy. This contributed to the emergence of a fragmented political and military landscape with power often centered around local warlords. By 1993, the country was sliding toward factional war, with various armed irregular forces competing for territorial control (Gustozzi and Ibrahim 2013). The Taliban, which emerged as a serious contender for state control in 1994, came closest to reestablishing a monopoly of violence. In 2001, the Taliban was ousted by the Northern Alliance

Map 2.2. Map of Afghanistan



supported by the United States, leading to the return of many of the factions that had battled for control of Kabul in the early 1990s.

The signing of the Bonn Agreement for an interim power-sharing government in late 2001 created a framework for a new political settlement and a new elite bargain, presided over by Hamid Karzai. The new government was heterogeneous, ethnically as well as ideologically, complicating former President Karzai's goal of unifying the country. From 2002 to 2013, a delicate balance of power was achieved between strong provincial actors, with the president at the center. The president used access to major political or government posts to buy off powerful, provincial, and local elites. Endemic corruption and elite impunity weakened the image of the government and led to a resurgence of the Taliban in parts of the country after 2005.

Progress in the delivery of health and education services in the country since 2002 has been mixed. External aid has played a prominent role, and two major programs have been implemented: the Education Quality Improvement Project (EQUIP) and Strengthening Health Activities for the Rural Poor (SHARP). Both are "on budget" national programs financed by a combination of the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund and International Development Association grants.

EQUIP represents the government's main education program. The development objective of EQUIP I (2004–09) was to:

"improve educational inputs and processes as a foundation for a long-term strategy through: a) the strengthening of schools and teacher training initiatives in communities; b) investment in human resources as well as physical facilities; and c) institutional development of schools, District Education Departments, Provincial Education Departments, and the Ministry of Education." (IEG 2010: 1)

EQUIP II (2008–16) seeks "to increase access to quality basic education, especially for girls, through school grants, teacher training, and strengthened institutional capacity with the support of communities and private providers" (World Bank and AREU 2016: 1).

The SHARP program as well as its successor, the System Enhancement for Health Action in Transition (SEHAT), are the government's main health programs, delivering basic health services. SHARP's development objective was to support the government in achieving the goal of the Health and Nutrition Sector Strategy 2009–13 to "contribute to improving the health and nutritional status of the people of Afghanistan, with a greater focus on women and children and underserved areas of the country" (World Bank 2014: 2).

Puzzles

From an aggregate national level, both EQUIP and SHARP have made progress. National health and education outcomes have improved since 2002, starting from a low base. One report on SHARP noted that it “was highly relevant for the development challenges of the Afghan health sector in 2009 and implementation was largely successful with minor challenges” (World Bank 2014: 19–20).

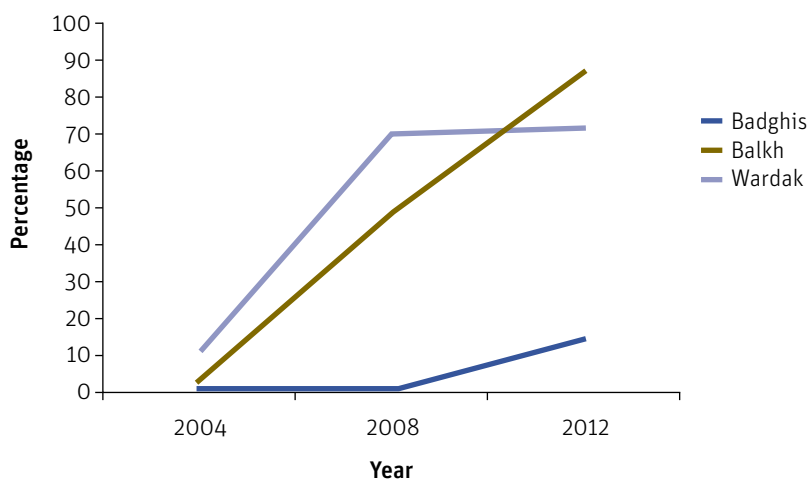
However, some important subnational variations should be noted. The education and health data, albeit patchy, suggests notable progress in certain provinces as well as variation between different provinces over time. This progress and variation is counterintuitive in the context of widespread violence and “dysfunctional” governance, but we found

no systematic studies to explain this. The research explored two key problems.

Puzzle 1: How did health service delivery (and education until 2008) make solid progress in the violence-affected, insecure, and clientelistic political environment of Wardak Province?

The province of Wardak is characterized by high levels of insecurity, and yet it still managed to make notable progress on certain health delivery indicators. The education sector also made some progress, especially up until 2008. From 2004 to 2012, for example, the health sector in Wardak was marked by an increase in the number of facilities, services, and medicines; and it also made progress on health outcomes such as child immunizations and access to skilled antenatal care, although progress in the latter area slowed after 2008 (see figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1. Access to skilled antenatal care, 2004–12



Source: World Bank and AREU 2016.

Puzzle 2: In the face of similarities in the level of insecurity and incidence of “violence,” why was service delivery implementation in general and health-care delivery in particular much more challenging in Badghis compared with Wardak? What was it about Balkh that made service delivery easier to implement and allowed it to achieve relatively good health and education outcomes, especially when compared with either Wardak or Badghis?

Both Wardak and Badghis have been repeatedly affected by violence, yet there was differential performance in service delivery implementation and outcomes. In Badghis, it was more difficult to deliver and sustain services, and its health outcome scores are noticeably lower than those of Wardak. Service delivery in Balkh was more organized than Wardak and Badghis, and its performance on a number of indicators for both sectors is relatively better than the others.

Findings

Puzzle 1: How did health service delivery (and education until 2008) make solid progress in the violence-affected, insecure, and clientelistic political environment of Wardak Province?

One key driver of progress in Wardak was a series of diverse and rolling elite bargains. The bargains were struck and upheld because of a more organized form of violence—enabling bargaining points to be identified—as well as a relatively strong local elite who were supportive of the health (and education) sectors and where the Taliban were relatively



Portrait of shop owner Abdul, Enjil District, Herat, Afghanistan GRAHAM CROUCH/WORLD BANK

reliant on local support. Political networks and organizations were linked to national and sectoral elites in Kabul. One important trade-off to note is that while the local elite facilitated social service delivery (SSD) in education; they did so selectively. While boys' attendance increased, girls' attendance in primary and secondary school dropped in the post-2008 period, mostly because of an antagonism to girls' education among the local elite and armed groups, suggesting that the ideology of local elites matters as much as the balance of power.

Table 2.1. Social service delivery in Afghanistan: Framework, puzzles, and findings

Site	Political settlement	Dominant form of violence	Prospects for pro-SSD elite bargain	Service and mode of delivery	Puzzles and findings
Balkh	Relatively stable. Pro-SSD incentives exist for ruling coalition. Organized and centralized around a regional strongman with pro-SSD interests/incentives.	Well-organized, disciplined armed groups with incentives favoring SSD. Dominant/organized strongmen allied with ruling coalition (General Atta Mohammed Noor).	High	Education: Centralized state provision Health: Decentralized nonstate provision	1: How did health service delivery (and education until 2008) make solid progress in the violence-affected, insecure, and clientelistic political environment of Wardak Province? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diverse and rolling elite bargains in Wardak served as a key driver of progress. A more organized form of violence and a relatively strong local elite supportive of health and education enabled the identification of bargaining points and the striking and upholding of bargains. Political networks and organizations were linked to national and sectoral elites in Kabul.
Badghis	Highly unstable. Situation fluid; marked fragmentation of power and no monopoly of violence; weak SSD incentives and political organization; multiple centers of power controlled by armed criminal organizations.	Disorganized/fragmented, mobile/roving insurgent armed groups with some local roots creating SSD incentives. Fragmentalized, uncoordinated armed groups.	Low	Education: Centralized state provision Health: Decentralized nonstate provision	2: In the face of similarities in the level of insecurity and incidence of “violence,” why was service delivery implementation in general and health delivery in particular much more challenging in Badghis compared with Wardak? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly fragmented, contested forms of violence and an unstable provincial settlement in Badghis compared with Wardak led to fewer agreements and bargains and to the targeting of SSD for predatory appropriation by roving groups. More organized, disciplined form of violence and stable political settlement in Balkh enabled SSD implementation compared with the fragmented but relatively organized violence in Wardak and the highly fragmented and contested form of politics and violence in Badghis. General Atta Mohammed Noor, a strong ally of the national ruling coalition, and current governor of Balkh Province, likely facilitated elite bargains around securing resource flows to health and education in Balkh. Greater economic prosperity and higher median household income in Balkh also contributed to greater progress in SSD.
Wardak	Moderately stable. SSD incentives mixed; incentives are contested between state, disciplined armed insurgencies, and powerful traditional elites (particularly pre-2008).	Somewhat organized/disciplined armed groups competing for regional power, legitimacy, and SSD.	Medium	Education: Centralized state provision Health: Decentralized nonstate provision	

Puzzle 2: In the face of similarities in the level of insecurity and incidence of “violence,” why was service delivery implementation in general and health-care delivery in particular much more challenging in Badghis compared with Wardak? What was it about Balkh that made service delivery easier to implement and allowed it to achieve relatively good health and education outcomes, especially when compared with either Wardak or Badghis?

In Badghis, compared with Wardak, highly fragmented and contested forms of violence as well as an unstable provincial settlement, led to fewer agreements and bargains and to the targeting of SSD for predatory appropriation by roving groups.

In Balkh, the more organized and disciplined form of violence and the stable political settlement—concentrated under General Atta Mohammed Noor, the governor of Balkh—enabled smoother SSD implementation compared with Wardak (where the violence was more fragmented, although still relatively organized) and Badghis (where politics and violence were highly fragmented and contested). The fact that General Atta was a strong ally of the national ruling coalition likely facilitated elite bargains around securing resource flows to both health care and education in Balkh. The greater economic prosperity and therefore higher median household income in Balkh also contributed to greater SSD progress. The political settlement, characterized by a dominant, organized strongman, made governance more predictable, also likely contributing to economic progress in the province.

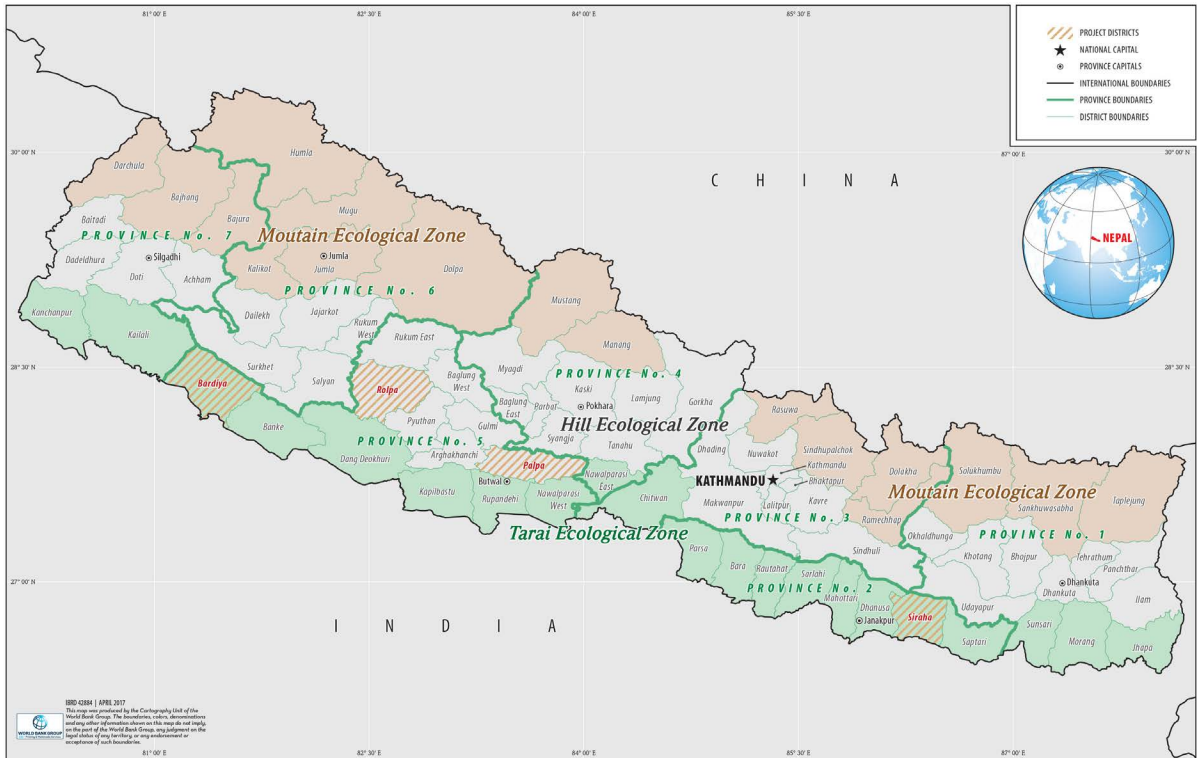
2.2. Nepal

Since the 1990s, Nepal (see map 2.3) has undergone significant sociopolitical upheavals. The most significant was the “People’s War,” launched by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) in 1996, affecting the country for a decade. The Maoist insurgency is widely considered to have had a negative impact on SSD: health-care facilities, schools, community centers, and local government offices were burned, while transportation within and between districts slowed down or was significantly reduced due to frequent checkpoints and curfews (Thapa and Sijapati 2005).

A peace settlement was reached in 2006, but the so-called postconflict period was marked by fluid and unstable political settlements and acts of violence. The mobilization of the Madhesi, for example, known as the “Madhesi Movement,” called for the fulfillment of certain rights and greater integration into the political mainstream. Elements of popular movements in the eastern and central Tarai evolved into different armed groups with political demands; some resorted to various forms of violence and criminality.

The health sector in Nepal has been supported by various donors both during and since the violent conflict. During the 1990s and early 2000s, the government of Nepal supported health through the World Bank–supported Population and Family Health Project (1994–2000) as well as subsectoral

Map 2.3. Map of Nepal



projects supported by various donors. A sectorwide approach was then adopted in the form of the National Health Sector Project. Phase I, implemented in 2004–10, sought “to expand access to, and increase the use of essential health care services, especially by underserved populations” (World Bank 2004: vii). Phase II, implemented in 2010–15, aimed to “enable the Government of Nepal to increase access to essential health care services and their utilization by the underserved and the poor” (World Bank 2010: 7).

Rural infrastructure also received support during and since the wide-scale violent conflict. The World Bank provided a loan for the Rural Infrastructure Project in 1999–2003, in addition to other sectoral investments (World Bank 2005a). The Bank then supported the Rural Access Improvement and Decentralization Project, implemented in two phases: 2005–09 and 2010–13. Its objective was to assist “residents of participating districts to utilize improved rural transport infrastructure and services in order to have enhanced access to social services and economic opportunities” (World Bank 2005a: 3; World Bank 2009: 5).

Puzzles

Like Afghanistan, an examination of the Nepal cases reveal impressive yet counterintuitive progress as well as some notable subnational variation. Unfortunately, there is a dearth of literature to explain this, particularly from a political economy and violence perspective:

Puzzle 1: What explains the impressive progress achieved in health delivery—that is, on track to achieving the Millennium Development Goals—in the context of large-scale violence and supposedly “dysfunctional” governance? In addition, how were gains made in rural infrastructure in this context?

Despite the adverse context of violence, political instability, and weak governance, Nepal registered progress. The country’s health sector made progress throughout the Maoist insurgency and since (table 2.2). Two aspects of this progress are particularly puzzling. First, improvements occurred regardless of the intensity of violent conflict. Table 2.3 illustrates how the midwestern hill region, which bore the brunt of the fighting, did generally as well as the other regions and is not even the worst performer. Second, the progress occurred in a context that would normally be considered the antithesis to good governance: a public administration

Millennium Development Goal/ impact indicator	1991	Maoist insurgency			2011	Target 2015
		1996	2001	2006		
Maternal mortality ratio (per 1,000 live births)	539	539	415	281	170 ^a	134
Total fertility rate	5.3	4.6	4.1	3.1	2.6	2.5
Adolescent fertility rate (15–19 years) per 1,000 population	NA	127	110	98	81	70
Contraceptive prevalence rate, modern methods (percent)	24	26	35	44	43.2	55
Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	158	118.3	91	61	54	38
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	106	78.5	64	48	46	32
Neonatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	NA	49.9	43	33	33	16
Percent of underweight children	NA	49.2	48.3	38.6	28.8	29
Tuberculosis cases						
Detection rate (percent)	NA	48	70	65	76	85
Successful treatment rate (percent)	NA	79	89	89	90	90
Malaria annual parasite incidence per 1,000	NA	0.54	0.40	0.28	0.11	0.06

Source: MoHP 2010; Government of Nepal and UN Country Team of Nepal 2013.

a. Further analysis of the 2011 census released in December 2014 showed the maternal mortality rate to be a high of 480 (Central Bureau of Statistics 2014).

Table 2.3. Health service delivery, Nepal, 1996 and 2006 (by region)

Subregion	Vaccinations						Demand for contraceptives satisfied (percent)		
	All basic vaccines ^a			None			1996	2006	Percent increase, 1996–2006
	1996	2006	Percent increase, 1996–2006	1996	2006	Percent increase, 1996–2006			
Eastern Mountain	35.6	83.8	48.2	30.5	6.3	42.7	45.9	3.2	
Central Mountain	51.5	54.6	3.1	19.1	8.4	35.6	68.1	32.5	
Western Mountain	26.3	70.8	44.5	35.0	3.2	26.3	53.0	26.7	
Eastern Hill	42.6	81.4	38.8	24.8	2.9	42.1	65.9	23.8	
Central Hill ^b	67.9	82.1	14.2	13.5	7.2	63.1	72.8	9.7	
Western Hill	63.8	88.9	25.1	9.9	0	43	49.5	6.5	
Mid-western Hill	34.7	72.4	37.7	30.6	4.7	34.7	56.0	21.3	
Far-western Hill	23.8	71.6	47.8	33.3	10.1	32.0	50.2	18.2	
Eastern Tarai	48.5	89.5	41.0	6.8	3.0	56.4	71.2	14.8	
Central Tarai	26.1	78.1	52.0	19.6	0	42.4	65.7	23.3	
Western Tarai	31.7	88.8	57.1	27.5	0	44.4	66.0	21.6	
Mid-western Tarai	49.6	90.4	40.8	21.9	0	61.2	73.7	12.5	
Far-western Tarai	45.3	94.4	49.1	29.8	0	45.5	82.1	36.6	

Source: Pradhan et al. 1997; MoHP, New ERA, and Macro International Inc. 2007.

a. BCG tuberculosis vaccine, measles, and three doses each of DPT (diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus), and polio vaccine.

b. The data from this region appear to diverge from the national trend because they also include Kathmandu. The bolded entries denote the worst performers.



Village road. Nepal. SIMONE D. MCCOURTIE/WORLD BANK

characterized by politicized appointments and rapid turnover of staff, the absence of locally elected governments, and widespread corruption and clientelism outside and within sectors (World Bank and SSB 2016). Progress was less impressive for rural infrastructure, although some progress was made, including at the height of the conflict (2004–06).

Puzzle 2: Why, in the post-2006 period, in a context where large-scale violence has ceased, aid has increased, and political settlements are fluid, has much greater progress been achieved in health and rural infrastructure in the hill and

mountain regions of Palpa and Rolpa compared with the Tarai lowlands of Siraha and Bardiya?

The data point to notable subnational variation between the hill region and the Tarai (“lowlands,” “plains”). For example, the Tarai was among the lowest-ranked regions on health indicators such as the percentage of women giving birth in a health facility, antenatal care, and nutritional status. Meanwhile, the hill region ranked among the highest nationally on these same health indicators. In terms of roads, Palpa, in the hill region, has seen rapid expansion in the years since 2006 while two districts in the Tarai have registered very limited progress (table 2.4).

	2006–07	2011–12	2013–14
Siraha	143.93	144.93	144.93
Palpa	128.59	199.59	235.89
Bardiya	189.32	211.42	211.42

Source: World Bank and SSB 2016.

Findings

Puzzle 1: What explains the impressive progress achieved in health delivery—that is, on track to achieving Millennium Development Goals—in the context of large-scale violence and supposedly “dysfunctional” governance? In addition, how were gains made in rural infrastructure in this context?

Progress was made in the health sector, even in the face of violent conflict, due to a series of elite bargains between insurgents, local elites, and service providers. This was possible because the insurgency was organized and disciplined (which made it possible to identify leaders who could engage in bargaining); had an ideology in support of health provision; needed health services itself; and relied on local legitimacy. In addition, rent-sharing agreements were struck and maintained.

Puzzle 2: Why, in the post-2006 period, in a context where large-scale violence has ceased, aid has increased, and political settlements are fluid, has much greater progress been achieved in health and rural infrastructure in the hill and

mountain regions of Palpa and Rolpa compared with the Tarai lowlands of Siraha and Bardiya?

Progress in the health and roads sectors was stronger in the hill region than the Tarai due, in part, to differences in subnational political settlements, forms of political organization, and the nature of the violence. The Tarai is characterized by more predatory and feudalistic elite bargains and fragmented roving armed groups (often with criminal motives). This form of violence makes it harder to strike the types of bargains that can protect SSD from appropriation. The hill region is characterized by programmatic forms of political organization—especially the Maoist party, which competes as a political party and advocates for pro-poor service delivery, and for a more equal land distribution and inclusive political settlement. There is evidence that links between Maoist party elites and the state administration were closer than those of landlords and political elites in the Tarai, which could help explain why elite bargains were more durable and credible around health and road provision.

Table 2.5. Social service delivery in Nepal: Framework, puzzles, and findings

Site	Political settlement	Dominant form of violence	Prospects for pro-SSD elite bargain	Mode of delivery	Puzzles and findings
<p>Palpa (hill district) During large-scale violent conflict: 1996–2006</p>	<p>Moderately unstable. Pro-SSD incentives exist but are contested among state and pro-SSD, disciplined armed insurgencies.</p>	<p>Well-organized, disciplined armed groups with incentives favoring SSD. Organized insurgencies resisting the state but desiring of some services.</p>	Medium/high	Health and roads—centralized state provision (during and after large-scale violent conflict)	<p><i>Puzzle 1: What explains the impressive progress achieved in health delivery—that is, on track to achieving Millennium Development Goals—in the context of large-scale violence and supposedly “dysfunctional” governance? In addition, how were gains made in rural infrastructure in this context?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of elite bargains between insurgents, local elites, and service providers was possible because the insurgency was organized and disciplined so leaders who could engage in bargaining were identifiable, had an ideology supporting health provision, relied on the health service, and needed local legitimacy. • Rent-sharing agreements were struck and maintained. <p><i>Puzzle 2: Why, in the post-2006 period, in a context of the cessation of large-scale violence and increased aid and fluid political settlements, was much greater progress achieved in health and rural infrastructure in the hill and mountain regions of Palpa and Rolpa compared with the Tarai lowlands of Siraha and Bardiya?</i></p> <p>(Key reasons are differences in subnational political settlements, forms of political organization, and nature of violence:</p>
<p>Post large-scale violent conflict (2006–)</p>	<p>Relatively stable. Competitive electoral politics; programmatic pro-SSD political party dominant; Maoist party influential.</p>	<p>Relatively little criminal gang activity.</p>	High	Multisector—simultaneous provision of mutually reinforcing services (not by design)	
<p>Rolpa (hill district) During large-scale violent conflict: 1996–2006</p>	<p>Moderately unstable. Pro-SSD incentives existed but were contested among state and pro-SSD disciplined armed insurgencies.</p>	<p>Well-organized, disciplined armed groups with incentives favoring SSD. Organized insurgencies resisting the state but desiring of some services.</p>	Medium/high	Health and roads—centralized state provision (during and after large-scale violent conflict)	
<p>Post large-scale violent conflict (2006–)</p>	<p>Relatively stable. Competitive electoral politics; programmatic pro-SSD political party dominant; Maoist party influential.</p>	<p>Relatively little criminal gang activity.</p>	High	Multisector—simultaneous provision of mutually reinforcing services (not by design)	
<p>Siraha (the Tarai) During large-scale violent conflict: 1996–2006</p>	<p>Moderately unstable. Pro-SSD incentives exist but are contested among state and pro-SSD disciplined armed insurgencies.</p>	<p>Well-organized, disciplined armed groups with incentives favoring SSD. Organized insurgencies resisting the state but desiring of some services.</p>	Medium/high	Health and roads—centralized state provision (during and after large-scale violent conflict)	
<p>Post large-scale violent conflict (2006–)</p>	<p>Highly unstable. Factionalized political parties. No pro-SSD programmatic political party. Landed elites dominant.</p>	<p>Significant elements of highly disorganized/fragmented, mobile/roving armed groups with criminal (nonpolitical) motives. No pro-SSD programmatic political party.</p>	Low/medium	Multisector—simultaneous provision of mutually reinforcing services (not by design)	

(continued)

Table 2.5. Continued

Site	Political settlement	Dominant form of violence	Prospects for pro-SSD elite bargain	Mode of delivery	Puzzles and findings
<p>Bardiya (the Tarai) During large-scale violent conflict: 1996–2006</p>	<p>Moderately unstable. Pro-SSD incentives exist but are contested among state and pro-SSD disciplined armed insurgencies.</p>	<p>Well-organized, disciplined armed groups with incentives favoring SSD. Organized insurgencies resisting the state but desiring of some services.</p>	Medium/high	Centralized state provision in health and roads (during and after large-scale violent conflict)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Tarai is characterized by more predatory, feudalistic elite bargains and fragmented, roving armed groups, making it more difficult to strike the types of bargains that could protect SSD from appropriation.
<p>Post large-scale violent conflict (2006–)</p>	<p>Highly unstable. Factionalized political parties. No pro-SSD programmatic political party. Landed elites dominant.</p>	<p>Significant elements of highly disorganized/fragmented, mobile/roving armed groups with criminal (nonpolitical) motives. No pro-SSD programmatic political party.</p>	Low/medium	Multisector—simultaneous provision of mutually reinforcing services (not by design)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The hill region is characterized by more programmatic forms of political organization, especially the Maoist party, which supports more equitable land distribution and inclusive political settlement. There is evidence that links between the Maoist party elites and the state administration were closer than those of landlords and political elites in the Tarai, which could help explain why elite bargains were more durable and credible around health and road provision.

2.3. Pakistan

In Pakistan (see map 2.4), violent conflict has characterized Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), and Balochistan for many years. This has led to heavy loss of life and economic stagnation. FATA is a border region that shares a long, porous, and mostly unmanned border with Afghanistan. FATA, as well as the Swat Valley in KP, have both seen the rise of violent extremism and significant state military operations. Balochistan has experienced violence as Baluch nationalists have battled the Pakistani state for greater autonomy. There are

multiple, overlapping causes of conflict and violence in the region, including political and economic marginalization, Baluch nationalism and militancy, the role of state security forces, the impact of the long-running conflict in Afghanistan since 1979, and violence from armed Islamist groups (Gazdar, Kaker, and Khan 2010: 2–3).

Health services, including polio eradication, face numerous challenges. This part of the research focuses on efforts to eradicate polio in KP and FATA. Ninety percent of all polio cases in Pakistan, and the nation’s post-2005 increase in polio incidence, relate to the Pashtun

Map 2.4. Map of Pakistan



areas of KP and FATA. Over 70 percent of confirmed polio cases in recent years has been in FATA alone. Attempts to eradicate polio have centered on the Polio Eradication Project, a national campaign involving federal and provincial governments and international partners. The Second Partnership for Polio Eradication (2005–08), a follow-up to the Partnership for Polio Eradication (2003–2005), aimed

“to assist Pakistan’s effort to eradicate polio through supply of the Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) for the country’s supplementary immunization activities during 2006–07” (World Bank 2005b: 5). The Third Partnership for Polio Eradication (2009–14) aimed to “assist Pakistan in its efforts under its Polio Eradication Initiative to eradicate polio from its territory” (World Bank 2015c: viii).

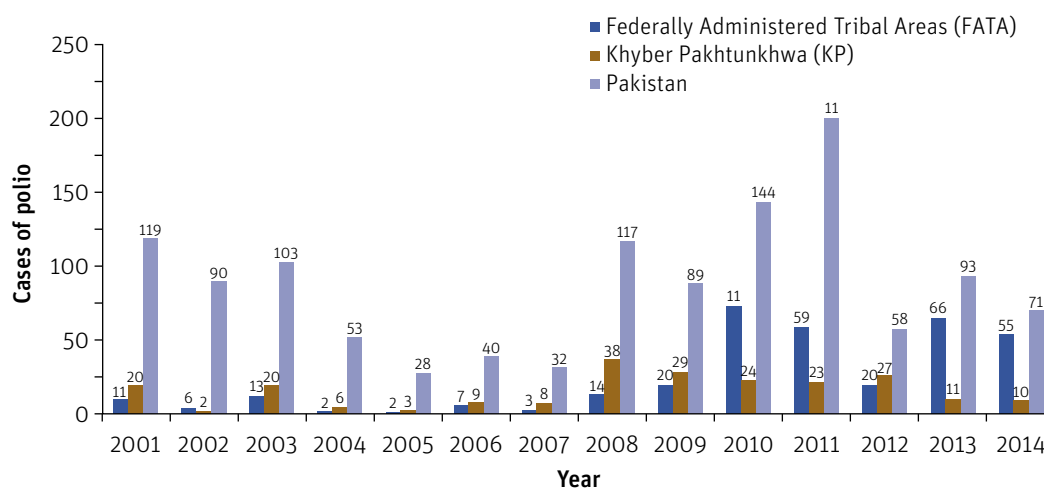
Education is an important area of activity in Pakistan. The second part of the research focuses on efforts to improve education in Balochistan, which lags behind other provinces across a range of development indicators, including educational attainment and literacy (World Bank 2006). Challenges include low primary enrollment rates among boys and girls, low-quality education, high rates of teacher absenteeism, poor monitoring and supervision, and weak institutional capacity in the public sector. The main objective of the 2006–14 World Bank–supported Balochistan Education Support Project (BESP) was “to promote public-private and community partnerships to improve access to quality primary education, in particular for girls” (World Bank 2015a: viii).

Puzzles

Puzzle 1: How and why did social service delivery—in the form of polio eradication—become politicized and targeted by violent resistance? Why was delivering polio vaccine services so difficult? Why were outcomes worse in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas than in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa?

Polio workers, but not other service providers, have repeatedly been targets of political violence in some areas of Pakistan. It is crucial to understand the reasons behind this, with a particular view to designing future risk mitigation strategies. Moreover, the data underline that progress toward eradication was greater in KP than in FATA, especially since 2007 (figure 2.2). Polio delivery was also more fraught with implementation challenges and more intensely targeted by political violence in FATA than KP.

Figure 2.2. Cases of polio in Pakistan: The Federally Administered Tribal Areas versus Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2001–14



Source: World Bank and Akram 2016.

Puzzle 2: Why was the Balochistan Education Support Project relatively successful in the context of a violent insurgency and clientelistic politics?

In Balochistan, progress in education through BEP was relatively successful. Despite the violent context, four out of five indicators of the project development objectives exceeded their targets. Project-supported schools increased overall enrollment in the province by 5.0 percent and girls' enrollment by 5.3 percent (World Bank 2015a: 13). How did this happen in a historically challenging region where violence was widespread? What was it about the nature of politics and violence that enabled this progress?

Findings

Puzzle 1: How and why did social service delivery—in the form of polio eradication—become politicized and targeted by violent resistance? Why was delivering polio vaccine services so difficult? Why were outcomes worse in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas than in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa?

Polio eradication became the target of political violence due to: (1) the nature of violent conflict and antagonism with the central state, (2) the perception that SSD was a vehicle for state penetration—and the manner in which the polio vaccine was delivered did not mitigate this concern, and (3) the fact that many



Umair, 9, a student of Government Comprehensive School in Gujranwala, Pakistan reads from a book in the classroom. VISUAL NEWS/WORLD BANK

Table 2.6. Social service delivery in Pakistan: Framework, puzzles, and findings

Site	Political settlement	Dominant form of violence	Prospects for pro-SSD elite bargain	Mode of delivery	Puzzles and findings
Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)	<p>Highly unstable. Weaker state penetration and control than in KP; more fragmented armed groups and weak SSD incentives/ideology.</p> <p>Antagonistic relationship with state and limited state penetration in terms of elites and administration.</p>	<p>Somewhat organized/ disciplined <i>insurgent</i> armed groups largely opposed to SSD.</p>	Low	<i>Polio eradication</i> : Centralized state provision	<p><i>Puzzle 1: How and why did SSD—in the form of polio eradication—become politicized and targeted by violent resistance? Why was delivering polio vaccine services so difficult? Why were outcomes worse in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas than in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa?</i></p> <p>Polio eradication became the target of political violence due to: (1) the nature of violent conflict and antagonism with the “state,” (2) the perception that SSD was a vehicle for state penetration—the manner in which the polio vaccine was delivered did not mitigate this concern, and (3) the fact that many insurgents and local elites did not consider polio eradication a priority.</p>
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP)—Peshawar and Swabi	<p>Moderately to highly unstable. Weak SSD incentives; some state penetration in areas controlled by relatively disciplined armed groups.</p> <p>Central state penetration in administrative and military terms greater and more durable than in FATA.</p>	<p>Somewhat organized/disciplined <i>insurgent</i> armed groups largely opposed to SSD.</p> <p>Somewhat disciplined, organized armed groups competing for local power, legitimacy, and SSD.</p>	Low-medium	<i>Polio eradication</i> : Centralized state provision	<p>Polio eradication efforts were more difficult in FATA than in KP because the form of violence in FATA was more fragmented; the political settlement—and relations between national and local elites—was less stable; the insurgents were more hostile to “state activity,” which was partly caused by drone attacks that took place in FATA but not in KP; and violent actors were more mobile. These factors meant that service providers found it more difficult to organize local elite bargains to protect polio vaccine service providers from violence.</p>
Balochistan—Quetta, Turbat, Dera Bugti, and Pishin	<p>Moderately unstable. Pro-SSD incentives exist but are contested among state and pro-SSD disciplined armed insurgencies with nationalist ideology.</p> <p>Clientelism/corruption widespread in the education sector.</p>	<p>Well-organized, disciplined <i>insurgent</i> armed groups with incentives favoring SSD. Organized/dominant insurgencies resisting state but desiring of some services.</p>	Medium	Education: Decentralized, community-based, non-state provision (Balochistan Education Support Project)	<p><i>Puzzle 2: Why was the Balochistan Education Support Project relatively successful in the context of a violent insurgency and clientelistic politics?</i></p> <p>Education progress was accomplished under the program due to a more organized insurgency; the small-scale model of delivery, which to some degree managed to circumvent national and regional clientelist networks; and the fact that there were incentives for insurgents and local elites to support education delivery because they contributed to their ideological goals of empowering Balochistan.</p>

insurgents and local elites did not consider polio eradication a development priority.

Polio eradication efforts were more difficult in FATA than in KP because the form of violence in FATA was more fragmented; the political settlement—and relations between national and local elites—was less stable; the insurgents were more hostile to “state activity,” in part because drone attacks took place in FATA but not in KP; and violent actors were more mobile. These factors meant that service providers found it more difficult to organize local elite bargains in order to protect providers of the polio vaccine from violence.

Puzzle 2: Why was the Balochistan Education Support Project relatively successful in the context of a violent insurgency and clientelistic politics?

The BESP managed to increase enrollment rates because of the nature of the insurgency in Balochistan; the small-scale delivery model, which to some degree managed to circumvent national and regional clientelist networks in the education sector; the fact that it was NGO-led, which was reportedly more acceptable to an antistate insurgent group than a state-led mode would have been; and the fact that some armed elites and nonarmed local elites saw education as contributing to their nationalist goals of empowering Balochistan.

Part II. Delivering Services in Violent Contexts: An Ethnography of the Findings



Soraya gets a check up at the local medical health clinic Tajikhan Village, Jabalseraj District Parwan Province, Afghanistan, May 2012. WORLD BANK/GRAHAM CROUCH

3. Political Settlements Matter

This chapter explores how the four interrelated dimensions, and cross-cutting characteristics, of settlements outlined in chapter 1 affect service delivery.

3.1. National Settlements

The broad characteristics of the political settlement at the national level inform what we consider to be the likely obstacles to and/or enabling factors for social service delivery (SSD). These include the extent to which the settlement is clientelistic/developmental, exclusionary/inclusive, or stable/unstable—characteristics that impact service delivery in a broad sense by shaping the policy space toward more or less progressive forms of delivery, as well as affecting the nature of local implementation arrangements.

Health and education delivery in Afghanistan, for example, occurs in a fluid and contested context with a precarious set of national political settlements. The post-2005 Taliban resurgence and the subsequent withdrawal of most international troops at the end of 2014 contributed to the insecurity. The post-2001 Kabul government's attempts at maintaining a fluid, "inclusive" peace agreement to buy off and/or co-opt regional power brokers while excluding the Taliban was a major source of

instability and uncertainty. According to a former government official, the main problem with the Bonn Agreement was its exclusion of the Taliban:

"The Bonn Agreement (December 2001) was a bad start in terms of increasing the insurgency in the country. Why would you bring the warlords to the Bonn Agreement and use them as ground forces, but deliberately isolate Hezb-e Islami and the Taliban, who were the real opposition? The warlords were not the opposition; they were allies. You should bring peace and security to those whom you are fighting, not those who are eating with you."
(KL: IDI-63)

The new government was ethnically and ideologically heterogeneous, complicating former President Karzai's attempts to unify the country. From 2002 to 2013, a delicate balance of power was achieved between strong provincial actors, with the president at the center. The president bought off elites with access to major political or government posts. Endemic corruption and elite impunity weakened the image of the government and led to a growing Taliban resurgence in the countryside. The nature of this settlement broadly impacts service delivery in two ways:



A young boy points to the letter F, with his teacher's help in a classroom in rural Nepal.

AISHA FAQUIR/WORLD BANK

1. The unstable and fragile nature of the settlement translates into fragmented, varied, and unpredictable elite bargains that link provinces to the center, which makes service delivery coordination increasingly politicized and challenging. Provincial elites often entertain disparate or even antagonistic relationships with elements of the political elite at the national level, with the aim of accessing greater resources from Kabul.
 - In many cases leading to unstable and fluid linkages between the center and the provinces, disrupting SSD;
 - Limiting the ability of provincial and central elites to strike and sustain elite bargains to deliver services; and
 - Heightening the incentives for elites to engage in short-term profiteering with regard to the allocation of resources and incentivizing some to allocate service delivery resources toward strengthening local patronage networks.
2. The fluid and uncertain nature of the settlement creates incentives for the sectors to engage in short-term profiteering and impacts the space for delivering services in several ways, including:
 - The nature of Nepal's political settlement affects service delivery there as well. Political

violence during the 10-year large-scale violent conflict (hereon referred to as the conflict) in 1996–2006 and the period of postwar political contestation (post-2006) led to changes in the political settlement, which in turn contributed to shifts in the way services were delivered. Two overlapping points deserve mention:

1. In the late 2000s, the national political settlement shifted to become a more inclusive elite coalition, which led to an increasingly inclusive approach to delivering services. The ostensibly pro-inclusion agenda of the Maoist insurgents contributed to shifts toward a more inclusive central political settlement and encouraged traditional elite coalitions to address issues of socioeconomic inequalities in SSD. The changes at the national level then filtered down to the sectoral policy and local implementation levels (box 3.1). This case illustrates the point that political violence is not always “development in reverse.”
2. The nascent, unstable, competitive, and clientelistic form of political settlement at the central level contributed to the formation of contested and politicized local structures for service delivery. The fluidity and uncertainty at the center, most evident in the postwar transitional period, translated into a lack of clear rules and power sharing at the local level. During the Maoist insurgency and during the

postwar period, informal arrangements and bargains between contending political elites tended to dominate attempts at reintroducing local government institutions, as local-level transitional authority was “up for grabs” (Byrne and Shrestha 2014). These local political elite bargains were shaped, to a large degree, by the nature of central political party competition, which lead to patronage-ridden yet more inclusive SSD at the sector and local levels in basic health care and in the roads sector.

Three important points emerge from the Nepal cases:

1. The politicization of local service delivery is the norm—not an aberration or dysfunction, as is commonly suggested in discourses about good governance. It serves the function of “making things work” in the absence of unclear rules and contested sites of local authority.
2. The front line of delivery in the health and roads sectors continues to experience progress in this highly political environment, suggesting that politicization is not the problem *per se*. Instead, the *form* of politicization seems to matter. Progress varies depending on the local nature of politics, including the nature of elites and the bargaining between them.

Box 3.1. Nepal's shift toward inclusion shapes social service delivery

An increasingly inclusive form of political settlement emerged during and after the Maoist insurgency. The war and political violence appear to have influenced the motivations of decision makers within the ruling coalition to address inequalities in the polity. This shift created space and mechanisms at the national and local levels for more inclusive service delivery. In this instance, political violence—although it created many negative impacts—cannot be characterized as simply “development in reverse.”

The forging of this new, fluid, and unstable political settlement was punctuated by measures and agreements reinforcing inclusiveness. A series of agreements culminated in declarations in the Comprehensive Peace Accord from both sides of their “determination for a progressive restructuring of the state to resolve existing problems in the country, based on class, caste, region, and sex”^a and in the 2007 interim constitution, which recognizes women, Dalits, Janajatis, and Madhesis—in addition to peasants and laborers—as groups that require special attention.^b

These shifts filtered down into various measures. In 1991, the health ministry introduced the National Health Policy, which focused on outreach to vulnerable groups, women, children, rural populations, the poor, and the marginalized.^c There were impacts to local operational mechanisms for public goods delivery that were focused on increasing the involvement of local bodies and communities in the planning, implementation, and management of local-level development activities, such as the 1999 Local Self-Governance Act.^d

The shift at the center did not solve all of the country's issues around inclusion but did translate into more inclusive service delivery structures, which then impacted service delivery. A short survey of groups typically excluded from health services, conducted for this study, points to a longer-term shift on the ground (World Bank and SSB 2016):

- Seventy-five percent of respondents reported using services provided by the local health-care post and/or primary health-care center;
- Ninety-four percent said they used government facilities more often than they had 10 years back;
- Fifty-six percent felt health services had improved; and
- Fifty-five percent of Dalit respondents felt that the behavior of the health personnel had changed for the better.^e

a. Unofficial translation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement concluded between the Government of Nepal and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), November 21, 2006 (www.unmin.org.np).

b. See Article 11(3) of the 1990 constitution and 13(3) of the 2007 interim constitution.

c. The National Health Policy extended the modern health-care system to the rural population by making the sector more decentralized and regionalized (MoHP 1991). Successive government health plans and policies that focused on outreach to vulnerable groups, the poor, and the marginalized included the Second Long Term Health Plan (1997–2017), Health Sector Strategy: An Agenda for Reform (2003), the Tenth Five-Year Plan (2002–07) and the Three-Year Interim Plan (2007/08–2009/10).

d. Other local operational mechanisms included increased emphasis on bringing the poor and marginalized groups into the development mainstream as well as various measures adopted by the government to support more inclusive government, most notably by reserving 45 percent of all government jobs for excluded groups.

e. Almost half felt that this was due to education, growing awareness, and the fact that it is now illegal to discriminate on the basis of caste.

3. Political party competition driven by patronage and collusion can increase inclusion, upward mobility, and local ownership. In the absence of local elections, political parties ensure that the smaller political parties receive at least some recognition; they also provide a forum for dialogue, which smooths project implementation. The chairperson of a local road user committee justified the dominance of political parties in the formation of user committees by noting that including representatives from all locally active parties ensures that people take ownership of a project. Moreover, in the case of the Rural Access Improvement and Decentralization Project, a local road user committee is required to include at least one woman and one member of a disadvantaged group, although the effort is subordinated to political party logic and affiliation. In the words of one informant: “People from the indigenous community are hand-picked by political parties to fulfil the quota needs of people and not for actual representation. Political interest takes precedence over true representation” (G15–KII–BAR). Nevertheless, many see the quotas as a route, albeit contested and imperfect, toward increased inclusion, and political parties serve as a vehicle for the recognition of previously excluded demands.

3.2. Sectoral Settlements

Elite balance-of-power and rent-sharing agreements, like national settlements, affect SSD in various sectors. Two aspects of these settlements—how elite rent-sharing influences SSD and how different sectors present different forms of and opportunities for elite bargaining—are examined here.

Rents

Patterns of rent-seeking among political and bureaucratic elites shape the allocation of services across the studied cases in Pakistan. For example, networks of patronage are embedded in the polio vaccine delivery chain. Evidence points to instances of corruption, ghost teams, and claims of immunizations where none occurred. One senior donor official expresses the challenge posed by corruption and rent-seeking behaviors by noting that money meant for polio eradication lines the pockets of some officials who dispense jobs as favors, turning over vaccination posts to their brothers or cousins, who pass them on to their children. The official concedes that his organization is helpless in these circumstances. Regarding the negative aspects of the Polio Eradication Project, he remarks, “We created a monster.” He acknowledges that there are instances of ghost campaigns, where money is spent but no actual work takes place. He

Box 3.2. Political settlements in Afghanistan's education and health sectors

The elite balance of power, interests, and incentives in Afghanistan's education sector, combined with blurred political and bureaucratic boundaries, influences the selection of school locations, the number of schools built in each province or district, and the hiring of staff. Key findings include the following.

Vote bank. Even though the Ministry of Education is the “largest single civilian employer in the country,” it is sometimes treated as a “vote bank.” As one informant expresses it:

“Education in particular . . . is very interesting, as it is one of the largest employers in the country. For instance, in election campaigns, it is an extremely useful ministry to have. If you want, you can instruct all teachers to campaign for certain candidates; you can instruct them to tell students to tell their parents . . .” (KL: KII–44)

Recruitment. Although the Ministry of Education in general and the Education Quality Improvement Project (EQUIP) in particular are supposed to abide by certain criteria in terms of recruitment, cases of nepotistic recruitments are reported (KL: KII–37 and 43). Another national program implementer admits that while hiring people without adequate qualifications compromises the quality of education service delivery, it is nonetheless necessary (KL: KII–37).

Patronage pyramids. The existence of patronage pyramids is alleged, where each bureaucratic layer sells positions to the layer below, and the bottom layer regularly demands payments from the beneficiaries (teachers, students, and even parents). According to an international researcher:

“Everything is the same everywhere; if you want the job of provincial director of education, you'll have to pay someone, that's for sure. You will not get the job without paying . . . How do they get reimbursed? Well, they will make sure that all the people who work for them collect money for them. Through this, they get reimbursed for the investment that they made to get the position of provincial director [of education]. How do these people get money [referring to those below the level of the provincial director]? From the students, from the parents, from the teachers . . .” (KL: KII–45)

Diversion to certain areas. Local political elites such as Members of Parliament (MPs) and power brokers play a role in shaping how education services are distributed. One national program implementer, referring to some MPs, remarked, “They have facilitated [the delivery of education services] in the sense that there are now more education service deliveries in their respective areas. They did not equally distribute the education services; more are found in their areas” (KL: KII–37; also, KL: KII–34 to 37). The leverage of politicians and local power brokers is enhanced by the fact that, historically, the Afghan government had difficulties with communities not previously exposed to state education (Giustozzi 2010).

(continued)

Box 3.2. Continued

Creating rent opportunities. Interviews with key study participants suggest that the emphasis on school construction is driven, at least in part, by the need to maintain and expand patronage networks: construction projects provide greater opportunities for rents than soft investments (KL: KII–45 and 50). EQUIP I’s implementation review hints at this, but does not allude to the political drivers: it notes that infrastructure grants are an area where “financial overcommitments” were made (World Bank 2009: 4).

Patronage politics. Similarly, the health sector is not immune to the impact of patronage politics. Actors well connected to the ruling elite manipulate the allocation of resources to favor their power bases, resulting in the unequal distribution of health resources between provinces and districts because better-connected politicians and power brokers can lobby more effectively (KL: KII–53; KL: KII–47). One study participant puts it this way:

“If you go to some provinces, you will see two clinics in one village, but another village does not have one. In [so-and-so’s, naming a particular Member of Parliament] district, there are many clinics, but in the other districts of the same province, which do not have a good connection with a powerholder, there is not a single clinic.” (KL: KII–53)

believes this is why some are skeptical of the polio eradication effort and do not trust the polio teams (see Roberts 2012).

A number of notable rent-sharing arrangements and patterns were also identified in Afghanistan’s education and health sectors; these affect if, how, and where services are delivered (box 3.2).

In Nepal, sectoral settlements, revolving around rent-sharing, shape progress in the health sector. Observers point to the politicization of health appointments, where elites seek to expand their political base by influencing the hiring of staff and the appointment of key officials (Asia Foundation 2012: 23; Harris et al. 2013; Sharma 2010). This has led to a lack of integrated planning, where

the “failure to devolve sufficient authority, exacerbated by local collusion to benefit private interests, has prevented the development of participatory and integrated planning in the health sector” (Asia Foundation 2012: 24). The growing number of strikes and scandals emerging from prominent hospitals suggests that the public administration, including the health sector, has been embroiled in a proxy war between the three main parties contending for power (Sharma 2010).

Bargains Differ by Sector

Interestingly, sectoral characteristics and sector-specific modes of delivery seem to affect the form of and opportunities for rent-sharing and patronage (KL: KII–44). In Afghanistan, there are different and fewer forms of

elite bargaining and patronage in the health sector compared with the education sector, in part because the latter provides more opportunities for rents in the form of construction projects and employment. Further, extracting rents from the education sector is deemed to be more straightforward because education is largely delivered through state mechanisms, as opposed to basic health-care delivery, which is contracted to NGOs, making it more difficult to directly divert resources without co-opting staff.

In Nepal, elite interests in the health sector varied at the subsectoral level (in preventative versus curative health); this in turn had varied impacts on the progress of delivery. Sectoral political settlements in the health sector, linked

to wider political party patronage, help explain why progress in basic preventive health care in Nepal was more advanced than in curative/diagnostic care. This is because basic preventive health care relied on locally embedded female volunteer workers who were dedicated to their jobs and were not appointed because they had political connections. Indeed, they operated outside the clientelist party structures. Conversely, curative health care depended on skilled physicians and nurses who were often able to avoid being posted in remote rural areas (generally considered undesirable) because they were part of unions closely allied to political parties. One of the main sources of political party power was the ability to broker deals for members of powerful unions (including those for skilled health workers).

Box 3.3. Relationships between elites shapes delivery of polio services

Delivering polio eradication services is more challenging in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) than in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, partly due to the different relationships each region has with the central state. FATA has long had a tenuous relationship with the state, and following a 2002 military intervention, its governance structures were dissolved. A series of central government military operations to destroy local militia and insurgent groups were only partially successful. This in turn has further isolated the region from the rest of Pakistan.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's links to the central government are comparatively stronger. The public participates in the local, provincial, and central legislature through elections. There is state patronage, particularly in the roads and electricity sectors, whereas it is virtually nonexistent in FATA. Interviewees suggest that the delivery structures are more contested and complex in FATA because of these differences, which makes it much more challenging to strike or to maintain service delivery bargains.

Another difference between the two regions is in the forms of violence and objectives of violent actors (see chapter 4).

3.3. Central and Subnational Elites

The nature of the relationship between ruling elites at the national level and subnational elites at the provincial, district, and village level shapes opportunities for accessing SSD resources and support. It impacts the degree of state penetration and control over insurgents, the flow of resources to a locality, and the autonomy and control of subnational elites over service delivery policy and implementation.

National service delivery programs impact regions differently depending on these relationships, which helps explain why delivering services is more difficult in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) than in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (see box 3.3).

The case of Afghanistan demonstrates the importance of this relationship to service delivery. As box 3.4 illustrates, the relationship influences the flow of resources and opportunities for SSD and therefore affects progress

Box 3.4. Central-subnational linkages and service delivery in Afghanistan

Diverse networks

The diversity among the linkages and relationships between provincial elites and those in Kabul is significant. Each province has a unique set of formal and informal relationships with the central government, which appears to significantly impact social service delivery.

Balkh. This province is characterized by a stable provincial settlement centered on a charismatic and resourceful strongman: Provincial Governor General Atta Mohammed Noor. The general has established an influential power base and positive linkages with the capital, giving the province more privileged access to Kabul-based ministers and senior civil servants.

Wardak. Some Wardak elites have obtained prestigious appointments in Kabul, and the main provincial-level networks have been nationally integrated, at least to a degree. The networks operate as quasi-political parties, and they are relatively well organized. They run the province through their local associates who control the machinery of government at the provincial and district levels.

Badghis. Widely seen as strategically unimportant, Badghis is economically underdeveloped and subject to fluid secondary political settlements because of the unstable relationships between its various strongmen. As a result, the province is unable to effectively lobby Kabul or form strong alliances with actors who are part of the primary elite bargain.

(continued)

Box 3.4. Continued

Impact on service delivery

A background country report (World Bank and AREU 2016) illustrates how the relationship between the subnational and central actors in each of the three provinces shapes the quality and quantity of its social services. The weak relationship between the provincial settlement in Badghis and the primary (central) one, in addition to its under representation in Kabul, negatively affects its opportunities for social service delivery. Badghis is not considered strategic by the Kabul-based elite. In the words of one key informant:

“If you look at it, it is far from Kabul, and unlike Herat and Faryab, it is not in a position to create problems for those in the center. So yes, it is left out. Also, it is not significant in terms of border relations, and there are no connecting roads leading to Kabul ... It is not that politically significant.” (KL: KII-49)

Another informant noted that the lack of powerful provincial warlords left them at a disadvantage: “If we had those kinds of powerful warlords, then the central government would have feared them and our province would have received attention” (BS: IDI-33).

Interviewees noted that Kabul’s perceived lack of interest in Badghis is one explanation for the poor level of services in the province, including a higher student-teacher ratio and a shortage of school buildings compared with Wardak. The reported sense of neglect spills into the health sector as well, with some interviewees noting a lack of qualified personnel, insufficient supplies, and poor quality of medicine (BS: IDI-31). Balkh, however, has managed to secure a more significant share of resources and linkages with Kabul, compared to Badghis.

Wardak also suffers from a lack of local resources, but because it is closer to Kabul, the province enjoys privileged access to higher education and career opportunities in the capital and elsewhere.

across health and education. Indeed, the extent to which provincial power brokers can draw on the resources and political commitment of central state resources and cooperation seems to depend on the history of subnational elite linkages to the center, the coherence and stability of the provincial-level political settlement, and the extent to which the province’s economic resources affect the political calculations of national coalition leaders.

In the post-2006 period, the different types of relationships between Kathmandu-based elites and the hill region compared with the Tarai shaped the ability of each district to broker service delivery deals. The research points to more embedded linkages between political elites in the hill region and the public administration (box 3.5). The Maoist political party is more dominant in the hill region, and the social background of the Maoist leadership

Box 3.5. Subnational settlements in Nepal help explain SSD outcomes

Our research suggests that a combination of organizational and programmatic factors explain why in the postconflict period in Nepal, the health and roads sectors in the Tarai performed more poorly than those in the hill and mountain regions. The Maoist hill and mountain areas are very different than the Tarai in terms of the nature of their subnational political settlements, political organizations, and agendas of political party elites (see map 2.3 for ecological zones).

Hill and mountain regions

The postconflict settlement in the hill and mountain regions is relatively stable, and organized around the programmatic party of the Maoists, who are electorally dominant there. The party's appeal is its programmatic push for socioeconomic change and pro-poor social service delivery and its capacity to deliver local results better than most political parties can (Bevan 2010). This makes it easier to deliver services and to organize bargains around service delivery.

The Tarai^a

Compared with the hill and mountain regions, the postconflict settlement in the Tarai is unstable and contested; it is characterized by highly disorganized and mobile roving armed groups (often with criminal motives); and there is limited state penetration in many parts of the region. Groups that emerged as a result of the Madhesi movement in 2007 included political parties linked to criminal gangs engaged in cross-border crime and extortion. This predatory behavior flourished in the region due to a weak state presence, and there was a higher incidence of criminal activity. Post-2007, the dominant motivations of the political leadership in the Tarai have centered on greater political representation of Madhesi leaders in Kathmandu rather than on forging a social service delivery agenda. Weaker links and less political influence in government has made brokering deals with central government ministries more difficult, resulting in the targeting of service delivery for appropriation and much riskier and more challenging service delivery.

a. Historically, the Tarai has experienced far less state extension and a far higher incidence of criminality as local groups have taken advantage of the state's absence to engage in criminal enterprises and appropriate valuable assets such as land. The absence of state penetration was a central condition to the rise of mafia-like organizations elsewhere (Gambetta 1993). The political landscape in the Tarai is therefore much more predatory and less oriented toward programmatic political projects that advance social welfare than in the hill and mountain regions, which may account for the fact that political instability and uncertainty is also greater in the Tarai.

is similar to those that dominate the public administration, which ostensibly facilitates a more functional working relationship with the state and more stable local-level political bargaining. Landlords and political leaders in the Tarai have less influence with the

government bureaucracy and the political system than the elites in the hill region. Weaker links and less political influence with the government appear to make coordinating and brokering deals with government ministries more tenuous (KII-03-NEP-GEN).²⁰

3.4. Subnational (Secondary) Settlement

The fourth, and perhaps most important, dimension is the subnational settlement. The research uncovered various types of settlements—and forms of violence—at the subnational level, each with its own impacts on the prospects for services and the ability to forge pro-SSD bargains. Key factors include the level of stability and contestation in the subnational settlement; the degree to which a developmental orientation cascades through the settlement, including the ideas and incentives among elites regarding development and service delivery; and the local balance of power between traditional, local elites, and armed elites and their allied insurgents.

Stability, Inclusiveness, and Development Orientation

The extent to which a subnational settlement is stable or contested, inclusive or exclusionary, and in turn has some elements of a developmental orientation, impacts its ability to deliver services.

In Afghanistan, subnational settlements differ widely across the three provinces in terms of their stability and fragmentation, and this shapes service delivery. In Badghis, for example, the local power brokers have not managed to form a stable or inclusive provincial settlement, instead remaining roving bandits. Forms of violence are more fragmented and

predatory in Badghis (see chapter 4), which partly explains their difficulty in delivering services.

The settlement in Balkh is quite different. It has been generally conducive to relatively smooth implementation of SSD. Balkh's recent history is dominated by General Atta Mohammed Noor, who has successfully centralized much of the power and largely disciplined other armed groups since about 2004.

In Nepal, differences in the subnational political settlement and forms of political organization help explain disparate progress in the health and roads sector in the hill region versus the Tarai. This case illustrates that who is in power and what their agenda is—at the subnational level—reveals a great deal about the politics of local-level SSD (see box 3.5).

Power and Incentives of Local “Nonarmed” Elites

At lower levels of the polity, the nature of incentives for localized elites and the balance of power between traditional local elites and armed elites and allied insurgents are crucial to shaping front-line delivery. The points briefly outlined here are further explored in chapter 4.

The first case relates to the nature and incentives of traditional local elites in Balochistan, Pakistan, with regard to education delivery. The Balochistan Education Support Project

(BESP) model focused on local, smaller-scale, and “community-run” schooling models. As noted previously, BESP made significant progress in the delivery of education services despite the violent context and clientelistic politics where the hiring of “ghost teachers” and the tolerance of teacher absenteeism by higher-level central and provincial elites (especially those linked with the Ministry of Education) was commonplace. Progress was possible, at least in part, because the local village elites were in favor of education service delivery free from clientelist politics and enjoyed robust local autonomy from provincial and central elites in terms of service delivery decisions. While Baloch and Pashtun villages are organized differently from one another, they tend to be close-knit and are frequently composed of members of the same tribe or close relatives. All villages have an elder—often whoever has the most land, is the oldest, and/or is the most experienced in local decision-making councils. These elites typically aspire to educate their children, but they cannot afford to send their children to school outside Balochistan, unlike many of the higher-level provincial elite—known as *nawabs* or *sardars*.²¹ Because these elites had a stake in local education they often supported the BESP and encouraged bargains with Baloch militants to ensure that schools remained open (see chapter 4).

The case of Wardak, Afghanistan, similarly demonstrates the importance of local nonarmed elites and their relative power to

“discipline” armed elites and allied insurgents with regard to driving progress in health service delivery. Local elders and traditional leaders play an important role in service delivery within the province. As one interviewee puts it: “The traditional leaders are more influential in the province than those elites who are at the national level, because the latter do not have large families in Wardak” (KL: KII-49; WK: IDI-17). These elites are sufficiently cohesive and aware of the potential benefits of lobbying provincial elites and keeping them on track to deliver services. Interviewees describe the interactions among these elites as generally good, with a fair degree of coordination to agree on basic operating guidelines to deliver services (WK: KII-09 and 13; WK: FGD-18 and 23; WK: KII-01, 03, and 07).²² In this sense, secondary settlements demonstrate a level of resilience. One interviewee notes:

“Their interaction and relationship are very good, because they have mutual and shared benefits. As in the case of any construction project, they benefit from it in terms of giving a contract to construction companies, and then their relatives are hired to work on the project. If they face problems, they solve them as soon as possible.” (WK: KII-07)

The coordination of the local elites over service delivery positively impacted health delivery. Their interests, ideas, and incentives

support local health service delivery, so they have sought to enable it. And because they are relatively influential and organized, they can often counterbalance and bargain with insurgents to ensure that services are delivered (see chapter 4).

The increased power of armed elites and allied insurgents relative to traditional local elites in FATA, on the other hand, resulted in service delivery problems. The breakdown of the links between the central and provincial government in the post-2005 period created a power vacuum, which was filled by several armed groups. This impacted the prospects for SSD because traditionally, local elites—maliks—are instrumental in implementing development activities. Implementing infrastructure construction projects, delivering aid, and facilitating the movement of goods were conducted largely with the involvement of local elites. While the maliks were known to extract bribes from contractors tasked with infrastructure projects, such as road construction or the establishment of schools and health centers, they also provided a focal

point for local elite bargaining that at least provided predictable and relatively safe access for SSD workers. As the power and authority of local elites declined compared with that of the armed elites and allied insurgents, the prospects for striking elite bargains that would allow access to health workers became much more tenuous.²³

In summary, various dimensions of political settlements at different levels of the polity shape the space, opportunities, and constraints for delivering services. The examination of these dimensions provides a better understanding of how the space for more or less progressive SSD is created, and what the prospects are for making local bargains. Understanding the nature of the settlement alone, however, does not adequately explain how and why services are delivered in violence-affected contexts. There is a need to dig deeper to get a fuller picture of how progress is made and why there is variation within and between violent contexts. These issues are explored in the following chapters.

4. The Form of Violence and the Ideology behind It Matter

“Many of the interviewees [working on service delivery in Afghanistan] did not see violence as a problem in itself for the delivery of services so long as it was possible to identify the key players and negotiate access to the services. It became much more difficult when local strongmen competed against each other or ‘criminal gangs’ were involved without any clear incentive to ensuring services were sustained” (World Bank and AREU 2016)

“The national ... data suggests that [the] Maoist rebellion [in Nepal] has not had the devastating effects on the health and well-being of the population as we can see resulting from similar types of violent conflict across the globe.” (Devkota and van Teijlingen 2015)

This chapter explores how various forms of violence may affect service delivery. As outlined in chapter 1, the research finds that elites take up arms for multiple reasons in varying contexts, as discussed in detail below.

4.1. Organization of Violence

The prospects for delivering social services partly depend on the ability of the government and armed and other elites to make political bargains that enable—or at least do not disrupt—on-the-ground delivery. A key determinant for whether some form of bargaining is feasible is the extent to which the insurgency is organized and uniform, and the leaders recognizable and incentivized to offer points for negotiation and bargaining.

For example, the organization of violence helps explain variations across provinces in Afghanistan (see box 4.1). For example, Balkh’s more organized and disciplined form of violence and more stable political settlement enabled easier implementation of social service delivery (SSD) than the more fragmented—but still relatively organized—violence in Wardak, and the highly fragmented and contested form of politics and violence in Badghis. (See chapter 3 for a more in-depth discussion of the political settlements in Afghanistan.)

Another example is the case of Nepal. Progress in SSD in the health and roads sectors was possible *during the conflict* partly due to three organizational elements: (1) leaders were recognizable, focal points for bargaining;

(2) Maoist leaders were disciplined in their policies, and so agreements were predictable and upheld; and (3) the ideology of the Maoists meant that health delivery aligned, to some degree, with their goals. The background country report explains:

“The Maoists represented a dominant, disciplined organized armed insurgency, and one that organized around an ostensibly political program of pro-poor service delivery. Our interview evidence suggests that the Maoists were organized armed insurgents with a ‘pro-poor’ agenda and while they were engaging in threats, kidnapping, displacement of government officials, destruction of infrastructure for political motives (G3–KII–SRH), their leaders were recognizable and somehow disciplined around certain policies (G9–KII–SRH) and therefore a focal point for organized political bargaining.” (World Bank and SSB 2016).

Chapter 5 explores the bargains that were struck with the Maoists that enabled the continuance of service delivery in those areas under their influence.

The importance of the organization of armed groups is further underlined when one tries to understand the challenges for SSD in the Tarai region of Nepal. During the post-2006

period, there was more progress in service delivery in the hill region of Nepal than in the Tarai, partly because politics took a more programmatic form in the hills. Indeed, the fragmented, competitive, and criminalized forms of violence in the Tarai made it extremely difficult to deliver services, protect service providers from violence and appropriation, and negotiate and uphold elite bargains. A former World Bank staff member explains:

“The project in Tarai suffered the pressure/threats from various armed groups making it difficult to continue working, whereas, in the Hill districts a conducive environment was created for project implementation.” (R6–KII–KTH)

A former district development committee member in Siraha also noted that “[p]eople of [the] Hill Region, businessmen, were threatened by these armed groups [in the Tarai] without any political motives, but only for financial gain” (G3–KII–SRH).

Similarly, in Pakistan, the differences in the organization of violent actors helps explain why bargains are more difficult to strike in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) than in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The background country report suggests that the more fragmented, contested, and radicalized forms of violence in FATA contribute to more difficult and dangerous service delivery.

Box 4.1. Organization of violence in Badghis and Wardak

Badghis Province

Delivering services in Badghis Province, Afghanistan, is particularly challenging, mainly due to the disjointed and unstable nature of the political settlement (see chapter 3) and the fragmented, divided, and contested forms of violence, which makes it extremely difficult to identify leaders with whom to bargain, predict the behaviors of violent actors, and reach bargains that enable the service delivery.

Violent conflict in Badghis is characterized by regular armed clashes between insurgents and government forces and periodic conflicts between rival warlords. The dominant form of violence is therefore characterized within our typology as highly disorganized and fragmented, with roving (and sometimes competing) armed groups. Dominating Badghis is an expensive enterprise that brings few rewards. Unlike Wardak, Badghis has a history of numerous influential warlords trying to assert control over it, both before and after the Taliban's Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. Abdul Malik, Abdul Rashid Dostum, and Ismail Khan each had influence over the province at different times, but none could assert full control (see Giustozzi 2009). This form of violence in Badghis affects service delivery in a number of ways, as outlined below.

Weak incentives and coordination. Many informants note that the competitive and fragmented scenario results in poor coordination between power holders and weak incentives for social service delivery, with a focus on predatory behavior. As one informant puts it:

“There is no doubt that the biggest suffering of Badghis comes from these unauthorized armed groups; they will be a big problem in the future. You know that a wrong policy was previously welcomed—to support militias. But this was happily decided by the central government to prevent a build-up of militia groups, since their existence can be a very big threat. But look at Ab Kamari, for example. It used to be the district of peace; now ... unauthorized armed groups create problems that the Taliban doesn't.” (BS: IDI-32)

Another informant expresses it this way:

“... We can see the security situation and some conflicts inside the center or in the districts of Badghis. This is a sign of powerholders not having good relationships. However, they portray themselves as honest and friends with each other to show the community that they are not against each other and that they are just working for the province. They are not honest; they are not supporting each other. Everyone looks out for his own position and power. If they show themselves to be allies, it is just to keep their own positions. We all know that they are against each other and that they are in different political parties ... When there are contracts for some projects or other sources of money that they can benefit from, they compete to gain a greater share than the others ...” (BS: IDI-23)

(continued)

Box 4.1. Continued

Challenges to bargaining. Many interviewees do not think violence is itself an obstacle to service delivery as long as it is possible to identify key players with whom to negotiate access. The situation is much more difficult when local strongmen compete against each other or when there is criminal gang activity and an absence of clear incentives for ensuring that services are sustained over the long term, which is largely the case in Badghis.

Unstable climate. Many leaders and service providers complain that they cannot understand or predict the behavior of the strongmen and warlords, and this creates an uncertain and unstable climate. One interviewee exemplifies this point by saying: “I don’t understand how they interact with each other. They are sometimes at war with each other and sometimes at peace” (BS: IDI–22). Another notes:

“They [Badghis warlords and strongmen] have their own agreements with each other in terms of what to do. Sometimes, they fight with each other ... sometimes, they make deals, especially during the pistachio harvest ... It is good that they come to an agreement on how to share it, so then there is no argument between them.” (BS: KII–15)

In this context, even when bargains were struck (see chapter 5), they were particularly difficult to forge and keep. Many local actors hoped for the arrival of a strong leader who could serve as a catalyst for the formation of a more stable provincial settlement. Some, including elders and activists, suggested that the emergence of a strong warlord such as General Atta Mohammed Noor in Balkh could be the best possible outcome for Badghis.

Wardak Province

Wardak, like Badghis, is often characterized as insecure and violent. Still, many interviewees perceive Wardak as a place where it is easier to deliver services than it is in Badghis, and its outcomes also tend to be notably better, particularly until 2008. Why is that? Insights from the research include the following:

- **Violence is, to a degree, more organized and less mobile (compared to Badghis).** In the absence of a strong leader to act as a catalyst for collective action, provincial elites did not develop a strong vision of the future or become more organized and centralized in their monopoly over violence, as they did in Balkh. Nevertheless, the more organized form of violence in Wardak enables bargaining, as the local elite is relatively strong (see chapter 3) and supports health and education, and the Taliban are relatively reliant on local support, which contributed to cases of forging bargains around social service delivery between service providers and insurgents (see chapter 5).
- **The provincial settlement in Wardak requires less rapacious behavior from the provincial elites and is more cohesive.** The main power broker is linked to anti-Taliban factions, which later incorporated Hezb-e Islami networks. The strong Hezb-e Islami and Hizb-i Wahdat networks in the Pashtun and Hazara areas, respectively, may have helped bring service delivery to these constituencies, but there is a lack of conclusive evidence.

4.2. Ideologies, Incentives, and Motivations behind Violence

The second key dimension of violence involves the ideologies, incentives, and motivations behind it. The aspects of this dimension are manifest in various ways across the study sites, and the differences between them had some surprising and disparate impacts on SSD.

Ideology of Violence and Service Delivery

The degree of alignment between the objectives and ideology of armed elites (whether leaders of armed insurgencies or established warlords) and the logic and scope of the service strongly impacted whether the service was tolerated or became the target of political violence. This is illustrated by several examples in the case material.

For instance, ideology's crucial role is starkly illustrated in the comparison between polio eradication and education delivery in Pakistan. Insurgents have engaged in violent attacks over polio eradication delivery in KP and FATA, while insurgents in Balochistan have, at times, tolerated and even supported education delivery. Differences in the history of, motivations for, and organization of violence appear to play a contributing role in explaining the disparity (box 4.2).

The case of health delivery in Nepal also illustrates the importance of the motivations of

armed elites and allied insurgents. Prospects of bargaining with health workers were enhanced because attempts to deliver health “to all” aligned with aspects of the Maoist agenda focused on expanding equality and inclusion (see chapter 5). Sociologist Chaitanya Mishra sums it up this way:

“Most analysts ... have concurred that poverty, illiteracy and low level of educational attainment, unemployment and underemployment, inter-household economic inequality—primarily in terms of landownership and income—and caste, ethnic, regional/spatial and gender oppression and inequality are the primary referents of the Maoist struggle.” (World Bank and SSB 2016)

This case also demonstrates that motivations for violence are not static. For example, the Maoists consciously changed their strategy around the building of roads. At the start of the insurgency, the Maoists were opposed to any kind of government-sponsored development activity because part of their strategy was to discredit the state. But by the early 2000s, the Maoists had changed tactics. An assessment from 2002 concludes:

“The Maoists have recently recognized the adverse propaganda effect of their earlier attacks on rural infrastructure and installations that could be regarded as primarily for development purposes,

Box 4.2. Ideology matters? Education in Balochistan versus polio eradication in KP and FATA

A comparative analysis of education in Balochistan and polio eradication in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) stresses the role of ideology, as well as other dimensions of violence, to explain the disparate social service delivery risks and performance.

Balochistan and education. Armed elites and allied insurgents sometimes did not overtly oppose the Balochistan Education Support Project (BESP). In fact, on various occasions, insurgents let the project take its course without any direct interference or threat, which helps to explain why BESP registered progress (see chapter 2). As one individual from Turbat explains:

“Extra judicial killing, abduction, and the like are observable everywhere but as far as this school and educational activities are concerned, Sarmachar [a local term for Baloch militants] never interrupted our activities. Rather, they encouraged us to get education.” (FGD–01)

Much depended on the case, but why could this be?

- **Ideology.** There was some degree of alignment between the goal of delivering education and the goals of the Baloch insurgency. First, some Baloch armed elites and allied insurgents viewed education as a means to achieving their goals. They viewed a lack of education as an obstacle for the province and therefore believed some forms of education could promote local empowerment. Second, certain militants relied, in part, on local support, which incentivized them to support services that the local communities wanted. Finally, locally influential nationalist elites viewed education as a means to pursue their nationalist objectives.³
- **Organization of violence.** In addition, the Baloch insurgency is relatively well organized and disciplined at the local level, making it easier to identify leaders with whom to bargain and negotiate to ensure that social service delivery was protected.
- **Bargains and compromises.** Baloch armed elites and allied insurgents were further incentivized to support local education by modifying and co-opting the education services (see chapter 5); moreover it was a nonstate, as opposed to a state-led, project.

Polio eradication in FATA

In contrast to the example of education in Balochistan, the history of the Polio Eradication Project (PEP) in FATA is more rife with violent attacks, with some vaccination workers being abducted or killed. In both regions, the insurgency is resisting the state, but has different motivations. In Balochistan the insurgency is driven by nationalist sentiment; in FATA it is linked to global Jihadi networks keen on imposing their vision of Sharia law on the state. The FATA insurgency has been increasingly radicalized and its relations with the state further antagonized by repeated drone attacks. Moreover, attacks against PEP workers increased after it came to light that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency had used a vaccination drive in Abbotabad to gather intelligence against Osama Bin Laden. Resistance to polio became a proxy for resistance to the state as well as a bargaining tool.

(continued)

Box 4.2. Continued

Further, in Balochistan, education is viewed as a vehicle for provincial empowerment, and its localized mode of delivery gives insurgents some control over how the services are delivered. In FATA, however, the polio eradication program is seen as a Trojan horse for external intelligence gathering. It is not considered a priority due to the lack of other basic health-care services and due to local demand for other services, such as electricity. Repetitive polio campaigns and poor communication with insurgents have exacerbated these problems (see chapter 6).

Polio eradication: FATA versus Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

The role of the ideology and organization of violence is further demonstrated by the comparison of polio eradication delivery in KP and FATA. PEP was more problematic to implement, at greater risk of violent attacks, and made less progress toward achieving its outcomes in FATA than in KP for a number of reasons, including:

- **Ideology.** FATA-based armed elites and allied insurgents have a more radicalized ideology and antagonistic view of the state than those in KP, partly due to the drone attacks in the region. Many focus group participants argue that the drone attacks also fueled the widespread perception in FATA that polio campaigns are a cover for U.S. intelligence gathering prior to pinpointing targets for drone attacks. Association with the state can automatically make one a target in FATA.
- **State penetration and organization of violence.** In FATA, state penetration and control is deemed to be relatively weaker than it is in KP (see chapter 3), which has led to more fragmented and autonomous forms of violence there. It also means there are fewer opportunities for political and administrative cooperation and coordination to deliver services on the ground.

a. The president of the Pashtunkhwa Mili Awami Party, the leading Pashtun Nationalist Party of Balochistan, perhaps representing a more radical, nationalist view, claims: “Our children are being kept out of schools intentionally. This policy dates back to British rule of this region. The British had a clear policy for our children that they must not get education. This state, mostly represented by Punjab, is continuing the same policy... they fear that if we get education and awareness, we will demand our rights.” (KII–14)

and have promised to leave them alone from now on.” (Seddon and Hussein 2002)

Practitioners would do well to regularly visit the field to track changes in these kinds of perceptions and local tactics (see chapter 8).

Another example emerges from Afghanistan, where the evolving Taliban ideology around

education impacts whether or not it is violently targeted as well as the types of education that will be tolerated. The Taliban is a diverse group, and its ideology can differ from province to province, but some interesting points emerge from the research:

The Taliban’s ideology and “policy” partly explains why it conducted violent attacks on schools. The armed opposition of the Taliban

identified education delivery as a key field of state activity. It regarded it as an attempt to indoctrinate and impose Western ideas on children. The resulting campaign of violence in 2006–08 led to the destruction of numerous schools and the closure of even more.

The evolution of the Taliban policy toward schools helps explain the reduction in attacks. Gradually, the Taliban’s campaign evolved toward an attempt to influence state schools through local-level negotiations with Ministry of Education officials. By the end of 2008, none of the schools in Balkh and Wardak were inactive, and only 5 percent were in Badghis. It also explains why, in

various cases (chapter 5), some Taliban were bargaining around co-opting, rather than closing, schools.

Taliban ideology was more tolerant of education for boys than girls, which impacted the nature of bargaining and their violent recourse, especially in Wardak. Despite the growing acceptance of state-sponsored education, Taliban ideology against girls being educated continued. This was particularly prominent in Wardak where, with the arrival of the Taliban in 1995, girls stopped attending school, and most of the schools were turned into madrasas. As a result, Wardak performed relatively well over the period



Classes in Physics and Chemistry being conducted at the Female Experimental High School in Herat, Afghanistan. GRAHAM CROUCH/WORLD BANK

2008–14 in terms of health and boys' education, but poorly in terms of girls' education, with the most significant decline in primary-school attendance rates among the three provinces studied. In effect, the Taliban made implicit sectoral bargains to allow boys to attend school at the expense of girls, which might help explain why in Balkh, where the Taliban presence and power is negligible, and in Badghis, where their collective power is fragmented, opposition to education for girls was less dominant.

Incentives

Armed elites and allied insurgents are more supportive of service delivery if there are incentives for them to do so. Two questions emerged as particularly important: are the violent actors in need of the service in question, and can they extract rents?

Do violent actors need the services?

The extent to which insurgents tolerate service delivery is shaped by the extent to which they, their families, and their "friends" need the service. When insurgents require the service, they tend to facilitate basic SSD coverage, particularly in the health sector.

In Nepal, for example, the Maoists maintained some health facilities because they and their families needed the services. One of the reasons given at all the research sites for the Maoists allowing health facilities to remain open was the need for the rebels and their families to make use of them (H3–FGD–SRH;

H8–FGD–PAL). Indeed, a number of interviewees argue that improvements in health were possible during the conflict because the Maoists had a strong interest in keeping them open as a source of services and rents (H21–KII–PAL; H29–KII–ROL; G10–KII–SRH).

Similarly, in Afghanistan, insurgents' need for services helps explain numerous cases of health and education services being insulated from violence. In Wardak, for example, there were instances of the Taliban allowing and protecting health services because they needed them. One informant notes:

"Medical staff does not have security problems, as the Taliban and militants only targets military convoys. Ambulances can easily travel around, because the Taliban and militants need health services. They are treated in these clinics, and their relatives also come for treatment to these clinics. Therefore, they do not prevent the delivery of health services." (WK: IDI–07)

Interestingly, there are even examples of the Taliban actively protecting health service delivery from criminal networks:

"The Taliban also has a level of commitment, because if they wanted to stop the delivery of health services, they could have already done it. For instance, there are robbers or other criminal groups who want to interrupt services or harm our medical staff. Sometimes, the Taliban protect our staff and they do not

let people or criminals interfere in the health service delivery. So yes, there is this level of commitment present.” (KL: KII–47)

Likewise, an interesting example from Afghanistan shows how commanders continued to protect education despite major armed clashes because their children and the

children from the local community needed the service (box 4.3).

Can violent actors extract rents?

The ability of violent actors to extract rents also impacts whether or not they will allow the delivery of services. Every service offers a unique opportunity for rent extraction, and

Box 4.3. Wardak, Afghanistan: Education incentives before the Taliban

In the 1980s and 1990s, the main jihadi party in Wardak was the Islamist Hezb-e Islami, which favored scientific and technical education, albeit within an Islamic framework (WK: KII–05 and 06). Some jihadi commanders wanted schooling for their own children and the support of locals. This is why even during armed clashes, many schools were actively kept open. Interviewees told some interesting stories about this:

“The main factors that kept the schools open were the jihadi commanders, village elders, ulema, mullah, imams, and maliks. People gave land for school buildings and they maintained the security of the schools, because on the one hand, their own children were attending these schools, and on the other hand, it was a service for their villagers. Although there were conflicts among the jihadi parties, they tried to support schools and they did not plan to close them.” (WK: KII–01)

“Tribal and party competition were the highest in this area. This means that each party and commander had his own government in his area. But most of the people agreed with the delivery of education services and supported education. I can give you an example of their support to education. In Chak District, there was a government school building in the Shir Khana area. In this area, there were different parties. The members of each of these parties occupied a room of this school building; they were living there. When the people of the community asked the commanders to leave the school building so that it could be used for teaching and studying, they also ordered their personnel to leave the school buildings. Finally, all of them left the school building and classes started again.” (WK: KII–02)

across the studied cases, insurgents were more willing to support a service if they could extract rent. This was manifest in a range of elite bargains where insurgents would allow or even enable the service to continue provided there was a clear rent-sharing agreement that gave them access to supplies, privileged services, or payments (see chapter 5).

4.3. Localization of Violence

When armed elites are embedded in local communities during times of violent conflict, the prospects for local bargaining around SSD improve. A number of factors emerge as important, including the insurgents' reliance on local support and how mobile or localized they are.

Reliance on Local Support

When armed elites rely on local support and local constituents want a service, then the elites are more willing to enable delivery. During the conflict in Nepal, for example, the incumbent government and the Maoist insurgency grew to realize that health service delivery was a vehicle for gaining legitimacy in the eyes of the people. This reduced disruptions to health services and increased the propensity for accommodations and bargaining. The government continued to deliver medical supplies to areas where the Maoists

held sway, and the Maoists allowed health facilities to function, with national campaigns such as polio and measles immunizations, vitamin supplementation, and family planning hardly affected (Devkota and van Teijlingen 2009). A doctor who had served in a rural primary health-care center during the conflict explains: "The Maoists also wanted the support of the general mass for their insurgency and since health services are directly related to the people, they did not choose to obstruct it" (H18–KII–PAL).

Afghanistan offers another example. In certain areas of Wardak, the Taliban relies on the support of local tribal elites and communities for local entry and legitimacy. As a result, they were predisposed to enabling services and appeasing local elites (see chapter 5). One informant explains:

"You see, the strength of the Taliban is highly dependent on the support of the people [in Wardak Province] ... The Taliban approach the leaders of the community like the maliks, and this is their entry to the community." (KL: KII–42)

Similarly, as noted previously, Jihadi commanders were also willing to enable education delivery in part because they relied on local support.

Localized Versus Mobile Insurgents

The research shows that localized insurgents, who have strong links with the local community, are more likely to enable local service delivery than are mobile insurgents. The more localized the armed elites and allied insurgents, the stronger their links to the community, the more responsive they are to local needs, and the more willing they are to tolerate local service delivery (see box 4.4).

In conclusion, context-specific dimensions of violence have varying impacts on service delivery implementation and progress. They explain how and why service delivery outcomes differ at the subnational level and how progress is—and is not—made. The various forms of violence, in addition to political settlements, expand or reduce the bargaining space for delivering services. The following chapter explores the issue of bargaining in more depth.



A girl receives polio vaccine drops at the door step of her family home in 2016. AKHTAR SOOMRO/ REUTERS

Box 4.4. Localized armed elites and allied insurgents and social service delivery bargains

Across the studied cases, the ethnographic evidence suggests that the more localized the armed elites and allied insurgents, the easier it is to negotiate for and deliver services. Following is a summary of findings.

Afghanistan

A range of interviewees note that mobile insurgents, usually deployed from neighboring countries during the fighting season, do not have links to local communities and do not stay long enough to establish smooth communication channels with local elders. They note that these armed elites and allied insurgents are much less bound by local needs or bargains, and they cite numerous instances of insurgents from outside the province disrupting service delivery. Some local representatives claim that “those Taliban who are not independent” (out-of-area Taliban coming from Pakistani territory) and the security forces are equally responsible for school attendance disruptions in some areas (WK: IDI–18).

A range of informants claim that it is easier to negotiate service delivery with the help of local elders if the Taliban are locally connected. One informant describes an example of local Taliban being so amenable to service delivery bargains that they allowed unofficial schools to be established:

“Until last year, girls in grade six did not have any problems. But due to some concerns, for girls in higher grades, between grade six and ten, the Taliban and the local people advised renting a specific house where these girls could attend school until the 10th grade.” (WK: IDI–14)

In Wardak, the rise of external violent actors, who are less respectful of local bargains and elders, more ideologically opposed to education, and less dependent on local support, helps explain the weakening sectoral bargains and overall decline of school attendance (particularly among girls).

Nepal

Evidence suggests that local village Maoists were more understanding of community needs than those from outside the village. The village of Taratal in Bardiya, for example, was relatively unaffected by the conflict because the Maoists in charge understood local needs. It was indeed Maoists from outside the village who obstructed development work (H16–KII–BAR). And nonlocal Maoists in the village of Madanpokhara in Palpa were reportedly more “forceful,” while local Maoists were more understanding (H22–KII–PAL).

Pakistan

The comparison between the Polio Eradication Project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) underlines similar findings. Roving forms of violence, fostered by FATA’s porous borders with neighboring Afghanistan, made organizing negotiation focal points difficult. Indeed, when international forces engage in a military offensive against the Taliban in Afghanistan, militants move to Pakistani FATA. If there is an offensive by the Pakistani military, militants move to adjoining areas in Afghanistan. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa communities, however, do not offer such a safe haven to militants as those in FATA tend to do.

5. Elite Bargaining Matters

“I see less harm in hiring a person who is corrupt but is capable of doing something ... and is doing something.” (KL: KII-42)

As discussed in previous chapters, context-specific political settlements and forms of violence create space and opportunities for delivering services. But service delivery is not mechanically determined by these factors. Indeed, the research indicates that there is room for actors to strategize, negotiate, and compromise to get things done.

This chapter explores how elite bargaining affects if and how services are delivered and progress achieved. Many bargains were sustained even during periods of intense violence. This research goes beyond broad statements like “elite bargains matter” to identify the actual processes through which bargains are achieved and reproduced. Bargaining is a fluid and overlapping process, but it can be identified in various forms, as outlined below. The bargains examined in this study facilitated some progress, but often came with trade-offs.

5.1. Forms of Bargaining

Many of the bargains considered in this study are rolling agreements. They were informally devised and must be regularly renegotiated. Some bargains were more successful or far-reaching than others. The form that a bargain took was shaped by the local elite balance of power, the incentives and ideas of armed and unarmed elites, and the ability of different actors to identify common interests.

Negotiating with Insurgents

In Nepal, a range of informal negotiations between local actors and Maoists facilitated the delivery of health and rural road services. In Palpa and Bardiya, for example, the Maoists obstructed road construction, viewing it as state encroachment. But in several instances, construction resumed after negotiations took place between road users, local elites, and the Maoists, suggesting that the Maoists allowed the road construction projects to proceed when they believed that doing so enhanced their legitimacy with local communities.

Another example involved negotiations between a district health officer in Siraha and armed elites in the Tarai, which facilitated the delivery of health training programs:

“The [district health officer] was trying to organize a training program during a strike by one of the two Jana Tantrik Mukti Morcha (JTMM) group [an ostensible political party engaged in armed criminality in the Tarai]. All the offices were closed. But, Dr C did not want to stop the training program related to OPD (Outpatient Department). Some JTMM cadres came and threatened Dr C to stop the program. However, he dealt with them and told them that it was a program that came from donor agencies and stopping the training program would send out a wrong message and such programs would be stopped in Siraha district. He also told them that the program was four hours long and two hours had already been completed and requested them to let him carry on with the training program. The JTMM cadres listened to him and returned.” (H4–KII–SRH; H1–FGD–SRH)

Persuasion earned support for SSD among some insurgents in Afghanistan as well. Even in Badghis, where bargains are uncommon and problematic (see chapters 3 and 4), service providers sometimes convinced the insurgents to allow services to continue:

“Before, the Taliban didn’t even let boys’ schools open, but in many places, boys’ schools are now open. We asked them, ‘Will it be better for your son to be educated or illiterate at that time?’ We [service providers and users] asked them that. In this way, we convinced them and opened schools for Mushkawani, which is in the Taliban’s territory.” (BS: IDI–33)

Sometimes, negotiations required gaining the permission and trust of armed elites and allied insurgents. Local elites and service providers regularly informed and engaged with insurgents, which was important because building a level of trust with armed elites fostered needed predictability for service delivery. For example, there were significant dialogues and trust-building efforts between implementing partners, local armed elites, and local elites for the Balochistan Education Support Project (BESP), enabling service delivery.

This form of bargaining sometimes resulted in insurgents actually codelivering the service. In Nepal, for example, interviewees argue that a great deal of health delivery continued during the conflict, partly because health workers regularly liaised with the Maoist leaders and because the Maoists were informed in advance when health programs were coming to their areas, building trust and predictability. One interviewee recalls:

“Such people [auxiliary health workers] needed permission from the Maoists and that was not so easily available. But since we knew the local Maoists, someone from the health post would accompany the district people. We would coordinate with the local Maoists here while those in the district center would coordinate with the security forces. Whenever we held health camps, the dates would be decided beforehand so that the security forces were aware where our camps were being held and they would not come on a patrol [so as not to cause conflict].” (H29–KII–ROL)

In Rolpa, local health staff coordinated with Maoists who issued passes for them to conduct national health programs during the conflict (H25–KII–ROL). One health worker coordinated with the Maoists to take a group of 20 men on a three-hour walk to a vasectomy clinic (H32–KII–ROL).

Enlisting the Support of Elites

Another form of bargaining involves enlisting locally influential elites to serve as intermediaries to enable service delivery. This involves, but goes beyond, basic dialogue and negotiations with armed elites and allied insurgents. In Afghanistan, these forms of bargains were crucial. In Wardak, elders proactively supported education, and their bargaining,

and accommodations with the Taliban partly explains why, based on a number of indicators, Wardak service delivery has performed relatively well, even in the face of volatile security conditions. Even at the peak of the Taliban’s power in the province, sectoral elite bargains were struck. According to a former Wardak government official, the “coordination and cooperation between elders and government in the province is much better compared with other provinces” (KL: IDI–63). Box 5.1 offers examples from the field research. It is noteworthy that even in Badghis, bargains were struck regarding health and education delivery, facilitated by local elites, even though they were somewhat fleeting and unstable.

In Pakistan, religious elites played a role in enabling polio eradication delivery even in the difficult environments of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). There are instances of religious elites helping to convince armed elites and allied insurgents, local elites, and constituents to allow the delivery of polio eradication services. In some cases, however, the support of such elites was needed but insufficient to ensure successful delivery (see box 5.2).

Finally, the case of road construction in Nepal underlines the role of political party elites in resolving local conflicts and negotiating with armed elites and allied insurgents to deliver

Box 5.1. Enlisting the support of local elites in Wardak, Afghanistan

Education

Local elites in Wardak were enlisted on multiple occasions to ensure that education services were sustained during the insurgency:

“When the Taliban closed schools, the Ministry of Education asked the tribal elders [in Wardak] to talk to the Taliban. Then there were discussions between the tribal elders and the Taliban, and some of their requests were accepted. Actually, only the tribal elders could convince the Taliban to keep the schools open.” (WK: IDI-16)

“Last year, a girls’ school was blocked ... by the Taliban [in Wardak]. They [pointing to the elders in the room] went to some Taliban members and mediated for the opening of the girls’ school. Those problems are not resolved by the government; those issues are solved by these elders.” (WK: IDI-14)

Health

Local elites and health *shuras* (consultative councils) in Wardak also enabled health service delivery:

“There were security checkpoints near the clinic, which were attacked by [the Taliban]. Due to the fighting between opposite groups and security checkpoints, it was difficult for patients to come for treatment to the clinic ... This problem was shared with health shura members, and to some extent, the problem was solved. The health shura and elders talked to the group of insurgents about not disturbing them during the day when women, men, and children go to the clinic for treatment, which they accepted.” (WK: IDI-07)

“The ... problem was the presence of insurgent groups against the government; that is a threat to everyone’s life. Through the establishment and communication of the health shuras, this problem was solved ... The shura talked to insurgent groups about the need for health services ... With that, [the insurgents] agreed to service delivery and that they will not interfere with the health sector staff.” (WK: KII-13)

“About the interaction of these power holders [local elites] with the insurgents, they agreed to the delivery of health and education services in the area, because of the involvement of the elders ... They verbally agreed that they would do no harm to health and education service delivery.” (WK: KII-09; WK: KII-12)

Box 5.2. Religious elites, fatwas, and polio delivery in Pakistan

The example of Pakistan illustrates the important role religious elites can play in social service delivery. According to some practitioners, fatwas from respected clerics helped convince skeptical local religious leaders to accept the vaccination program, and they in turn convinced insurgents and locals (R20–KII–PSH; R15–FGD–PSH). One donor agency official, noting how fatwas helped tackle cases of refusals, cites an instance of a fatwa issued by a madrasa in Multan persuading the religious elite to cooperate:

“We had to face refusal from the whole village once, when the imam of the mosque announced to boycott polio drops in a village named ‘Sadri Jadeed’ in Dagi, Swabi. In the year 2012–13, we brought a fatwa from a madrasa in Multan to convince reluctant religious persons.” (R10–KII–PSH)

In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), internally displaced female community members from North Waziristan engaged with religious and political elites to convince the Taliban of the benefits of polio vaccination (R19–FGD–PSH). However, while fatwas were necessary, they could not ensure effective polio eradication delivery, especially in FATA.

Even though numerous respected clerics supported polio immunization, the Pakistani Taliban have consistently refused to allow polio teams into their areas, especially in FATA. The background country report notes that in some cases, ensuring the support of religious leaders was not enough to broker deals around the Polio Eradication Project. A focus group discussion participant with the FATA polio program technical staff argues:

“Due to lack of education, religious guidelines take heavy precedent over everything else—but having a fatwa issued is not enough, you need to convince local imams as well or they will oppose you despite the fatwa from higher level imams.” (R–24–GI–PSH)

services. The presence of politicians in local user committees made it easier to resolve conflict (R5–KII–KTH). As one informant put it:

“It is ... true that having politicians on board helped in ensuring that construction work was not halted even in

the most adverse circumstances such as direct negotiations with the Maoists during the insurgency as happened in the case of the Arebhanjyang-Rampur Road in Palpa, a role the project could not have undertaken on its own.” (G17–KII–PAL)

There were other examples cited as well. In Bardiya, road construction was blocked by the Maoists but then resumed after the road user committee got local supporters to convince the insurgents that the road was indeed in the community interest (G13–KII–BAR); and a locally influential elite successfully convinced the Maoists to allow health training programs to be conducted (H7–FGD–BAR).

In Palpa, local political parties engaged in dialogues with the Maoists in order to reduce the violence (G19–KII–PAL).

Concessions and Compromises

These types of concession-making bargains manifested themselves in at least three ways: (1) providing privileged services to insurgents; (2) modifying the service; and (3) using services as a bargaining chip.

1. Providing privileged services to insurgents

In Afghanistan, concessions were made with the Taliban so that they would not attack health services. For example, nongovernmental organizations and government clinics have been asked by local elders to treat the Taliban, and to allow the Taliban to conduct inspections of facilities so they could ensure that these were not being used for “spying” purposes. There have been instances of violence and bans on further service delivery when service providers refused (Jackson and Giustozzi 2012; Norland 2012).

Similar concessions were made in Nepal. If local health workers agreed to discreetly provide services to the Maoists, then health services were often maintained. Sometimes, the Maoists cultivated personal relationships with health workers, seeking their help at any time of the day or night. The health workers had to be discrete and cultivate trust with the insurgents, who did not spare anyone suspected of being an informant (World Bank and SSB 2016).

2. Modifying the service

A second aspect of bargaining involves modifying aspects of a service to appease armed elites and allied insurgents. This tactic was apparent in education delivery in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In Balochistan, Pakistan, armed elites and allied insurgents were more predisposed to allowing education services if the curriculum was modified. The armed elites and allied insurgents did not interfere with school operations as long as: (1) the school did not raise the Pakistani flag; (2) school children did not sing the national anthem; and (3) Pakistani history was not taught (PIPS 2012).

Similarly, in Afghanistan, the Taliban allowed education services as long as the curriculum was modified in a way that aligned with their ideology. For example, there were reports that deals were negotiated in Wardak allowing schools to stay open in exchange for concessions that included changes to the curriculum

(Giustozzi and Franco 2011). As one informant describes:

“In most of the districts, the government curriculum is being taught in schools. But in some areas, where there is the Taliban, there is a slight change in the curriculum, which the government does not favor. ... The Taliban ... keep control over the curriculum of education in their controlled areas ... We have not heard that the Taliban has made any problems with either ministry [the Ministry of Public Health or the Ministry of Education] or their work in Wardak Province.” (WK: IDI-18)

Another informant made a similar point: “If there were a problem with the curriculum, the Taliban would go to those schools and would advise for those subjects to be taken out and suggest which subjects to include.” (WK: IDI-14).

3. Using services as a bargaining chip

Armed elites and other elites sometimes use services as a bargaining chip to achieve other goals. This tactic emerged most prominently in the case of polio eradication delivery in Pakistan. There were instances of the Taliban opposing polio vaccination ostensibly in an effort to halt the drone attacks in FATA. Local elites and constituents attempted to use resistance to polio eradication delivery as a

political bargaining chip to ask for government concessions, such as improved power supplies, a reduction in the cost of power, and increased wages. This is expressed in a number of ways:

“[P]eople were saying ... that if their salaries were not increased they would boycott Polio Eradication activities. So it is becoming a political tool in the hands of people as a bargaining chip.” (R11-KII-PSH)

“... if they [elites and constituents] need something (roads, electricity) they target polio, knowing that it is priority of the government and through this their voice can be finally heard. This is kind of a weapon that they have to be heard.” (R13-KII-PSH)

“There are three types of refusals, religious, demand and misconception. Either they are refusing on religious grounds; or they demand for something and threaten not to vaccinate their children unless the demand is met with; or they have a misconception regarding polio drops about it having dangerous elements such as inducing infertility.” (R-24-GI-PSH)

Chapter 6 explores these points in greater detail.

Sharing Rents and Tolerating Corruption

One form of bargaining involves rent-sharing arrangements that enable progress in service delivery in the midst of violent conflict. These bargains emerged across the three studied countries, some more enabling of service delivery than others. None resembled best practice or good governance approaches to SSD. This section outlines some of these arrangements at the front line of delivery. (See chapter 3 for a more thorough exploration of these rent-sharing arrangements at higher levels of the polity.)

In Nepal, a key puzzle is how health service delivery was sustained during periods of intense violent conflict. One part of this answer relates to the incentives of the armed elites and allied insurgents and a series of bargains, as outlined above. Another dimension of this bargaining involved rent-sharing agreements. In a number of cases, Maoists allowed health services to remain operational in exchange for rents in the form of donations and levies. The Maoists typically demanded either “donations” or a day’s worth of salary per month as a “levy” from health staff in health posts (health assistants, assistant health workers, nurses) as well as private medical practitioners.²⁴ In



Principal of Sorya High School in West Kabul, Afghanistan. GRAHAM CROUCH/WORLD BANK

some cases, they also demanded a share of the supply of medicines, especially during periods of intense fighting.²⁵ Because local health workers could not easily find commensurate employment elsewhere, many remained at their posts despite the extortion.²⁶

There is evidence that government officials turned a blind eye to these practices, a critical factor enabling continued delivery. District-level officials reportedly understood that they needed to continue sending medicine to villages in accordance with the government's strategy of delivering services and enhancing local legitimacy even if some would fall into rebel hands. They understood that only by heeding the demands of local health workers could district offices ensure their continued presence in the villages, especially when the insurgents heightened oversight of their activities (Hart 2001; Seddon and Hussein 2002). Cases of district officials relaxing their formal oversight of supplies was noted, as a health worker in Rolpa recalls:

“We did have to keep a record of all the medical supplies that came to our health post. But we were not made to clarify how medicines were consumed to the district office. The people at the district headquarters knew everything. They were well acquainted with the situation at the local level. Even the CDO (Chief District Officer)²⁷ during our review meetings would ask us to adapt to the situation and would not cross-question us on either the supplies we received or the

services we had to provide to the Maoists.” (H30–KII–ROL)

From a policy perspective, these examples suggest how rent-sharing can enable continued delivery and reduce the risk that insurgents will target a service (see also box 5.3 and chapter 8).

Rent-sharing bargains were also evident in road construction projects in Nepal. Sometimes, the Maoists viewed road projects as a source of their own funding during their insurgency; the same was later true for many of the armed elites in the Tarai. There is some evidence that negotiations and rent-sharing between Maoists and local supporters allowed road construction to continue. One key informant notes:

“BJ [interviewee] shared an incident in 2003, when the Maoists looted 40,000 Nepali Rupees from [the chair of the road construction committee] ... They blamed him for constructing the roads without their permission and for the convenience of security officials to travel rather than for the public. In order to continue the project after a halt of some time, the committee sent local supporters of the Maoists to them to explain the importance of the road to the community and succeeded in getting their permission to resume the project.” (G13–KII–BAR)

Box 5.3. Bargaining with the Maoists in Palpa, Nepal

K.C., a health care assistant at the Tahu primary health care center in the district of Palpa in Nepal, discussed several strategies that were used to keep health services functioning during the Maoist insurgency in Palpa:

Rents. In addition to paying a levy of a day's salary every month to the Maoists, providing supplies to them was crucial to remaining operational. K.C. gave the insurgents anything they requested, though he could not ask them to submit a medicine demand form, as the procedure dictated. On one occasion, insurgents asked for a sphygmomanometer (a tool that measures blood pressure), but the center did not have one, so K.C. put in a request for two. The district health officer who sent the equipment knew without asking any questions. K.C. believed that the officer understood the sensitive and difficult nature of the conditions under which health centers located in remote areas were operating, and therefore promptly responded to their requests. Supplies were continually replenished, and the district officer never demanded any kind of accounting for them.

Discretion. An important survival strategy was to never provide any information about the security forces to the Maoists and vice versa. For example, government forces would often arrive at the primary health care center a few days after a battle and question the staff as to whether injured combatants had been brought in for treatment. The standard response from the staff was to suggest that they had perhaps been taken to Rampur—a nearby market town.

Treat on request. Wounded Maoist fighters were discreetly treated on request in a room separate from other patients. Some of the Maoist insurgents visited K.C. at his home as well because he had a private pharmacy. When this happened, K.C. had to provide both health services and accommodation.

Source: Based on H17–KII–PAL.

According to another informant, adherence to a strict policy of neutrality toward all sides was the only way people could continue to live in the affected areas (R20–KII–PAL).

Similarly, in Afghanistan, we find cases of rent-sharing in both health and education. In Badghis, for example, armed and un-armed elites colluded in several instances to

appropriate and share rents from the social service sectors (BS: IDI–23). In Wardak, some in the education sector accept patronage and corruption as a necessary evil in exchange for delivering services. One informant notes that some who are recruited through patronage networks for the wrong reasons may still be able to deliver:

“I see less harm in hiring a person who is corrupt but is capable of doing something and is doing something. For instance, look at the enthusiasm that everyone has in the education sector. Everyone is looking to what is going on in schools, with teacher training and the curriculum. However, if you place someone there who looks at the delivery of any services as something to help him or her gain economic resources or use it to promote a certain agenda, but does not work toward its development, that is another thing.” (KL: KII–42)

SSD was more developmental in Balkh but still not immune to rent-sharing bargains as a way of getting things done. For example, interviewees in the education sector admit that interference and pressure for favors or bribes from Members of Parliament (MPs) and strongmen did occasionally occur during the implementation of the Education Quality Improvement Project (EQUIP).²⁸ See chapter 3 for further discussion about these types of arrangements.

If A Bargain Cannot Be Struck

The research indicates that the absence of a bargain complicates SSD. Across all sectors and countries studied, an absence of dialogue and bargaining with armed elites and other

powerholders disrupted delivery and made life more difficult for SSD workers.

The case of polio eradication delivery in Pakistan illustrates this point. As noted in part I, a key objective of the research is to explain why polio eradication delivery was so challenging and frequently targeted by acts of violence, especially in FATA. Chapters 3 and 4 describe how this was partly shaped by the nature of the political settlements and the forms of and motivations for violence that contribute to the absence of bargaining—negotiations, accommodations, and concessions—with insurgents, in turn leading to highly problematic service delivery.²⁹ Insurgents felt their demands were not being met even partially, dialogue and trust building with insurgents was at best weak, and local elites wanted services other than polio eradication (see chapter 6). As a result, delivery of the Polio Eradication Project became a dangerous business. Health workers could not travel to FATA and some parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, such as Swabi, because of the heightened security risk.³⁰ There has been no polio eradication campaign in North Waziristan since 2010 because of the security risks and lack of access to the region (R13–KII–PSH).³¹ Security was particularly difficult for female local health workers, who were seen as key enablers of improved vaccination coverage because they could enter households to vaccinate children and were familiar with and known to their

communities. These women were specifically targeted by insurgents in their effort to disrupt the operations of the Polio Eradication Project (R15–FGD–PSH). In some communities, people would not get vaccinated because they feared retribution by insurgents opposed to the program (R09–KII–PSH; R10–KII–PSH). In Swabi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, fewer people vaccinated their children at the district level because the government required proof of address, and families were afraid of being targeted by insurgents (R10–KII–PSH).³²

Limited outreach, dialogue, and trust-building with armed elites and allied insurgents also contributed to challenges in Balochistan. While local elite bargains and the alignment of interests between insurgents, local elders/elites, and implementing partners facilitated the local elite bargains that underpinned the progress of the BEBP, the absence of such bargains seemed to have the opposite effect. Security raids led to school closures in some areas (KII–11); some city schools such as in Turbat, Panjgor, and Awaran were affected by raids (KII–05); violence in the southeast region between different groups blocked access to schools (KII–02); and there were reports of attacks on project implementers who were perceived to be representatives of the government (KII–09). Similar incidents occurred in Nepal, where delivery of health and road services were disrupted when demands for “donations” were not met.³³

5.2. Trade-Offs

The research does not suggest that bargaining is the ideal way to deliver services, merely that it often appears necessary to achieve progress. Elite bargains frequently include trade-offs, which do not represent technical failures in SSD design or implementation, but instead reflect the political compromises made to allow or to maintain SSD. A better understanding of these trade-offs can help inform strategies for supporting SSD in violence-affected contexts (see chapter 8). Four significant trade-offs emerge from the research, which are described in turn below.

1. Service Delivery Maintained, but Flow of Resources Skewed

It is not unusual for resources to be diverted as a result of bargaining. For example, the bargains between local elites and armed elites in Wardak, Afghanistan, were crucial to enabling the continuation of education and health services, but at the same time, significant evidence exists of skewed investments. Local elites, despite their positive attitude toward education, also view it as an opportunity to extend their patronage. In some instances, lobbying by economic and political elites over the location of schools disrupted educational development in the area, resulting in suboptimal sites that left some communities

very far from a school and others quite close (WK: KII–01). Allegations of corruption in the education sector are common (WK: IDI–18). In Wardak’s health sector, there was an alignment of interests between provincial and powerful local elites to enable services

but this also affected their distribution (box 5.4). Similarly, local politicians in Nepal who played a role in bargaining also influenced the selection of roads, diverting projects to areas they favored.³⁴

Box 5.4. Bargains and skewed health provision in Wardak, Afghanistan

The experience of the health sector in Wardak demonstrates how bargaining between provincial and more powerful elites can contribute to a skewed provision of services. For example, provincial council members from the two Hazara-dominated districts in Wardak authorized several local clinics, despite these not being in accordance with Ministry of Health guidance. As one interviewee notes about two related events:

“They have many recommendations for upgrading a health facility, for downgrading a health facility, for establishing a new health facility. In the two Behsud areas, this is very common. Therefore, we have an extensive number of health facilities in Behsud, because every time they go to the minister, he is not brave enough to face these Members of Parliament (MPs). The minister refers the case to the Grants and Service Contracts Management Unit in the Ministry of Health and then to us. What began as a small clinic eventually became a well-established clinic. We now have 23 clinics in the two Behsud areas; 40 percent of our clinics in Wardak are in Behsud.

He [senior health official] forced us to accept what he thought was right in terms of the staff in one of the clinics, where he had some personal interest. That clinic was previously supported by the government and was later taken over by a nongovernmental organization. He still had links in the clinic. He wanted to be involved in all of the recruitment and everything that was happening in the clinic. He was frequently supervising it. He forced us to upgrade it from a Comprehensive Health Centre (CHC) to a CHC+, and he succeeded. But he did not stop with the CHC+, as he said that it should be a special CHC+. So he went to the new minister and gained special approval to hire people.” (KL: KII–47)

2. Basic Service Coverage Sustained, but Quality Compromised

In the Tarai region of Nepal, bargains struck regarding road construction helped maintain service delivery but compromised quality. Large-scale road contractors—usually based out of Kathmandu—were more frequently targeted by roving armed groups in the post-2006 period because they were seen as major money-making targets. A resulting adaptation involved the use of local subcontractors who could get the work done more easily because they were more localized, more trusted by the bandits, able to negotiate on a local level with armed elites, and better equipped to resolve local problems as they arose (R1–FGD–SRH). However, because of this deal, road construction quality was compromised. Smaller-scale local contractors were less skilled, and subcontracting made monitoring and controlling construction less straightforward. Therefore, the problem of substandard quality in road construction is not merely technical. Rather, it involves the political economy challenges around securing a feasible bargain in a violent context.

The education sector in Pakistan and Afghanistan require similar trade-offs. In Balochistan, bargains were struck with armed elites and allied insurgents that enabled education delivery as long as the curriculum was modified in line with Balochi nationalist ideology. This allowed access to education, but questions remain as to how greatly the quality of education was compromised by removing certain

modules, such as history, from the curriculum. Likewise, deals were struck in Afghanistan with the Taliban to keep schools open that required adaptations to the curriculum and there are similar questions about the impact on learning outcomes of the dramatic expansion in hours dedicated to religious subjects to the detriment of math and reading. Wardak commanders were willing to allow education, but there is scant evidence suggesting that they were incentivized to deal with issues related to quality of education, such as low attendance rates or poor quality of teachers.

3. Some Groups Benefit, but Others Are Excluded

Sometimes, bargains maintain delivery for some groups and exclude others. These bargains depend on the interests, incentives, and ideology of armed elites and allied insurgents and the extent to which service providers are willing to compromise certain goals to ensure minimum service delivery. The example of girls' education in Afghanistan is a case in point. The Taliban tolerated schools in some areas as long as they did not emphasize education for girls. Providers were left in a quandary: should they adapt to the demands of the local Taliban or go against them and risk the entire service being targeted or shut down? This explains why in Wardak, even though education for girls is a priority for EQUIP, progress has been minimal, marked by a decline in attendance rates for girls in primary schools over the course of the project.

4. Small-Scale Impacts, but Difficult to Scale Up

Bargains made at the local or micro level can prove difficult to scale up. Some interventions are focused on small-scale, localized delivery, which enables them to forge bargains with local-level elites and allows them to circumvent higher-level predatory or clientelistic elites. Scaling up, however, is challenging because elite interests and incentives operating at higher levels of the polity may be quite different (see discussion of BESP in Balochistan in chapter 6).

In short, different forms of bargaining can make or break service delivery in violence-affected contexts. These various modes of bargaining help explain how progress is made against the odds, and why the lack of a bargain can make life very difficult for service providers. But bargains bring trade-offs, and the same agreement can contain both progressive and regressive elements. The extent to which a bargain is regressive or suboptimal depends on the nature of the political settlement and the motivations and ideas of local insurgents and elites. Finally, the research suggests that different modes of delivery can shape the potential for more progressive forms of bargaining, as the next chapter explores.

6. Modes of Delivery Matter

This chapter explores the final piece of our framework: how progress in service delivery is shaped by the extent to which a strategy or mode of delivery adapts to local forms of politics, violence, and bargaining. While political settlements, forms of violence, and the nature of bargains can be important drivers of—or barriers to—progress, service delivery strategies and implementation modalities also seem to matter.

6.1. Mitigating the Effects of Sectoral Patronage

Some approaches—by luck or by design—seemed to reduce the impact of sectoral politics that constrain social service delivery (SSD). These modes of delivery manage to lessen the influence of existing, clientelistic political coalitions.

Establish Semiautonomous Institutional Delivery Channels

An important aspect of the Balochistan Education Support Project (BESP) was the establishment of a semiautonomous institution to manage and finance education delivery. The Balochistan Education Foundation (BEF) was the main executing body of the BESP

with a mandate to support public-private and community partnerships in education (World Bank 2006).³⁵ Evidence suggests that the BEF contributed to progress under the BESP in part by bypassing the provincial-level, clientelistic, incumbent education settlement that was centered around the Department of Education. At least two factors appear to have enabled this. First, because it was a semiautonomous agency overseen by a board of governors and directors, its accountability structures and bureaucratic procedures were somewhat separate from other education activities under the department. Second, its mandate to work with nonstate and private sector actors meant that it was more able to work through new coalitions and actors, such as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other agencies with direct links to local elites, which brought a broader network of elites into the operation.

However, this model was contested and came with trade-offs. Points of disagreement included the following:

- There was a rivalry between the BEF and the Department of Education, and the latter had concerns about setting up a “dual” (or parallel) public sector in rural education. Some department officials suggested

that the BEF was establishing a parallel and overlapping implementation channel, while others suggested that the reason the BEF was being criticized was that it was outperforming the department, and in so doing was seen as a threat. One official notes:

“[W]e felt, on basis of various interactions, that the government felt threatened by the role of Balochistan Education Foundation (BEF). Their feeling was as if BEF was intending to act as a parallel department to the education department of the Government of Balochistan.” (KII–01)³⁶

- Some claimed that the BEF and nonstate implementers were themselves prone to clientelistic capture by the new elites who had been incorporated into the sector.³⁷ These claims are not explored or corroborated by this research.
- Some thought the nonstate model under the BEF could undermine trust-building efforts. The World Bank’s implementation, completion, and results report for the Promoting Girls Education in Balochistan (PGEB) project (2012–15), a follow-up to the BESP, explains that “implementation by the government as opposed to NGOs or other parties greatly contributes to the

sustainability of operations and building trust among citizens” (World Bank 2015b).

In fact, under the Balochistan follow-up project, implementation shifted from a semiautonomous body to a government-led operation. An important question is if such changes were due to inefficiencies or to a backlash from incumbent political coalitions seeking to regain sectoral control.

Working Small and Local

Another aspect of the BESP that was seen as politically astute was how it worked through local-level elites. Evidence from interviewees at various levels of the polity suggests that the BESP model was relatively successful not only because it was community based but also because it was able to work directly with the local-level elite, who were motivated to support education in their communities and reduce capture by provincial-level elites, who were more linked to the mainstream education settlement. This strategy also aligned with the BEF model of encouraging greater local involvement. But it came with trade-offs (see box 6.1).

Box 6.1. Engaging local elites in the Balochistan Education Support Project: Challenges to scaling up

A politically savvy approach

One reason that the Balochistan Education Support Project (BESP) made progress was that it was able to work through local-level elites, which was arguably politically savvy in a number of ways, as outlined below.

- **Direct links to local elite.** The project was able to work directly with local elites who had greater incentives and interest in furthering education than higher-level elites (see chapter 3). For example, by only permitting parents whose children were enrolled in BESP schools to be members of the parent education committees, the project design reduced the direct influence of higher-level elites who would typically send their own children to private schools.
- **Reduced scope for interference.** By working more at the local level, with smaller contracts and protected by the Balochistan Education Foundation model, there was less scope and interests for elites (especially ones linked with the Department of Education) that dominated the sectoral political settlement to interfere with or capture the project.
- **Space for local bargains.** Working at the local level also provided space for bargains between local elites and armed elites and allied insurgents (see chapter 5).
- **Demonstration effect.** Although at a small scale, interviewees suggest that the local-level approach created an important political demonstration effect by showing how projects can work in a context of violence. It further contributed to local demand and education which could eventually create new coalitions of elites and pressure higher-level elites to be more responsive.

(continued)

Box 6.1. Continued

Trade-offs

There are, however, political and developmental trade-offs that accompany this model, as summarized below.

- **Prospects for scaling up.** Evidence suggests that attempts at scaling up would be challenging because doing so would likely challenge the incumbent sectoral political settlement (World Bank 2006).^a Issues include:
 - The Ministry of Education is already thought to be overstaffed, with more than 60,000 school teachers on the government payroll. Many of these teachers are ostensibly recruited on a political basis, and teacher absenteeism is high at 15 percent—among the highest rates in Pakistan. Integrating BESP teachers could put additional pressure on the payroll.
 - The new provincial coalition government is planning to reform its teacher recruitment method by outsourcing it to the National Testing Service, an independent recruiting and testing agency. Because BESP teachers were recruited by traditional methods, the government may be reluctant to regularize them.
 - The political parties in the new government may have little political capital to gain by supporting the regularized recruitment of the nearly 800 BESP teachers—although some argue that they can be considered a potential “800 voters.” A donor technical specialist, commenting on the complexities of the teacher recruitment agenda, explains:

“As the nearly 800 BESP teachers existed outside the teacher union, many political economy aspects connected to the role of regularized teachers in the system did not apply to them. This included for instance the bargaining power of regular teachers through their role in the election and census.” (KII–11)
- **Limited impact on sectoral transformation.** BESP has remained a small part of the total education provision in the province, constituting only 1.7 percent of the government’s education expenditures from 2006 to 2014.
- **Quality challenges.** Efforts to maximize coverage of marginalized communities has come at the expense of teacher salaries, teacher quality, and potentially, education quality. Evidence gleaned from interviews suggests that low teacher salaries makes recruiting and retaining qualified teachers challenging.

a. The project was actually intended as a pilot intervention, to be expanded if successful (World Bank 2006: 3).

6.2. Anticipating and Mitigating Insurgent Resistance

Various strategies emerge from the research as more or less effective in mitigating resistance and violence from armed groups. The research revealed the following types: (1) buying off armed elites and allied insurgents and opposing elites; (2) using trusted service providers; (3) embedding conflict resolution mechanisms; and (4) actively reaching out to armed elites and allied insurgents.

Buying Off Insurgents and Opposing Elites

As described in chapter 5, rent-sharing arrangements with insurgents are critical to maintaining service delivery in the face of violent conflict. By contrast, the case of polio eradication efforts in Pakistan suggests that a singular focus on polio eradication and the lack of service bundling undermined efforts to buy off local insurgents and elites and to forge local bargains (see box 6.2). The case demonstrates that it is extremely risky to emphasize one service without tailoring it to the incentives of the local elites and insurgents.



Students are doing practice of their lessons in the laboratory of Mashriqi high school.

IMAL HASHEMI/TAIMANI FILMS/WORLD BANK

Box 6.2. Lack of bundling undermined elite bargains on polio eradication in Pakistan

Limited incentives

Evidence from interviews suggests that a singular focus and a lack of service bundling undermined the Polio Eradication Project's ability to buy off local insurgents and elites, incentivize local cooperation, and forge local bargains. Armed elites and allied insurgents were more interested in other potential services, such as infrastructure and electricity, as well as other forms of bargaining, such as reducing drone attacks. Local elites and their constituents considered polio eradication a low priority, especially when compared with other health and nonhealth services. As a result, in many cases, local elites had limited incentives to protect or promote polio eradication delivery. One donor notes:

“Because there have been significant gains in polio reduction throughout the rest of the country, because there are very few polio cases in a population of 180 million, and because 140,000 children die annually in Pakistan from other causes, it is not hard to see why polio is down the list of priorities.” (R-04-KII-PSH)

Potential for bundling

Clear political economy incentives for allowing social service delivery and bargaining around polio eradication delivery were lacking. Several interviewees suggest that this problem could be solved through bundling. They argue that local elites and households would be more responsive to polio vaccination efforts if they were offered as part of a wider package of health—and other—services. Polio program technical staff describe it like this:

“Free medical camps should be used as mediums to encourage polio vaccination rather than relying on door to door visits that ferment resistance and suspicion of [the] polio-specific eradication program ... Provision of ‘complete health packages’ (including polio immunization) and facilities can bolster trust of local people. Such activities, moreover, are supported by political, religious and local elites.” (R11-KII-PSH)

This again demonstrates how seemingly technical changes in service delivery can have notable implications to the broader acceptance of a particular intervention.

Challenges to bundling

There are also challenges to putting bundling into practice. One donor official notes that it may be costly to provide other services in tandem with the Polio Eradication Project (R05-KII-PSH), but program designers should nonetheless weigh the costs against the risk of polio eradication efforts being rejected or targeted by violence. In addition, bundling would require coordination within the health ministry and across other ministries, and this would likely be more difficult in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas than in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, because administrative structures are much weaker there (see chapter 3).



Students study in the library at the Female Experimental High School in Herat, Afghanistan.

GRAHAM CROUCH/WORLD BANK

Using Trusted Service Providers

Multiple cases demonstrate that certain service providers were more or less trusted by armed elites and allied insurgents and therefore more or less likely to be allowed to continue delivering services. Examples include the extremely negative consequences of providers being associated with the state in the Polio Eradication Project; the need to use local subcontractors for road projects in Nepal; the

reliance on local shuras (consultative councils) in Afghanistan; or the use of local implementing partners for BESP (see chapters 4 and 5). Another example relates to the role of local female volunteers in the provision of health services in Nepal. Health services, particularly preventative services, were sustained and even expanded during the violent conflict partly because the local female volunteers, on whom the service delivery depended, earned the trust of the Maoists (box 6.3).

Box 6.3. Female volunteers deliver health services in violent contexts in Nepal

Background

The use of female community health volunteers (FCHV) in Nepal can be seen as an approach that is sensitive to context-specific politics and violence. It's particularly politically savvy because it bypasses some of the entrenched human resource patronage in the health sector, which revolves around close linkages between political parties, elements of the Ministry of Health, and trade unions (see chapter 3). The strategy was also sensitive to the violent context.

Nepal's Female Community Health Volunteer Program, a partnership between Nepal's Ministry of Health and Population and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), began in 1988 and by 1995 covered all 75 districts.^a The program's goals were to "improve community participation and outreach of health promotion through local women working voluntarily" (Bhandari, Gordon, and Shakya 2011). By 2012 there were around 52,000 female volunteers in Nepal serving as the primary contact between health facilities and communities.^b From providing door-to-door services disseminating health information to supplying necessary medications and advice to pregnant women and new mothers, FCHVs guide people to the health facilities and educate them on the services available.

Impact of FCHVs

One health worker described the volunteers as the "medical officers" of their communities, claiming that without them health information would not have been distributed and the services would not have been as effective (H8–KII–SRH). A World Bank assessment notes that:

"Continuation, improvement and strengthening of the FCHV program therefore appear as a key strategic priority for HSS [Health Sector Strategy]. Regarding the importance of first line health workers in rural and remote areas a strengthened FCHV program will act as a powerful booster for the social impact of HSS not least according to gender, indigenous peoples and Dalit communities." (World Bank 2004)

And in a 2004 statement, the minister of health, acknowledges that the then over 49,000 FCHVs served as the main link between the village and the country's health infrastructure (Nepal Ministry of Health 2004).

Trusted providers

Even at the peak of the conflict, the volunteers managed to sustain service delivery, largely because they were non-governmental workers and locally based and recruited and so therefore trusted by the Maoist leadership as well as by the local communities. FCHVs tend to remain in their roles for a long time—the program has a very low turnover rate, enabling them to build longer-term relationships and bonds of trust with insurgents, local elites, and community members.^c A health worker in Rolpa emphasizes the key role the volunteers play in violence-affected and remote areas:

(continued)

Box 6.3. Continued

“FCHVs were not harassed by the state nor by the Maoists, and so they were able to carry out their work. Would you think that without the FCHVs family planning measures in their wards and village development committees would have been successful? Would the locals consume medications if there had been no FCHVs? It’s easy to make policies but the crux is its implementation. Even we have not been able to go and raise awareness in the nooks and crannies of each and every VDC. I have worked here for 20 years but I have been able to go to only five of the 22 VDCs under my charge. Do you think that by going to five VDCs there would be changes at the local level in terms of health awareness? The local Maoists have also benefitted from the activities of the FCHVs. If they had a headache, they were able to get paracetamol [acetaminophen] from the FCHVs.” (H25–KII–ROL)

Not a panacea

FCHVs were not, however, a cure-all for health delivery. They did help drive progress in basic health care, but they were unable to deliver more complex, staff-intensive, curative health care that requires a more skilled workforce, which for political economy reasons cannot be easily deployed in rural areas (see chapter 3). According to one estimate, there is only one doctor available for every 150,000 people in rural areas, compared with the urban area of Kathmandu where the ratio is one doctor for 850 people. The government relied on lower-skilled staff to deliver preventative health services, enabling it to remain on track in meeting its Millennium Development Goals. For example, apart from occasional and always brief stints by medical doctors, one primary health-care center in Rolpa had effectively been run by an auxiliary health worker for 20 years.^d

a. At least one woman serves as a volunteer per ward (the smallest subdivision of local governance). An estimated 40,000 FCHVs were engaged by mid-1997 (Fielder 2000), and even during the most intense fighting period (2001–06), their numbers grew by 14 percent.

b. Facing a severe shortage of health workers, the World Health Organization promoted the idea of “task-shifting,” that is the “review and subsequent delegation of tasks to the “lowest” category that can perform them successfully” (Lehmann and Sanders 2007: 1). This idea has received renewed interest among community health worker programs. FCHVs are chosen by local mothers’ groups from the community to support activities conducted by local health facilities. Following an 18-day basic training, they can provide an array of services, including distributing vitamin A capsules and deworming tablets to children under five years old, providing health education in terms of family planning, distributing condoms and birth control pills, providing community-based treatment of pneumonia, treating diarrhea, referring out sick newborn babies, providing antenatal counseling to pregnant women, and distributing medication to mothers for improved neonatal cord stump care and to pregnant women to prevent postpartum hemorrhages. Despite these varied responsibilities and the fact that the volunteers do not get paid, the program has a low attrition rate of less than 4 percent per year.

c. A focus group discussion participant explains:

“During the construction of the Sub-Health Post at Tarataal in Bardiya district, the Maoists had been obstructing the work asking about the source of the funds. Finally, they allowed the construction to proceed provided that the monitoring was done by no one else but an FCHV. Hence, each of the 21 FCHVs active at the time took turns to oversee and monitor the construction work every day, and they were even on duty during important holidays. It was this kind of trust that allowed FCHVs to move around unhindered during the time of the conflict.” (H16–KII–BAR)

Even during the Madhesi uprising in 2008 and the subsequent armed activity in the Tarai, during which it became quite perilous for people from the hill region to work there, the fact that the FCHVs were themselves Madhesis allowed them to operate freely (H6–KII–SRH). “There was a time when health officials would come in their vehicles to provide family planning services but the locals would not trust them. But now as FCHVs have been recruited from the local level the people trust us” (H4–FGD–SRH). As members of the community, they could convince others of the benefits of getting vaccinated, as an example (H6–FGD–BAR).

d. See “Nepal at a Glance” at <http://www.paahs.edu.np/about/about-nepal>.

Embedding Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

Approaches that put a major emphasis on conflict resolution as an in-built function of service delivery also seem to offer promise. One aspect of BESP was to recruit and train an army of local facilitators who were hired by implementing partners—local community members who would work directly with the community and build trust during project implementation. The implementing partners and their facilitators were selected partly based on their experience with community mobilization and engagement. The local facilitators were widely considered to be the drivers of progress due to their ability to resolve local conflicts and therefore forge bargains. Aspects contributing to their effectiveness include the following:

- Most came from the community—usually from the same district, which allowed them to travel fairly easily, even during times of conflict, and help mediate and resolve disputes between insurgents, elites, and constituents.
- Because of their local connections, they were also largely trusted by the local population, enabling them to foster locally based collective action and resolve conflicts—violent or not. Training enhanced their ability to negotiate bargains with mechanisms such as community meetings to discuss disputes and enable problem solving; bringing disparate groups

together; and using traditional customs, language, and culture to resolve issues.

Actively Reaching Out to Insurgents

The research suggests that proactive and savvy forms of communication and engagement with armed elites and allied insurgents can help reduce their interference with SSD. Chapter 5 outlines how engaging in dialogue and negotiations can be a form of bargaining. An interesting example of what did not work well in this regard is the Polio Eradication Project in Pakistan. Interviewees point to a number of failings. One senior donor official who is heavily involved in the health sector in Pakistan notes that no serious attempts were made to target the Pakistan Taliban in a communication campaign to counter their resistance to polio vaccinations. The government policy of not communicating with armed elites and allied insurgents and the lack of local communication channels to negotiate with them reduced the prospects for achieving their cooperation. Attempts to engage the military to potentially reduce their resistance were also limited (R04–KII–PSH).

In addition, the unsophisticated forms of communication, which were not sensitive to the ideology or incentives of violent actors, backfired. As one informant explains: “Door to door campaigns, high publicity of polio campaigns, advance notice of health workers’ visits and field campaigns, predictability of movement of teams, agency surgeons and stakeholders make them susceptible to

attacks” (R11–KII–PSH). Another makes the point more forcefully: “A life threatening situation is invoked in the door to door campaigns. When I send my workers on a door to door campaign in Bara, it’s like sending them towards their death” (R11–KII–PSH).

There are no easy solutions when an insurgency is aggressively targeting a service, but field experience suggests that a more sophisticated and violence-sensitive approach could have been adopted.³⁸

6.3. Increasing Local Bargaining Space

Some of the interventions in this study relied on decentralized and participatory modes of delivery. The overall evidence across the three countries demonstrates that these approaches created some space for local deliberation and problem solving, and in turn, local-level bargains and local ownership facilitated service delivery. Yet the on-the-ground unfolding of these approaches rarely resembled good governance notions of community-based delivery. Elites routinely jostled for power; the local structures were politicized; a share of resources was skimmed; and the bargains could work against, or for, SSD (World Bank and Akram 2016; World Bank and AREU 2016; World Bank and SSB 2016). Examples of this have been discussed in previous chapters and a few are briefly outlined below.

In Nepal, local user committees were established for road service delivery. They included the village road coordination committees and local road user committees. As illustrated in chapters 3 and 5, these local committees became the focal points for political party bargaining. User committee members were chosen on the basis of their political affiliation, but the three main positions of chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary were usually divvied among the country’s three major parties—the Nepali Congress, the Unified Marxist Leninist Party, and the United Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). The positions depended on the relative strength and the influence of the parties in the area. This strategy contributed to local bargains in three ways:

1. It provided local focal points and local space for bargaining with the Maoists and even with the organized groups in the Tarai during the postwar period.
2. It enabled political parties to “cut up the pie” and follow their imperatives of local patronage, while still promoting a degree of progress in road construction.
- 3.. While local jostling for political representation was dominated by political parties, it still increased the representation of previously excluded groups and increased the local stake in the way the roads were managed.

Similarly, under BESP in Pakistan, the localized and participatory nature of delivery helped enable some services to be sustained even during violent conflict. This model increased the space for local elites, local constituents, and at times local armed elites and allied insurgents to negotiate and modify services in ways that were locally acceptable. Moreover, this model fostered local ownership by encouraging local participation and by incentivizing local communities and elites to have a stake in implementation: BESP criteria required that a community request the program for a local school and demonstrate a commitment toward managing the school prior to any physical construction occurring (KII-11).³⁹ One informant notes:

“Despite the poor law and order situation in Balochistan, BESP schools would remain functional because of the beauty of the model on which this project was based. Under this model, the community was involved and they were given the ownership of the schools. An example of how it worked is in the case of this school located in Kahaan, District Kohlu. Due to armed conflict, it is very hard for outsiders to enter the area, but our school is

completely functional and very successful.” (KII-01, 3–4)

Likewise, mechanisms to decentralize delivery and increase local autonomy were found to enable local service providers to arrive at flexible local arrangements with the Maoists during the conflict. And in Afghanistan, local *shuras* or consultative councils often served as vehicles for mediating local conflicts and bringing together conflicting stakeholders to settle on bargains.

6.4. Supporting Progress Outside the Sector

Certain cases in this study show how investments and reforms outside of a sector contributed to progress within it. The investments and reforms impacted the demand and access to services, forms of political organization, and even forms of violence (see box 6.4). Accounting for the externalities that affect SSD in violence-affected contexts could have important implications for how projects are designed, implemented, and evaluated, a point returned to in chapter 8.

Box 6.4. The impact of socioeconomic factors outside a sector

Rising wealth contributed to improved social service delivery (SSD) in Balkh, Afghanistan. Political stability, developmental leadership, and strong linkages with Kabul contributed to significant economic investment and growth in Balkh, which in turn impacted SSD. The net effect was faster development in and around Mazar-i-Sharif, one of the largest commercial centers of Afghanistan. As a result, its poverty rate more than halved from 2007 to 2012 (from 60 to 22 percent). In Wardak, poverty rates dropped by only one-quarter (54 to 40 percent); and in Badghis, the poverty rate barely improved (40 to 39 percent).^a Much of the improvements in SSD outcomes in Balkh Province is due the progress made in and around Mazar-i-Sharif, the provincial capital. Neither Badghis nor Wardak had a comparable urban population nor could they match Balkh in terms of its overall wealth. Further, several wealthy businessmen connected to Balkh's strongman, General Atta Mohammed Noor, invested in the building of schools and clinics in the province.

Increased income levels and expanded road networks contributed to health delivery in Nepal. Data suggest that factors outside of the health sector contributed to progress in health outcomes over the past two decades, including rising average per capita income levels (there was a 20 percent increase in the 1980s, a 21 percent increase in the 1990s, and a 16 percent increase in the 2000s); a decline in one-dollar-a-day poverty from 68 percent of the population in 1996 to just 25 percent in 2011; increases in household incomes owing to a rise in remittances to Nepal; and improvements in education and advances in empowerment for women. This progress contributed to improvements in health knowledge, access, and outcomes. Furthermore, 33 percent expansion of the road network between 1999 and 2008 improved access of people in remote villages to medical help.

Differences in land rights and distribution as well as income equality contributed to varying SSD dynamics and outcomes in the Tarai versus the hill region of Nepal. There is evidence that the Tarai performed worse than the hill region in terms of SSD, which can be traced back to differences in land and income distribution. The hill and mountain regions, which generally have a lower per capita income than the Tarai, distribute land and income in a more egalitarian way. While a small degree of landlessness still exists in the hill region, 33 percent of eastern and central Tarai households are landless compared with 13 percent in western Tarai. Tarai dalits form a major part of these landless groups, who are the subject of quasi-feudal relations with landlords, especially in the eastern Tarai. These differences have had varied effects on local politics and violence, which in turn impact SSD (see chapters 3 and 4).

a. See Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Ministry of Economy, and World Bank (2015).

Part III. Implications for Policy and Operations



Schoolgirls walk past a damaged mini-bus after it was hit by a bomb blast in the Bagrami district of Kabul, Afghanistan, April 11, 2016. MOHAMMAD ISMAIL/REUTERS

7. Policy Takeaways: A Radical Rethinking

This chapter attempts to extract the five overarching and overlapping policy implications of the above findings. As box 7.1 outlines, the implications are preliminary, but nevertheless potentially significant. Scant research has been conducted to date that systematically takes into account and addresses the issues identified in this study.⁴⁰

Box 7.1. Clarifying expectations: What this study tells policy makers and practitioners

Further research is needed. The policy implications are nuanced and powerful, but also partial for three reasons:

1. The research findings need to be further tested and replicated in other contexts;
2. Given the high level of contextual variation in violence-affected settings, it is not possible to provide an off-the-shelf road map for action; and
3. The extent to which development actors adopt (or interpret) the study implications will depend on a given organization's objectives, available instruments, and appetite for risk, among other factors.

The focus is on the “how to” of delivering services.. The implications focus on the delivery of services and progress toward achieving service delivery objectives over the short-to-medium term in violence-affected contexts. Issues such as the relationship between social service delivery (SSD) and drivers of violence or whether external actors should be supporting SSD in such contexts are important, but not the subject of this research.

The report touches on sensitive issues.. The findings highlight the prevalence of corruption, rent-sharing, and collaboration with armed elites in the “real world” of SSD—and the following policy implications do not endorse, but do not also side-step, these thorny issues. Recognizing the role of such unpalatable elements in the cases is a reflection of what the field evidence revealed, but this does not mean that the authors of this report condone these practices. The study does, however, recognize that these issues require systematic and realistic treatment in policy making and program design.

7.1. Adapt to a New Set of Contextual Factors

Most development practitioners recognize that “context matters,” but this rather broad adage provides limited practical or granular guidance. Moreover, progress has been limited in terms of understanding how context matters to driving and constraining service delivery progress in violence-affected settings.

Programs Must Better Adapt to Context

Contextual factors that remain underexplored, including forms of political settlement, forms of violence, processes of elite bargaining, and

modes of delivery, play important roles in making or breaking service delivery in violence-affected contexts. Development actors need to take these aspects much more seriously. Chapter 8 explores how these factors shape opportunities for and constraints to social service delivery (SSD) programs.

Adaptation to Subnational Contextual Variation Is an Absolute Must

Subnational contextual variation is particularly decisive. It helps explain major differences in SSD implementation and outcomes in the same violence-affected country. Such adaptation is not straightforward, however (see chapter 8).



Female health care workers in rural Nepal. AISHA FAQUIR/WORLD BANK

7.2. Recognize that Some Forms of Violence Are Less Bad than Others for Service Delivery

Mainstream approaches tend to view violence as simply bad for service delivery. But the research shows that different forms of and motivations for violence can be more or less amenable to SSD.

National Notions of Violence Are Not Always Helpful

When classifying contexts as fragile or violence-affected, policy makers too often focus on the national level. As our and other research demonstrates, such a focus risks glossing over important subnational variations in violence. Policy makers must move beyond national definitions of fragility to focus more on subnational specifics.

Unpack “Violence” for the True Scope for Progress to Be Revealed

The various dimensions of violence—organization, ideology, and mobility—need to be unpacked to see how they offer diverse opportunities for and constraints to service delivery. Of course, violence harms SSD, but opportunities for progress vary within and between violence-affected contexts to a much greater extent than previously thought. Put differently, we need to better understand

whether nonstate armed actors have an interest in more effective service delivery. If they do, policy makers should try to understand how this interest can be tapped; if they do not, policy makers may need to think about how such actors might develop such an interest. Chapter 8 offers some preliminary guidance.

7.3. Address the Operational Ways through Which Elites Matter

Clearly, politics and elites influence development progress. Yet, in many ways, this assertion has frustrated service delivery practitioners. It tends to yield a long list of broad recommendations, rarely specific to the mechanics of front-line service delivery. Moreover, elites are too often framed in a negative light, as actors who capture and subvert SSD and whose role should thus be minimized or mitigated.

The Technical Is Political

The report reinforces the view that technical aspects tell only part of the service delivery story. Political economy factors repeatedly undercut attempts to foster best practices and influence outcomes.⁴¹ Even technical aspects such as the selection of the mode of delivery have profound political implications.

The Mechanics of Elite Bargaining Must Be Put Front and Center

The lens of elite bargaining provides a more granular—and thus operationally relevant—understanding of how politics matter to SSD in violence-affected contexts, including at the front line of delivery. Specifically, three new policy insights emerge:

1. Elites, armed and unarmed, are often (if not always) intimately involved in shaping SSD in such fluid, informal, and contested contexts.
2. Elite bargains are critical to explaining SSD progress—or the lack of it—and such bargains can take different concrete forms, which have different implications for SSD programming.
3. The extent to which elites facilitate or undermine a service in a given context depends on the political settlement, especially at the sectoral and subnational levels; the incentives and ideology of the elites; and the extent to which the mode of delivery creates some space for bargains that support service delivery.

7.4. Rethink the Function of Service Delivery: Rents Matter

Mainstream approaches tend to view service delivery as being largely politically neutral. They also make significant efforts to ensure this “neutrality” is maintained and safeguarded throughout project implementation. But this research raises questions about the validity of this line of thinking.

Rents Can Be Generated by Service Delivery

On the difficult issue of rents and SSD, the findings give rise to three interrelated policy insights:

1. **SSD is not politically neutral.** SSD can generate important rents in violence-affected contexts, and such rents can strengthen certain elites, armed or unarmed, which can in turn impact the balance of power and the political order.
2. **SSD can sustain, spark, or mitigate violence.** Rents created or constrained by an SSD program can impact the dynamics of violence because in such settings violence is often controlled by (fragile) rent-sharing agreements.

3. Rent-sharing may sometimes be a necessary evil. Rent-seeking and rent appropriation of SSD resources by armed elites can, in some cases, be the “cost of doing business” in terms of ensuring peaceful project implementation. In some cases, rent-sharing agreements may satisfy key elite gatekeepers and help sustain pro-SSD coalitions. In other cases, some rent-sharing agreements may totally undermine service provision. The extent to which partial rent appropriation by armed elites is a cost worth absorbing is as much a political as a technical judgement—more an art than a science.

Modes of Delivery Affect Rent Access and Elite Bargaining

Sectors and modes of delivery matter by offering different opportunities regarding if and how rents are accessed and bargained over by elites and their constituents.⁴² In fact, the rents generated by SSD can be most clearly identified through a sector-by-sector analysis of political settlements and elite bargains. These aspects should be considered when working in specific sectors, and when selecting modes of delivery (see chapter 8).

7.5. Be Realistic about Good Governance

Overall, the findings—in line with the 2017 World Development Report—raise important questions about the good governance paradigm, which has dominated mainstream governance-for-development discourse over the past two decades. The paradigm promotes formal rules, liberal democratic norms of transparency and accountability, technocratic fixes, and institutional models derived from best practices often borrowed from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member and upper-middle-income countries.

Governance Matters, but Not Necessarily as Expected

The findings do *not* suggest that governance does not matter or that “bad” governance should be promoted. It is just that many of the governance characteristics in our cases did not always resemble the “good governance” paradigm (see table 7.1). Moreover, the findings suggest that there are a wider range of options for progress in the midst of far-from-perfect forms of governance than the good governance paradigm assumes. Alternative paradigms, such as “good enough governance” or “neo-patrimonial developmentalism” can help flesh this out.⁴³ However, such paradigms have yet to be systematically

adopted and operationalized in mainstream practice. Furthermore, this aspect of our argument is not new: there is now a burgeoning body of evidence on these points.⁴⁴ Yet, the good governance approach remains widely dominant.⁴⁵

Some Cases of Progress May Not Resemble Good Governance

Related to the last point, there is a need to rethink how progress happens. Informal relationships, rent-sharing, far-from-perfect transparency or accountability, and deep politicization of service delivery—through political parties or “unsavory” powerful actors—can underpin change and progress in SSD. In fact, the categories of “communities,” “civil society,” and “citizens” were less apparent in explaining what happens compared with “elites,” “warlords,” and “political society.”

This suggests that progress in SSD is not just about, or mainly about, preventing elite capture, but about how and why local elites can actively become part of pro-SSD coalitions, even though some rent appropriation and corruption may occur. While this may seem difficult for some to acknowledge (especially donors with public constituencies and media suspicious of the benefits of overseas development assistance in general), there is a growing recognition that this type of scenario is not uncommon, especially in less developed countries (World Bank 2017).

Narrow the Disconnect between Donor Discourse and Ground Reality

The gap between donor discourse and the on-the-ground reality needs to narrow. The analysis of the cases in this report reveal a disconnect between the way development actors express what is driving change and what is actually unfolding on the ground. Indeed, many of the factors that the research found decisive to project outcomes were hardly ever systematically considered in the projects examined.⁴⁶ In other words, our dominant mind-sets may be distracting us from what really matters.

Toward a New Paradigm for the Governance of Service Delivery

“History ... shows that very significant gains in economic transformation and human well-being can be achieved within highly dysfunctional systems. Reform initiatives should surely aim to repeat those gains by whatever means are to hand” (Booth 2015b).

Taken as a whole, these findings prompt a more nuanced view of the forms of governance and politics that shape SSD progress. Table 7.1 offers a stylized summary of where our research diverges from conventional good governance discourse.

Table 7.1. Beyond good governance: Service delivery in violence-affected contexts

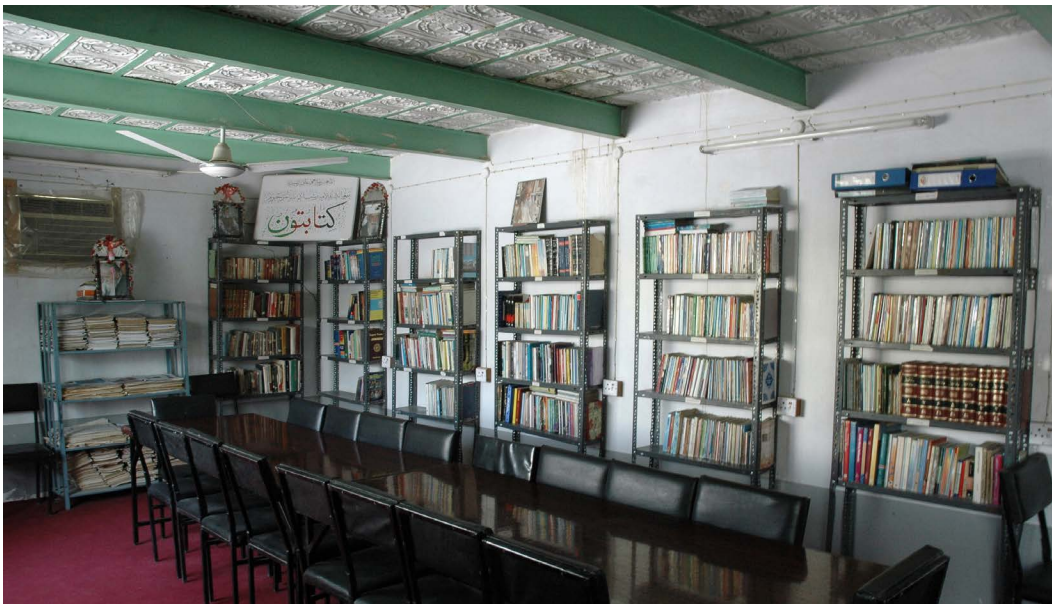
	Good governance paradigm	Our research
Rent-sharing	Corruption, rent-sharing, and patronage are bad for social service delivery (SSD). These aberrations need to be eradicated.	Scope for progress under “patrimonial” governance is larger than often perceived. SSD progress can take place in a context of, and even be facilitated by, rent-sharing and patronage-based relationships. Rather than aberrations, these arrangements are the norm and have wide social and political legitimacy. Rent-sharing and patronage are suboptimal, and measures can be taken to eradicate them if doing so does not trigger violence or major disequilibrium. But it is probably not feasible to ring-fence delivery from these influences all the time.
Technicality and neutrality	SSD can be politically neutral. SSD programs can be approached with a purely technical mind-set.	SSD in violent contexts can often be a vehicle for rent-seeking. A feedback loop in which SSD programs influence political dynamics is likely. Therefore, in addition to thinking technically, there is a need to think politically.
Role of elites	Elites (where recognized) are largely seen as capturing or subverting good programs and undermining the poor. Elite incentives, interests, and bargaining dynamics are rarely unpacked. Bargaining with elites is rarely encouraged.	Elites can play a positive or negative role. Elite capture can subvert a program, but it can also enable progress. Elite incentives and interests must be fully understood, and bargaining must be taken more seriously in SSD design and implementation.
Violence	Violence is harmful to service delivery.	Different forms of violence are more or less harmful. This must be recognized and SSD tailored accordingly.
Formal and informal institutions	Formal institutions are crucial. They need to be put in place and be formalized to the greatest extent possible. The form of such institutions, usually based on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) models, are often the focal point. Informal institutions are problems to be bypassed or ignored.	Informal institutions can often prove decisive. Formal institutions are unlikely to function in the absence of the widespread social and political legitimacy that is often tied to “informal” practices. These informal practices can be seen as part of the solution, not as just a problem; they should be better understood and built on. Approaches that actively combine formal and informal institutions, such as practical hybrids or institutional bricolage, may be critical. ⁴⁷ Institutional function is what matters.
Citizens, communities, and civil society	Communities, civil society, and citizens tend to be framed as homogenous forces for good.	These actors can and do matter, but they require more nuanced treatment. They are not homogenous; they comprise contesting and undemocratic elites and power relations between different groups with disparate incentives toward or tolerance for broad-based SSD.
Context	Best practices can be more easily transferred across contexts. Win-win scenarios are common.	“Good enough” or “best fit” approaches, with substantial contextual adaption, are more likely to work. Trade-offs are more common than win-wins.
Important actors	Prominence is given to the “usual suspects,” such as the state, service users/citizens, and service providers.	Systematic attention is also given to “unsavory” actors, such as insurgents, the military, landlords, and political parties.
How change happens	Citizens, armed with information, can hold service providers and the state accountable; top-down state incentives can also drive change.	Citizen pressures and top-down state pressures matter, but change is also driven by dynamics between pro- and anti-SSD networks and coalitions that include elites from the state, economy, and society.

8. Practical Directions and Recommendations

The policy implications presented in chapter 7 contain nuanced, potentially difficult, operational implications. This chapter identifies some operational starting points that address the implications of this research and relates key points to the global evidence base to make the implications more widely generalizable. There are no simple solutions, but the following discussion suggests that we can take steps to develop a more realistic and grounded treatment of political and violence dynamics in social service delivery (SSD) programming, in turn enabling us to take more calculated risks. Moreover, parts of the discussion may raise as many questions as they answer (see box 7.1), but this does not make the issues any less worthy of significant thought and attention.

Six mutually reinforcing recommendations emerge from the research (see figure 8.1):

1. Improve diagnostics for measuring the actual scope of progress;
2. Think and work politically;
3. Tailor approach to specific forms of violence;
4. Take bargaining seriously;
5. Revise internal donor rules and incentives; and
6. Explore new frontiers of delivery and research.



Zahir Shahe high school library. IMAL HASHEMI/TAIMANI FILMS/WORLD BANK

Figure 8.1. A new framework for strengthening service delivery in violence-affected contexts



8.1. Improve Diagnostics for Measuring the Actual Scope of Progress

In order to improve context-specific diagnostics to inform program design, we propose integrating a new diagnostic toolkit. This has three interrelated modules (box 8.1 outlines the scope of the proposed toolkit and appendix B has guiding questions for each module). The first step is to identify the sectoral problems to diagnose. This will involve bringing together management, project staff,

and relevant local stakeholders to discuss focal sector(s), the scope of the diagnostic, and the sectoral problem(s) that need further analysis.⁴⁸ Next, answers could be sought to the questions in each module.

Module 1: Understand relevant political settlements, who the relevant elites are, and how they matter

Identifying the elites and power brokers who are relevant to the sector and locality as well as their ideologies and incentives is crucial. If feasible, identifying power brokers that are

Box 8.1. What the proposed diagnostic toolkit can and cannot do

The proposed diagnostic seeks to complement, not replace, existing diagnostics.

The suggested questions can be adapted and included in existing analytical tools that support the strategic planning of development actors. This diagnostic offers tools in the form of modules and questions for actors specifically concerned with supporting social service delivery in contexts affected by active violence.

The diagnostic does not need to be extensive but does require careful application.

Its scope can be tailored to available resources and urgency. Information can be gathered through one-hour conversations with experts; one-day workshops and consultations; rapid desk reviews; or the commissioning of a report. Care should be taken that the tools be implemented by people who are in tune with the political dynamics of the relevant country and who have a solid understanding of the specific context.

The diagnostic is not a one-time exercise.

Given the fluid nature of fragile, conflict, and violence-affected contexts, the diagnostic needs to be regularly updated. Perhaps more important than the rigor of the diagnostic is the process of ensuring organizational uptake of its findings. Adequate resources and incentives must be dedicated to discussing and following up on the findings.^a

There are unlikely to be magic bullet solutions.

The diagnostic is unlikely to offer unambiguous solutions; it should, however, provide the basis for better planning and more informed risk taking.

a. For other useful resources on performing quality diagnostics in the context of donor programming, see Hudson, Marquette, and Waldock (2016); Yanguas (2015); and DFID (2016).

broadly for or against SSD in a given sector can help with coalition-building. At a minimum, this module should provide project teams with a firmer grasp of the power brokers at the central, sectoral, and local levels of delivery.

Module 2: Map the relevant dimensions of violence in the program areas

Understanding how specific dimensions of violence in a given context are likely to present their own risks and opportunities for the focal sector is critical. The focus would be on

the key dimensions unearthed in this research: organization, ideology, and localization. This would enable project teams to come up with typologies of violence in their context and to consider their different implications for their program (see recommendation 3). Because forms of violence can differ at the subnational level, project teams need to be highly sensitive to subnational variation.

Module 3: Draw lessons from local service delivery and bargaining

Project teams can also collect lessons on what modes of service delivery work and what do not, as well as if and how forms of bargaining take place in their context. These lessons could derive from the experiences of multiple stakeholders, and especially those actors operating at the grassroots level and at the front line of delivery. Donor knowledge on such local dynamics can sometimes be limited (see also recommendation 5).

8.2. Think and Work Politically

“We can’t go around it [politics], we can’t go over it [...], we’ll have to go through it” (Evans, paraphrased in Menocal 2014: 11).

Our study amply demonstrates the critical role of political economy factors in making or breaking service delivery. In this area, three

key operational messages are proposed: (1) SSD design should be tailored to the specific type of political settlement; (2) the delivery of services should be rethought as a function of coalition-building; and (3) politically savvy modes of delivery exist and should be actively pursued.

Tailor design to political settlements

Political settlements—particularly at the subnational and sectoral levels—exist along a spectrum and can differ within and between violence-affected contexts. As the report has shown, such differences can have important practical implications for SSD. Based on the typology developed for this report, table 8.1 attempts to tease out some of the initial, practical implications. Note that this is just a starting point, and is by no means exhaustive.⁴⁹

Build service delivery coalitions in fluid contexts

SSD is able to operate more effectively when it is supported by coalitions of supportive actors. A key implication is as follows: improving SSD is a technical challenge but it is also a political one insofar as effective implementation requires the building of coalitions—however limited, fluid, or localized—that can to some degree enable services to be delivered and can protect some aspects of delivery from factions that wish to appropriate it. Context matters, but three “rules” on coalition-building can be derived from the research:

Table 8.1. Implications of political settlements for social service delivery in violence-affected contexts

Subnational/sectoral settlement	Implications for social service delivery (SSD)
<p>1: Relatively stable Pro-SSD incentives exist for ruling coalition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized and centralized around a regional strongman/warlord with pro-SSD interests/ incentives. • Organized around pro-SSD programmatic political party. 	<p>Reasonably good prospects for SSD, as incentives align. Stability in settlement potentially allows for planning over longer time horizon and the building of a pro-SSD coalition. However, SSD needs to align with ruling factions' preferred mode of delivery (given the ruling factions' relative power in setting the rules of the game).</p>
<p>2: Moderately stable SSD incentives mixed; incentives are contested between state, disciplined armed insurgencies, and powerful traditional elites.</p>	<p>Medium prospects for SSD. Moderate stability allows for better planning and better coalition-building around SSD programs, but contestation can undermine delivery depending on the level of contestation at the front line of service delivery. Mechanisms of coordination between powerful elites may be needed.</p>
<p>3: Moderately unstable Pro-SSD incentives exist but are contested among state and pro-SSD disciplined armed insurgencies.</p>	<p>Some prospects for SSD, given pro-SSD ideology. However, active contestation between state and insurgent groups potentially undermines service delivery. Efforts, compromises, and bargains likely to be needed to reach consensus among contesting groups on "ring-fencing" (to a degree) services.</p>
<p>4: Moderately to highly unstable Weak SSD incentives; some state penetration in areas controlled by relatively disciplined armed groups.</p>	<p>SSD is likely to be challenging. Some state penetration offers a modicum of stability that may help with service delivery, but weak incentives as well as antagonism can undermine service delivery.</p>
<p>5: Highly unstable (type a) Weaker state penetration; less disciplined armed groups and weak SSD incentives/ideology.</p>	<p>SSD is likely to be challenging. Weak SSD incentives as well as antagonism can undermine SSD.</p>
<p>6: Highly unstable (type b) Situation fluid; marked fragmentation of power and no monopoly of violence; weak SSD incentives and political organization; multiple centers of power controlled by armed criminal organizations.</p>	<p>SSD is likely to be very challenging. The lack of broadly agreed rules of the game as well as the presence of dominant ideology/incentives that seek short-term appropriation of SSD make progress difficult. Delivery needs to be flexible; practitioners need to learn by doing and (most likely) accept that bargaining strategies must be built in.</p>

Rule 1: Expect the unexpected: fluid and unstable politics are the norm

In violence-affected contexts, the rules of the game are fluid and everchanging. Even bargains that allow a modicum of stability are often made under the constant threat or existence of violence. They tend to change over time and are subject to regular renegotiation because the dominant coalition often struggles to maintain its supremacy in the face of internal and external pressures (Kelsall 2016). Practitioners should thus expect the unexpected, and recognize that an adaptive approach—involving regularly changing tactics and strategies—will most likely be needed.

Rule 2: Be realistic about the role of “spoils” and rents

This report suggests that, in violent contexts, the relationship between SSD programs and rents needs to be considered very seriously and very carefully. As argued earlier, SSD programs can provide rents, and rent-sharing in violent contexts often plays a role in stabilizing coalitions, controlling violence, and allowing functional service provision. If an SSD program disturbs these arrangements, factions could increase their demands and increase acts of violence. A case in point is the Nepal health sector during the Maoist conflict: evidence from interviews suggests that attempts to circumscribe rent-sharing at the local level would have stalled service delivery and would have increased the risk of violence to service facilities and staff. Specifically, two operational implications emerge as critical:

1. Systematic consideration must be given to the way an SSD program provides rents, and whether it maintains or undermines specific coalitions; and
2. Overly aggressive attempts to curb rents in a sector could result in sabotage or even an increase in violence.⁵⁰

There are no magic bullet solutions, but these points require attention.

Rule 3: Find “good enough” ways to support—or at least not undermine—coalitions that support service delivery

Even during the best of times, external actors play a limited role in supporting or maintaining coalitions. In violence-affected contexts, elites find it particularly difficult to act collectively due to weak coordination mechanisms, major information asymmetries, extremely low levels of trust, limited consensus, power jostling, a “winner-takes-all” mentality, and unpredictability (North et al. 2011).

Drawing on coalition-building lessons, donors could support mechanisms to: (1) help pro-SSD elites coordinate themselves and act collectively; (2) reduce information asymmetries between factions; (3) build trust across groups; and (4) increase predictability to enable longer time horizons.⁵¹ Yanguas (2016) takes this further by suggesting broad strategies for coalition-building that target pro- and antireform factions, which could eventually be applied to violence-affected settings, however challenging this may be (see box 8.2).

Box 8.2. Potential strategies for building pro-SSD coalitions

It is often unclear in fragile, conflict, and violence-affected contexts who the pro- and anti-SSD actors are. This is partly because actors frequently change sides. As outlined below, Yanguas (2016) offers some strategies for building coalitions that could be useful in violence-affected contexts.

Strategy	Aid Recipient	
	Incumbent: Anti-SSD	Challenger: Pro-SSD
Diffusion	Adaptation	Contestation
Certification	Legitimization	Delegitimization
Brokerage	Consolidation	Disruption

Diffusion. The flow of ideas across borders and policy domains in which the aid industry plays a role:

- *Adaptation* of ideas occurs when diffusion is aimed at supporting incumbents to achieve their goals through incremental change.
- *Contestation* of ideas occurs when the diffusion of ideas by aid agencies is aimed at strengthening challenges to existing ideas held by the incumbents.

Certification. International validation signaling recognition of the existing power distribution:

- *Legitimization.* Foreign aid could serve to legitimize the incumbents, bolster elite priorities, and signal political backing from the international community.
- *Delegitimization.* Aid and dialogue is directed away from powerful elites or incumbents.

Brokerage. Using donor resources and legitimacy to facilitate bargaining and trust-building to establish new links between actors and policy fields and to coordinate the formation of new coalitions.

- *Consolidation* represents brokerage influences that ultimately strengthen the incumbent coalition.
- *Disruption* entails brokering new relationships outside the incumbent coalition.

Source: Adapted from Yanguas (2016).

Design modes of delivery that are politically savvy

Building on the previous point, different modes of delivery may be able to reduce the power of anti-SSD forces. Depending

on local context, there are myriad potential strategies for making delivery more politically astute, however difficult. Key practical lessons from this research are summarized in box 8.3.

Box 8.3. Making delivery more politically astute: Key practical lessons

1. Semiautonomous delivery mechanisms can reduce the power of sectoral clientelist networks, but sustainability and creation of parallel delivery systems is a challenge

Examples

The establishment of semiautonomous management and oversight institutions, such as the Balochistan Education Foundation (BEF) in Balochistan.

Using alternative human resource approaches or bypassing existing systems to staff service delivery, such as the case of health service volunteers in Nepal.

Why is this politically savvy?

The BEF experience demonstrates that a semiautonomous agency can reduce the impact of clientelist networks on a sector by setting up new procedures that are to some degree ring-fenced from interference. Moreover, the semiautonomous institution may, if designed correctly, have credibility with and the backing of reform-minded elites. In other words, “new” institutions must be built on new elite pacts.

Using volunteers or alternative human resources systems can help sustain or expand service delivery by reducing the influence of patronage-based appointments and the power of incumbents, such as unions or political parties, in civil service transfers and postings.

What are the trade-offs?

The creation of a semiautonomous institution generates risks: (1) it could become a donor-driven entity with limited social and political legitimacy; (2) it could perpetuate dual public sectors and create parallel structures; and (3) it could be subverted by the old elites or used by the new elite grouping for unintended purposes. Checks and balances are crucial. Indeed, various interviewees argued that the Balochistan Education Foundation became less effective over time and was subject to capture.

(continued)

Box 8.3. Continued

The trade-offs for using volunteers or alternative human resources systems include: (1) volunteers might be able to fulfill simple short-term functions but not deliver the more complex services (and over the medium term, human resources systems would have to be reformed); (2) the role of unions and political parties would need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis: these actors might be more or less supportive of SSD depending on the context. The global evidence suggests that their relevance to the development process should not be taken lightly.

2. Small-scale interventions can circumvent sectoral elite networks and spark a slow-burning political demonstration effect, but efforts to scale up can be elusive

Examples

Implementation of smaller-scale and localized interventions, such as the Balochistan Education Support Project (BESP) in Pakistan, road user committees in Nepal, and local health shuras in Afghanistan.

Why is this politically savvy?

BESP's small-scale and localized model reduced appropriation by higher-level elites. Central- and provincial-level rent opportunities were reduced, and local elites—who had greater incentives for local education delivery—had more control over resource allocation and implementation.

What are the trade-offs?

Small-scale or localized successes can spur incremental and indirect political demonstration effects; that is, they can increase political pressure by constituents on higher-level elites and open up reform spaces by demonstrating what is possible, potentially bolstering reform-minded actors and shifting the mind-set and incentives of elites.

However, local successes can be difficult to scale up, and new forms of local elite subversion can emerge. Rather than aiming for a province-wide rollout, programs should seek to deepen local successes, harness reform-minded impulses, and broadly disseminate communication about achievements to strengthen the demonstration effect. Further, efforts should be scaled up incrementally and have built-in strategies for compensating losers and antagonists to reform.

3. Bundling delivery into a suite of services can increase the political feasibility of success, but implementation logistics are challenging

Examples

Bundling services into a suite of selected services, such as providing a range of health services in Nepal or combining polio with other services in Pakistan.

Why is this politically savvy?

While multisectoral delivery is often framed as a technical and capacity challenge, this research suggests that this approach can help address some of the political barriers to delivery. For example, as the case of Pakistan illustrates,

(continued)

Box 8.3. Continued

combining pro-poor services—such as basic vaccinations—with other services that powerful opponents and/or local constituents really want—such as other health services or electricity—can reduce resistance and impact the incentives of power brokers to support or block the smooth implementation of SSD. Combining basic SSD with measures to address income or land inequalities and/or infrastructure investments, such as road connectivity, can increase user demand, and can thus have spillover effects on the sector, as the Nepal case illustrates.

What are the trade-offs?

Before putting together a suite of services, a strong understanding is needed of what local elites want to ensure that the plan is technically feasible and politically palatable. Bundling requires strong multisectoral coordination and logistics and includes associated costs.

4. A decentralized, multistakeholder approach can facilitate more inclusive delivery bargains, but serious mitigation mechanisms are necessary

Examples

Decentralized, multistakeholder approaches to delivery that set up local structures for decision making around service delivery, such as the road user committees in Nepal and the local school and community development committees in Afghanistan.

Why is this politically savvy?

This approach can create space for local bargaining; absorb the transaction costs of enabling local collective action; and create opportunities for previously excluded groups to increase their bargaining power with local elites, thus securing a better resource allocation deal for themselves at the local level. In short, it can shift the local balance of power.

What are the trade-offs?

While a decentralized, multistakeholder approach can create bargaining space, it can also enable local elite capture because local structures are invariably dominated by powerful local elites—political, social, and religious. The focus should be on how to make these structures improve SSD rather than expecting to instantly eliminate their role. In addition, it is difficult for the excluded to bargain effectively with powerful local elites, and their inclusion could be met with backlash and even increased violence. On-going political risk management in project management teams will be needed to manage these trade-offs.

8.3. Tailor Approach to Specific Forms of Violence

In addition to tailoring SSD to political realities, it should also take into account the specific forms of violence in the context. Table 8.2 offers a stylized depiction of the different

types of violence and their implications for SSD. As a general rule, the more fragmented, mobile, and ideologically antagonistic the violent actors, the more difficult it will be to deliver services and the more mitigation strategies will be needed.

Form of violence	Implications for delivery of social services
<p>Well-organized, disciplined armed groups with incentives favoring social service delivery (SSD)</p> <p><i>Example:</i> dominant/organized strongman allied with ruling coalition, such as General Atta in Balkh, Afghanistan</p>	<p>Bargaining feasible (actors clear, incentives for service delivery aligned). Good prospects of direct state provision given alliance with ruling coalition. Resource transfer—from the center to the subnational level—may be substantial to maintain alliance.</p>
<p>Well-organized, disciplined <i>insurgent</i> armed groups with incentives favoring SSD</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> organized insurgency resisting or trying to capture the state but wanting some services, such as Maoists (Nepal), Balochistan (Pakistan)</p>	<p>Bargaining feasible (actors clear, incentive alignment). But poor relationship with the state means strategies are needed to mitigate risks such as nonstate provision and dialogue with insurgents to ensure that delivery of social services is not perceived as a proxy for state penetration.</p>
<p>Somewhat organized/disciplined <i>insurgent</i> armed groups largely opposed to SSD</p> <p><i>Example:</i> relatively organized insurgents who want to undermine delivery, for example of polio inoculation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan</p>	<p>High risks of violence targeting delivery. Insurgent leaders relatively clear in their antiservice ideology driven by their poor relationship with the state. Mitigation strategies could include bundling of services to increase insurgent incentives not to undermine delivery.</p>
<p>Somewhat organized/disciplined armed groups competing for regional power and legitimacy; positions favoring service delivery contested</p> <p><i>Example:</i> large parts of Wardak Province, Afghanistan</p>	<p>Complex scenario. Strategies for service delivery will depend on various factors: local contestation may lead to competition to improve services or to capture/undermine services. Competition may also be over who is seen to deliver the service.</p>
<p>Disorganized/fragmented, mobile/roving <i>insurgent</i> armed groups with some local roots creating incentives for service delivery</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> fractionalized, uncoordinated armed groups with some incentives for service delivery as in parts of Badghis, Afghanistan</p>	<p>A more difficult context (compared to the four previous ones). Leaders fragmented, power contested, and violence less predictable, with the result that bargaining is less feasible. Second-best solutions need to apply, such as using local implementers to increase safety and securitize delivery.</p>
<p>Highly disorganized/fragmented, highly mobile/roving armed groups with criminal (nonpolitical) motives</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> some parts of Badghis, Afghanistan; to a lesser extent, Tarai, Nepal, after large-scale violent conflict.</p>	<p>Most difficult context: leaders fragmented, power contested, and violence less predictable; incentives of violent actors are to undermine delivery of social services. Second-best solutions will be required.</p>

8.4. Take Bargaining Seriously

Bargaining is, as outlined at length, critical in making or breaking SSD in violence-affected contexts. The implications of these bargains are ambiguous and fraught with ethical dilemmas, but some key, preliminary practical tips are outlined below.

Consider the dynamics of bargaining

At minimum, the research suggests that program designers and implementers should take the dynamics of bargaining seriously. Indeed, if SSD programs are not tailored to local politics and bargaining, they risk being a “shot in the dark.”⁵² Two points deserve highlighting:

- 1. Intended or not, some form of bargaining is likely to occur.** Indeed, elite bargains emerged as fundamental in all the studied cases, but we found scant evidence that project implementers are aware of or systematically consider them.⁵³
- 2. Making decisions about projects without considering the role of bargains could put SSD at increased risk.** Engaging in bargains and compromises may not be ideal, but might be the only way to make SSD progress in some violence-affected contexts. For example, if education delivery in Afghanistan had entirely circumscribed the space for modifications to the curriculum, the Taliban might have targeted such services. If higher-level officials had demanded an

accounting of resource flows for health in Nepal, it likely would have disrupted delicate local bargains, increased acts of violence, and negatively impacted progress in health delivery (see part II).

Carefully weigh trade-offs

It is also important to put the issue of trade-offs front and center in this debate. Trade-offs exist for both traditional and “bargaining-sensitive” approaches to SSD in violence-affected settings. The difficult question is: what should be prioritized?

- 1. Trade-offs with traditional programming.** For example, a traditional program (that is, one that ignores the role of bargaining) might unknowingly create rents that sustain locally powerful elites; it might circumscribe rents that fuel factional violence; or the provided services might be accessed by insurgents and their allies, indirectly sustaining them.⁵⁴
- 2. Trade-offs with bargain-sensitive programming.** Bargains with insurgents can enable SSD progress in the short term, but they present challenges that must be considered and managed:
 - Bargains might help short-term, localized delivery progress, but little is known about if and how they might contribute to longer-term state- or peace-building objectives.

Table 8.3. Operational strategies for bargaining with insurgents

Bargaining method	Operational options
Build SSD program bargaining capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an enabling environment for local service providers to reach SSD bargains with local armed elites and allied insurgents, for example, by providing front-line staff with some degree of autonomy and incentives to reach out to elites and insurgents and find compromise. • Provide negotiation and training in bargaining to all relevant staff. • Employ staff with expertise in negotiation and conflict resolution.
Facilitate dialogue and negotiations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a tailored communication strategy to negotiate with armed elites and allied insurgents and persuade them to tolerate the service. • Absorb transaction costs of bringing together key stakeholders and armed elites to negotiate bargains; use mediation experts to facilitate.
Inform and obtain “permission” from insurgents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform and build trust with armed elites and allied insurgents and manage delivery with them so delivery is seen as less threatening. • Use actors trusted by armed elites and allied insurgents to deliver the service. If insurgents have an antagonistic relationship with the state, implement services through nonstate actors.
Enlist influential local elites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify local pro-SSD elites who could be allies in delivering services. • Engage influential, pro-SSD elites to encourage armed elites and allied insurgents (and local constituents) to allow the service.
Make concessions and compromises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify acceptable areas for modifying the scope of delivery to make it more tolerable to armed elites and allied insurgents, such as allowing curriculum changes in Balochistan and developing realistic plans for girl’s education in parts of Afghanistan.
Engage in rent-sharing agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicate some of the budget to compensating losers, opponents, and/or armed elites and allied insurgents with “sweeteners” or incentives, such as bundling or allowing insurgents to use the services. • Consider tolerating some leakage if it is necessary to reduce violence and enable delivery.

Note: Selection of activities should depend on organizational objectives, comparative advantages, and the results of the diagnostic.

- Using locally trusted actors and volunteers to deliver services might reduce the risk of attacks and maintain service quantity, but doing so makes it difficult to improve service quality. For example, volunteers might be unable to deliver complex services.
- Service delivery might be maintained through bargaining, but resource flows could be diverted to areas and groups considered more important by powerful insurgents and elites, and depending on the group or area being excluded, this can increase violence.

- Achieving small-scale impacts through local bargaining might be possible, but scaling up could prove difficult.
- Rent-sharing might be costly and unpalatable to donor agencies, but these concerns must be weighed against the risk of violence if the insurgents' rents dry up.

In short, the question of whether bargaining with armed elites and their allied insurgent groups to deliver services is better than slower progress or no progress at all depends on the particulars of a case.

What would a bargain-sensitive delivery program look like?

Let us suppose that, after deliberation, a project team decides to consciously integrate some form of bargaining into a given SSD program. What might this look like? First, options could be explored for “doing no harm” to pro-SSD bargains, and for reducing the space for anti-SSD bargains. Second, table 8.3 offers some initial ideas to provoke thought and debate among project teams. Indeed, it is recognized that in any given context “bargain-sensitive SSD programs” may not be formally possible as it may undermine an agency’s relationship with the government and articles of association that allow it to operate in the country.

8.5. Reform Donor Rules and Incentives

Many of this study’s implications upset the traditional thinking of the mainstream aid system. The findings of this study build on at least two important contemporary narratives around changing aid delivery: (1) advocacy for *doing development differently* and *thinking and working politically*⁵⁵ in the aid system, which includes adaptive and iterative programming;⁵⁶ and (2) advocacy for a more context-specific approach in violent contexts that considers the political economy and risk of violence and draws on lessons about what really works on the ground (IEG 2016; Marc et al. 2016).

This report builds on these narratives in two main ways: (1) by offering a more granular framework for addressing politics and violence in SSD operations based on bottom-up research (above); and (2) by outlining further ideas, and associated challenges, on how to reform traditional ways of delivering aid (below).

Encourage honest debate on bargains: avoid “shots in the dark”

One challenge is changing mind-sets. For instance, interviews undertaken for this research suggest that such issues are currently glossed over or painted in an overly simplistic light in internal debates (see also the discussion on

Recommendation	Example
Budget for bargaining	Fund type of diagnostics proposed in chapter 8; pilot and integrate bargaining strategies into design and implementation.
Change program vocabulary	Talk about power and elites at every opportunity. Balance terms such as <i>community-driven development</i> and <i>citizen engagement</i> with terms like <i>local-elite-driven development</i> and <i>engaging development elites</i> .
Involve the “ <i>un-usual suspects</i> ”	Talk to insurgents; to military, political, and religious elites; to tribal elders; and union representatives—or encourage governments and implementers to do so.
Engage in frank internal communication	Encourage project teams and senior management to openly discuss politics, trade-offs, and “leakage” in program design.

“good governance” in chapter 7). Thus one recommendation is to actively foster frank internal debate (table 8.4) on politics, violence, and bargaining to start changing organizational mind-sets and cultures.

What needs to be done differently and why is it difficult?

Taken together, the implications of our research and global evidence underline the need to shift, to differing degrees, the way aid is delivered in violent contexts.⁵⁷ Table 8.5 offers a stylized summary of the main differences between traditional approaches and what may be required based on this (and other) research. It also highlights some of the operational risks and policy dilemmas that would result from trying to adapt to reform in this direction. Indeed, the powerful political economy of the aid system and donor agencies presents legitimate dilemmas, which cannot be wished away.

8.6. Explore New Frontiers of Delivery and Research

Finally, what does this all mean for a forward-looking agenda on models of SSD, as well as research in this field? In what follows are some initial considerations and thoughts, which are meant to encourage further thinking and debate among academics and policy makers.

Adding to contemporary debates

During the course of this study, an important and challenging question was posed: how does the approach emerging here differ from more standard approaches to SSD? This is an expansive question. This report was not intended to provide a new SSD model, even if it contains a number of seeds of a new model. To explore these points, a literature review was undertaken (Deshpande 2016), and the main headlines are outlined below.

Table 8.5. Shifts in how aid actors work: Frontiers and challenges

Mainstream aid priority	What this research suggests	Considerations and risks in reforming the way of working
Emphasize success; underline win-wins and underplay difficult trade-offs.	Emphasis should be on what does and does not work as well as why. Difficult trade-offs and political and ethical dilemmas should be acknowledged.	Few—if any—agencies seek to highlight their mistakes. Taxpayer and donor tolerance for failure and trade-offs is likely limited.
Leakage/rent-sharing unacceptable. Donor fiduciary rules and requirements require zero leakage.	A degree of leakage can accompany progress and in some cases is necessary to reduce violence and allow social service delivery (SSD) to continue.	It is extremely challenging for donors to encourage or endorse leakage. Fiduciary rules need to be revised to include built-in exceptions.
National and/or “one-size-fits-all” programs. Limited internal incentives for staff to significantly adapt to subnational variation. Pressure to prepare projects quickly.	Significant adaptation to and incentives for subnational and local variation is necessary. This includes staff rewards and time and budget allocation for this.	Significant subnational variation can be costly, very complex, put additional pressure on overstretched staff, and undermine efforts to scale up. Consideration should be given to how much local calibration is practically achievable.
Weak incentives to undertake and follow-up on analytical diagnostics of project design and implementation.	Project teams should be incentivized to undertake and ensure uptake of the proposed diagnostics.	Diagnostics rarely present simple solutions. Expectations should be adjusted accordingly.
“One-size-fits-all” project preparation and implementation support budgets.	Greater mitigation and bargaining strategies and operational support are needed in subnational areas where the politics and forms of violence are strongly opposed to SSD. Budgets should be increased relative to the challenges of local politics and violence.	A bigger budget does not necessarily mean more success. Consideration should be given to how aid actors should best allocate limited resources in violence-affected contexts.
Relatively limited ability of and incentives for projects to regularly adapt to changes on the ground. Linear log-frames with output focus tend to dominate.	Fluidity of the context requires strong adaptive capacity and the ability to monitor, learn, and experiment over time, including setting up systems for more regular monitoring at the subnational level.	Challenges include building adaptive capacity in a violent environment with low institutional capacity, a weak public sector, and patchy political coverage; making large-scale programs adaptive to local programs without creating huge transaction costs; and rectifying iterative approaches with modern rules of accountability and budgeting.

(continued)

Development and SSD problems and programs defined by a tight-knit group of experts. Support of top-down implementation, especially in fragile contexts where people are sometimes stuck in compounds and cut off from life outside the compound of the capital city.	Projects should enable and absorb the costs of gathering multiple stakeholders to identify locally defined problems and locally driven solutions. Teams should reach beyond the normal interlocutors—government and other donors—to include journalists, political parties, and others.	Challenges include engaging with local stakeholders in extremely violent contexts without putting donor staff at great risk and ensuring local people also benefit from external experiences without being dictated by them.
Sectoral silos. Poor integration of conflict and political economy specialists in project teams.	Build knowledge-practice alliances between various specialists and ensure a multidisciplinary mix on project teams.	Classic challenges remain regarding sector coordination, resourcing, and incentivizing of multidisciplinary teams.
High turnover of staff among many donors. Short tours are the norm for most in violence-affected contexts. International staff are regularly rotated.	Revise human resource practices by retaining local staff with strong local knowledge and reducing high levels of staff turnover. Engage staff in longer-term postings with greater emphasis on country knowledge and experience.	Attracting and retaining people in violence-affected contexts is difficult. The psychological effects of such postings can take a major toll on a person.
<p><i>Sources:</i> Authors; key informant interviews conducted for this study; Akmeemana et al. n.d.; Devarajan and Khemani 2016.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> This is a stylized summary; aid agencies differ and exist on a spectrum.</p>		

The idea that “governance matters” in explaining SSD is now widely recognized, thanks to the groundbreaking 2004 World Development Report (World Bank 2003). There are, however, different SSD models in both the theoretical and practitioner literature. One of the main issues that differentiates these models are their different understandings of *governance* and the way it matters for service delivery. SSD models include the following (sometimes overlapping) approaches:

(1) those inspired by the World Development Report 2004; (2) the Community-Driven Development (CDD) approach and its later variants; (3) combinations of (1) and (2) rooted in good governance norms; and (4) a more recent generation of approaches that attempt to systematically relate service delivery to the political economy context.⁵⁸ The model that emerges here is most aligned with the fourth type of model and the recently published 2017 World Development Report.

In sum, this report’s implications differ from a number of the mainstream approaches in the following ways:

- **No one model is privileged.** Different models can be more or less effective depending on local political settlements, the form of violence, and the context (see, for instance, chapter 6).
- **It brings new drivers of progress to the forefront of the debate.** These include informal institutions, elite bargaining, and far-from-perfect modes of governing.
- **It suggests that violence needs to be unpacked and systematically related to service delivery.** The varying impacts of different forms of violence on SSD are central preoccupations.
- **Political economy is not just about material power; it is also about ideas.** We show the important role of “ideas” (held by elites and insurgents) in shaping the constraints and opportunities for SSD.
- **Service delivery is rarely politically neutral.** The research, by showing how SSD is a source of rents that differs by sector, undermines traditional approaches that suggest it can be technical, neutral, or ring-fenced from politics and power.
- **Bargains and trade-offs are part of the new normal.** Bargains, trade-offs, and compromises are integral to service delivery—an element scarcely treated by other models.
- **New actors are brought into sharper focus.** A more concerted effort is made to analyze the central role, interests, and incentives of key SSD actors, such as elites, landlords, or warlords, who have not received much, if any, attention in the past.
- **SSD is understood through a lens of political feasibility rather than technical soundness.** Through this lens, we reach slightly different conclusions:
 - Semiautonomous institutional delivery mechanisms are effective because they can bypass powerful sectoral clientelistic networks, not because they are more rational-legal, as standard models suggest.
 - Small-scale interventions are effective because the model is more appealing to local elites and because small grants offer fewer incentives and opportunities for rent capture at higher levels of governance, not just because they involve “local people” and “citizen participation.”

Box 8.4. Key questions for further exploration

- How can the typology of violence be deepened and further tested in other geographic areas to strengthen its general applicability?
- How do the ideas, values, and ideologies held by different elites and armed actors shape the way in which basic services are delivered in violence-affected contexts? Beyond standard information campaigns, how can development actors shape these ideas toward better development outcomes?^a
- Given the risks and trade-offs inherent in engaging with informal institutions and nonstate actors and in pursuing bargaining for social service delivery (SSD), are there lessons to be learned from any cases where bargaining was integrated and risks effectively mitigated?
- How can we better understand projects in which elite bargains are struck but major progress is not achieved? Or the opposite: are there cases where elite bargains were not struck yet success was achieved?
- What role do constituents and project beneficiaries, including the very poor, play in shaping the way elites and armed actors approach a given service? In other words, how can we better understand how pro-SSD alliances and coalitions between elites and nonelites (especially the poor) form?
- How precisely do development interventions create and sustain bargaining structures? How can interventions operate within elite bargaining dynamics while creating incentives for the bargains to be more supportive of SSD?
- How do gender dynamics fit into this elite bargaining approach in violence-affected contexts?
- How can donor agencies square the circle between their fiduciary requirements, such as accounting and procurement, and the need for flexibility and bargaining for SSD? What aid instruments would be most appropriate for this?
- Given the important role it plays in creating and sustaining rents and in shaping elite bargaining around delivery, how can SSD's influence on political outcomes—such as strengthening political parties or informal institutions—be more systematically assessed? What is the measure for whether or not these political outcomes are good or bad for development?
- How can we better understand if bargaining in the short term to enable the delivery of services endangers or advances the long-term goals of reducing the power of the insurgency, bringing about peace, and ensuring the legitimacy of the state?

a. See Rodrik (2014).

- Bundling can be effective not just because of the social and economic benefits of combining complementary services, but also because it means that powerful opponents can be compensated for enabling SSD to continue.
- Decentralized, multistakeholder approaches are effective because they create space for local elites to bargain over delivery, not just because local citizens are “empowered.”

Areas for further research

Box 8.4 provides a summary of areas inspired by this research that should be explored further.

In conclusion, this report provides the foundation for developing an approach to service delivery in violence-affected contexts that is more sensitive to the actual forms of violence, politics, and bargaining that are found on the ground in many conflict-affected states today. It raises particularly sensitive issues about how to approach service delivery in contested settings for development organizations such as the World Bank which work with recognized governments. As many countries today are increasingly riven by violent conflict and internal division, the traditional “rules of the

game” may be inadequate to deal with the mounting humanitarian and development challenges posed by complex conflict situations, particularly where SSD access is required. This raises complex dilemmas about the ethical and political judgments and trade-offs that development actors frequently have to make. Some trade-offs will be especially difficult to consider due to the nature of the compromises required, but it is at least time to consider and discuss them as part of a broader debate about how to tackle the growing humanitarian and development consequences of fragility, conflict, and violence in the world.

At minimum, the report sets out to question traditional ways of thinking about delivering services in highly fluid, contested, and risky contexts. A key challenge is whether development actors can adapt their procedures and ways of working to the uncertainty of this new agenda and its demands for fluidity and risk taking, while preserving the sometimes fragile support for development assistance in the donor country constituencies: “do no harm” and provide effective aid. This agenda cannot be ignored. Progress in basic service delivery in violence-affected contexts will make or break global efforts to end poverty and increase shared prosperity over the coming decades.

Notes

1. There are synergies between this report and the *thinking and working politically* (TWP) approach. In our view, this report makes a contribution to further unpacking and operationalizing the approach. Thinking politically means understanding that both political and technical dimensions are central to developmental outcomes. Working politically in development means supporting, brokering, facilitating, and aiding the emergence and practices of (public or private) developmental or reform leaderships, organizations, networks, and coalitions at any level, and across all sectors. It means helping them to respond to, and work with, initiatives and requests from local individuals and groups.

Below are emerging findings on what thinking and working politically means (Leftwich 2011: 9–11):

- Prior and existing networks often facilitate the formation of developmental coalitions in unfolding situations that present opportunities for working politically (for example, in the context of democratization or decentralization). Prior knowledge and experience with working politically extends and enriches the tactical and strategic repertoire of such leaders and elites. Well-educated and sometimes well-connected individuals play an important part in directing and driving coalitions for reform.
- The character and conditionality of funding by donors or supporters can make or break a coalition, for example, if tight conditions are applied or funding arrangements are transparent.
- The internal organization of a coalition committed to reform is important, such as transparency of procedures and financial arrangements, agreement and clarity on roles and responsibilities, size of a coalition and potential trade-offs between inclusiveness and effectiveness, and navigating between formal and informal institutions and environments.
- Coalitions can help drive the endogenous politics of developmental reforms by achieving a specific policy goal, opening up debate on a previously taboo issue, deepening and strengthening the coalition's internal organization and relationships for future purposes, and increasing the capacity of constituent organizations.

For more details on what the *thinking and working politically* approach entails, see Leftwich (2011: 3–9). For details on the principles and characteristics of a politically smart program, as per the TWP approach, see Whaites et al. (2015: 44).

2. Given the especially fluid, nonlinear, and unpredictable nature of change in violence-affected contexts, adaptive and realistic approaches to supporting change are probably necessary. Indeed, our research found important changes on the ground over time, but limited evidence of major or real-time adaptation to such changes by the programs under investigation.

Key principles of the emerging adaptive approach to social service delivery (SSD) programs in fragile and violent contexts are as follows (adapted from Andrews, Pritchett, and Woolcock [2012] and Valters [2016]):

- Focus on processes, behavior changes, and intermediate outcomes rather than just on activities or outputs.
- Focus on solving locally nominated defined problems rather than transplanting preconceived ideas of what local priorities should be or how things should work.
- Actively engage broad sets of agents to ensure that reforms are viable, legitimate, relevant, and supportable, rather than having a narrow set of external experts promote a top-down diffusion of innovations.
- Allow flexibility and positive deviance by creating an authorizing environment for decision making that encourages experimentation rather than designing programs and then requiring agents to implement them exactly as designed.
- Prioritize ongoing learning and adaptation by ensuring that experimentation is embedded in tight feedback loops that facilitate learning rather than having long lag times of ex-post evaluations.
- Think compass, not map. Set broad directions for change rather than laying out microdetails in advance.

Some unanswered practical questions remain, such as: how will adaptive capacities be built in environments with low institutional capacities, a weak public sector, and patchy political coverage, as is often the case in violence-affected contexts? And how can development agencies operate with such high levels of uncertainty?

3. Underpinning this synthesis are three unpublished country reports and global literature reviews (see World Bank and Akram 2016; World Bank and AREU 2016; World Bank and SSB 2016).

4. Note that these gaps were identified through a rigorous review of the literature alongside consultations with a range of practitioners in these fields.

5. As Booth (2013: 2) puts it: “The evidence is now overwhelming that most of the binding constraints in development are about institutions and institutional change.”

6. There is little evidence that what matters for developmental outcomes depends on best practice or good governance (Khan 2010; Rodrik 2014). “Best fit” or “good enough governance” refers to attempts to design development projects in the context of actually existing governance structures, which often involve navigating the realities of clientelism, corruption, and patronage-ridden politics.

7. There is scant but growing evidence regarding how the political economy impacts SSD in low-income countries (for example, McLoughlin and Batley 2012; Harris, McLoughlin, and Wild 2013). Significant gaps remain: (1) the existing research tends to be conceptual and not strongly informed by firsthand ethnographic field research; (2) even studies that recognize the importance of politics treat the subject superficially (for example, broadly referring to a lack of “political will”); and (3) the issue has not been applied to SSD in violence-affected contexts.
8. Based on informal consultations with the authors at the World Bank Fragility Forum, March 2016, Washington, DC (<http://www.dlprog.org/opinions/what-do-we-do-on-monday-political-settlements-in-theory-and-practice.php>).
9. For a country to be included on the World Bank’s list of fragile and conflict-affected states, it only needs to score low on the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) indicators, which are as much a measure of “underdevelopment” as of a particular condition of “fragility.” These indicators, drawn up by the World Bank (Moore 2014), are tools that allow a lender to rate the creditworthiness of a potential borrower. Countries are given scores based on 16 criteria grouped in 4 clusters: (1) economic management, (2) structural policies, (3) policies for social inclusion and equity, and (4) public sector management and institutions.
10. Even when studies examine SSD in violence-affected contexts (for example, World Bank 2011), there is no attempt to explore if and how diverse forms of violence matters. Indeed, what is missing is a systematic discussion of how and why political violence is likely to alter the context of SSD delivery.
11. Because it pilots a new innovative research framework in difficult contexts, the inductive approach seemed to be the most appropriate. In other words, rigid theories do not apply at the beginning of the research, and the researcher is free to alter the direction of the study after the research process has commenced (<http://www.anthropocaos.com.ar/Russel-Research-Method-in-Anthropology.pdf>). The study seeks to examine and refine in an iterative process patterns emerging from the field research and assess how and if these patterns fit with reigning analytical explanations of the politics around SSD. To build an analytical framework that could explain SSD implementation and outcomes, we drew on and attempt to integrate insights from varied and rich literature on the political economy of institutions in less developed and violence-affected contexts and varying options of SSD strategies and modes.
12. The aim was to develop analytical narratives focused on common patterns and processes of pro-poor service delivery rather than provide systematic comparative analysis of sector specificities. Focal projects for each sector were selected based on whether the life of a project spanned a certain period of violent conflict; if the project and sector presented interesting puzzles of successes, challenges, or divergent outcomes; and if the Bank project team was interested in the study remit, which would improve the chances of getting access to data and encourage future uptake.
13. A great deal of literature is available on these subjects, but it is not the purpose of this study to engage in theoretical debates.
14. A challenge to state authority through violent means is synonymous with a challenge to the ruling coalition itself, which is the principal reason why political violence creates a dynamic or fluid situation for a political settlement.
15. This categorization of political settlements does not imply that the national, provincial, and sectoral levels are disconnected from one other in terms of elite bargains, contestations, and their effects. Moreover, because political settlements are historically specific, broad diversity and complexity is likely to be found in political settlements at different levels of the polity.
16. There are sound reasons why a large variation in subnational political settlements might be expected. Kalyvas (2003) argued that the main driver of violence at the local and regional level is not usually linked to drivers of violence at the national level. Master cleavages often fail to account for the nature of the conflict and its violence or if the violence is unrelated or incompletely related to the dominant discourse of the war. Civil wars are imperfect and fluid aggregations of multiple, more or less overlapping civil wars that are smaller, diverse, and localized, and that entail Byzantine complexity and splintering authority into “thousands of fragments and micropowers of local character. A great deal of the action in a civil war is therefore simultaneously decentralized and linked to the wider conflict, including violence, which can be simultaneously political and private. A fine-grained analysis is required that takes into account intracommunity dynamics as well as those of the civil war to determine when this is the case and who is allied with whom. The prospects for success for any SSD effort depend on the identification of the main local elites, including armed groups, as well as an understanding of what motivated the violence in the first place.
17. This all results in a political settlement that is unstable and fluid, generates uncertainty about the “rules of the game,” and tends to create short-lived ruling coalitions and complex shifting alliances between elites at the national and subnational levels. Crises of political settlements need not occur only at the national level. One strand of research focuses on violence and breakdowns in political settlements at the subnational level (Parks, Colletta, and Oppenheim 2013).
18. Olson’s (1993) “bandit theory” offers some insights into how two different organizations of violence can affect developmental outcomes. In the model, a “stationary bandit” refers to a leader that has eliminated rival armed groups and has established a monopoly of violence and has established a disciplined chain of command over its armed groups. Because stationary bandits are relatively secure in power, they have incentives to limit confiscation of property, avoid overburdensome taxation, and provide public goods to maximize the rate of economic growth because this will maximize the resources accruing to the leader in the long run. In short, stationary bandits have a long-run time horizon and an “encompassing” interest in promoting economic development. This contrasts

with a situation of “roving banditry” where there are either competing regional warlords or where the ruling coalition’s hold on power is fragile. In this case, leaders have a short-run time horizon and they have incentives to pillage the economy as fast as they can which has obvious negative effects on economic activity. While it has been pointed out that this model overlooks the reality that all states are organizations which emerge from the internal dynamics of relationships among elites (North, Wallis, and Weingast 2009: 17), it does suggest that the organization of violence matters to SSD and other developmental outcomes.

19. There is a great deal of literature about how ideas and interests affect development, how ideas can alter power balances, and even how the powerful can alter their interests. See, for example, Rodrik (2014).

20. The weaker links may also be one of the reasons why unforeseen government official transfers and the general rate of turnover is more common in the Tarai than in the hill region. The greater degree of turnover and politicization of transfers clearly affects the planning and the continuity of policy implementation among the three main types of local officials: government agents, local development officers, and district planning officers.

21. The higher-level elites are the *nawabs* (Indian-Muslim word for “head of the landed nobility”) and the *sardars* (Persian word for “chief”), who can serve as the figurehead or de facto leader of the wider tribe. These groups are seen as highly influential—the Baloch *nawabs* and *sardars* even more so than their Pashtun counterparts. These elites often maintain two residences because living conditions and the social life in their home districts are generally poor. Families and children of the elite live in the major cities of Pakistan (such as Karachi, Islamabad, Quetta, or DG Khan) or abroad, and they maintain another home in their ancestral homeland. Consequently, while this group has provided leadership for issues that can affect a whole tribe, such as war or disaster, their perpetual absenteeism risks them losing their land and legitimacy. These elites are not likely to send their children to a BESP school. In addition to lineage and being conversant in local customs, a prerequisite for entering the upper elite is a certain amount of “Westernization,” and therefore the children of elites typically attend one of the top Pakistani schools and then pursue a higher education abroad.

22. Elders are sometimes organized into tribal shuras (consultative councils), although only a few tribes have all-Wardak shuras. The Pashtuns of Wardak have stronger tribal representative structures than do those in Badghis, although neither compares with the eastern tribes (WK: IDI–14 and 18). The existence of shuras tends to magnify the influence of elders, which makes them more attractive partners in secondary settlements.

23. Similarly, one of the factors that contributed to the prospects for elite bargains in Nepal was that the power of traditional elites were often maintained at the local level, despite shifts in the national political settlement and the fluid nature

of political party contestation (see boxes 3.1 and 3.2). Almost everywhere the leading political figures that the field research team encountered, especially in the rural parts of the districts, had a political pedigree that had been passed on to them from their family. A few exceptions could be seen in Rolpa, where new leaders have emerged from among the ranks of the Maoists, as well as in Siraha, where the Madhesi movement has empowered Madhesis to take leadership roles. Overall, however, there was a continuity of elites at the local level. This may likely facilitate the political bargaining required to allow the implementation of the projects, even though many of these were of substandard quality.

24. Based on H5–KII–SRH; H6–KII–SRH; H7–KII–SRH; H10–KII–SRH; H17–KII–PAL; H20–KII–PAL; H21–KII–PAL; H1–FGD–SRH; G8–KII–SRH; and G10–KII–SRH.

25. Based on H17–KII–PAL; H25–KII–PAL; H29–KII–ROL; H30–KII–ROL; H32–KII–ROL; and H8–FGD–PAL.

26. Health facilities turned out to generate several privileges: (1) they were a source of supplies and services for the Maoist rebel forces (H21–KII–PAL; H29–KII–ROL; G10–KII–SRH); (2) health workers were found paying “levy to the Maoists” (H13–KII–BAR) and private medical practitioners had to pay donations to Maoists (ibid.); and (3) there was evidence that Maoists sent letters to locals asking for rice and wheat (H14–KII–BAR).

27. The chief district officer is the principal district administrator who also serves as the head of the district security committee along with the district chief of police and the commander of the local military unit.

28. Informants acknowledged that there is no way to avoid this kind of interference, that it could only be “managed.” They indicated a need for compromise or vaguely referred to solutions being found, without elaboration.

29. Based on KP: R09–KII–PSH; KP: R10–KII–PSH; KP: R13–KII–PSH; FATA: R07–KII–PSH; FATA: R05–KII–PSH; FATA: R11–KII–PSH; FATA: R13–KII–PSH; FATA: R12–KII–PSH; and FATA: R24–GI–PSH.

30. Based on R18–FGD–PSH; and R19–FGD–NWA. As recently as November 2015, a polio district coordinator was gunned down in KP’s Swabi district (Express Tribune 2015).

31. In another interview, Hafiz Gul Bahadur declared in June 2012 that no polio campaign would take place in North Waziristan (R05–KII–PSH). A recent exception to this trend is in Bannu, where there were five campaigns in the bordering areas of Lakki Marwat, Tank (R13–KII–PSH).

32. It was reported that in FATA, even nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) (which are usually more welcome than government workers) cannot access areas for the polio program because of the fierce insurgent resistance to it. One interviewee claims that the polio program was considered a “taboo” topic (R05–KII–PSH).

33. A failure to provide these “donations” often led to the disruption of construction work. Government officials in the Tarai were threatened, and as a result, rarely went out into the field. Monitoring and supervision was often conducted with the help of security forces. In Bardiya, during the years of conflict, the Maoists had even asked for up to 50 percent of the project cost, accusing the road user committee of colluding with the government to build the road so security forces could use it. The Maoists also demanded money from contractors who risked the disruption of construction work if they did not comply (based on G17–KII–PAL; G3–KII–SRH; R5–KII–KTH; G13–KII–BAR; R8–KII–SRH).

34. An assessment of local governance finds that pet projects of political leaders were given priority and that those of ordinary people received attention only when they corresponded with the interests of the politicians (Inlogos 2009). Politicians were sometimes even able to influence the selection of roads under the Rural Access Improvement and Decentralization Project. In fact, 35 percent of the village development committee secretaries admitted that recommendations from politicians was the clinching factor when making decisions about the projects (Based on G2–KII–SRH; R8–KII–SRH; R9–KII–SRH; R8–KII–SRH).

35. The Balochistan Education Foundation (BEF) was set up in 1994 by the government of Balochistan to strengthen the private sector provision of education and to raise the standards for education in the province. The government restructured the foundation and brought about significant reforms in its governance, management, and operating procedures through amendments to the BEF Act in 2004 and 2006.

36. Several other informants expressed similar ideas (based on KII–01; KII–08, 43; KII–12). The problems between the two parties emerged in the later stages of BEP when relevant people in the bureaucracy and top management were transferred to other departments.

37. Numerous interviewees suggested that BEF and the NGOs were equally subject to corruption and patronage. A key informant interview with a donor office (anonymized, KII–01–PAK–BAL) gave the following information: (1) participants at a meeting remarked they did not want to work through NGOs as implementing partners due to corruption, lack of capacity, and difficulties in reaching out to them; (2) participants noted that BEF was allegedly corrupt, with one person receiving the salary of 100 people (based on hearsay); and (3) the interviewee was of the opinion that local NGOs do not have greater capacity than local people—donors/development partners should work directly with communities by supporting them with new technologies and adding an economic element/component.

38. For instance, the increased use of the military and police to escort health workers enabled them to reach areas where there was violent political opposition to the Polio Eradication Project, but this also made health workers more easily identifiable (R16–FGD–SWB).

39. See also the following interview transcripts: KII–01; KII–02; KII–03; KII–04; KII–09; FGD–01.

40. The main points outlined in chapters 7 and 8 were derived from the authors’ analysis and from suggestions received from a number of experts and development practitioners related to an earlier draft of this chapter (as noted in the acknowledgements).

41. This does not mean, however, that technical aspects do not matter. They just need to be complemented by an attempt to understand and adapt to the realities of the political economy, as is widely recognized in the political economy literature.

42. See also Harris and Wild (2013), which acknowledges this point.

43. See Booth and Cammack (2013), Unsworth (2015), G and Kelsall (2016) for a discussion of the policy implications of these approaches, and the latest World Development Report (World Bank 2017).

44. See, for example, DiJohn and Putzel 2009; Grindle 2007; Khan 2010; Unsworth 2010; Booth et al. 2015a; Goloba-Mutebi and Hickey 2013; Hickey 2013; World Bank 2017.

45. See World Bank (2016b).

46. This observation is not just limited to our cases—there is limited global evidence to suggest that aid agencies are systematically assessing and tailoring their approaches to the issues addressed here. The reasons behind this disconnect could be myriad, including knowledge gaps, ideological blind spots, and organizational cultures that prefer to avoid acknowledging such realities, but whatever they are, evidence suggests that we need to get to the root it.

47. At least three main lessons should be taken into account when delivering or implementing SSD. First, in practice, delivery is often facilitated by informal and ad hoc arrangements across blurred public-private boundaries (McCloughlin and Batley 2012: 30–31). Second, informal practices and institutions are often pervasive and are not going away soon, whether we like it or not (Mohmand 2012). Third, informal institutions—frequently framed as governance problems—should instead be seen as part of the solution (Moore and Unsworth 2010). Two notable thinkers have tried to make these insights more practical:

- *Practical hybrids.* Booth (2012) describes “practical hybrids” as institutional arrangements that combine modern bureaucratic standards and approaches to development with locally accepted cultures and practices. Specifically, they are institutional arrangements that are: (1) locally anchored in that they are locally driven initiatives making use of local resources and deriving their legitimacy from “local cultural repertoires” and “local views on what is important and how to get things done” (Booth 2012: 19); and (2) “problem solving,” insofar as the arrangements address problems that are perceived as important in the local context, build on

currently existing arrangements, and facilitate collective action to address the problems.

- *Institutional bricolage*. Cleaver (2001) finds multiple cases of “institutional bricolage” where “people consciously and unconsciously draw on existing social and cultural arrangements to shape institutions in response to changing situations.” Institutions are formed through the uneven “patching together” of old practices and norms with new arrangements. In practice, this requires the constant renegotiation of norms, the reinvention of tradition, the identification of legitimate forms of authority, the facilitation of cross-cultural borrowing and multipurpose institutions, and the fostering of mutual cooperation and respect. See Cleaver (2012) for examples. It must be noted that bricolage is not always benign and can reproduce inequalities.

48. This is in line with “problem-driven” approaches to development (Fritz, Levy, and Ort 2014).

49. There is scant practical guidance on how to deliver services under different political settlements (Parks and Cole 2010; Kelsall 2016).

50. As North et al. (2011: 1) put it, “when development policy advice threatens the logic of stability in limited access orders, these societies often resist or sabotage the recommended measures.”

51. There are a number of approaches for how aid actors can support local networks and coalitions that can be drawn on to inform programming (O’Meally 2013). For example, Leftwich (2011) notes that prior or existing networks often facilitate the formation of developmental coalitions in unfolding situations of this kind. Well-educated and sometimes well-connected individuals regularly play an important role in directing and driving coalitions for reform. The internal organization of a coalition for reform is important, such as transparency of procedures and financial arrangements, agreement and clarity on roles and responsibilities, size of the coalition, potential trade-offs between inclusiveness and effectiveness, and navigating between formal and informal institutions and environments. Coalitions can help drive the endogenous politics of developmental reform by: (1) achieving a specific policy goal; (2) opening up the debate on a previously taboo subject; (3) deepening and strengthening its internal organization and relationships

for future purposes; and (4) increasing the capacity of constituent organizations.

52. We are grateful to Professor James Putzel for the term “shot in the dark” in this context. This term was communicated in his comments on an earlier draft.

53. There are two potential reasons for this: (1) development practitioners are detached from how things really work on the ground, or (2) they were aware of these issues but were not comfortable with officially documenting them. Our research suggests the former.

54. These debates are also captured in the humanitarian literature on the issue of SSD neutrality and the trade-off between treating insurgents and sustaining the conflict.

55. See note 1.

56. See note 2

57. It is nonetheless recognized that the aid system is not homogenous and embodies different approaches.

58. The World Development Report (World Bank 2004) argument is that when services remain undelivered, break down, or are substandard, it is due to failures in the chain of accountability that links service providers to beneficiaries. It introduced the now influential “accountability triangle,” which links poor people to service providers either through policy makers (that is, the “long route” of accountability) or directly (that is, the “short route”). It therefore claims that SSD works when the incentives of providers and beneficiaries are aligned (Kelsall 2016). The second major SSD paradigm among donors is community-driven development, an approach that emphasizes community control over planning decisions and investment resources (see Wong 2012; Marc et al. 2013; Bennett and D’Onofrio 2015). The idea behind it is that involving communities in local development decisions is not only the inherent right of every citizen but that participation can often lead to a better use of resources, geared toward meeting community needs. However, there is scarce systematic evidence or analysis examining why and how community-driven development projects work in violence-affected contexts.

Appendixes



Three women train to be midwives. Tajikhan Village, Afghanistan, GRAHAM CROUCH/WORLD BANK

Appendix A. Methodology and Case Study Background

Methodology

South Asia is home to more than 1.6 billion people—about 24 percent of the world’s population and about half of the world’s poor. Progress toward ending extreme poverty will be therefore largely influenced by progress made there. The region has experienced various forms of violent conflict, which have negatively impacted its development progress. This study focuses on service delivery in Afghanistan, Nepal, and Pakistan—countries selected to span a range of forms of violence. The research focuses on the health and education sectors in Afghanistan, the health and rural infrastructure sectors in Nepal, and the health and education sectors in Pakistan. The research covers but is not limited to six projects in these focal sectors.

Field research sites were selected within each country for in-depth study and comparative analysis. Each of the subnational areas was affected by violence, but had different characteristics in terms of location, forms of violence, and composition of society. Further information about the subnational research sites is available in the respective background country reports (World Bank and Akram 2016; World Bank and AREU 2016; World Bank and SSB 2016).

Gathering Information

The study methodology is qualitative and combines multiple methods, summarized in box A.1. The country-based field research was conducted by local partners, with technical backstopping provided by the research task team.¹ The methodology was inductive in that we began with broad questions and key gaps and iteratively narrowed the focus based on the empirical findings that emerged. This process included multistakeholder workshops, in-country field visits to deliberate with local partners, refinement of the findings through expert input, and literature reviews of emerging topics.

Regarding the interview method, we made every attempt to triangulate responses from individual interviews with information from focus group discussions and with primary and secondary data. Much of the information in the study regarding the views, interests, and behavior of armed insurgent actors are based on third-party intermediaries because insurgent groups are often extremely difficult to access and highly fragmented. We triangulated the views of the intermediaries when possible. Further research could include interviews with insurgents.

Box A.1. Summary of Research Methods

The findings were generated and triangulated using the following methods:

- **Systematic metareview of global evidence.** The review included existing knowledge on social service delivery (SSD) in violence-affected contexts, political economy and violence conceptual frameworks, existing policy guidance on low-income and violence-affected contexts, and knowledge on delivering health and education in fragile contexts.
- **Review of country-, sector-, and intervention-related evidence.** The review included the full range of academic-, policy-, donor-, and project-related documentation, both internal and external to the World Bank.
- **Semistructured key informant interviews (KIIs).** Over 220 interviews were conducted in Islamabad, Kabul, and Kathmandu—capital cities of the three countries selected—and at field sites with a range of informants, including current and former World Bank staff, project team leaders, sector specialists, government officials, service providers, subject experts, donor agencies, implementing partners, and elites and leaders at various levels.
- **Field visits and focus group discussion (FGDs).** These visits and discussions were conducted to triangulate and validate the findings, observe the on-the-ground power dynamics, enrich the findings through rolling group discussions, and ensure representation from users of the services.
- **Systematic interview transcript analysis.** Based on transcript analysis methodologies, the key informant interviews and focus group discussions were coded, clustered, and analyzed to draw out common findings and issues.
- **Expert input and consultations.** Sectoral, country-specific, and global experts provided comments and input at various points in the process.
- **Multistakeholder consultations.** Consultations were held with local partners, experts, and donor officials.

Why We Chose These Methods: Case Selection and Limitations

The case studies were selected based on research puzzles developed from gaps in the literature (see background country reports). Pakistan’s Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, post-2006 Nepal’s Hill Region and the Tarai, and the regions in Afghanistan were chosen based on variations in outcomes of service delivery;² the Balochistan Education Support Project (BESP) was chosen for being an outlier of progress in the province; and the period of large-scale violent conflict in Nepal (1996–2006) was chosen for its counterintuitive nationwide progress in social service delivery (SSD) during a period of political violence. We then attempted to discover what political economy dynamics and forms of violence are associated with—if not the cause of—such variations. The aim was to construct analytical narratives to suggest potential explanations for the divergences because the current theory and practice literature could not, at least in our cases. Thus, the cases were chosen purposefully but were not necessarily meant to be representative of country context. For example, the polio campaign may not be emblematic of service delivery in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa or the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. It was a discrete activity born out of unique circumstances, with highly specific characteristics. Insights drawn from the polio campaign may not be readily extrapolated to

other service delivery areas. All the regions chosen had experienced political violence.

Case study sites were not chosen randomly, and no attempt was made to set up a randomized controlled trial (RCT). Because political contexts and dynamics vary so widely across regions affected by large-scale political violence (Kalyvas 2003), we determined that the RCT method—often not feasible in fragile, conflict, and violence-affected areas—would be largely inappropriate as a method of case selection. While RCTs are useful for describing what works, they are much less useful for drawing inferences or demonstrating causality (Basu 2014). In addition, lessons learned from RCTs translate poorly because contexts differ within and across countries (Hausmann 2016). Finally, a more fine-grained analysis with a “small N” sample permits us to trace and explain how a combination of factors—local political settlements, elite bargaining, forms and motivations of violence, and mode of delivery—generate divergent outcomes in ways that the RCT method could not (Basu 2014; Hausmann 2016). In this sense, the case selection method was used to develop a more general theoretical framework for how and why these four dimensions matter to SSD outcomes (see Thomas 1998).

Sectors and associated projects were selected for several reasons. The sectors chosen in each country focused on basic social services that emphasized serving the poor. The intention

was not to provide systematic comparative analysis of sector specificities but rather to focus on common patterns and processes of pro-poor service delivery. The focal projects for each sector were selected based on: if the project spanned some of the period of violent conflict; if the project and sector presented interesting puzzles about successes, challenges, or divergent outcomes; and if the World Bank project team was interested in the study remit, which would improve the chances of getting access to data and encourage future uptake. In short, the study focuses on selected sectors with key projects as focal points. Note, however, that the report does not focus on attributing impacts to specific projects. It covers selected sectoral projects but is not limited to them or does not attempt to separate them from other processes in the sectors.³ In many cases, we did not attempt to distinguish them from broader sectoral or government processes or to examine the impact of additional resources compared with none.

We focus on four dimensions in the analytical framework—local political settlements, elite bargaining, forms and motivations of violence, and mode of delivery—due to several factors. Like the case study selection, these dimensions were chosen as the organizing ideas of the study after a number of iterations of the research framework based on what the empirical material was telling us, what the gaps in the literature were, and how we could explain the puzzles in each case. As previously noted, this was an inductive process: we had

developed hunches and working hypotheses based on the literature, and we chose study sites with divergent outcomes in SSD and examined what differed in terms of political economy and violence patterns. We wanted to develop an analytical framework that was focused enough to identify patterns that had not yet been illuminated in the literature. For a similarly focused approach that attempts to explain patterns of political order, see North, Wallis, and Weingast (2009) regarding limited access orders.

These four dimensions emerged as important contributors to implementation and outcomes; and they have been underemphasized in the available literature. However, while we focus on these areas, we do not suggest that other issues do not matter. For example, there is a well-established notion that beneficiary participation and service provider incentives are central drivers of service delivery (World Bank 2004). Our study did not focus on these factors because interview and other evidence did not suggest that they were decisive in addressing the research puzzles. However, we do say something about beneficiaries and service providers, even if they tend to be elite dominated, as discussed in the report.⁴ Our framework should be seen as an attempt to specify how politics and forms of violence affect more mainstream models of service delivery, such as the accountability triangle approach from the 2004 World Development Report (World Bank 2003) or community-driven development.

The puzzles and framework can be tested with further research. In this sense, our work is a starting point. Research in other contexts would be desirable to further test the findings. Nevertheless, our findings were triangulated with the national and global evidence base to increase their wider applicability.⁵ Further research could similarly incorporate the opinions of beneficiaries regarding services, their levels of participation, and the motivation of providers to understand how the strategies of the elites take their views into account. We hope this work encourages further research into such important dynamics.

This study does not attempt to address the impact of SSD on broader political dynamics, such as peace-building and state-building. While this an important area of research, we think that the link is indirect and overly broad to provide granular, day-to-day guidance for policy makers and practitioners on the ground. The assumption that delivering social protection and basic services contributes to state-building outcomes appears with a striking degree of regularity in the literature, and yet empirical evidence supporting or undermining this link is very thin (Carpenter, Slater, and Mallett 2012; Haar and Rubenstein 2012).

The study does address the extent to which SSD can become a target for political violence. In this respect, we aim to understand why and how this occurs, and provide donors guidance on how to “do no harm” at various points in this study.

Notes

1. Technical backstopping included regular two-way communications as well regular field visits from the task team to debate and refine emerging findings and fill gaps. For example, the task team provided detailed guidance notes on the analytical framework, field research methodology, key informant interview questions, and background report drafts.

2. See King, Keohane, and Verba (1994) on the importance of variation in outcomes when designing research.

3. Note that the report also focuses on how services are delivered in violence-affected contexts. It does not focus on the relationship between SSD and state-building or state legitimacy (Mcloughlin 2014); the relationship between SSD and peace-building (Denny, Mallett, and Mazurana 2015); or whether SSD contributes to changes in the political settlement (Barrientos and Pellissery 2012). Moreover, it is difficult to establish linear causal relationships between political economy and service delivery outcomes (Harris and Wild 2013: 4).

4. For example, while there were very few systematic surveys available on the opinions of beneficiaries, we conducted a small survey of marginalized groups in Nepal; and the scorecard that formed the puzzles on Afghanistan embedded beneficiary opinions in the index.

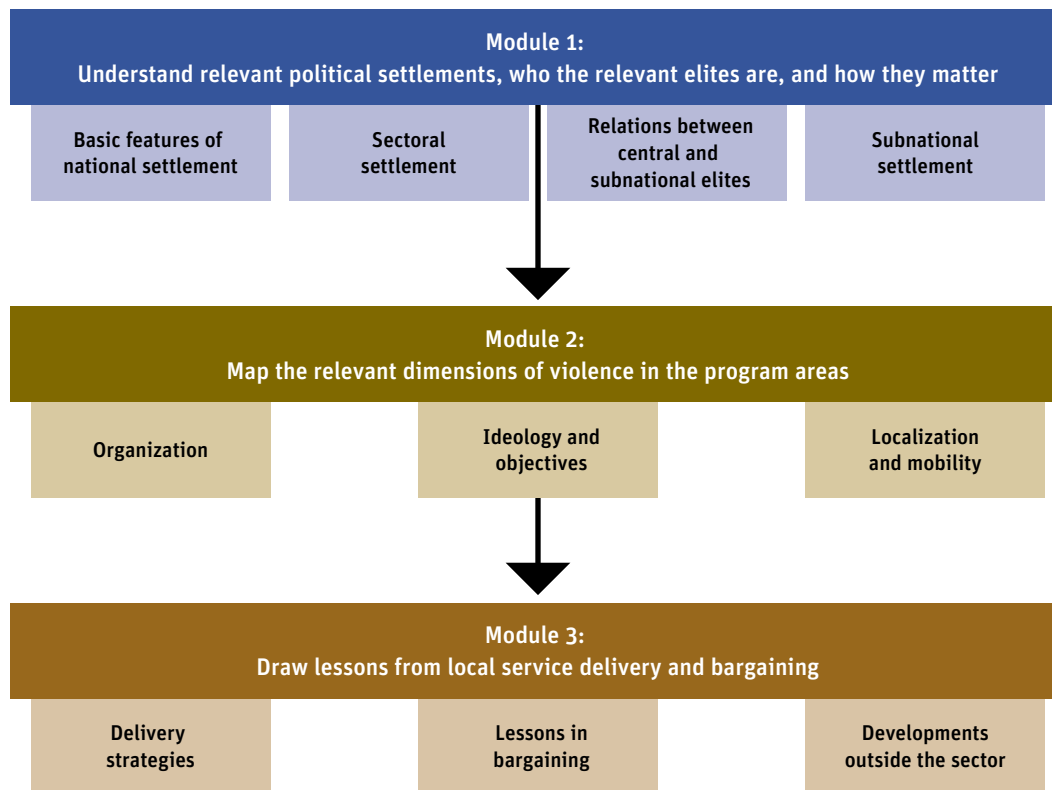
5. The findings are complementary to rather than a substitute for other technical analyses. The political economy analysis should be viewed as a complement to help solve complex development problems (Booth, Harris, and Wild 2016).

Appendix B. A Diagnostic Tool: Steps and Question Set

Chapter 8 describes the rationale and modules for this diagnostic tool. Its core purpose is to help practitioners gain a better understanding of the important dimensions of political settlements, violence, and service delivery bargaining in a given context to help them support interventions that are more sensitive

to these aspects. Figure B.1 summarizes the main diagnostic modules, followed by sample sets of questions. Note that this is merely a starting point—additional questions can be developed depending on the context and interests of practitioners.

Figure B.1. Main diagnostic modules



Module 1: Guiding Questions

Basic features at the center of power

- Who are the key power holders in the ruling coalition? What is the relationship between the ruling elites and violent actors?
- What mechanisms help sustain the settlement? To what degree can elites act collectively to deliver goods?
- To what extent is the settlement clientelistic/developmental, exclusionary/inclusive, or stable/unstable?
- How do these features affect the space for delivery in the given sector?

Sectoral dimensions

- What is the balance of power and nature of rent-sharing agreements in the sector? What are the interests, incentives, and ideas of elites with regard to the focal sector?
- What are the opportunities for rents in the sector, and how does this influence the way service delivery resources are allocated? What are the dominant modes of delivery in the sector, and how does this impact on rent-sharing (for example, state-led versus contracting out, preventative versus curative health care delivery)?

Relationship between central and local elites

- What is the nature of the relationship between ruling elites at the center (often in the capital) and powerful elites in relevant subnational areas?
- What is the degree of state penetration over the subnational territory?
- How does the above shape the amount of, and channels for, service delivery resources to the area? How does it shape the degree of autonomy of subnational elites to deliver/manage/allocate resources?

Subnational dimensions

- Who are the powerful elites (armed and unarmed) in the subnational area?
- What is the nature of the subnational settlement, and how is it sustained and reproduced?
- What is the relationship and relative balance of power between subnational elites and armed elites?
- To what extent do key elites have ideas, interests, and incentives in favor of broader-based service delivery?

Module 2: Guiding Questions

Drivers

- What are the key drivers of violence?
- How does this relate to the dynamics associated with the forms of political settlements?

Organization

- To what degree is violence organized so that leaders for bargaining are identifiable?
- To what degree are violent actors disciplined and homogenous so that bargains can be struck and upheld?

Ideology, objectives, and incentives

- What are the objectives and ideology of the armed elites? To what degree does the logic, scope, and mode of delivery align with such objectives?
- Do armed elites have a “policy” toward the services in question? Does this cascade through their ranks?
- Do armed elites have incentives to enable the service (for example, rents, need to use service, helps them achieve goals)?
- Are different modes of delivery likely to be more acceptable to armed elites? For example, which actors would they trust to deliver the services? Would they be more comfortable with decentralized delivery?

Localization and mobility

- To what degree are the armed elites locally anchored as opposed to more mobile/roving across borders?
- Do armed elites need/want local support and do locals want the service?
- Do local elites have relative power to bargain with/constrain local insurgents?

Module 3: Guiding Questions

Experience and strategies for delivery bargaining

- What are the prior lessons of front-line service delivery and bargaining in the violence-affected area? Has dialogue been established with insurgents and bargains struck? Was this formalized?
- Are there opportunities for bargaining? If not, how could services be delivered in those areas?
- Given steps 1, 2, and 3, which types of bargains might be feasible? What are the likely trade-offs?

Service delivery strategies

- How are services currently being delivered in the sector? What are the institutional channels for delivery and political economy challenges for implementation?
- Do the sectors have certain policies/strategies for delivering services in violence-affected areas? How well are they working, and have any lessons been learned?
- What is the feasibility and opportunities for making delivery more sensitive to local politics and violence?

Developments outside the sector

- What is the nature of income and land distribution in the area? How might this affect service delivery, citizen demand, and forms of political organization?
- What other projects are in the focal region (for example, roads and livelihoods)? Are there opportunities for multisectoral approaches?

Reference List and Bibliography

The following in-text citations refer to the interview transcript codes used for informants and focus group participants:

Afghanistan: KL: IDI-63, KL: KII-34, KL: KII-35, KL: KII-36, KL: KII-37, KL: KII-42, KL: KII-43, KL: KII-44, KL: KII-45, KL: KII-47, KL: KII-49, KL: KII-50, KL: KII-53, BS: IDI-22, BS: IDI-23, BS: IDI-31, BS: IDI-32, BS: IDI-33, BS: KII-15, WK: IDI-07, WK: IDI-09, WK: IDI-13, WK: IDI-14, WK: IDI-16, WK: IDI-17, WK: IDI-18, WK: FGD-18, WK: KII-01, WK: KII-02, WK: KII-03, WK: KII-05, WK: KII-06, WK: KII-07, WK: KII-09, WK: KII-12, WK: KII-13, WK: KII-18

Nepal: KII-03-NEP-GEN, G2-KII-SRH, G3-KII-SRH, G8-KII-SRH; G9-KII-SRH, G10-KII-SRH, G13-KII-BAR, G15-KII-BAR, G17-KII-PAL, G19-KII-PAL, R5-KII-KTH, R6-KII-KTH, R8-KII-SRH, R9-KII-SRH, H3-FGD-SRH, H8-FGD-PAL, H4-KII-SRH, H5-KII-SRH, H6-KII-SRH; H7-KII-SRH, H8-KII-SRH, H10-KII-SRH, H13-KII-BAR, H14-KII-BAR, H16-KII-BAR, H17-KII-PAL, H18-KII-PAL, H20-KII-PAL, H21-KII-PAL, H22-KII-PAL, H25-KII-PAL, H29-KII-ROL, H30-KII-ROL, H32-KII-ROL, H1-FGD-SRH, H4-FGD-SRH, H6-FGD-BAR, H7-FGD-BAR, H8-FGD-PAL, R1-FGD-SRH, R5-KII-KTH, R20-KII-PAL

Pakistan: KII-01, KII-02, KII-03, KII-04, KII-05, KII-08, KII-09, KII-11, KII-12, KII-14, KII-15, FGD-01, R-04-KII-PSH, R-05-KII-PSH, R07-KII-PSH, R09-KII-PSH, R10-KII-PSH, R11-KII-PSH, R12-KII-PSH, R13-KII-PSH, R15-FGD-PSH, R18-FGD-PSH, R19-FGD-PSH, R-19-FGD-NWA, R20-FGD-PSH, R-24-GI-PSH, KII01-PAK-BAL

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