

Summer 2014

Post-conflict reconstruction: Impediments and challenges in the process of sustainable reconstruction and development in post-2014 Afghanistan

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By Mohammad Ilyas Payab

Entitled

POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION: IMPEDIMENTS AND CHALLENGES IN THE
PROCESS OF SUSTAINABLE RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN POST-2014 AF

For the degree of Master of Science in Building Construction Management

Is approved by the final examining committee:

Kirk Alter

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07/22/2014

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POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION: IMPEDIMENTS AND CHALLENGES IN
THE PROCESS OF SUSTAINABLE RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN
POST-2014 AFGHANISTAN

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty

of

Purdue University

by

Mohammad Ilyas Payab

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

of

Master of Science in Building Construction Management

August 2014

Purdue University

West Lafayette, Indiana

To my parents – for I will not be where I am without their love, support and
encouragement

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At times words cannot truly express the feelings of a person and this is one of those moments. To mold this study and bring it to fruition, a number of people did not back down in extending their continuous guidance, suggestions, criticisms, support and encouragement. I am greatly thankful to these people from the bottom of my heart. As my chair, Dr. Kirk Alter was always there to provide me with the much needed advice and encouragement. His unparalleled knowledge of countless subjects truly inspired me to do everything possible within my efforts. Dr. Daniel Aldrich, who with his unprecedented knowledge of the political world, post-disaster recovery, and development, provided me much invaluable criticism and guidance, broadening my insight of the subject. Dr. Mark Shaurette, whose continuous support and suggestions gave me much encouragement at times when I really needed it. I am truly grateful to all these great people for providing me with their expertise and being patient with me. To Dr. Riall Nolan, who provided critical guidance in qualitative research, I am equally thankful.

Finally, I am much grateful to my parents for their continuous support and encouragement, and for being there for me at all times.

I am equally thankful to all those friends whom I have not mentioned here but have supported me throughout this study.

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ABSTRACT

Payab, Mohammad I. M.S.B.C.M., Purdue University, August 2014. Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Impediments and Challenges in the Process of Sustainable Reconstruction and Development in Post-2014 Afghanistan. Major Professor: Kirk Alter.

Armed conflicts have left numerous marks on the history of mankind and still continue to do so. They have resulted in considerable damage to the social and physical fabric of the society. Millions of people both in the past and present have been suffering from the consequences of this unfortunate man-made disaster. Yet we see a continuing trend that seems to be resistant to any change despite efforts on a global level. This study sets out to understand the nature of *reconstruction* and development after armed conflicts with a focus on Afghanistan. After more than a decade of expended efforts, billions of dollars and sacrificed lives, desired results and set objectives have not been achieved by the international community and the Afghan government. This process of rebuilding Afghanistan seems to be a non-integrated effort on the part of the international community and the Afghan government, which has resulted in a process of development and *reconstruction* that is unsustainable, especially after the withdrawal of the international forces in 2014. The aim of this study is to identify and understand the nature and complexity of the challenges and impediments in this process. It attempts to

catalogue and discuss the problems and obstacles in this process of *reconstruction & development* by establishing a conceptual framework of the main issues.

Keywords: Afghanistan, Post-conflict reconstruction & development, Sustainable, Impediments

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. Hate multiplies hate, violence multiplies violence, and toughness multiplies toughness in a descending spiral of destruction...The chain reaction of evil -- hate begetting hate, wars producing more wars -- must be broken, or we shall be plunged into the dark abyss of annihilation.”

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968)

1.1 Background

Contrary to the common belief, the end of Cold War did not result in a global peace by putting a halt to the proxy wars. The following period witnessed a series of new and bitter civil, ethnic, and religious wars. They have been quite destructive and have caused physical, social, and economic losses (Hasic, 2004). From 1946 to 2001 there were 225 armed conflicts (Gleditsch, et al, 2002). During this time, the period from 1989 to 1999 has been the most intense producing some 110 armed conflicts in 73 locations (Wallensteen and Sollenberg, 2000). These armed conflicts have disrupted and/or destroyed the society at all levels – from social to economic to physical to technological. The conflicts in Africa, the Americas, Europe, and Asia have been characterized by

targeting not just combatants but also civilians. This practice could also be observed in some of the other conflicts in history; however this has become a common war tactic specifically in the last half of the twentieth century. These conflicts have increased sectarian and ethnic violence and undermined the authority of the civil government. One can point to a number of these conflicts that have lasted for years and ended in unstable peace, sometimes still followed by periodic clashes (Weiss Fagen, 1995). The genocide in Rwanda and the conflicts in Sudan and Somalia in Africa; the conflicts in Kosovo, Serbia and Chechnya in Europe; the prolonged Palestinian and the current Syrian conflict in the Middle East are some that could be mentioned here. Figure 1.1 shows the number of deaths caused by the armed conflicts from 1970 to 1994 in 42 countries, representing some 44% of the world population, which resulted in the loss of more than 12 million lives (Haughton, 1998).

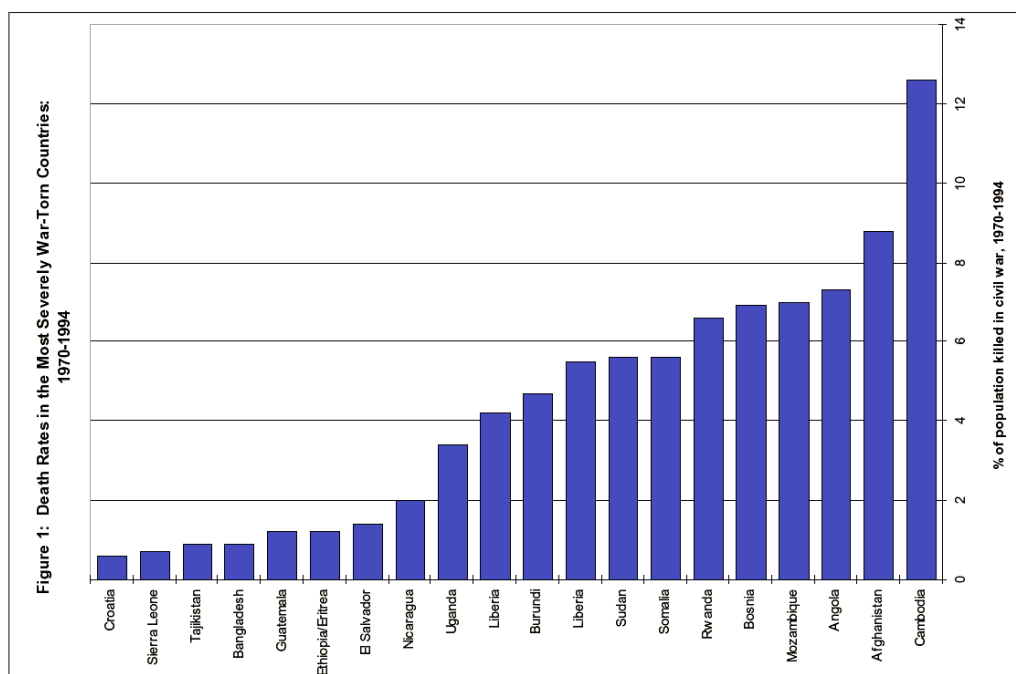


Figure 1.1. Death rates in most severely war-torn countries 1970-1994
(Source: J. Haughton, *The Reconstruction of War-Torn Economies*, Harvard 1998.)

Conflicts have devastated a number of countries in the recent past. It has resulted in the complete destruction of cities (Grozny), prolonged urban warfare (Beirut), extended siege (Sarajevo), displacement of entire populations (Kosovo), ethnic cleansing (Bosnia and Herzegovina), and throwing back of countries to the middle ages (Afghanistan) (Hasic, 2004). This destruction is followed by a process of rehabilitation activities entailing provision of humanitarian needs, physical restoration, political restructuring, economic regeneration, reconciliation, and setting a framework for sustainable development (Barakat and MacGinty, 2002). This process requires structured planning. Contrary to armed conflicts, which result in a process of negative change, planning aims to achieve goal driven changes through coordination of activities. “Planning is about problem solving, about shaping the future; it is about improving the quality of life. All of these aspects lie at the core of post-conflict reconstruction” (Hasic, 2004).



Figure 1.2. Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development Process

The reconstruction plan of a conflict affected state is set out by the international community and organizations in agreement with the representatives of the conflict state as the conflict comes to an end. The donor community and development agencies – the World Bank, United Nations, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID),

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Department for International Development (DFID) and so forth – often under the guidance of the United Nations begin the reconstruction and emergency relief activities as soon as the conflict ends. Haughton (1998) observes that the activities of the international community and development agencies focus on four areas: political reconstruction (moving to elections), support for security (retraining the police force), humanitarian relief (food) and reconstruction of physical infrastructure (water services, electricity and housing). The international community and development agencies believe that once peace has been brought to a conflict affected state; all efforts should be made to prevent a recurrence of another conflict. This approach of the international community implies that peace building is a requirement for development. This is an essential condition that must be prioritized over other relief and recovery activities (Hasic, 2004).

This study focuses on Afghanistan which has been a stage for armed conflicts for more than three decades. It attempts to identify and understand the difficulties and challenges that have been a blockade in the process of sustainable reconstruction and development in the past decade; and bring to light the major problems and impediments faced by this process after the 2014 withdrawal of the international forces from Afghanistan.

1.2 Significance

Armed conflicts cause extensive damage to the economic, social, and physical systems of a country. Armed conflicts are a major constraint in development (Hasic, 2004). The international community has been involved in the reconstruction and

development of Afghanistan after the collapse of the Taliban in 2001. Since then billions of dollars have been expended in the reconstruction and rehabilitation process. Common sense would suggest that with the presence of the international community and the aid from many donor states and organizations, the situation should have ameliorated. However, there has not been as much progress as either the international community or the Afghans themselves had hoped for.

Afghanistan remains one of the poorest, least developed countries in the world. Afghanistan will not meet its Millennium Development Goal targets, even on an extended time frame. Unemployment is currently around 30%. Over half the population lives in poverty, a third lacks enough to eat, and 40% of Afghan children are underweight. Two out of every ten children born in a rural Afghan area will die before their fifth birthday. Nearly five out of ten people do not have regular access to clean drinking water. Life expectancy is just 47 years. Over 80% of Afghans do not have access to reliable electricity (HM Government, 2009). Furthermore, with each passing day an increase in attacks from the insurgent groups has been observed. Between 2002 and 2007 the number of improvised explosive device (IED) attacks rose by nearly 6000%, and annual international military fatalities more than tripled (Barakat and Zyck, 2009).

Both the international community and the government have been immensely criticized by the Afghan public for their inability to achieve better results in the reconstruction and development of the country. One question that can be raised is why in spite of all the efforts by the international community and the state institutions, desired results are not achieved. Despite the support of many countries and organizations,

Afghanistan is perceived to be heading towards a failure. Thus, the urge to understand the underlying roots and causes, significance and characteristics of the challenges and impediments is felt. This understanding would better enable the involved actors in the recovery process to avoid the different blockades and create a strategy and set of policies that would result in better outcomes. Such policies could ensure stability and development in the political, economic, social, educational, and infrastructural sectors which could prevent a relapse into violence.

1.3 Statement of Purpose

The rebuilding of Afghanistan could be seen as a process of non-integrated efforts lacking shared-vision carried out by the international community and state institutions. Such a lack of coordination has resulted in an ineffective recovery and development process which could push Afghanistan into another phase of violence and calamity after the withdrawal of the international forces in 2014. The overall goal of this study is to contribute to a better understanding of the complexity of post-conflict reconstruction and development. The objective of this work is to identify the major factors affecting the process of sustainable reconstruction and development in the post-2014 Afghanistan.

1.4 Research Questions

This study is intended to address the following research questions:

- What are the major factors affecting the process of sustainable reconstruction and development in the post-2014 Afghanistan?

- What are the underlying issues impeding the success of Afghanistan's reconstruction and development program?
- In the light of the findings of this study, what measures could be taken to improve the process of reconstruction and development in Afghanistan?

1.5 Research Design

The research tools utilized for this study are the Delphi technique and case studies. The Delphi technique is a qualitative method that gathers data from sources considered expert in their respective fields. This research method was selected because of the complex nature of this subject and the lack of comprehensive data available. Each of the questions presented to the participants was intended to reveal the different aspects of this subject and the connections they have with each other. Therefore, this approach seemed to be the best method to answer the questions posed in this research and have the potential to shed further light on this topic based on the practical experience of people who are involved in the process of reconstruction and development, in particular in Afghanistan.

The case studies method analyzes actual cases within specific settings to understand a specific problem or issue within a given context. The cases studied were of actual projects implemented in Afghanistan. Each case was carefully analyzed to identify the different issues experienced from project conception to completion. Further, this approach was adopted to reinforce the findings of the Delphi technique.

1.6 Disciplinary Lens

The curiosity that led the author of this study to pose the aforementioned research questions is his experience. The author of this study is a graduate student in the field of Building Construction Management. He has worked in different capacities in the construction industry of Afghanistan. The challenges he experienced and observed in the process of reconstruction and development while working in Afghanistan has shaped this study.

1.7 Assumptions

The ideal underlying assumptions for this study are that after the withdrawal of the international forces from Afghanistan in 2014, the situation will not deviate towards deterioration but rather melioration. Since corruption and insecurity are two major variables that could turn the situation to better or worse, it is assumed that the upcoming elections of 2014 would result in further peace and stability with clear accountability and transparency within the state institutions. In this regard, it is assumed that the ongoing reconciliation and peace talks with the insurgent groups will result in a productive outcome. Such an outcome could assist in preparing the ground for tackling issues such as education, gender, social equity, health, human rights, and others in the rural regions of Afghanistan. Furthermore, it is assumed that the international community will remain committed to their financial and technical support to Afghanistan after 2014 as pledged in the Kabul conference in 2010 and Tokyo conference in 2012.

However, it would be unrealistic to assume that what the Afghan government with the assistance of more than 42 countries and other international organizations could

not achieve in 12 years could do it in a matter of a few years all the while when most of the international community will withdraw from Afghanistan after 2014. Therefore, realistically speaking, the overall situation of Afghanistan may improve but only gradually. It could take decades to fight corruption and establish accountability and transparency in all public and private institutions. The peace-talk between the Afghan government, the international community, and the Taliban, having failed once, has shown no progress for months, leaving the security situation as doubtful as before. Thus, it would be a while before peace and stability could be observed in Afghanistan given the uncertainties present on the ground.

1.8 Limitations

Limitations refer to restrictions in the study beyond the researchers' control (Rudestam and Newton, 2001). The field of post-conflict reconstruction is still a developing one and there is no clear and established theoretical foundation or strict conceptual and operational framework for analyzing these kinds of situations (Hasic, 2004). Due to certain restrictions, the author could not go to the field for data collection. As a result, data collection took place via electronic means of communication – mainly email. This might have resulted in the author not being able to observe the subjects' facial expressions, language tones and other bodily gestures in response to certain questions which could have proved to be valuable while analyzing the results. Further, some of the subjects due to the nature of this study might not have responded to the author's questions to the full extent of their knowledge because of the confidentiality and sensitivity related to some of the issues. Similarly, some of the individuals approached

for participation in this study might not have been able to participate due to either personal or official reasons. Some of the data used in this study has been from sources published by other researchers which could be less reliable, outdated and different among sources. Further, the project data required for this study was limited and not available on the databases of some organizations for general public use. This lack of project data could bias the results as the data available might not be completely representing the whole range of issues on this subject.

1.9 Delimitations

Delimitations imply limitations imposed deliberately on the research design (Rudestam and Newton, 2001). This study is delimited to the reconstruction and development of post-conflict states, in particular Afghanistan. In this regard, extensive cross country comparisons with other post-conflict states from Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas could not be done due to the sheer amount of literature available and the limited availability of time. Therefore, the findings of this study may only be applicable to Afghanistan and those countries/regions that share similar situations and circumstances.

1.10 Definitions

Post-conflict recovery – due to the complex and multifaceted nature of this term and the multiple disciplines involved therein – engineering, architecture, education, medicine, etc. – it is difficult to narrow its definition to a singular term. However, by its aims and objectives, it could be defined as a process to reactivate the economic and social development to create a peaceful environment to prevent a

relapse into violence. This definition may be widely agreeable to; however, it may be subject to change in the context of varying level of crisis and geographical regions (Barakat and Zyck, 2009).

Post-conflict reconstruction – the World Bank’s definition of post-conflict reconstruction focuses on the needs for “the rebuilding of the socioeconomic framework of society” and the “reconstruction of the enabling conditions for a functioning peacetime society [to include] the framework of governance and rule of law.” (World Bank, 1998). However, Hamre and Sullivan argue that besides the above definition provided by the World Bank, “post-conflict reconstruction includes providing and enhancing not only social and economic well-being and governance and the rule of law but also other elements of justice and reconciliation and, very centrally, security” (Hamre and Sullivan, 2002).

Post-conflict stabilization – in the context of post-conflict states, stabilization refers to the “establishment of basic security, with humanitarian activities serving as force protection and public diplomacy, rather than for more comprehensive and customarily civilian domains such as governance and socioeconomic development” (Barakat and Zyck, 2009).

Post-conflict societies – by revelation, “post-conflict societies are societies in which rebellion had proved to be feasible” (Collier, et al, 2008).

Sustainable construction and development – sustainability is defined as, “that which is capable of being sustained” and addresses three key areas – economic, social, environmental. Sustainable construction and development as defined in the Brundtland Report is construction and development that “meets the needs of the

present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987). Within the context of this study it would refer to construction and development that is sustainable by the government and people of Afghanistan.

Armed conflict – an armed conflict is defined as “a contested incompatibility that concerns government or territory or both where the use of armed force between two parties results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a year. Of these two parties, at least one has to be the government of a state” (Themner & Wallenstein, 2012).

Civil war – Collier et al, defines four main characteristics of a civil war. “It requires that there is organized military action and that at least 1,000 battle-deaths resulted. In order to distinguish wars from genocides, massacres and pogroms, there has to be effective resistance – at least 5% of the deaths have been inflicted by the weaker party.” (Collier, et al, 2008).

Peace building – a “set of transitional reconstruction activities undertaken in a postwar phase, designed to lay the foundation for longer-term developments such as democratization, economic development and social justice.” (Suhrke, Harpviken, & Strand, 2002). It could also be defined as, “actions undertaken by national or international actors to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict” (Rocha Menocal, 2011).

State building - state building refers to the “set of actions undertaken by national and/or international actors to establish, reform and strengthen state institutions where these have been seriously eroded or are missing” (Rocha Menocal, 2011).

Political settlement - a “political settlement is the expression of a common understanding, usually forged among elites, about how political power is to be organized and exercised, and about how the nature of the relationship between state and society is to be articulated” (Rocha Menocal, 2011).

Factors and Issues – it should be noted that within the context of this study, factors and issues are used interchangeably.

1.11 Audience of this Study

This study is intended to serve as a source of information about the different aspects and relevant problems faced in the process of reconstruction and development to the author, the researchers and professionals involved in this field and process, and the general populace, particularly of Afghanistan, interested in learning about this subject. It is hoped that the findings of this research will prove to be valuable – no matter to how small a group of people – in understanding the impact of some of these issues on this process and the development of new ideas that could lead to improvements and efficiency in the process of reconstruction and development resulting in better and sustainable outcomes.

1.12 Chapter Summary

The intensity and frequency of the armed conflicts have increased since WWII. Some have been interstate while most of them have been intrastate conflicts. These conflicts have caused partial or complete state failures resulting in the destruction of the political, economic, social, environmental, and technological sectors.

Subsequent to this destruction is the process of recovery and reconstruction. The international community, Non-Governmental Organizations, and donors get involved in this process alongside the institutions of the post-conflict state. However, due to the different political and other agendas of these actors, their efforts are not concentrated and integrated towards recovery and reconstruction. These uncoordinated efforts result in unsustainable practices in the reconstruction and development of the post-conflict state. Thus the need to identify the impediments and challenges in this process are essential. Forming a strategy and set of policies to avoid these impediments while channeling and focusing the use of resources with structured planning towards a common goal will result in better outcomes.

The objective of this study is to identify and bring to light the major challenges and impediments faced by the process of sustainable reconstruction and development in Afghanistan. However, due to the complex nature of this topic and lack of widely available research materials, this study will be carried out with certain assumptions, limitations, and delimitations taken into account. This will limit the findings of this study to Afghanistan and regions with similar characteristics.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

“War is not a single catastrophic event but a devastating way of life closely associated with chronic poverty and social injustice. Peace is not a quick fix but a development process that begins and can be nurtured long before ceasefires are brokered, and which needs to be sustained through years of ‘post-war recovery’”.

Dr. Barakat and Chard (2002)

2.1 Conflicts

The history of mankind has been marked by numerous conflicts. Conflicts occur because of the differences among people. Differences in perception, perspectives, and values lead to disagreements. These disagreements may be related to territory, economic interests, religion, culture and ideology. Disagreements may lead to tense disputes which may result in conflicts of different scales (Kress, 2012). Hasic states that “war, armed conflict, violent conflict, humanitarian war, guerrilla war, ethnic violence, civilian strife or political violence are all terms without precise definition and very often used indiscriminately to support a specific point of view” (Hasic, 2004). However, whatever term is used, it is certain that conflicts depress national economies and degrade many aspects of social life (Carlton-Ford, 2009).

Historically, the objective of a conflict has been to control territory. However, in order to gain political control, insurgents design contemporary conflicts to disrupt ongoing day to day life (Carlton-Ford, 2009). Conflicts of this nature target both civilians and combatants as seen in the wars in Africa, Central America, the Balkans and in parts of Asia (Hasic, 2004). Such disruptions affect all the sectors of a state – social, political, economic, environmental, physical and technological.

Looking at the period from the end of Second World War (WWII) to 2011, there have been 248 conflicts active in 153 locations worldwide (Themner & Wallenstein, 2012). Figure 2.1 shows the trend of armed conflicts since 1946. Of these 248 conflicts, more than 140 have been civil wars. The data available puts the number of casualties to around 20 million and the people displaced to 67 million for these wars. Comparing this data to that of WWII, the number of casualties are almost equivalent to half with more than double the number of people displaced (Panic, 2005). Among these conflicts, the genocide in Rwanda was one of the most intensive killing campaigns in history. The conflict in Caucasus resulted in the worst destruction of physical infrastructure since WWII. The conflict in Palestine is the most prolonged conflict of all (Hasic, 2004).

The end of Cold War instilled the image of an ideal world in the minds of people. In the absence of friction and tension between states supported by one or the other of the world super powers – the capitalists and the communists – people began to dream. They dreamt of an era of peace, development, prosperity and cooperation within and between states. However, there were skeptics who feared the uprise of the ethnic and cultural conflicts in the post-Cold War era, and it turns out they were right (Panic, 2005). From 1989 to 2011, there have been 137 armed conflicts in regions including Europe,

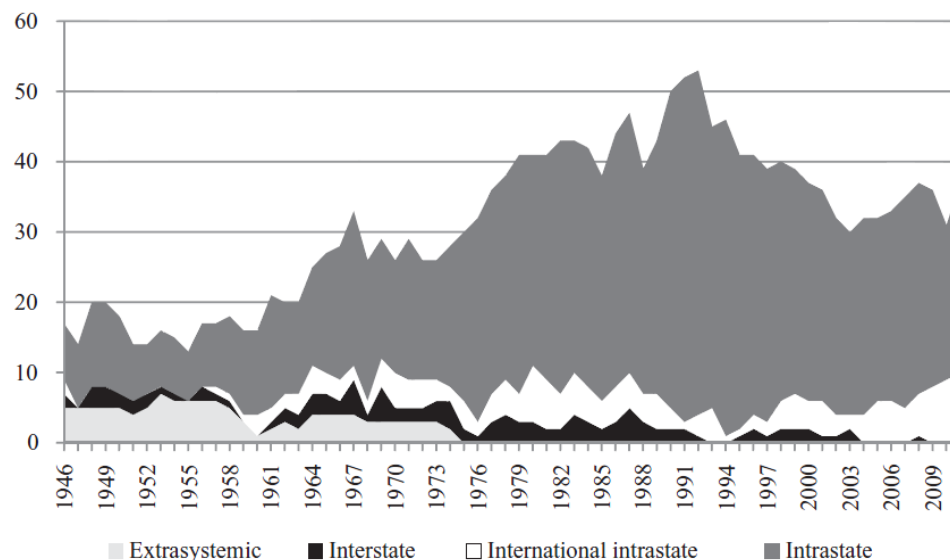


Figure 2.1. Number of Armed Conflicts by Type, 1946-2011
(Source: Themner & Wallensteen, *Armed Conflicts, 1946-2011*, 2012)

Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Americas (Themner & Wallensteen, 2012). Table 2.1 presents the conflicts by types from 1989 to 2011. Table 2.2 presents the conflicts by region for the same time period. In 2011, 37 armed conflicts were active in 30 locations. This figure is substantially lower than the active 50 armed conflicts recorded in the early 1990s, while higher than the 31 conflicts recorded in 2010. The increase in conflicts from 2010 to 2011 is in fact the largest increase in the number of armed conflicts between any two years since 1990. This rise in the number of conflicts is partly due to the events related to the Arab Spring (Themner & Wallensteen, 2012).

Although, there is no general consensus on the causes of violent conflicts among academicians (Collier, Hoeffler, & Soderbom, 2008), researchers have identified different factors responsible for the conflicts in different parts of the world. However, due to the varying nature of a conflict, factors relevant to a conflict in one region of the world

may not be the same to the factors identified to a conflict in another region of the world. Still there are some characteristics that are found to be common amongst states that have experienced a conflict. Panic (2005) describes three of these characteristics as follows:

I. Poverty

According to the Human Development Index (HDI) of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) over 80 percent of the states that have experienced civil conflicts are in the bottom half of this list. The common economic characteristics shared by these states are unemployment and economic stagnation, with economic welfare and income security deteriorating rapidly. Over 40 – 50% of the population of these states is ranked as poor. As a result their levels of literacy, education, health standards and life expectancy are much lower than those of high or medium income states.

II. Impoverishment, Inequality and Pessimism

If a state is experiencing a gradual economic growth, development, and has a fair and just system then there would be no general feeling of civil unrest and conflict among people. The people would be certain that the system is working fairly for the benefit of all. However, this is not the case in many developing countries. There is a wide gap of income equality among people which has created a feeling of insecurity internationally. People feel less prosperous and are less optimistic about the future. This pessimism, if not reversed, will create a cycle of impoverishment, despair, and hate among the inhabitants of a state.

Low level of development results in invariably high level of unemployment. Since such a situation does not affect all the sections of a society equally, it creates inequality. As the overall effect is greater economic insecurity and dissatisfaction in the government

Table 2.1. Armed Conflicts by type and location, 1989-2011
 (Source: Themner & Wallensteen, Armed Conflicts, 1946-2011, 2012)

Level of Conflict	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Minor	30	35	39	41	35	35	34	33	32	28	26	27
War	13	15	13	12	10	11	7	8	7	12	13	10
All Conflicts	43	50	52	53	45	46	41	41	39	40	39	37
All Dyads	62	67	67	64	57	56	47	51	54	54	50	49
All Locations	36	37	38	39	32	33	31	31	29	32	31	28
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	89-2011
	28	26	25	25	27	28	31	32	30	27	31	89
	8	6	5	7	5	5	4	5	6	4	6	48
	36	32	30	32	32	33	35	37	36	31	37	137
	48	45	41	44	38	46	44	48	45	39	50	279
	29	24	23	24	23	24	25	27	27	25	30	81

Table 2.2. Armed Conflicts by region, 1989-2011
 (Source: Themner & Wallensteen, Armed Conflicts, 1946-2011, 2012)

Level of Conflict	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Europe	2	3	7	8	9	5	5	1	0	2	3	1
Middle East	4	7	8	7	7	6	6	7	4	3	3	3
Asia	16	21	15	20	15	16	16	18	19	16	15	17
Africa	12	13	17	14	11	15	10	12	14	17	16	15
Americas	9	6	5	4	3	4	4	3	2	2	2	1
All Regions	43	50	52	53	45	46	41	41	39	40	39	37
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	89-2011
	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	23
	3	2	3	3	5	5	4	4	5	5	6	15
	14	12	15	14	16	15	14	15	15	12	13	39
	15	15	10	10	7	10	12	13	12	10	15	46
	2	2	1	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	14
	36	32	30	32	32	33	35	37	36	31	37	137

and the system, it increases political instability and risk of conflict. Such a situation encourages immigration of highly skilled and educated labor along with the transfer of capital. This makes it even more difficult to reverse the economic decline, thus raising the likelihood of a conflict. Examples of states where sharp falls in income and large increases in unemployment preceded civil wars are Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Indonesia and Yugoslavia.

III. Social Divisions and Political Oppression

When the economic welfare and personal survival of people are threatened, they form alliances with people who face similar dangers to protect themselves. An independent and developed state will not collapse if the 'population is homogenous and share the same roots, language and religion; equality prevails in the society and there is no discrimination against any group of the people; every member of the society has the same legal rights, equal access to state institutions and influence on the way they are run, and most importantly the economic inequalities in the society are considered fair'.

If, however, there are economic inequalities and discrimination against certain groups of the society based on race, root, or religion, then the dominant social group will ensure to have power over key political offices and positions at all levels of the state. This would give them control over the country's resources, the army, the police, and judiciary, which will result in a continued discrimination and oppression. These actions will increase the risk of a conflict and the longer such discrimination and oppression continues, the more violent the eventual conflict will be.

2.2 Involvement and Policies of the International Community

A very simple question that might be asked is why the international community should get involved in the reconstruction and recovery of failed states. There are two sets of notions in this regard. First, such actions represent ‘rational and ethical attempts to support “universal goods” such as democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, and thereby create conditions under which those who have endured conflict and disruption can pursue the “good life”’(Gheciu & Welsh, 2009). The second view may not be clear when looked at from a local perspective but becomes apparent when analyzed on a global scale. There is a ‘growing recognition that weak or failed states may provide ideal conditions to nurture terrorist networks’ (Barakat, 2009). If the failed states are left untended, such states can become sanctuaries for terrorist networks with a global reach along with international organized crime and drug traffickers who exploit the dysfunctional environment. As such, failed states pose a threat to the political and economic stability of the entire region and national interests of many developed countries (Hamre & Sullivan, 2002). Thus, to control the threats posed by these states, the use of military force by the international community results in damaging and destabilizing effects on local people and institutions. The moral intuition is therefore to compensate for unintended consequences and ensure the well-being of those affected by such actions (Gheciu & Welsh, 2009).

Rebuilding failed states has become a priority to the international community. As much as the international community would like to avoid involvement with the failed states, it is a reality that has to be faced. Terrorist groups have already exploited the vacuum of state authority in many countries in the Middle East, South Asia, and the Horn

of Africa and are likely to seek further advantage. These failed or failing states have either no longer a functioning government (Somalia), or their central government no longer control major parts of their territory (Pakistan), or those whose central governments can no longer provide the basic needs to their population (some African countries) (Hamre & Sullivan, 2002).

Significant international interventions to rebuild weak or failed states is certainly not always the answer because of the magnitude of efforts and resources involved, however international involvement does become inevitable in many cases. When dealing with a failed or failing state, the international community has at least eight policies to consider. These are:

1. Do nothing in the hope that the situation will resolve itself without major action on the part of outsiders.
2. Quarantine a failed state and monitor and intercept potential threats that emanate from the territory.
3. Acknowledge that a failed state is no longer viable and to “carve it up” or recognize its dissolution into smaller pieces.
4. Seek to integrate or absorb a failed state, or parts of it, into a larger entity, whether this entity is a single state or a body.
5. Establish some sort of international transitional authority.
6. Promote some sort of a neighborhood watch system, with countries in the region playing a central role in trying to solve or contain the problem.
7. Back one side in a given conflict and hope that it emerges as the winner and that it can reorder the affairs of the country.

8. Have a strategy and capacity for post-conflict reconstruction if regional stability is to be maintained, economic development advanced, lives saved, and transnational threats faced (Hamre & Sullivan, 2002).

2.3 Immediate Post-conflict Reconstruction Objectives

Contemporary post-war reconstruction programs have four defining features. First, they are not only designed to reconstruct but also improve significantly the performance of state institutions. These state institutions – promoting the rule of law, liberal democracy, supporting civil society and open economy – reflect a vision of social progress in a broader concept of development and modernization. Second, these programs are increasingly standardized and endorsed by international institutions, such as the World Bank, OECD and UN Development Program (UNDP). Third, the basic model of reconstruction and modernization is derived from ‘Western experiences of liberal political development and economic growth’, with ‘good governance’ as a recent addition to this model. Fourth, inclusion of ‘cooperative national elites’ to make the model work (Suhrke, 2007).

This reconstruction program, as simple as it may seem, when executed in a post-conflict setting, results in too many and frequently contradictory political and economic agendas due to the involvement of many international actors. As a result, a set of expectations and objectives are imposed marginalizing the recipient state institutions and, therefore, constitute a major threat to state sovereignty and stability (Barakat & Zyck, 2009).

Barakat (2002) argues that two schools of thought exist concerning the timing of reconstruction and development activities. The first is that ‘peace is a prerequisite for reconstruction and development’. The second is that long term recovery will be feasible if the reconstruction and development activities are initiated at an appropriate time during the conflict. Evidence from world-wide experience supports the second theory.

Though the situation after a war could be clearly outlined however not the situation after a conflict as various active variables continue to blur the situation. For this reason, Barakat and Zyck (2009) have termed ‘post-conflict recovery’ as ‘mid-conflict stabilization’. They contend that this approach not only affects the timing of intervention but also the sectors. The early implementation of post-conflict recovery activities has resulted in the politicization of, for instance, humanitarian assistance – including relief and reconstruction spending. While the objective of post-conflict recovery is to maintain peace and stability, focusing initial assistance towards the most violent areas has produced ‘perverse incentives not only for the continuation of violence in those areas but also for peaceful regions to permit, attract or mimic insurgent activity in hopes of maximizing access to resources’. This has resulted in the generation of extended insurgencies compared to the smaller scale violence at the end of the 1990s.

Some researchers within the field of social sciences have started studying man-made disasters with similar approaches as those used for the post-natural disaster recovery and reconstruction. However, due to the intricate nature of conflicts the two situations require completely different strategies. “Disaster relief requires both immediate emergency action and carefully planned reconstruction. The task following conflicts is not to reconstruct entities that have been destroyed but there is a need to create

alternatives to those structures, as prior systems and living patterns have been severely changed. In a post-conflict state, there are no identifiable communities to rebuild, the political authorities that were previously in place are no longer recognized or exist, the legal systems are nonexistent and there is often a negative attitude on the part of government toward aid donors” (Hasic, 2004). However, this may not be the case in every post-conflict state. As long as the state and its inhabitants exist no matter in what condition, there will always be a community to rebuild; political authorities will get support from at least some members of the community; and some of the people constituting the government will have a positive attitude toward aid donors. In addition, in some cases following a conflict, the international community and aid donors would endeavor to return the state to *status quo ante* and step back when the state institutions become operational.

Conflicts are the results of the failure of governance. In a post-conflict setting, good governance and public administration programs must be the cornerstone of peace building efforts (Panic, 2005). The international community should focus from the onset on the institutional changes and policies that promote and contribute to political and economic stability and development. Hamre & Sullivan (2002) have discussed four important pillars, distinct yet interrelated, necessary for post-conflict reconstruction. These are:

I. Security

“Security addresses all aspects of public safety, in particular, creating a safe and secure environment and developing legitimate and effective security institutions” (Hamre & Sullivan, 2002). These institutions have the responsibility to secure the lives of

civilians as well as the territorial integrity of the post-conflict state. Security is significant in preventing conflicts between the dyads, warring factions, and pockets of groups trying to create insecurity in parts of the state. Good security can pave the road to economic development in terms of attracting national and international investments. Security is a prerequisite to the successful achievement of goals in a post-conflict state.

II. Justice and Reconciliation

“Justice and reconciliation addresses the need to deal with past abuses through formal and informal mechanisms for resolving grievances arising from conflict and to create an impartial and accountable legal system for the future, in particular, creating an effective law enforcement apparatus, an open judicial system, fair laws, and a humane corrections system” (Hamre & Sullivan, 2002). In a post-conflict state failing to bring the wrongdoers to justice could provoke victims to retributive violence. Conflicts result in atrocities against civilians as well as combatants resulting in intense feelings of grievances, resentments, and animosities. If the problems that resulted in the conflict in the first place are not solved and if reconciliation of warring factions are not achieved then the future of the state will remain as bleak as its past (Panic, 2005).

To secure a lasting peace, the government and the international community have to come to terms with the wrongdoers. If internal order is not established quickly, lawlessness will prevail with the state institutions, especially the judiciary and the police discredited. Therefore, the provision of internal order and security is highly prioritized as success of the post-conflict strategy depends on it (Panic, 2005). To deal with the wrongdoers and the groups involved in the conflict, the state and the international

community have six options at hand - trials, truth commissions, reparations, amnesties, purges, and exiles (Binningsbo, Loyle, Gates, & Elster, 2012).

III. Social and Economic Well-being

“Social and economic well-being addresses fundamental social and economic needs, in particular, providing emergency relief, restoring essential services to the population in areas such as health and education, laying the foundation for a viable economy, and initiating an inclusive and sustainable development program” (Hamre & Sullivan, 2002). Social and economic development is bound to take time in post-conflict states. The reconstruction of physical infrastructure and provision of social services are critical for the revival of the economic activity. However, none of the problems in a post-conflict state can be solved in isolation.

Sustained development could contribute to reducing the risk of conflict. To achieve major improvements in economic conditions, decisions have to be made early in the process. Two such important decisions are economic development and poverty reduction. To achieve these goals five economic policies are to be followed strictly (Panic, 2005).

1. Achieve high levels of employment and job security in order to give everyone a stake in their country's future.
2. Sustain the rate of growth to maintain high levels of employment and job security in the long run.
3. Keep prices stable so that the rate of inflation does not make it impossible to achieve the other objectives.

4. Ensure that gains from economic progress are distributed fairly and that no one should live below a socially acceptable standard.
5. Sustain external balance to enable the country to preserve its economic sovereignty, thus allowing it to pursue the other four goals.

However, the means and methods to achieve these economic objectives will have to remain flexible and pragmatic.

IV. Governance and Participation

“Governance and participation addresses the need to create legitimate, effective political and administrative institutions and participatory processes, in particular, establishing a representative constitutional structure, strengthening public-sector management and administration, and ensuring the active and open participation of civil society in the formulation of the country’s government and its policies” (Hamre & Sullivan, 2002). Good governance includes ‘sensible economic and social policies, democratic decision making, governmental transparency and financial accountability, creation of a marketfriendly environment for development, measures to combat corruption, respect for the rule of law, human rights, and freedom of press and expression’ (Barakat & Chard, 2002).

As the United Nations secretary general Kofi Annan has noted, “All these tasks – humanitarian, military, political, social, and economic – are interconnected, and the people engaged in them need to work closely together. We cannot expect lasting success in any of them unless we pursue all of them at once as part of a single coherent strategy. If the resources are lacking for any one of them, all the others may turn out to have been pursued in vain.” (Hamre & Sullivan, 2002)

2.4 The Development Challenge

Reconstruction and development in a post-conflict setting is of utmost importance and are determinants of the prosperous or bleak future of the post-conflict state. But, does development in a post-conflict context have the same meaning as that in a developed country? Development may have different definitions for experts of different fields and the context it is used. In the first half of the twentieth century, the scholarly literature assumed development was about using the state to lead the process of modernizing the society and raise its income. However, contemporary development is less concerned about the level of involvement of the state in the development process. The consensus is for the state to be “better” involved in this process, and thus of significance is the administrative and technical capacity of the public sector (Rapley, 2007). It could, therefore, be contended that what development means is dependent on what it is supposed to achieve. However, in all cases, the objective of development is the provision of more resources and facilities to the society. It is to *improve the quality of life* of the people by providing access to education & health care, employment opportunities, better living environment and so forth. To Paul Collier (2007), “development is about giving hope to ordinary people that their children will live in a society that has caught up with the rest of the world.”

How can a country, especially one that has come out of a conflict in the recent past, achieve these development objectives? There are two main types of resources that determine the level of development in a region a) hard resources (physical resources such as housing, infrastructures, public services, etc.), and b) soft resources (non-physical resources such as employment, education, information, etc.). The process of

reconstruction and development in a post-conflict state is to provide people access to both the hard and soft resources that were lost and those resources that probably did not exist before the conflict (Lizarralde, Johnson, & Davidson, 2010). However, provision of these resources faces certain challenges. As mentioned earlier, the main development challenges in a post-conflict setting can be categorized into four groups – security, political, economic, and social. The effective tackling of these issues ensure one thing – the growth of the state; and growth leads to development. According to Collier (2007), 73% of the people in low-income societies have been or are still in a conflict. One of the main reasons for this is the growth rate of these countries. He states that in “absolute terms the growth rate of these countries have been negative and in relative terms it has been much below than the rest of the developing countries”. Experts set development goals in these countries but they do not identify the process that could achieve these goals effectively and completely.

The challenges in terms of growth that these countries face is what Collier (2007) calls the ‘development traps’. These traps are:

1. The Conflict Trap

Conflict is inherent to politics and it is one of the factors to slow and/or block growth. There are three economic characteristics that make a state more vulnerable to conflicts – low income, slow growth, and dependence on primary commodity exports. The lower the income of a country, the more it is likely to fall into a conflict. Slow growth will also increase this risk of conflict. A typical low-income country has a 14% risk of falling into a conflict in any five-year period. Any increase in the growth percentage of the country will reduce the risk of conflict by the same amount. Similarly, a

decrease in the growth percentage will increase the risk of conflict by the same percentage point. Dependence on the primary commodity exports, such as oil, diamonds, etc., significantly increases the risk of a conflict. These commodities have been found to not just finance conflicts but in times even motivate it. One example is the ‘conflict diamonds’, which is also known to some as the ‘blood diamonds’ of Africa. Low-income countries that have experienced a conflict have disproportionately high risks of relapse.

2. The Natural Resource Trap

The existence of natural resources in a state is a paradoxical trap that is generally thought of as a catalyst to prosperity, which in some cases is i.e. if a state has enough natural resources to forget about normal economic activities, for example, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. However, the surplus from natural resource exports has been found to significantly reduce growth. The export of resources in these states causes the currency to rise in value against other currencies, leaving other export activities of the state uncompetitive. This results in a loss of opportunities to diversify the economy which might have been the vehicle to technological progress. Resource rich countries receiving resource endowments have proved difficult to harness this income into growth, for example, much of the Middle East. The income from resources can take them to middle-income countries status but to fully develop, they would need to use this wealth for growth.

3. Landlocked with Bad Neighbors

Economists have realized over the past decade that geography of a country matters when it comes to growth. Landlocked countries are hostages to their neighbors. Transportation of goods to and from landlocked countries incurs much higher costs and

this cost is directly related to the amount its coastal neighbor has spent on the transport infrastructure. A landlocked country loses around half a percentage point in the growth rate. However, for landlocked countries their neighbors not only serve as corridors to the overseas markets but also directly as markets. The economic conditions of the neighbors directly affect the economy of the landlocked country. For example, compare Switzerland where it is surrounded by Germany, Italy, France and Austria to Uganda where it is surrounded by Kenya, Sudan, Rwanda, Somalia, Congo, and Tanzania. The growth of neighbors benefit the growth of the landlocked countries in what is called the ‘growth spill over’. If the neighboring countries grow by an extra one percent, the landlocked country will grow by an extra 0.7 percent. Further, a resource-rich landlocked country can do much better compared to resource-scarce landlocked country, as the natural resources being valuable could be exported despite higher transport costs associated with being landlocked – for example, Botswana, abundant in diamonds.

4. Bad Governance

Good governance and economic policies can help increase the growth rate. But no matter what governments do, the economy cannot grow faster than 10%, which is the ceiling growth rate. Good governance and policy can help a country grow, but only if the growth opportunities exist. On the contrary, bad governance and policies can destroy the economy very rapidly. It is not easy to determine whether current governance and policies are adequate, but what societies could do is learn from failures – for instance, China completely changed its policies after the 1960s economic crisis generating the biggest economic success in history. However, not every leader would prefer such a positive change. Many leaders of the world’s poorest countries are among the richest

people of the world, so it is in their benefit to keep their people uneducated and ill-informed, while practicing the politics of patronage and corruption. Reformers, who rarely dare to make changes, are often suppressed and sometimes have to pay high price for their efforts.

To sustain growth in order to support the development process, Collier et al. (2003) suggest the following strategies:

1. Reduce Dependence on Primary Commodities

Dependence on the primary commodities can increase the risk of rebellion, poor governance, and poor economic performance. Even though dependence on the primary commodities can be detrimental, yet they could be conducive to better growth of a country. The challenge is for the policy makers at the national and international level to devise policies that could help in better harnessing this potential.

Diversification is one way of reducing dependence on the primary commodities which can significantly assist the growth and stability of the economy. Three factors have been found to reduce dependence on primary commodities – growth, aid, and policy. Growth assists in diversifying the economy in general resulting in a reduction of the risks of market price changes. Aid helps in reducing dependence on primary commodities as it provides an incentive to reduce exports and improves the infrastructure activities. Good economic policies can also significantly result in diversification. The effectiveness of policies is measured through the World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) rates. An increase of one point in the CPIA of a developing country would reduce its dependence on primary commodities from 15.4 percent of the GDP to 13.8 percent.

2. Reduce Corruption

Governments need to have transparency in using their revenues particularly that generated from natural resources, as embezzlement of this revenue by a group of elites could lead to the disappointment of the general public resulting in insecurity and/or rebellion. As the information provided by the government may not be considered reliable by the general public, a useful model here could be the formation of an alliance between the government, the civil society, and the World Bank to make the revenue and expenditure reports more trustworthy.

3. Cushion Adverse Shocks

Countries dependent on primary commodities may face severe negative shocks as the prices of these commodities are generally very unstable. These shocks will damage the medium-run growth of the country and the growth lost during this period may never be recovered. This could result in possible conflicts. For example, during the financial crisis of East Asia in 1998, the income of Indonesia fell by 10 percent which resulted in an escalation of violent conflict in Aceh. The international community, thus, in this regard will have to assist in cushioning these shocks as the governments of developing countries generally do not have the expertise, and sometimes the political goodwill, to “implement contractionary policies effectively”. For instance, OECD economies could adopt trade policies that could have a sharp effect on the world prices of primary commodities.

4. Raise Economic Growth

Faster economic growth will result in an increase in the income and promotion of diversification. Three instruments are considered effective in raising growth – domestic

policies, international aid, and access to global markets. It is not easy to establish what forms good policies; however it is clear what are bad policies. No economist desires “high and variable inflation, high trade barriers, widespread public ownership of marketed activities, or use of public employment for patronage rather than for equitable service delivery”. One way to determine the effectiveness of existing policies is using the World Bank’s CPIA, as mentioned earlier. This policy rating system rates “macroeconomic, structural, social, and public sector policies on a scale of 1 to 5”. The higher the rating of policies, the more effective they are. The average ratings of developing countries are 2.95 on this scale and those of successful developing countries are 3.75, for instance Ghana and India. An increase of one point in the CPIA is associated with an increase of 1.6 percent in the growth rate.

Aid as a development assistance is found to increase the average growth rate of developing countries by 0.1 percentage point, if the amount of aid is increased by one percentage point as a share of GDP. Similarly, access to global markets will improve exports increasing the country’s foreign reserves resulting in a growth in the economy. However, major trade reforms are required to diversify as well as increase trade.

2.5 Afghanistan: A Brief History

The modern state of Afghanistan was founded by Ahmad Shah Abdali (later to be known as Ahmad Shah Durrani) in 1747. An influential and powerful commander in the service of the Persian warlord Nadir Shah, Ahmad Shah took control of his army and Nadir Shah’s chest of Mughal jewels after the Shah’s assassination. Subsequently, Ahmad Shah led to the conquest of Kandahar, Kabul, and Lahore, and then later launched



Figure 2.2. Map of Modern Afghanistan
(Source: United Nations Cartographic Section)

a series of lucrative raids into India. He created an empire that was built out of the collapse of three other Asian empires – the Uzbeks to the north, the Mughals to the south and the Safavids of Persia to the west. At its height, the empire extended from Nishapur in modern Iran through Afghanistan, the Punjab and Sindh to Kashmir and the threshold of Mughal Delhi. Following Ahmad Shah’s death after contracting a tumor, his son, Timur Shah, succeeded him as the ‘Shah’ or king of the empire in 1772 (Dalrymple, 2013).

Subsequent to Timur Shah’s death in 1793, a volatile period followed as a result of power struggle between the Sadozai and Barakzai clans. In the meantime, the British East India Company was expanding rapidly out from its coastal factories to conquer much of the Indian subcontinent. Feeling threatened by the Russians in the north, the

British intervened militarily in 1838 to replace the pro-Russian Shah, Dost Mohammad, with the then exiled Shah Shuja, more amenable to the British interests. This foreign intervention stirred growing resentment among the Afghans leading to tribal oppositions and eventually to the first Anglo-Afghan war which resulted in complete demise of the British troops in 1842 (Holt, 2012).

Driven by revenge and paranoia of the growing Russian influence in Afghanistan, the British commenced the Second Afghan War in 1878. Following a military triumph, reprisals came swiftly as the angry occupiers rounded up rebels and hung them ten at a time. The war caught fire again and burned brightly. At the battle of Maiwand, the British forces suffered a devastating defeat followed by a victory at the battle of Kandahar (Holt, 2012). Following this victory the British forces withdrew soon after taking charge of Afghanistan's foreign affairs in exchange for protection against the Russians and Persians and an annual subsidy. A period of friendly Afghan-British relations began during the reign of Amir Abdur Rahman Khan. However, after his death, his son, Amanullah Khan, who claimed the throne started the Third Anglo-Afghan War in 1919 to claim control of Afghanistan's foreign affairs from the British. The Afghans ended up the victors in this war.

The Afghans experienced a period of peace, tranquility, and prosperity in the 20th century. However, not long after, the former Prime Minister, Daoud Khan took charge of the affairs of the country by overthrowing the monarchy of his cousin Zahir Shah and declaring himself as the first President in 1973. Daoud's modernization programs and reforms, set in the 1960s, accelerated after the 1973 coup creating both fears and expectations. New social groups emerged with demands for political power and distinct

ideas of what constituted 'progress'. Developmental change had weakened traditional society and created new politically conscious social groups that the inflexible and later authoritarian political system under Daoud could not accommodate. Failure to accommodate the emerging communist and pro-Islamic movements in the political system and the growing political polarization eventually caused the political order to collapse. In the escalating tension between the communists and pro-Islamic supporters, the former developed a significant following in the armed forces and captured the state in a military supported coup in 1978 (Suhrke, 2007).

The communists with their revolutionary ambitions and the violence which the regime unleashed saw rapidly growing resistance among the common Afghans (Suhrke, 2007). The following year, in response to increasing fears of Islamic resistance both within Afghanistan and the newly declared Islamic Republic of Iran, the USSR invaded the country in support of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) government.

From late 1979 until February 1989 Soviet military forces occupied Afghanistan, during a period marked by fierce resistance from Afghan fighters, known as the Mujahidin, backed mainly by the USA and the Pakistani intelligence agency. After nearly a decade of occupation, the Geneva accords of 1988 led to the withdrawal of all Soviet forces in early 1989. Despite being considered as a success, the accords had failed to address adequately the issue of the post-occupation period and the future of governance of Afghanistan (Barakat, 2002).

In 1992 the Mujahidin groups formed an alliance but with no united or coherent strategy for running the government. Within months, incompatible goals and an aversion

to power sharing between the different Mujahidin factions led to the collapse of their coalition as a new phase in the conflict began. What began as a struggle against occupying Soviet forces mutated into an internal power struggle as the different factions within the Mujahidin regime fought each other. This civil war left a political vacuum which resulted in the emergence of the Taliban towards the end of 1994. Within two years of their emergence, the Taliban had captured the major cities of Kandahar, Herat, and Kabul as the Mujahedin forces either fled or joined them. By mid-2001 the Taliban controlled more than 90% of Afghanistan and the overall situation in the areas they controlled was one of relative peace, in the sense that factional fighting had ceased (Barakat, 2002).

It was during the Taliban rule that the Al-Qaeda set its base in Afghanistan. Large numbers of foreign nationals, from Pakistan, Chechnya and many Arab countries, had come to Afghanistan to undertake military training in camps run by Al-Qaeda (many of these camps had originally been established with the assistance of western countries to provide support to the Mujahedin). The attacks of 11 September 2001 in America, attributed to the Al-Qaeda, led to the military campaign aimed at the overthrow of the Taliban regime in October 2001. Within a month of this military campaign, the Taliban forces retreated from Kabul in November 2001 (Barakat, 2002) marking the beginning of a new phase in the history of modern Afghanistan.

2.6 Afghanistan: Post 2001

Shortly after the apparent defeat of the Taliban, talks were held about the future of Afghanistan in Bonn from 26 November to 4 December 2001. The talks resulted in the

establishment of an interim authority, which included a number of warlords, with Hamid Karzai as the Chair. In addition, an Independent Commission was also established charged with organizing an ‘Emergency Loya Jirga’ (a Pashto term, meaning a ‘Grand Assembly of Elders’) six months after the Bonn conference. This Jirga was responsible for the establishment of a multi-ethnic Transitional Administration to overlook the affairs of the state until the official elections of 2004. Furthermore, a Constitutional Loya Jirga was also established which adopted a new constitution for the country on 4 January 2004 (Barakat, 2002).

2.6.1 An Overview of the Reconstruction Program

The reconstruction program in Afghanistan initiated by the international community was highly ambitious. ‘In its minimalist version, the aim was to eliminate terrorist safe havens, reconstruct the state, and kick-start the economy; in its maximalist form the plan was also to develop and modernize Afghan society’. In defining the tasks this way and setting timetables and benchmarks for monitoring progress, the international community was boldly challenging the formidable difficulties ahead (Suhrke, 2007). As Barakat (2002), a well-known researcher in the field of post-war recovery and having served as an advisor and consultant in this regard to many organizations & countries including the UN, the World Bank, Afghanistan and so forth, rightly notes it, “the biggest problem facing those charged with the task of Afghan reconstruction is that rebuilding has been embarked upon not on the basis of the real and acute need to rebuild, nor as part of a carefully planned, integrated process... on the contrary, it has been initiated as part of a rushed ‘knee-jerk reaction’ by external actors”. However some of these external

actors on the contrary may contend that the task of rebuilding Afghanistan has been embarked as part of a planned process. The activities corresponding to this process, for instance those of USAID's, are to 'rehabilitate the rural economy; develop financial organizations; increase trade and export; repair the infrastructure for energy, transport, and water services; assist in building democratic institutions; and develop the capacity of those institutions to perform in a participatory, accountable and responsible manner' (USAID, 2013). Thus, one could say that proper planning has been taken place in the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan; however whether those plans have translated in the field into what was desired is a different question.

2.6.2 Diversity of Actors

There seems to be a lack of coordination and planning among the external actors themselves and with the government of Afghanistan which could be associated to the interests of the various actors involved in this process. Suhrke et al (2002) states that, "the diversity of interests among Afghan parties, and the large number of international actors involved, suggest that the most difficult part of the peace-building effort lies ahead". In general, there are more than 60 countries and 20 international organizations who have participated in the recovery and reconstruction of Afghanistan (Oskarsson, 2012). Of these, the US, Japan, the UK, the European Commission (EC), the World Bank (WB), Germany, and Canada are the major donors (Waldman, 2008).

The presence of all these international actors in Afghanistan, each following their personal agendas and vested political, economic, social, and other interests, has resulted in the marginalization of the legitimacy of the government. In the process of the

provision of developmental assistance and the allocation of reconstruction initiatives, Afghanistan has had only an observer's status. The priorities expressed by the Afghans have been outshined by those of the external actors. The Afghan government has only had control of more than a fraction of its own core operating budget (Barakat & Zyck, 2010). Of the estimated \$57 billion spent on the reconstruction of Afghanistan in the period 2002-2010, only \$6 billion has been channeled through the national development budget with the full ownership of the Government (Afghan Government, 2011).

However, from the perspective of the international community, channeling a smaller amount of funds through the government's development budget could mean a lack of capacity of the Afghan government and the existence of corruption. With the warlords given share in the government and the politics of patronage a common practice, the international community might have considered channeling more funds through the government's budget an ineffective way of utilizing resources for the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. This might have resulted in more development funds siphoned off by the warlords.

2.6.3 Managing the Reconstruction Program

In 2002 when the Afghan Interim Authority (AIA) was formed, the need for greater governmental control over the reconstruction process was recognized. This resulted in the establishment of the Afghan Assistance Coordination Authority (AACA). However, according to the World Bank observations, 'this unit itself required capacity building in order to play its intended role. This left the international actors to exercise decisive influence over the reconstruction process' (Suhrke et al., 2002). The AACA was

dissolved in 2003 and the functions of aid coordination and management were incorporated into the 'General Budget Directorate' of Ministry of Finance (Ministry of Finance, 2010). 'While the international community continues to argue that the lack of capacity justifies the circumvention of the government structures, it is important to note that they have entrenched this lack by failing to provide adequate opportunities for capacity development' (Barakat et al., 2008).

The Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) is a major funding channel to support the rehabilitation and development efforts of the Afghan Government. It was designed to act as a treasury for the government. 'However, the ARTF has remained entirely under the control of its donors and has received almost no funds from some of its largest donors – the US and Japan. As a result of bypassing the ARTF, and the preference for direct execution by donors through implementing partners, the Afghan government has only had control on approximately one percent of all project-based international assistance. While it is not necessary for the Afghan State to utilize all international revenues itself, it should be more greatly involved in their allocation. Indeed, a more collaborative governance would have been appropriate. This would have allowed the international community and the Afghan government to divide and share responsibilities. The result of not pursuing collaborative governance and the exclusion of the Afghan government from this process has left the government disempowered having not developed the necessary capabilities to take a leading role in the country's recovery and stabilization' (Barakat et al., 2008).

2.6.4 Funding Commitments and Management

‘Even more damaging to the effort to stabilize Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban was the low level of committed funding to rebuild a country laid waste by almost three decades of war’ (T. H. Johnson & Mason, 2007). ‘On the humanitarian front, per capita reconstruction assistance for Afghanistan is a third what was provided in Iraq and one-twelfth given to Bosnia and Herzegovina more than a decade ago despite the appalling lack of infrastructure, human resources, state institutions, and basic services in Afghanistan’ (Barakat & Zyck, 2010). Furthermore, ‘international studies of peace-building and reconstruction packages highlight the gap between the rhetoric and pledges of the international community and the reality in terms of delivery on the ground’ (Goodhand, 2002), which has been replicated in Afghanistan.

In the seven conferences held on the development and reconstruction of Afghanistan in the period 2002 to 2012, a total of \$63.44 billion was pledged by the international community and donors. An additional \$56 billion was pledged outside these conferences. This is indicated in Table 2.3. However, as seen in Table 2.4, only \$85.116 billion was committed off these pledges till the end of 2011, out of which only \$69.723 billion was disbursed. Figure 2.4 shows the trend and amounts of the external assistance committed and disbursed annually for the period 2002-2011.

Table 2.3. Total Pledges as of July 2012 (\$billions)
(Source: Ministry of Finance, Development Cooperation Report 2012, 2012)

Pledging Conferences for Afghanistan							Total Pledges by Conference	Supplemental Pledges	Grand Total of Pledges
Tokyo 2002	Berlin 2004	London 2006	Rome 2007	Paris 2008	Chicago 2012	Tokyo 2012			
5.1	5.6	8.7	0.04	14	14	16	63.44	56	119.44

Table 2.4. Total Commitment as of December 2011 (\$millions)
(Source: Ministry of Finance, Development Cooperation Report 2012, 2012)

Rank	Donor	2002-2011 Commitment	2002-2011 Disbursement
1	United States of America	57,383	47,524
2	Japan	3,821	3,821
3	European Union/European Commission	3,077	2,816
4	United Kingdom	2,574	2,578
5	Germany	2,435	978
6	Asian Development Bank	2,400	1,129
7	World Bank	2,378	1,852
8	India	1,588	759
9	Canada	1,371	1,371
10	Netherlands	1,109	1,110
11	Australia	953	806
12	Norway	852	712
13	Sweden	736	736
14	Italy	697	589
15	Denmark	503	503
16	United Nations	446	182
17	Iran	399	367
18	France	376	199
19	Turkey	226	193
20	Spain	220	194
21	Others (25 donors)	1,572	1,304
Total		85,116	69,723

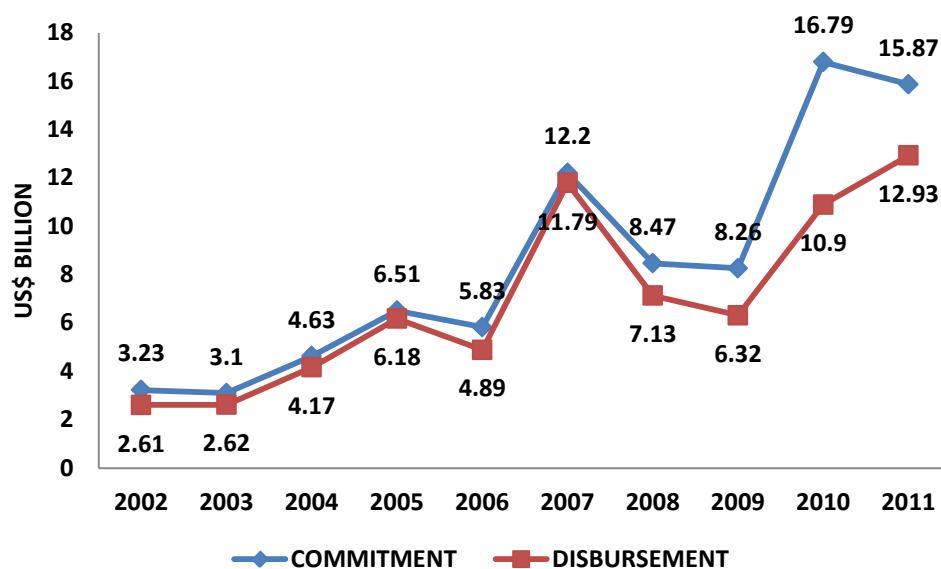


Figure 2.3. Annual Commitments & Disbursements (2002-2011)
(Source: Ministry of Finance, Development Cooperation Report 2012, 2012)

There are multiple reasons for the difference between aid commitments and disbursements. One of the reasons is the challenging operating conditions, nominally, insecurity. ‘Security deterioration is considered to be a major obstacle hindering project implementation across the country’ (Ministry of Finance, 2010). However, the fact that this much aid circumvents the government could be partly linked to ‘budget execution problems, such as capacity constraints, procurement delays and complex budget procedures’. Although, the government has been able to disburse over \$4 billion of funds in 2011, still the over \$8 billion that has bypassed it points to the enduring lack of capacity of the government. The donors are partly responsible for this lack of capacity as ‘sufficient funds have not been devoted to build the institutional and implementing capacities of line ministries’. Further, another reason is corruption, which ‘remains endemic and is compounded by limited financial oversight and weak governance’. A major concern in this regard is ‘the lack of political will to tackle high level corruption’. Yet, improvements have been observed in the government’s ‘public financial management systems, fiduciary controls and regulatory framework’ (Waldman, 2008). While the government is primarily responsible for abusing badly-needed assistance, the international community must also share the blame. “Poorly conceived state-building projects, the failure to enforce oversight, to properly measure outcomes rather than just inputs and to address systemic failures in aid delivery create opportunities for corruption” (Crisis Group, 2011) .

More than half of the total international assistance or Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) has been invested in the security sector i.e. provision of equipment, supplies, services, facilities, and training to the Afghan National Security Forces. The rest

has been invested in sectors, such as Governance, Infrastructure, Agriculture and Rural Development, Education, Health, Private Sector Development, Social Protection, and others (Ministry of Finance, 2012).

The dispersion of the ODA, for the development of both security and non-security sectors, takes place via two main channels of delivery:

- a) Off-budget: This “support consists of assistance that bypasses the government’s Public Finances Management System with little or no government involvement in planning, implementation or monitoring of the programs/projects” (Ministry of Finance, 2010).
- b) On-budget: This “support consists of assistance that either has been given to the government as bilateral support or provided through the Trust Funds. Most such on-budget programs are government designed, implemented, and monitored” (Ministry of Finance, 2010).

According to the government’s reports, less than 20% of the ODA has been provided through the government’s Core Budget, whereas more than 80% has been ‘managed by the Development Partners (DP) through projects/programs implemented parallel to those of the government’ (Ministry of Finance, 2010). Table 2.5 below shows the total ODA provided through government budget for the period 2003 – 2011.

Table 2.5. ODA Through Government Budget, 2003-2011 (\$millions)
(Source: Ministry of Finance, Development Cooperation Report 2012, 2012)

FY	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total Budget	1,620	864	1,344	1,646	2,250	2,818	2,731	3,266	4,331
Donor’s Contribution	1,238	559	918	1,109	1,534	1,900	1,662	1,800	2,169
Govt.’s Contribution	382	305	426	536	715	919	1,069	1,466	2,162

2.6.5 The Dispute

Implementation of parallel programs/projects by DPs and their implementing partners have always been criticized by the government. Such donor-driven practices, with no accountability to the government, do not align with programs of national priority. The contracting and sub-contracting processes of the DPs have a negative impact on the Afghan economy. Further, they are not conducive to building the capacity of the state institutions (Ministry of Finance, 2010). One such structure parallel to the government is the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) whose effectiveness and contribution to peace and stability in Afghanistan has been frequently questioned by many researchers (Barakat & Zyck, 2009; Waldman, 2008; Crisis Group, 2011; Ministry of Finance, 2010).

PRTs are civil-military teams with the objective to ‘extend the authority of the central government and improve security, thereby facilitating the reconstruction process at the provincial level’ (Ministry of Finance, 2010). PRTs are not development agencies but are engaged in development projects. These military reconstruction bodies work as part of a broader counter-insurgency operation aimed at winning local support for international military forces and newly established governments (Barakat & Zyck, 2009) through their Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and Quick Impact Projects (QIP). As such, ‘aid programs in these areas focus more on meeting narrow security objectives than achieving nationwide development goals or building and strengthening state institutions’ (Crisis Group, 2011). In doing so, PRTs have in many cases undermined the emergence of effective institutions of national and local government and other civil development processes (Waldman, 2008).

Such practices demonstrate the lack of coordination and communication between the DPs and the government. Barakat and Zyck (2009) contend that due to the influx of actors with distinct and often contradictory agendas, coordination will remain chaotic which will significantly inhibit effective recovery. Further, each actor ‘brings agendas associated with its domestic constituency, with the ideologies of its rulers and with its desire for recognition and relevance’. Such varying agendas make it difficult for the DPs to coordinate among themselves and with the government in a way to maximize the efficiency and delivery of projects. According to the government, a large number of DPs follow their own ‘aid strategies, design methods, procurement policies, and implementation, monitoring and evaluation procedures’. Consequently, aid is fragmented with projects duplicated in the absence of well-shared information among the DPs resulting in unbalanced and inequitable development (Ministry of Finance, 2010). According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) ‘donors often channel funds directly to implementing partners or contractors, and do not always keep the relevant Afghan ministries informed about financial flows’. This has resulted in the government not having information on how some \$5 billion were spent since 2001(Waldman, 2008).

2.6.6 The Aid Effect

Aid has a major impact on peace and stability. The way aid is delivered can have a varying level of effect on development and poverty reduction. Poverty is a significant factor in the spread of insecurity. More than a third of population lives below poverty line

in Afghanistan (Ministry of Finance, 2012). Thus, how effectively the aid is used could steer Afghanistan towards peace and stability or insecurity and devastation.

“While aid has undoubtedly contributed to progress in Afghanistan, a large proportion of aid has been prescriptive and supply-driven rather than indigenous and responding to Afghan needs. It has been heavily influenced by the political and military objectives of donors, especially the imperative to win so called ‘hearts and minds’. It has tended to reflect expectations in donor countries rather than what Afghan communities want and need. Projects have too often sought to impose a preconceived idea of progress rather than nurture, support and expand capabilities, according to Afghan preferences” (Waldman, 2008).

Development is not a short term effort, yet much of the development aid in Afghanistan has been appropriated to Quick Impact Projects in regions where donor-country troops are deployed. It is unsurprising that such projects have yet to produce sustainable results. “While there is no doubt that aid is required to address short-term, especially humanitarian, challenges, to some extent this has come at the expense of Afghan participation, sustainable poverty reduction, and capacity building objectives. There has been a tendency to overlook intangible dimensions of aid, especially the promotion of Afghan ownership, which is essential for achieving project relevance, utility, and sustainability” (Waldman, 2008).

In this manner, much of the aid has been ineffective or wasted. Based on a number of assessments, it has been found that ‘the impact of aid on lives remain uncertain, particularly when assistance is shaped by stabilization goals rather than the needs, priorities and input of the recipients’ (Crisis Group, 2011). According to the

report, *Evaluating U.S Foreign Assistance to Afghanistan* (2011), the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee stated, “The evidence that stabilization programs promote stability in Afghanistan is limited. Some research suggests the opposite and development best practices question the efficacy of using aid as a stabilization tool over the long run”. The US government’s development agency (USAID), for instance, concentrates more than half of its budget on the four most insecure provinces to achieve counter-insurgency objectives. This approach is not only inequitable but dangerously short-sighted. Such aid distribution disparities could be perceived as insecurity attracting more aid. Thus such perverse incentives could attract insurgency in relative secure areas with persistent poverty (Waldman, 2008).

Moreover, the donors spend a significant proportion of assistance on administrative costs, purchasing goods and services, as well as highly paid advisers from their own countries (Crisis Group, 2011). As cited in Waldman (2008) and Development Cooperation Report (2010), according to NATO Special Civilian Representative, the World Bank, and Oxfam about 40% of aid to Afghanistan flows back to the donor countries as a result of these donor placed conditionalities. ‘Such operations not only result in the loss of opportunities to generate income for the Afghan service providers and local producers, but also make the results less cost-beneficial as the cost of both services and goods are lower in Afghanistan than donor countries’ (Ministry of Finance, 2010). ‘Drawing somewhat on external resources is unavoidable but a large number of projects do so to an extent which cannot be justified. As a result, international construction contracts in Afghanistan are estimated to have just 10-15% local economic impact’ (Waldman, 2008). This practice is also against the Afghanistan Compact (2006) agreed to

by donors in the London Conference where increased use of Afghan services and goods are encouraged.

2.6.7 Building the Afghan Capacity

Afghanistan lost many of its skilled human resources during the three decades of fighting and disturbances and opportunities to replenish this created gap were missing. The educational and training institutes to prepare the Afghans to carry the responsibility of managing the reconstruction and development of their country were either completely destroyed or were of low standards of negligible impact. The significant change in the government system in the past ten years with the support of the international community provided conditions for the Afghans to continue higher education and get sufficient knowledge and skills to build their country. But still there is an obvious shortage of qualified experts who can make a difference.

A quarter of international aid is used to fund international consultants with the objective to support government capacity building. While there is a need for the government to receive technical and managerial support, however it has had a minimal impact. Based on the review of World Bank (2007), 'technical assistance (TA) tends to be donor driven, and peppered around at high cost with little effective involvement from national decision makers and only marginal impact in terms of lasting capacity building'. Waldman (2008) notes that, 'the total cost of each full-time expatriate consultant is in the range of \$250,000 to \$500,000 a year'. At the Interior Ministry of Afghanistan, 282 foreign advisers are absorbing a total of \$36 million a year (Crisis Group, 2011). In the same report mentioned above, World Bank (2007) concludes that, 'the widespread use of

uncoordinated and non-strategically targeted technical assistance is neither fiscally nor politically sustainable'. It is estimated that a total of \$1.6 billion was used to fund international TAs between the period 2002 to 2006 (World Bank, 2007). The Afghan government on the other hand criticizes the use of these international TAs as substitutes for civil servants being engaged in daily operations rather than on institution building. These TAs have not been able to transfer the required knowledge and skills to Afghan institutions thus leaving a similar vacuum after their departure which existed before their deployment (Ministry of Finance, 2010).

A possible working model here could be the establishment of an Afghan Capacity Development Agency. This agency should have representatives from both the Afghan government and the international community. The agency should initially determine the exact needs of the Afghan government at all levels and devise a capacity building program that could train and educate the Afghan officials as required. However, this agency should periodically evaluate the impact of this program and the changing needs of the Afghan government and modify its modules and programs accordingly.

2.6.8 Contracting and Construction

The international community and donors committed a total of \$9.24 billion to the infrastructure sector of Afghanistan during the period 2002 – 2011; however out of this commitment only \$6.02 billion was disbursed (Ministry of Finance, 2010). Many of the projects funded by this development aid are awarded to national and international contractors. However, the contracting and subcontracting processes of these projects have proved to be less effective in making these reconstruction and development projects

sustainable. Though, the contracting and subcontracting of projects is a common norm throughout the world, however in Afghanistan some large projects have up to five layers of national and international subcontractors. Each layer of these contractors retain 10-20%, and in some cases up to 50%, profit on any given contract (Ministry of Finance, 2010). This practice not only increases the total operational cost but also results in fewer dollars spent on the project, compromising the quality and hence achievement of the desired objectives.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) assists Afghanistan through the issuance of contracts, assistance instruments, and direct assistance to the Afghan government (Hutton & Johnson, 2012). It uses contractors, also called implementing partners, to help award and administer its contracts and grants and perform on-site monitoring of other contractors' activities (C. M. Johnson, 2010). USAID relies heavily on six US contractors – inter alia, KBR, the Louis Berger Group, Chemonics International, Bearing Point and Dyncorp International – and allocates a major portion of its funds to them (Waldman, 2008). These contractors, absorbing aid in corporate profits, in turn subcontract to local companies, hence increasing the overall project cost and making it difficult to know if funds are spent as intended. For example, the construction of a short stretch of road leading to Kabul international airport was awarded to the Louis Berger Group by USAID in 2005 who in turn subcontracted to another construction company. The cost of this project is reported to be \$2.4 million per kilometer, at least four times the average cost of road construction in Afghanistan, which could range between \$100,000 and \$600,000 based on the terrain and region (Waldman, 2008). Though relying on subcontractors can provide benefits, however USAID has not always

addressed related risks – for instance conflicts of interest. Federal regulations require enhanced oversight of contractors in situations where they provide close support to governmental functions, however USAID has been generally unable to do so (C. M. Johnson, 2010).

USAID lacks a sufficient number of supervising personnel with work experience in contingent regions such as Afghanistan. One of the reasons is the high turn-over rate of USAID personnel (C. M. Johnson, 2010). This has led to poor implementation of projects by many contractors and subcontractors, resulting in a waste of development aid. For instance, “the Planning and Development Collaborative International (PADCO), another US consultancy and services firm has implemented construction projects under a four-year \$60 million USAID alternative livelihood program in Badakhshan, most of which are reportedly unfinished or breaking down. During their implementation between 2005 and 2009, it was reported that only one USAID staffer monitored performance on the ground, with USAID relying on third party monitors” (Crisis Group, 2011). USAID has acknowledged that it has limited ability to verify the accuracy and completeness of the reports provided by contractors (Hutton & Johnson, 2012). The specific reason provided by the USAID for this lack of monitoring and evaluation of projects and verification of reports is the security environment of Afghanistan. The high-threat security environment requires USAID personnel to travel with armored vehicles and armed escorts to visit projects in much of Afghanistan. This has limited their movement and the frequency of their visits to project sites (C. M. Johnson, 2010).

2.6.9 Accountability

USAID programs are more prone to corruption, waste, fraud, and abuse because of its improper execution of performance management and evaluation procedures (Hutton & Johnson, 2012). The same could be contended about many other actors involved in the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. There is no or only minimal accountability for donors and their implementing partners. Donors are subject to little or no scrutiny, as opposed to the Afghan government who is liable for 77 measurable benchmarks based on the Afghan Compact (Waldman, 2008). Quick and visible projects with no proper planning and coordination with all the relevant stakeholders might win the hearts and minds of the people temporarily but sustainability and long term benefits of these projects are questionable. ‘Donors, in their haste, have invested much aid to short-term military objectives and timeframes, but when the drawdown begins, funding and civilian personnel presence may rapidly decline, undermining the sustainability of whatever construction and development that has been achieved in Afghanistan’ (Crisis Group, 2011).

2.6.10 Development

Afghanistan has come a long way and made significant progress since 2001. Some of the noticeable accomplishments, as shown in table 2.6, are for instance, ‘increase in the provision of access to primary health care from 8% of the population to more than 60%.; increase in the number of children getting education in schools from 900 thousand to over 8 million; pavement of about 2000 kilometers of road cutting travel time by 75%; increased access to electricity by 250%; provision of telecommunication

services to over 80% of the population; carrying out of elections; increase in the per capita GDP from \$180 to over \$530; increase in an average fiscal growth rate of 9%; open media; growth in the role of women in the society with girls making 39% of the students in schools and women emerging as successful political, business, civil, and society leaders' (The Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2011).

Although, much has been achieved during the last decade with the assistance of the international community, however there remains much to be achieved yet. To set on a path of successful development, the Afghan government will have to spare no efforts to overcome the challenges present in this process. Afghanistan currently faces three development challenges – the conflict trap, landlocked with bad neighbors, and bad governance. As Afghanistan is a resource rich country, it would not be far from the present that it might also get trapped by the fourth development challenge – the natural resource trap. Overcoming these challenges would be an uphill climb for the Afghan government, in particular to the policymakers. Whether Afghanistan will be able to successfully overcome these traps and join the group of successful developing countries or continue remaining trapped and stay among the underdeveloped countries depends primarily on the efforts of the Afghans themselves and partially on the assistance of the international community.

Table 2.6. Afghanistan Development Indicators, 2002-2011
(Source: World Bank)

Information Detail	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Population, total (million)	22.2	23.1	24.0	24.8	25.6	26.3	27.0	27.7	28.3	29.1
Population growth (annual %)	3.93	4.03	3.83	3.45	3.05	2.76	2.56	2.47	2.46	2.46
Urban population (% of total)	21.1	21.3	21.6	21.8	22.1	22.4	22.7	22.9	23.2	23.5
Population density (people per sq. km of land area)	34.0	35.4	36.8	38.1	39.3	40.4	41.4	42.4	43.5	44.6
GDP (current US\$)(billion)	4.1	4.5	5.2	6.2	7.0	9.8	10.1	12.4	15.9	18.0
GDP growth (annual %)		8.4	1.0	11.1	5.5	13.7	3.6	21.0	8.4	6.9
GDP per capita (current US\$)	185.9	198.2	220	252.4	275.3	373.5	376.9	450.6	561.2	619.5
Inflation, GDP deflator (annual %)		11.7	11.2	10.9	7.1	22.3	2.1	-2.1	9.4	10.6
GNI (current US\$)(billion)			5.0	6.1	6.9	8.6	9.8	12.7	14.3	16.6
GNI per capita (current US\$)			210	250	270	330	360	460	510	570
Revenue, excluding grants (% of GDP)					8.8	6.9	7.9	10.5	11.0	11.3
Net ODA received per capita (current US\$)	58.9	68.9	96.2	114.1	115.5	188.4	180.3	225.0	226.3	230.5
Foreign direct investment, net inflows (BoP, current US\$)(million)	50.0	57.8	186.9	271.0	238.0	188.6	87.2	213.6	75.6	83.4
External debt stocks, total (DOD, current US\$)(billion)					0.9	2.0	2.1	2.4	2.4	2.6
Merchandise trade (% of GDP)	62.3	48.9	46.9	45.5	42.3	38.0	33.5	30.5	35.2	34.6
Refugee population by country or territory of origin (million)	2.5	2.1	2.4	2.1	2.1	3.0	2.8	2.8	3.0	2.6
Internally displaced persons (number, high estimate)(thousand)	920	600	200	200	132	161	235	297	352	456
Battle-related deaths (number of people)	699	353	621	1271	3167	5901	4446	5103	6241	7234
Armed forces personnel, total (thousand)	12	13	27	27	51	51	94	255.7	306.8	340.3
Military expenditure (% of GDP)		2.0	2.1	1.7	1.7	2.4	2.1	2.0	3.6	4.7
Life expectancy at birth, total (years)	45.8	46.0	46.3	46.6	46.9	47.2	47.5	47.9	48.2	48.6
Births attended by skilled health staff (% of total)		14.3			18.9		24			38.6
Mortality rate, under-5 (per 1,000 live births)	129.2	125.9	122.7	119.4	116.3	113.4	109.7	106.7	103.9	101.1
Improved water source (% of population with access)	30	33	38	42	46	50	50	50	50	
Improved sanitation facilities (% of population with access)	33	34	34	35	35	37	37	37	37	
School enrollment, secondary (% gross)		11.7	16.4	17.2	25.7	25.6	34.1	39.7	45.5	48.5
Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education (%)		54.7	40.9	55.4	58.1	57.6	59.6	62.1	63.7	65.9
Mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 people)	0.1	0.7	2.2	4.3	8.8	16.0	26.4	34.3	41.3	54.2
Internet users (per 100 people)	0.005	0.08	0.10	1.22	2.10	1.9	1.84	3.55	4	5

2.7 Chapter Summary

Looking at the history of conflicts and the data at hand we could come to the conclusion that the current trend of conflicts will continue in the future. Conflicts will continue to cause casualties and displace people within and outside their respective states. Though, there is no general agreement on the causes of conflicts, at the least academically, however there are characteristics that are found to be common among states that have experienced a conflict. Such characteristics are poverty, 'impoverishment, inequality & pessimism', and 'social divisions & political oppression'. When faced with a failing or failed state that could pose a threat to the regional stability or the national interests of developed countries, the international community has at least eight policies to choose from. What comes next to intervention by the international community in these conflicts is the phase of reconstruction and development of these states. This phase of reconstruction is to enable the state institutions and people to take charge of their affairs. The four major areas that need to be addressed immediately after the reconstruction phase begins are security, justice & reconciliation, social & economic well-being, and governance & participation.

In Afghanistan, after a decade of major security, development and humanitarian assistance, the international community and the Afghan government has failed to achieve a politically stable and economically viable Afghanistan. Most Afghans still live in conditions of hardship and extreme poverty. The international aid has been prescriptive and used by the donors based on their priorities rather than Afghan needs and preferences. The construction and development projects have been delivered with results and visibility in mind rather than sustainability. The aid allocated to the technical

assistance and development of government capacity has been wasteful, donor driven and of limited impact. State institutions remain fragile and unable to provide good governance, deliver basic services to the majority of the population or guarantee human security. ‘As the insurgency spreads to areas regarded as relatively safe till now, and policy makers in Washington and other Western capital seeks a way out of an unpopular war, the international community still lacks a coherent policy to strengthen the state ahead of the withdrawal of most foreign forces by Decemeber 2014’ (Crisis Group, 2011).

CHAPTER 3. FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

“The most incomprehensible thing about the world is that it is comprehensible.”

“We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.”

Albert Einstein, Princeton (Lectures 1933-1945)

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The issue of sustainable reconstruction and development in Afghanistan is influenced by many factors. Some of these factors are the ‘participatory’ approach of the international community, the donor conditionalities, the insecurity, the lack of coordination and planning among the different actors and organizations, and the lack of technical capacity within the Afghan institutions. The general approach of the international community and the donors throughout this reconstruction and recovery phase has been a participatory rather than a ‘blue-print’ approach (Barakat & Zyck, 2009). This approach has led to a slower and less effective process of progress, recovery and development. Models of western democracy, governance, and liberal economy adopted have not been very effective due to the presence of different variables and parameters, for instance cultural, security, and geopolitical, which do not fit within these models. Incorporation of these models would have been effective if the society was

sufficiently developed and stable. Donor conditionalities have resulted in the organizations and people to focus more on the visible outcomes of the projects and programs than the long-term impact and the effectiveness of the process. During aid negotiations, conditionalities are asserted by donors and accepted by recipients with no or little objection because of their extreme vulnerability or lack of bargaining authority (Barakat & Chard, 2002). Security is of vital importance to the effective recovery and reconstruction of a war-torn state. There has to be an understanding between the international community and the state representatives incharge of this process to yield better outcomes. No objective can be achieved with a lack of planning and coordination among all the relevant stakeholders. However, with a lack of capacity within the state institutions, measures should be taken to develop their capacity and handover more responsibility to them. It would be desirable to know when the whole process of reconstruction and development is Afghan led after 2014, what current problems would continue to exist and what new challenges would emerge to impede the process of sustainable reconstruction and development.

3.2 Research Bias

Utmost care was taken by the author to remain unbiased in this research. However taking into account the nature and mentality of the humans, it may be possible that unintentionally and subconsciously some of the materials and findings in this research may have been biased. A reason for this could have been the author's link to Afghanistan. Further, the participants interviewed for this study were all present in Afghanistan. These participants were serving either the state institutions or the international organizations

involved in the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. Thus, there is a possibility that the responses of these participants to the interview questions may have been biased to one end or the other.

3.3 Methodology

“The “holy grail” of research is establishing methodological rigor. This refers to a researcher's responsibility to ensure that procedures have been adhered to and confounding factors eliminated to produce dependable results” (Hasson & Keeney, 2011). This study has been carried out using two approaches - the Delphi technique and the use of case studies. These methods were used to bring to light some of factors affecting the process of sustainable reconstruction and development in Afghanistan in the post 2014 period.

3.3.1 The Delphi Technique

The Delphi Technique is a qualitative method that “elicits, refines, and draws upon the collective opinion and expertise of a group of experts for long-range forecasting” (Gupta & Clarke, 1996). More generally, the technique is seen as a procedure to “obtain the most reliable consensus of opinion of a group of experts...by a series of intensive questionnaires interspersed with controlled opinion feedback” (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963). It is typically used to “elicit information, suggestions, and judgments from a dispersed and heterogeneous group of specialists on an issue of interest to all of them, but where there may not yet be a clear agreement on the shape of the issue” (Lambert, Nolan, Peterson, & Pierce, 2007). The intent of Delphi is not to challenge

statistical or model-based procedures, it is to judge and forecast situations in which pure model-based statistical methods are not practical or possible because of the lack of data – historical, economic, technical – and thus some form of human judgmental input is necessary (Rowe & Wright, 1999). As such, the goal of Delphi is ‘simply to obtain as many high-quality responses and opinions as possible on a given issue from a group of experts to enhance decision making’ (Gupta & Clarke, 1996).

The Delphi Technique is named after the Greek oracle at *Delphi*, who offered visions of the future to those who sought advice (Gupta & Clarke, 1996). This technique was developed in the 1950s by – Gordon, Helmer, and Dalkey – workers at the RAND corporation while working on a project funded by the US Air Force (Rowe & Wright, 1999). The method became popular and aroused worldwide interest after an article describing this research was published in 1963 (Woudenberg, 1991).

The Delphi Technique has many applications and “works well when the factors surrounding the problem are not well understood, controversial or subjectively weighted. It is particularly useful in generating a model for future data-gathering” (Lambert et al., 2007). Some uses of this technique are to:

1. Establish goals and their priorities.
2. Identify the dimensions and attributes of a problem.
3. Provide predictions.
4. Clarify positions and delineate differences between group members.
5. Gather information from a group whose members wish to retain their anonymity (Delp, Thesen, Motiwalla, & Seshadri, 1977)

A key reason for the continuous popularity of Delphi is its unique strengths. It is a structured, yet indirect, approach to quickly and efficiently elicit responses from experts who bring knowledge, authority, and insight to the problem (Gupta & Clarke, 1996).

Gupta & Clarke (1996) describes some of the advantages of this technique as below:

1. This method captures a wide range of interrelated variables and multidimensional features common to most complex problems.
2. It has a fair to good prediction accuracy over different time horizons.
3. It documents facts and opinions of the experts.
4. It avoids pitfalls of face-to-face interaction, such as group conflict and individual dominance.
5. It is a good method to deal with the open-ended and creative aspects of a problem because it motivates independent thought and gradual formation of solutions.
6. It is a relatively inexpensive method to organize and administer.

However, this technique has also some limitations, which include “potential for sloppy execution, crudely designed questions, poor choice of experts, and limited value of feedback” (Gupta & Clarke, 1996).

3.3.2 General Delphi Procedure

The Delphi technique is iterative. It is executed in ‘rounds’. A set of initial questions framed around an issue is sent to a list of preselected experts via email, fax, mail or web. Respondents are asked to provide written feedback on the problem. The results of the first round are analyzed and used to help structure more detailed questions

for the second round. The responses from the second round can be used to help structure a third round, if necessary (Lambert et al., 2007). Generally, two to three rounds are carried out but may vary depending on the issue being studied and the type of Delphi design (Hasson & Keeney, 2011). There is no guarantee that the Delphi technique will result in a consensus among participants concerning the issue being studied, however it does succeed in generating a framework of the main problems (Lambert et al., 2007).

3.3.3 Sampling Design

One of the marks of a qualitative study is the use of *purposeful sampling* (Patton, 2002). This sampling design confines specific types of people who can provide the desired information, either because they are the only ones who have it, or conform to some criteria set by the researcher (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009). This study utilizes this method to identify the participants for this research. The criteria set for this reason by the author are:

1. Participants have to have an understanding of the issues surrounding the research topic. This was verified by two conditions. First, the requirement was for the participants to have at least a bachelor's degree in their respective fields. Second, they were to have at least two years of work experience in the post-2001 Afghanistan.
2. They have to be middle to high ranking officials – for instance department heads, directors, presidents, CEOs, advisors, program officers/managers or the deputies of these positions – within the state institutions, international

organizations and private firms involved with the reconstruction and development activities of Afghanistan.

Creswell (2003) mentions that the sample size for a study varies by the type of study – approximately 15 for experiment, 30 for a correlational study that relates variables, and 350 for a survey study. However, for the Delphi technique the sample size could range from 5 to 30 (Rowe & Wright, 1999). Linstone & Turoff have stated that in the original RAND effort a Delphi was sent to 5 to 15 experts asked to rank in order the critical top ten targets and explain why each was so important (Linstone & Turoff, 2011). The number of participants to be included for this study was set to be 10. This is a decent number considering the position and status of the participants chosen for this study.

3.3.4 Participation Rate

In order to collect the required data, a total of forty-six individuals meeting the above set criteria for this study were identified. These individuals were informed of this study and asked for their kind participation. However, out of this group of forty-six only nine individuals participated in the first round. Thus, the response rate of the participants for this round was about 19 percent. For the second round, a total of eight individuals participated out of the group of nine from the first round. Though, the numbers of participants in both cases were below the set number of 10 for this study, however it was higher than the minimum number of five participants required for using the Delphi technique.

3.3.5 Case Studies

A case study research is the study of a real-life case within a specific setting (Yin, 2009). Some researchers (Stake, 1995) argue that ‘case study research is not a methodology but a choice of what is to be studied’, however other researchers argue that it is a ‘strategy of inquiry, a methodology, or a complete research strategy’ (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2009). Thus, it could be contended that a ‘case study research is a qualitative approach where a researcher explores a real-life object of study in depth’ (Creswell, 2013).

The types of cases selected for this study are what Stake (1995) call as *instrumental cases*. These cases serve to understand a specific problem or an issue within a given context. Further, the type of case study adopted for this research is the *collective case study*, where multiple cases are selected to study the issue/s under concern from different perspectives (Creswell, 2013). The numbers of cases studied for this research are six. There is no definitive answer on the number of case studies to be selected for a research, however Creswell (2013) states that ‘researchers generally choose no more than four or five cases’. The criteria of case selection for this study are as follows:

1. The cases should be reconstruction and development projects implemented in Afghanistan between the periods 2002 to 2013.
2. These projects should have been implemented by one of the actors involved in the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan, for instance, Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, the World Bank, the United States Agency for International Development, and so forth.

3. These cases should be representatives of different regions of Afghanistan, i.e. East, West, North, and South.
4. These cases should have been implemented under varying ground conditions, i.e. secure areas and insecure areas.

3.4 Study Environment

This study was carried out at the Purdue University of West Lafayette, Indiana. Purdue University is one of the top research universities both in the United States and the World. The research conducted in this study, which is extensively qualitative, was done at the West Lafayette campus. The reason for this was that the researcher was a full time student in the department of Building Construction Management and the resources required to carry out this research was easily available in this institution.

The interviews with the subjects were carried out via email due to certain travel limitations. These subjects who were experts in their fields were contacted through email and interviewed in the same manner for this research.

3.5 Approvals

A meeting was held with the Internal Review Board (IRB) of Purdue University. The IRB was informed of the research and its methodology and the relevant approval was sought. After reviewing the documentation about the research, permission was granted to carry out the interviews.

The subjects of the interview were informed about this study. The importance of their participation and feedback was mentioned. The subjects were provided full

confidentiality about their identity and whatsoever within and outside this study. After receiving their consent interviews were conducted.

3.6 Data Collection

Data collection could be considered a series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer research questions (Creswell, 2013). The initial data for this study was collected from journal articles and books. The majority of these journal articles and books were readily available in the physical and online library of Purdue University. Further, websites of credible international organizations involved with the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan, for instance USAID, World Bank, UN, etc., were also explored for available data and resources.

Field data for this research was collected by questioning experts in the field. These ‘experts’ were individuals who had met the qualification and experience requirements set for this study. Identification of and access to these experts within the aforementioned organizations was challenging. The author, for this reason, approached his contacts in Afghanistan who identified and contacted these experts. These contacts were active middle to high ranking officials – directors, presidents, CEOs – within the government and international organizations. When communication was established with the experts, the questions round was commenced.

This process of sending a set of questions and receiving the feedback from the respondents was carried out via email for two reasons. First, as mentioned in the limitations section of this study, the researcher could not travel to Afghanistan for certain reasons. Second, due to the time constraints and availability of the participants, it was

convenient to them to respond to the questions with no specific deadlines. As mentioned earlier in this section, such flexibility would ensure that the participants have thoroughly answered all the questions to the full extent of their knowledge. Further, utilizing a fax to serve this purpose would have yielded no result as there is limited fax service available in Afghanistan. Similarly, using postal services would have been impractical due to time constraint and the distance between the two countries.

Once the ‘experts in the field’ were identified and initial communication established, a set of questions consistent with the statement of objectives were formulated. The questions for the first iteration of Delphi were:

1. What do you think are the obstacles in the process of reconstruction and development post-2014 within your organization?
2. What do you think are the obstacles in the process of reconstruction and development post-2014 in other national or international organizations involved in this process?
3. What improvement opportunities do you see for the obstacles you have mentioned in question 1 and 2?

The questions framed were open-ended. This choice was made to ensure a better coverage of the different aspects of this subject, which might or might not have been discussed in the literature review. These questions along with a short cover letter outlining the task and reiterating the understanding reached in the early communications were sent to the participants. The same process for the second round of questions was

repeated entailing more detailed questions based on the responses received from the participants in round one. A list of these questions can be found in the appendix.

The case studies were identified by searching the project databases of organizations active in the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. The projects accessible on these databases were available for the general public. The projects selected were by reading the executive summaries of the available projects on the databases of these organizations and matching it with the criteria set forth for this study.

3.7 Analysis

Data analysis in a qualitative research consists of preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes and finally representing the data in figures, tables or discussion. This is the general process however there will be variations in this approach depending on the type of study and the methodology used (Creswell, 2013).

Following the end of the first round of Delphi and upon receiving the feedback from the participants, the responses were analyzed and sorted based on distinct information contained within each document. All the responses from each participant were read meticulously and reflected upon to identify the different issues and their central themes in terms of reconstruction and development in Afghanistan. Each of the responses was put in a group, stacked separately and labeled with the central theme, commonalities and differences. Categories of different issues were created based on the information provided by the participants. These categories of common and varying issues were transformed into a matrix in Microsoft Excel. By categorizing the different issues and

arranging them in a matrix, attempt was made to get a holistic view of all the issues surrounding the topic of research.

The questions for round two were structured with refined parameters based on the information provided by the participants in round one. These questions were much more detailed compared to the questions of the first round. Similar to round one, these questions along with a cover letter were sent to the participants for their feedback. The responses from the second round were again thoroughly analyzed, sorted and categorized based on their differences and commonalities. The issues identified from the responses of the second round were incorporated into the matrix created earlier for the first round. Based on this matrix, the issues mentioned by the participants were categorized into several identifiable overarching issues. A list of these major issues affecting the reconstruction and development process of Afghanistan was created.

To validate these issues externally, the findings of the case studies were used to support them. The case studies were analyzed using what Yin (2009) calls *embedded analysis*. This type of analysis looks at the specific aspects of the cases and focuses on the key issues present. First, a general description of all these cases and the noted issues was presented. This was followed by the analysis of the factors identified both through the Delphi technique and the case study research. These factors were analyzed through *cross-case analysis*, where all these factors were discussed within the light of each case study separately. A general theme of the data collection and analysis process is presented in figure 3.1.

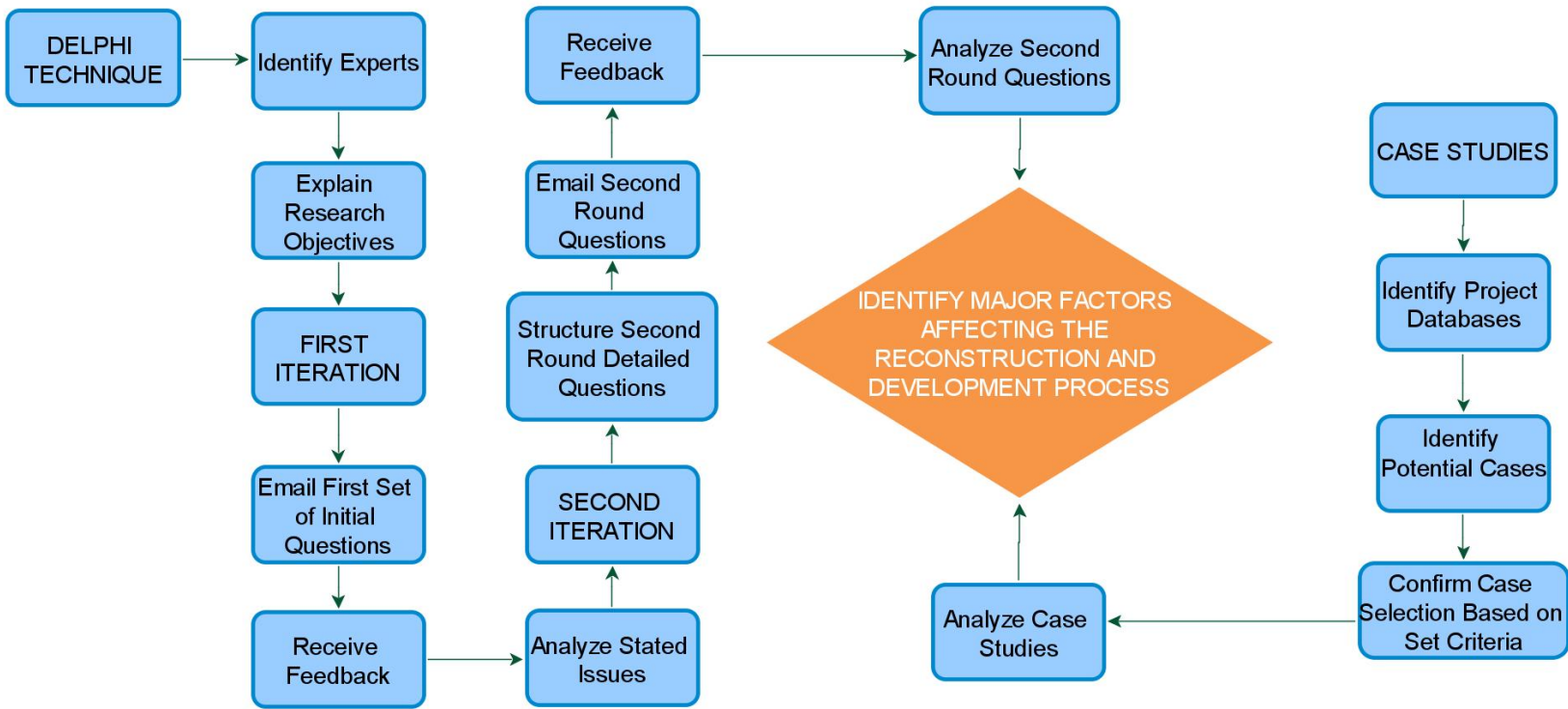


Figure 3.1. Data Collection and Analysis Process

3.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an outline of the overall framework and methodology used in this research. This chapter discussed the theoretical framework, research bias, the research methodology, the study environment, and the data collection and analysis methods employed in this study.

CHAPTER 4. DATA AND ANALYSIS

“Lucky is he who has been able to understand the causes of things”

Virgil 70-19 BC: Georgics

4.1 The Reality

Reconstruction and development, specifically in a post-conflict setting, is of utmost importance and are determinants of the prosperous or bleak future of a state. Out of the 7 billion plus population of this world, about 20% lives in the rich (high-income) countries and the rest in the developing countries. Among these developing countries, where the other 80% of the world population live, some are prospering and on track to entering the group of the rich countries, that is, its population will have access to better education and health care, employment opportunities, better living environment and so forth. However, over a billion of the people in these countries (low-income) live in conditions that are of the fourteenth century – conflicts, plague, ignorance – and most of these countries are situated in Africa and Central Asia (Collier, 2007). Why does development matter in these low-income countries and why should the rest of the world care about it? It is because the thriving middle-income and high-income countries are increasingly vulnerable to these countries in this age of globalization. It is not only that these countries have poor economy and slow growth but the living conditions are much

worse than the rest of the world. For example, the average life expectancy in these countries is fifty years, whereas in the other developing countries it is sixty-seven years. Infant mortality – the proportion of children who die before their fifth birthday – is 14 percent in these countries, whereas in the other developing countries it is 4 percent. The proportion of children with symptoms of long-term malnutrition is 36 percent in these countries compared to 20 percent for the other developing countries. The average income of a person in these countries is only one-fifth of what it is in other developing countries (Collier, 2007).

So low income and slow growth in these countries not only make living conditions worse but also spreads poverty and hopelessness, especially among the youth. This provides opportunities to the youth to create gangs, increasing the crime rate, and groups to rebel against the government. This gives rise to conflicts which in most cases end up in civil wars lasting for years and in some cases decades. Conflicts affect the region directly and the world indirectly in two ways. First, it not just results in the death of people due to the use of weapons but also through diseases. Conflicts create refugees and mass movements of these refugees in the absence of public health systems create epidemics. Refugees in their trek across areas and countries pick up diseases with little resistance and carry it to their place of refuge infecting the people already living there.

Diseases are highly persistent and they do not stop once the fighting stops. Further, diseases are not limited to a certain country or region. For example, combination of mass rape and mass migration in wars produce ideal conditions to spread sexually transmitted diseases, which has been the case for HIV. Another recent example is the spread of 'polio virus', which has been declared as an international public health

emergency by the World Health Organization (WHO). According to BBC News (2014), Pakistan, Cameroon, and Syria pose the greatest risk of further exportation of this virus in 2014. All three of these countries have low-income and slow growth and have recently been or are still in a conflict. Attacks on the vaccine campaigns in the tribal areas of Pakistan have allowed the virus to spread across borders. Syria, which was polio-free for 14 years, was re-infected with the virus from Pakistan, as a result of Pakistani insurgents fighting in Syria. Refugees from Syria are pouring out to Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, and checking all of them for this virus will be impossible. This brings us to our second point and that is the creation of a territory that is outside the control of a recognized government.

Conflicts end up in generating territories over which the government of a country cannot have full control. As a result these territories end up as safe havens for terrorist groups and drug traffickers. Ninety-five percent of the world's drugs are produced in the conflict countries. Further, the activities of these terrorist groups are not limited to the region they are based in but are also global – for example, the incidents of 9/11, the London bombing, and so forth. Conflicts may incur varying costs to the country and the region depending on its magnitude, however, a typical civil war would cost \$64 billion to the country and its neighbors (Collier, 2007). Conflicts not only affect the economy of a country but the region in general, and the economy of a region can affect the economy of the world itself. So, it is not that development in these low-income countries is just a local or regional problem but it is a global one that needs to be fixed.

As has been noted in the literature review part of this study, there are many factors that contribute to the success or failure of reconstruction and development

projects and programs. It is vital to identify these factors in order to ensure an efficient and productive development process. Identification of these factors for this study was carried out through interviews and analysis of case studies of projects implemented in Afghanistan. The following section discusses the interviews that were conducted for this study, followed by case studies and the relevant discussions.

4.2 The Interviewees

As a result of the confidentiality agreement between the author and the participants, no information about the individuals who have participated in this study will be disclosed. However, to establish data validity and reliability and to outline the range of the data collected; brief profile of the organizations where the participating interviewees are currently engaged is provided below:

1. Ministry Of Finance (Government of Afghanistan)

“The Ministry of Finance (MoF) is responsible for the management and execution of the budget, collection of taxes, organization and control of public expenditure and payments to the government. The Ministry of Finance, as the responsible body for public finance and expenditure, has increased its efforts on coordination and management of international financial assistance to Afghanistan and in convincing donors to channel more funds through the government treasury for the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan.” (Ministry of Finance, 2014).

2. Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD)

Formerly known as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), DFATD has the mandate to “manage Canada's diplomatic and consular relations, to

encourage the country's international trade and to lead Canada's international development and humanitarian assistance" (DFATD, 2014a). Canada has spent hundreds of millions of dollars in the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan post-2001. The DFATD's work focused on "supporting basic services, infrastructure, rural development, community development councils, humanitarian assistance, democratic governance, investing in the future of children & youth, security, the rule of law, and human rights" (DFATD, 2014b).

3. United States Department of Commerce (USDC)

"The Afghanistan Investment and Reconstruction Task Force (Task Force) of the U.S. Department of Commerce facilitates and coordinates the Department's activities that are designed to help Afghanistan develop a sustainable economy. Its efforts focus on helping Afghanistan develop a commercial legal environment that supports trade, investment and private sector-led growth, a more capable and competitive private sector, and stronger U.S.-Afghan commercial ties" (USDC, 2014).

4. United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

"UNOPS has supported the Government of Afghanistan in collaboration with donor governments, UN organizations and other partners. By providing sustainable infrastructure, procurement and project management services, UNOPS support the Government with its national reconstruction and development efforts, focusing on the promotion of national ownership and capacity development. In Afghanistan, UNOPS has constructed and rehabilitated over 10,000 kilometers of road, rehabilitated airports and hospitals, and designed and constructed schools for higher education" (UNOPS, 2014).

5. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

The cross-cutting themes that are the areas of focus of UNFPA in Afghanistan are Reproductive Health, Gender Based Violence, and Population & Development. The UNFPA has supported many projects in the aforementioned areas in Afghanistan in partnership with the Afghan Government and various Non-Governmental Organizations (UNFPA, 2014).

6. International Home Finance and Development (IHFD)

IHFD is a limited liability construction company based in Denver, Colorado, USA. IHFD's main areas of operation in Afghanistan have been:

- a. “Design, partial manufacturing, installation as well as operation and maintenance of renewable energy systems such as solar power, wind power and hydro power.
- b. Design, installation and operation of environmental technologies such as wastewater treatment systems, solid waste management systems and heating and cooling systems.
- c. Production and marketing of alternative, "Green" construction technologies.
- d. Housing development and finance.
- e. Construction management and finance” (IHFD, 2014).

7. Appleton Consulting

“Appleton Consulting Inc. (ACI) is an international business consulting company based in Afghanistan that focuses on enabling unique business solutions for emerging and developing market sectors. ACI provides a wide range of services for its Afghan and international clients including business management, strategic partnership development, and supply chain management. ACI has worked with over 70 Afghan companies, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations Office

for Project Services (UNOPS), the Government of Afghanistan, the Canadian Embassy in Kabul, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), Aga Khan Foundation, U.S coalition forces, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and Afghanistan International Bank (AIB)” (Appleton Consulting, 2014).

8. Think Renewables

“Think Renewables, Inc. (TRI) is a United States based company that develops technologies to help solve current problems and promote sustainable development with Afghanistan as one of its areas of operations. All the profits of TRI are donated to Charity Help International to support its humanitarian work in the country where it is selling its products” (Think Renewables, 2014).

9. Abdulhai Gardezi Construction Firm (ACF)

ACF is a local Afghan construction firm that has operated in the country since 2006. ACF has implemented a number of infrastructure and vertical projects for different donors in Afghanistan including United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACF, 2014).

4.3 Analysis of the Interview Data

After receiving the feedback of the participants for both rounds of the interviews, analysis of these responses was commenced. Each response was carefully and critically reviewed and the terms and phrases describing a particular issue by the participant were noted down in a table. This process was carried for all the responses of the participants of this study. The table highlighting the terms and phrases used by the participants to describe the various issues is presented in Appendix C.

After completion of this initial phase of data analysis, the produced table of the specific terms and phrases was analyzed. A certain commonality of issues could be observed in these terms and phrases. Therefore, all the issues in this table were categorized into their respective overarching issues. This categorization of the various issues can be observed in the table present in Appendix D. A summary of the overarching issues identified through analysis of the collected data from these interviews is presented in table 4.1 below. Further, the number of participants having mentioned a certain issue in their responses can also be observed in this table.

Table 4.1. Issues Identified through Analysis of the Interview Data

	NO.	ISSUES	MODE
OVERARCHING ISSUES	1	Security Challenge	8
	2	Qualified Human Capital	8
	3	Government Capacity	7
	4	Investment Risk	7
	5	Corruption	7
	6	Development Budget Reduction	6
	7	Economic Growth	5
	8	Policy Reforms	5
	9	Transparency & Accountability	4
	10	Government-Donor Coordination	3
	11	Turnover	1

4.4 Case Studies

The case studies analyzed for this study were all implemented in Afghanistan by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and were accessed through its projects database known as *Development Experience Clearinghouse* (DEC).

Each case was analyzed individually and the existing issues were noted down. A brief summary of these cases and the associated issues are presented in the following tables.

Table 4.2. Case Study 1 - Kabul to Kandahar Highway
(Source: USAID, Audit of the Kabul to Kandahar Highway Reconstruction Activities Financed by USAID/Afghanistan's Rehabilitation of Economic Facilities and Services Program, 2004)

CASE STUDY 1	
PROJECT	Kabul to Kandahar Highway
OBJECTIVE	Implemented under the Rehabilitation of Economic Facilities and Services (REFS) program, the aim of the project was to promote economic recovery and political stability by repairing infrastructure in Afghanistan.
LOCATION	East to Southwest of Afghanistan – passing through Kabul, Kandahar, Wardak, Ghazni, and Zabol provinces
ESTIMATED COST	\$269 million
ORIGINAL DURATION	September 2002 to December 2004 (project was completed at the end of 2005)
PROJECT SCOPE	The project, awarded to Louis Berger Group, Inc. (LBGI) by USAID, consisted of removing the old road surface, survey, design, and reconstruction of a segment (389 kilometers) of the Kabul-Kandahar Highway along with bridges (6), causeways, and culverts.
MAJOR ISSUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Personnel • Personnel Competence • Project Design • Project Management

Table 4.3. Case Study 2 - Kandahar to Herat Highway
 (Source: USAID, Audit of USAID/Afghanistan's Reconstruction of the Kandahar-Herat Highway under the Rehabilitation of Economic Facilities and Services Program, 2006)

CASE STUDY 2	
PROJECT	Kandahar to Herat Highway
OBJECTIVE	Implemented under the Rehabilitation of Economic Facilities and Services (REFS) program, the aim of the project was to promote economic recovery and political stability by repairing infrastructure in Afghanistan.
LOCATION	South to Northwest of Afghanistan – passing through Kandahar, Helmand, Farah, and Herat provinces
ESTIMATED COST	\$257 million
ORIGINAL DURATION	September 2002 to December 2005 (project was completed in mid-2007)
PROJECT SCOPE	<p>This USAID project, also awarded to Louis Berger Group, Inc. (LBGI), like the Kabul-Kandahar Highway consisted of the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demining the highway right-of-way • Removing the old road surface • Surveying and designing the highway • Mobilizing camp sites and asphalt making plants • Constructing the new highway (326 kilometers), including culverts, causeways, and bridges (4).
MAJOR ISSUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Project Management • Funding • Personnel Competence • Personnel Turnover

Table 4.4. Case Study 3 - Strategic Provincial Roads
 (Source: USAID, Final Report Evaluation of USAID's Strategic Provincial Roads
 Southern and Eastern SPR-SEA Program, 2011)

CASE STUDY 3	
PROJECT	Strategic Provincial Roads – Southern & Eastern Afghanistan
OBJECTIVE	The Strategic Provincial Roads (SPR) was part of the reconstruction program of Afghanistan aimed at increasing stability and security in Southern and Eastern Afghanistan by rehabilitating provincial roads and improving subcontractor capacity to build and maintain roads.
LOCATION	Eastern and Southern Afghanistan
ESTIMATED COST	\$269.5 million
DURATION	2007 to 2011 (terminated)
PROJECT SCOPE	The SPR project, awarded to International Relief and Development, Inc. (IRD) by USAID, was expected to rehabilitate an estimated 1500 to 2000 kilometers of roads to an all-weather gravel standard. In addition, capacity building and community development were designed to facilitate construction and minimize community impact caused by road construction and ensure sustainability of the rehabilitated roads.
MAJOR ISSUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Project Management • Personnel Turnover • Personnel Competence • Project Design • Communication between Project Staff • Subcontractors

Table 4.5. Case Study 4 - Alternative Development Program for Eastern Afghanistan
 (Source: USAID, Evaluation Report of Alternative Development Program (ADP) Eastern Region by USAID in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2010a)

CASE STUDY 4	
PROJECT	Alternative Development Program (ADP) – Eastern Afghanistan
OBJECTIVE	The goal of this project was to accelerate the regional economic development in ways that provide new opportunities to the population to seek livelihoods in the licit economy, and soften the socio-economic shockwaves of the reduction in opium economy.
LOCATION	Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar, and Nuristan provinces
ESTIMATED COST	\$118.4 million
DURATION	February 2005 to June 2009
PROJECT SCOPE	<p>Awarded to Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI) by USAID, this project consisted of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving rural roads to connect farms to the markets • Renewal of irrigation infrastructure • Improvement of agricultural production • Rehabilitation of potential irrigable land • Assisting small to medium enterprises with business skills
MAJOR ISSUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel Competence • Project Design

Table 4.6. Case Study 5 - Alternative Development Program for Northern Afghanistan
 (Source: USAID, Evaluation Report of Alternative Development Program (ADP)
 Northern Region by USAID in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2010b)

CASE STUDY 5	
PROJECT	Alternative Development Program (ADP) – Northern Afghanistan
OBJECTIVE	The goal of this project was to accelerate the regional economic development in ways that provide new opportunities to the population to seek livelihoods in the licit economy, and soften the socio-economic shockwaves of the reduction in opium economy.
LOCATION	Badakhshan and Takhar provinces
ESTIMATED COST	\$60 million
DURATION	2005 to 2009
PROJECT SCOPE	<p>The project was awarded to PADCO by USAID and consisted of the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure construction/rehabilitation (roads, bridges, canals) • Construction of structures (veterinary clinics, root cellars) • Improvements in agricultural productions • Agribusiness development (feedlot, walnut processing, potato seed production, marketing)
MAJOR ISSUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Management • Project Design • Personnel Competence • Personnel • Corruption • Communication and Coordination with Govt. Agencies

Table 4.7. Case Study 6 - Alternative Development Program for Southern Afghanistan
 (Source: USAID, Evaluation Report of Alternative Development Program (ADP)
 Southern Region by USAID in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2010c)

CASE STUDY 6	
PROJECT	Alternative Development Program (ADP) – Southern Afghanistan
OBJECTIVE	The goal of this project was to accelerate the regional economic development in ways that provide new opportunities to the population to seek livelihoods in the licit economy, and soften the socio-economic shockwaves of the reduction in opium economy.
LOCATION	Helmand, Kandahar, and Uruzgan provinces
ESTIMATED COST	\$162 million
DURATION	2005 to 2009
PROJECT SCOPE	<p>The activities for this USAID project, awarded to Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI), consisted of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction/rehabilitation of infrastructure projects (Lashkar Gah airport runway, electrical substation, roads, irrigation canals) • Improvements in agricultural productions • Agribusiness development (poultry, livestock feed mills, marketing)
MAJOR ISSUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Personnel Competence • Project Design • Personnel Turnover • Communication and Coordination with Govt. Agencies • Corruption

4.5 Identified Factors

Based on the analysis of the data from the interviews and the case studies, the following factors have been found to impact reconstruction and development activities in Afghanistan. The rationale behind the selection of these factors is the shared commonality of these factors among the list of the issues identified through the use of the two research methods applied in this study.

1. Security
2. Mismanagement
3. Personnel Competence
4. Personnel Turnover
5. Corruption
6. Accountability
7. Government-Donor Coordination

4.6 Analysis of the Identified Factors

1. Security

Security has been a major obstacle in implementing projects affecting them not only in terms of completion on time but also quality and cost. It resulted in limited number of site visits for the first case study. The site visits that were made for this project were either under very tight security or from air using helicopters. The outcome of this was increased project cost and poor quality control. Efforts were made to increase monitoring personnel for this project from 2 to 10; however the security situation continued to effect the recruitment. Although, financial incentives were offered and the

work and living conditions were improved, however this only resulted in filling only one additional position (USAID, 2004). Similarly, in the second case study, which was initially considered to be in a rather secure area than the first case study, deteriorating security conditions resulted in staff turnover affecting the quality and timely completion of the project. Further, the security situation increased the security cost of the project resulting in an increase in the overall cost of the project itself. The first case study and the second case study projects were both implemented under the Rehabilitation of Economic Facilities and Services (REFS) program, which was initially estimated to cost \$155 million, however security being one of the reasons, increased this initial cost to \$730 million. In addition, both of the projects were scheduled to be completed by the end of 2004 and 2005 respectively; however the first case study project was completed at the end of 2005 and the second case study project in mid-2007 (USAID, 2006).

South-east and southern parts of Afghanistan are relatively more insecure than the rest of the country. The third case study project suffered immensely from the insecurity in these areas. Although, security issues were addressed in the proposal through community outreach programs, however this approach yielded positive results in only certain areas. Overall, this project suffered from 928 security incidents – deadly military attacks, roadside bombs, and kidnappings – which resulted in 127 deaths and 258 injuries between 2007 and 2011. These attacks were sporadic and differed between provinces, however the highest number of incidents were in two provinces – Paktika (122) and Helmand (117) – and the lowest number of incidents were in Nangarhar and Laghman. Speculations point to the varying levels of community support for this difference in these provinces, however Nangarhar and Laghman were initially relatively stable provinces compared to

the others. These security incidents resulted in a proportionate increase in the security costs of the subcontractors. In some cases, the subcontractors could not mobilize their equipment and personnel to the job site. This resulted in no progress payments affecting the subcontractors' cash-flow, which in turn caused the termination of the contract by convenience or default. In addition, parts of the project that could be worked on could not be visited by the senior managers, resulting in poor quality control and delayed decision making delaying the project completion itself (USAID, 2011).

Similarly, in the sixth case study, the substation upgrade in Lashkar Gah, Helmand province, which included addition of distribution lines and transformers, could not be completed because of rocket attacks. The security situation resulted in poor project oversight as personnel were confined to their compounds. Furthermore, some activities of this project were forced to shut earlier in the Kandahar region due to increased insurgent attacks (USAID, 2010c). In summary, the security situation resulted in increased project costs, project delays, and project termination affecting the reconstruction and development program in many areas. However, case studies four and five did not suffer from security incidents, compared to case study six, as they were situated in relatively stable areas. Yet case study four was considered a success whereas case study five was considered a failure. Thus, the security situation is not the only factor leading to success or failure of a project, which is discussed in the following sections.

2. Mismanagement

Mismanagement has been observed to be consistent in many projects in both secure and insecure areas. The primary problems have been project monitoring and

quality control. The Louis Berger Group (LBGI) and USAID, for instance, did not fully monitor the first case study project activities, project timeline, or the quality of the work. The performance of the contractor was not fully monitored to ensure that the approved quality control and assurance programs were strictly followed. Further, the quality testing laboratory of the contractor was not inspected and thus the testing done was not in compliance with standards. LBGI had not properly trained its personnel for this project. For example, when cracks were noted in the asphalt layer due to paving during bad weather or cold asphalt during compaction, the contractor was not asked to stop work or remove the layer. This lack of adherence to project quality control and assurance requirements resulted in 30 kilometers of asphalt to be removed due to quality issues, pushing back the project completion date. As mentioned in the security part above, efforts were made to increase monitoring personnel for this project from 2 to 10, however only 3 positions could be filled due to the security and working conditions. However, the roles of these available monitoring personnel were poorly defined and/or had other duties in addition to monitoring this project (USAID, 2004). This points to the fact that this project was not managed well by LBGI, despite all the challenges that were known and present on the ground.

There were no quality issues reported for the second case study as in contrast to the first case study. This could be related to the location of this project being in a relatively secure area compared to the project in the first case study and the willingness of personnel to work in this area. Yet, this project was completed in mid-2007, more than a year after the original project end date. The reason for this delay was an increase in the project cost and a lack of funding as a result. The cost increase was because of a lack of

assessment of the old road and bridges due to demining issues (USAID, 2006). This alludes that certain challenges were not taken into consideration when this project was planned and appropriated.

On the contrary, the third case study proposal was well prepared. The proposal took into consideration the security issues in remote areas and addressed this issue through community outreach program. The low skill level labor and subcontractor issues were addressed through capacity building and training. Similarly, other variables such as field conditions, labor pool, ethnic and political factors were also taken into account. The security personnel and labors for this project were to be hired from the local communities. This was thought to improve the local economy and increase the local community support for the project reducing any security risks. The unskilled labors were to be provided hands on mentoring in the field and the subcontractors were to be trained in project management in Kabul. All these variables increased the complexity of the project and required a well-organized and efficient plan to render it practical. However, the one issue in this regard was the system of authority delegation to the field for decision-making and implementation (USAID, 2011).

Although, International Relief and Development (IRD) had prior experience in Afghanistan and had taken key factors into account but the problematic issue was the organizational structure. The Chief of Party (COP), located in Kabul, was the main decision-maker, making the decision-making process centralized. The poor management structure could not address the realities in the field. It slowed down the information flow and decision-making resulting in delays in resolving field problems. For instance, the road design requirements in the contract were more excessive for the low traffic volumes

of these provincial roads. The design criteria used for the SPR roads was the same as for the first and second case studies. However, rectification of this problem on time failed because of the centralized organizational structure and slow flow of communication between the field staff and senior managers. As mentioned in the security factor, senior managers could not visit the field due to the security situation. This further emphasized for the need to decentralize mid-level management decision making. As critical decisions were passed up the chain of command, this overwhelmed the senior area managers with day to day issues. This preoccupation with the details of daily management obscured their broader view and direction of the program. However, if the field offices were staffed with expat managers, many problems could have been prevented. The general feeling in the field was a lack of support from the management in Kabul, resulting in a breakdown of confidence between the field staff and the senior managers (USAID, 2011).

The third case study was conceived with the notion that violence was decreasing. This particular notion was perhaps the reason that no significant risk analysis or contingency planning was carried out for this project. As mentioned earlier, security attacks increased heavily in 2009, especially in the Helmand and Paktika provinces. The security issue, as mentioned above, was to be addressed through the community outreach program. However, the community mobilization teams focused more on the Community Development Councils (CDC) and formal political structures than on 'Shuras' (local community councils). This was perhaps due to poor understanding of the traditional rural social and political structures. The result was a lack of preparation for the community groundwork before the arrival of road program teams. This may have been one of the factors for increased security problems in certain areas. In highly insecure areas, IRD

could have suspended the project and transferred all equipment and operations to an alternative project. This could have motivated the community to help deal with the security issues, knowing that because of the insecurity they will not have roads. However, because of a lack of functional decision-making process, which resulted in a series of poor decisions, the third case study was eventually terminated in 2011 (USAID, 2011).

Similar to the first and second case studies, the third case study had also quality control issues. The quality control laboratories were in many cases not up to standards. Often times, the test results despite not being up to standards were recorded as being in compliance. This problem was recognized by USAID and in 2010 hired TetraTech to establish third party QA process. However, the benefit of this action was infinitesimal as the project was terminated in 2011 (USAID, 2011).

The fifth case study also suffered from mismanagement. The program operations began in November 2005, whereas the winter limited operational activities until May 2006. The project design, approval, and implementation did not confirm with the climate realities of northern Afghanistan. This project had both infrastructure and agricultural activities. However, the results of these activities were found unsatisfying. In infrastructure, the bridges seemed well constructed but the roads were of poor quality, specifically because of asphaltting problems during unfavorable weather. A canal, the Baharak Power canal, was constructed in unstable soil on a steep slope. The construction material did not meet the project specification requirements (cement to sand ration of 1:7 compared to 1:4 required). Further, large boulders and breaches were observed in the canal after completion. Its walls collapsed after seasonal floods and seepage eroded unlined canal banks. This canal which was supposed to deliver water to the downstream

power plant and irrigation fields, failed to do so. Further, it threatened a road that was just close by to this canal. In addition, root cellars constructed for the farmers to store potatoes and food in general were a failure as they were conducive to fungus. The evaluation team of this project expressed serious reservations about the metrics used to guide and measure progress and success (USAID, 2010b).

In agricultural activities, vegetable seeds and fertilizers were distributed. However, some crops were serious economic disappointment as local field testing was not carried out. Farmers in Badakhshan started suffering losses in potato crops as a result of Colorado Beetle, which they blamed PADCO for introducing to their environment. Further, fruit saplings were distributed to the farmers, however no training in terms of orchard management was provided to them (USAID, 2010b).

PADCO developed a negative image not just because of the failure of the aforementioned activities, but also because of its heavy security footprint and the relative high cost. The high security profile and extravagant lifestyle of PADCO was found intimidating by the locals, as Badakhshan was considered a rather secure area and other NGOs and foundations were able to operate effectively with unarmed guards and low lifestyle footprint. People saw this act of PADCO as the diversion of resources that were supposed to help them (USAID, 2010b). Thus, this project is noted to be poorly planned and monitored, not taking into account the realities on the ground and the local ethnic and cultural factors. Further, due to the poor judgment and decision-making of the PADCO managers, this project did not receive much support from the local community, which is a significant factor in a smooth implementation of projects in Afghanistan.

3. Personnel Competence

As mentioned in the literature part of this study, Afghanistan lost most of its skilled resources during the three decades of fighting and disturbances, and opportunities to replenish this gap was missing. This lack of local qualified human capital and the inexperience of international personnel in an unpredictable and challenging environment like Afghanistan were felt during the reconstruction and development period of post-2002. As mentioned earlier, many of these projects suffered from mismanagement and a lack of proper quality control and assurance programs, which indicate a lack of experience and/or knowledge of the field.

In the first case study, both the USAID and LBGI did not carry out an effective quality control and assurance program. The personnel were not trained properly and as a result laboratory testing was not done in compliance with standards, which resulted in the removal of 30 kilometers of asphalt. Consequently, a contract was signed with another international company for monitory and advisory services in May 2004 (USAID, 2004). However, the same issue was not experienced in the second case study. This probably could be as a result of the lessons learned from the first case study.

The third case study had a well prepared proposal demonstrating the experience of IRD in Afghanistan. However, the management was not structured well to address the complexity of the project and the realities in the field. Further, although the subcontractors were selected using the industry norms, but in most cases they were financially and materially impacted due to underestimating of the Statement of Work of the project. These subcontractors were responsible both for the design and construction of the provincial roads. However, the quality of the design and compliance to international

codes were much higher than what these subcontractors were familiar with. Those subcontractors who recognized the higher cost liability of this change submitted higher bids but many subcontractors underbid their projects without fully understanding their responsibilities. The selection of these lowest bidders resulted in many problems. For example, the submitted design sets by the subcontractors and their consultants were rejected multiple times resulting in much delays. In addition, the design data provided to the subcontractors was in the form of ‘aerial photogrammetric imaging’. However, the subcontractors had no prior experience with this kind of data and thus it took them two months to verify this data on the field. In addition, as mentioned previously, this project suffered from the incompetence of personnel involved, such as lack of jobsite management and supervision; lack of contingency planning and risk management; limited capacity of field engineers to adequately supervise subcontractors causing delayed payments and hence cash-flow problems; and reliance on subcontractors to provide quality designs (USAID, 2011). All these factors compounded contributed ultimately to the termination of the project.

Case studies four, five, and six also faced similar issues. The case study four personnel showed a lack of hands on experience on fruit trees establishment and fruit orchard management (USAID, 2010a). Similarly, the case study five and six personnel did not provide these trainings to the farmers which resulted in a reported loss of 15-50% of saplings for the latter (USAID, 2010c). In the fourth case study, one important facility missing was the cold storage warehouse for fruits and vegetables. This resulted in farmers/businesses selling fruits and vegetables cheaper or sending it over the border to

Pakistan for cold storage to re-sell in the Afghan market during off-season (USAID, 2010a).

The design and quality of infrastructure and buildings of the fifth case study were particularly egregious. Its roads were of very poor quality, the canals were poorly constructed, and the root cellars were conducive to fungus. These establishments rendered useless almost as soon as they were constructed (USAID, 2010b). In the sixth case study, the short duration of many project activities prevented a lasting impact on the economy of the region. Many of these activities were not designed to be sustainable beyond the project conclusion. With no transition plan, the assumption was that the locals would take over without any technical or financial support. However, this led to the disappointment of many people involved in this project (USAID, 2010c). Thus, if these projects and its many activities were planned and monitored properly, not just the local people but all Afghanistan would have benefited much more than what is possible now.

4. Personnel Turnover

Personnel turnover might have been one of the reasons for some of the projects not accomplishing its stated objectives. All of the projects, however, did not suffer from this factor. The first case study project had high rates of staff turnover, which could be related to the security situation, living conditions, and limited tour of duty. Staff turnover was the main reason for this project being delayed as the issue of lack of funding was not addressed on time due to frequent change in key project personnel (USAID, 2006). Likewise, the third case study project also experienced high turnover of key personnel. The average tenure of senior managers in this project was 8.3 months. Among these, of particular concern was the tenure of the Subcontractors Manager, which was 5 months

(USAID, 2011). The sixth case study project, similarly, had high personnel turnover at the beginning of the project making it difficult to maintain a focus on the project goals and objectives (USAID, 2010c). Had staff turnover been lower, the management problems discussed earlier might have been lesser resulting in better outcomes.

5. Corruption

The literature part of this study mentioned that corruption remains endemic in Afghanistan, and that there is a lack of political will to tackle it. Further, the donor community is also blamed for it because of poorly conceived development projects and weak oversight. In the fifth case study project, PADCO bribed provincial or national government departments to take premature control of an activity so as to avoid making repairs to bring the activity up to project standards (USAID, 2010b). In the third case study project, each subcontractor was required as part of the contract to provide support facilities for the IRD field staff. However, in some cases, for instance in Kandahar, IRD engineers lived with the subcontractor's field staff in the subcontractor's compound. As was mentioned earlier, many test results were recorded as being in compliance where in reality they were not up to standards (USAID, 2010c). So, the living and working conditions for these engineers were such that it favored the subcontractor.

6. Accountability

The absence of accountability eases the way for corruption and mismanagement. Were accountability properly practiced in Afghanistan, most of the aforementioned internal (within the human control) problems could have been prevented or rectified, resulting in better outcomes. The quality issues in the first case study project resulted in the removal of 30 kilometers of asphalt causing a delay in the project and wastage of

resources (USAID, 2004). In the third case study project, the implementing mechanism was a ‘cooperative agreement’ rather than a ‘contract’. The result was less accountability and responsiveness to USAID. Therefore, much of the management problems that were present in this project were not known by USAID within time. Further, as mentioned above, the IRD field staff was living with the subcontractor’s field staff in their compound (USAID, 2011). As a result, this literally forced the IRD staff to overlook the quality issues in the provincial roads for the reason mentioned in the above section. Similarly, in the fifth case study project, government departments were bribed to take control of activities that were either incomplete or not in compliance with quality requirements of the project. In addition, PADCO expended much resource on a high security footprint and extravagant lifestyle in an area where other organizations were operating effectively without similar arrangements. Based on the analysis of the evaluation team for this project, it was stated that much of the work done by PADCO will not have long-term consequence. Further, the cost-benefit value of the project was questioned as the estimated value of the benefits was in the order of \$40 million for a cost of \$60 million (USAID, 2010b). Thus, a lack or improper enforcement of accountability resulted in many personnel of these projects to not perform their duties responsibly.

7. Government-Donor Coordination

A lack of Government-Donor coordination has affected the implemented projects in two ways. First, it has resulted in duplication of efforts and resources in some areas, as mentioned in the literature part of this study. Second, a lack of involvement of the government agencies have led to the underdevelopment of skills and capacities of the government officials and brought to question the sustainability issue of these projects. In

the fourth case study, the relative government agencies were not involved in the design and planning of this program (USAID, 2010a). Their inclusion could have provided some local insight that might have resulted in a better design and planning of the program. In the fifth case study, the evaluators have expressed their views that the support and follow-on of the government agencies could have greatly improved the results of the project. The Baharak Power Canal failed to deliver the water to the power station and irrigation lands downstream, as mentioned earlier. The officials of this power station stated their unawareness of the details of the work done in this activity and complained about the absence of relevant documents that should have been provided to them. The Director of Water Management said that not only did PADCO not coordinate with his department but also refused to leave blueprints, specifications, or record of what was done for the project within his jurisdiction. The Director of Public Works claimed that his department was wholly ignored despite its obvious jurisdiction over many project activities. The government officials criticized PADCO for a lack of coordination and arrogance. PADCO often time remained absent from coordination meetings. As a result many activities of this project were stated to have no long-term significance (USAID, 2010b). Similarly, in the sixth case study, department of Agriculture and Rural Rehabilitation and Development indicated some involvement with the project but wished for more involvement and consultation. The long-term impact and sustainability of this project was questioned as there was no transition plan after project completion, as it was assumed that the local government agencies would take over without any further technical or financial support, which did not turn out to be the case (USAID, 2010c).

4.7 Chapter Summary

Discussion in this chapter entailed the factors impeding and proving challenging to the process of reconstruction and development. These factors were identified based on the interviews carried out with the organizations involved in this process and a number of case studies of projects implemented on the ground. Brief profiles of the participating organizations and summaries of the case studies were provided. This was followed by a analysis of the identified factors discussed in the light of the case studies.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSIONS

“Study the past if you would define the future”.

Confucius (551 BC - 479 BC)

“The greatest challenge to any researcher is stating the problem in a way that will
allow a solution”.

Bertrand Russell (1872 – 1970)

5.1 New Outlooks

The underlying idea of this study was to identify the key factors that would affect and slow down the reconstruction and development process in a post-conflict zone, in particular in Afghanistan, through interviews with people involved in this process and case studies of projects implemented on the ground. This study has discussed and alluded to the complexity and uncertainty of this process. The different challenges present in a post-conflict setting – the varying interests and agendas of different countries and organizations, the capacity of the local institutions, the security and stability uncertainty, corruption, infrastructure, the unknown and challenging terrain – have proved to be difficult to the international community to overcome. This has had varying level of outcomes, however in most cases the stated objectives of the projects and programs were not achieved entirely.

The international community has labelled these failures in all development cases as the *lessons learned*. This rhetoric has been repeated from time to time; however it displays a lack of understanding of the situation on the ground and the development process in general. In the author's opinion, what the international community tends to forget is that this reconstruction and development opportunity that the post-conflict state gets has a limited time frame. Thus, it is imperative to use this window of opportunity in the best way possible in order to achieve the set goals by the international community and the aspirations of the post-conflict communities. The international community ought to know that all the issues in this process are dynamic and interconnected and therefore requires a holistic approach where all sectors play an equal role in forming the framework and foundation of an effective and productive development process.

This holistic approach would require a considerable amount of planning on a micro and macro level to integrate the efforts of all the parties involved in the reconstruction and development program. This planning would need to identify and address the numerous factors surrounding this process. The proper assessment of these factors and their management could sway the projects and programs toward success contributing to the overall success of the process itself.

If the analysis of the collected data for this study is correct, then the factors mentioned in the previous chapter would be pivotal to the success or failure of reconstruction and development program in Afghanistan, and other post-conflict states in general. This argument may not be something new in this field; however what is really needed is an alternative way of thinking to better manage this process and the factors challenging it. The people involved in this process need to step out of the box and their

comfort zones and start thinking of ways that could produce better outcomes. This would mean challenging their own knowledge and experience and adapting to the reality on the ground. This would result in a proactive approach that would take into account the complexity of the situation and produce results that are more conducive and sustainable.

For the factors identified in this study, the author has presented suggestions in the following sections that could be used to improve the outcome of these factors. These suggestions should not be considered independent interventions but rather added measures to the current endeavors and strategies of the international community and governments to achieve security, stability, and an improved reconstruction and development process.

1. Security

The author believes that for lasting peace in Afghanistan, approaches on three fronts are vital – diplomacy, development, and military. The last decade (2002 – 2012) has shown that pursuing only military engagement to tackle the insurgency is not a viable option. Thus there is a need to politically engage these groups. As Barakat et al. (2008) have suggested, this process will need to involve directly the Afghan government and key insurgent representatives with any needed assistance from the international community. Furthermore, key stakeholders would need to be assured that any negotiations with the insurgents would ultimately be in their favor and contribute to an improved stability of the region. The international community would need to extend its support to the government in this process to show that it is a capable and credible partner.

In addition to negotiations with the insurgents, the government needs to engage in public diplomacy. The traditional structures such as ‘shuras’ (local community councils)

are still a functional part of the society in much of Afghanistan. Similarly, the clerics, mullahs, and imams still hold influence in much of rural areas where illiteracy is the highest. These figures in general pass message of sorts to the public during the Friday prayer sermons. Further, they are also conveyors of insurgent messages and in some cases motivators of insurgency itself. Thus, gaining the support and confidence of these clerics is important to the government to not only stop the conveyance of the insurgents' messages but also to persuade the people not to support the insurgents. These people could also serve as a source of local intelligence reporting the activities of these insurgents (Barakat et al., 2008).

According to Barakat et al. (2008) many Afghans blame the government for the grim state of the country. With a lack of unemployment, the young Afghans who make a larger percentage of the population are a good source of manpower to the insurgents. Therefore, the government needs to focus on development projects in these rural areas to meet the local needs and provide life improvement opportunities to these young men. In addition to employment, for instance in infrastructure, agriculture and livelihood support programs, these young men could be provided vocational and educational training, adding up to the skilled workforce of the country. Further, as has been evident from the case studies, the support of local communities is significant for the implementation of projects in insecure environments. The local communities can take security measures to prevent the insurgents from hindering the project work. This would contribute to both the stability and development of the region. Therefore, the government needs to be clear and organized in its message and practice, especially in these rural areas. Losing the trust of these people could result in losing the positive achievements of many years. In order to

prevent this, the government could also work on raising the awareness of the people about the civilian fatalities resulting from insurgent attacks. Further, they could be pointed to the current situation of Iraq where the sectarian violence could prove to be a powerful lesson to the people.

In the author's opinion, there are two groups of insurgents. The first are the moderate elements who are willing to negotiate with the government. These are the people with whom the Afghan government and the international community have been recently trying to interact and have dialogues. However, the results have not been very favorable so far. The second are the hardcore extremists who do not negotiate under any circumstances. It is therefore necessary to substantially improve the capabilities of the Afghan security forces to enable them to effectively combat these hardcore insurgents. Doing so will not only slow down but also downsize the activities and attacks of these insurgents. This will further put pressure on the less extreme elements of these groups and, hopefully, bring them closer to the negotiations table.

2. Mismanagement

The author believes that the issue of mismanagement could be categorized into two categories. The first is mismanagement carried out by people due to negligence of their duties and responsibilities. Dealing with this type of mismanagement falls under the subject of accountability and will be discussed in a later section. The second type is mismanagement due to a lack of experience in new (and insecure) environments, such as Afghanistan, as has been noted in some of the case studies. Dealing with this type of mismanagement requires close involvement of the local experts. The involvement of these local experts from the initiation of a program/project to the completion can provide

insight into issues of a certain area that others might not be aware of or may foresee. Having information of some of the upcoming challenges and problems would provide time to the decision makers to devise ways of managing these risks. Further, coordinating the project/program plans with the local agencies and involvement of the local communities would ensure a less problematic and informed implementation process.

One main mismanagement issue that has been noticed in the case studies to have remarkably affected the projects is the flow of information between the main office and field personnel. The lynchpin for this issue was noticed to be the centralized structure of the project hierarchy. Though, centralized structures provide ease in project management, especially decision making, however these structures render less effective as the project magnitude increases specifically in uncertain environments, where on time decision making is imperative to project success. It is in the author's believe that in such unpredictable environments a rather dynamic project structure would yield better results. The project structure should remain flexible for meeting the varying needs of the project itself. As the project size and uncertainty on the ground increases, decision making should be made decentralized enabling middle level to senior managers to make on-time and optimal decisions.

3. Personnel Competence

Developing countries in general suffer from a shortage of qualified human resources due to substandard educational institutions, among other factors. The state of post-conflict countries in some cases is even worse in this regard. During the conflict years the primary goal of people is survival, and as the conflict extends the educated and more skilled group of people will leave for other countries and the less fortunate, who

make the larger percentage of population, will stay behind. Due to a dysfunctional or complete absence of educational institutions a generation of young men and women lose the opportunity to get the proper education and training to add up to the workforce of the country, as was the case in Afghanistan. This skill gap proves to be the most critical challenge during the post-conflict years as it directly affects the growth of the country and all other development activities.

The international community does have capacity development programs; however in most cases they are donor-driven with a shorter duration rather than meeting the actual and long-term needs of the state (Sanyal & Babu, 2012). For this program to be sustainable and to contribute to sustainable development, it needs to be owned and managed by the developing country with the international community playing a supporting role. As each country have a specific set of needs and expectations from these programs, they need to be flexible and open to modifications as required (Murrell, 1984). Examples of such models that are endogenous and flexible to the changing demands of the market are the Botswana National Productivity Center (BNPC), the Rwandan Human Resources and Institutional Capacity Development Agency (HIDA), and the South African Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) (Hope, 2009).

Access to technology is becoming more common in the developing countries. In Afghanistan, an estimated 18 million people have access to cellular phones and 2 million have access to internet out of an estimated 31 million population (MCIT, 2014). Technology could be thus used to increase the competence of local workforce. Based on a personal communication with one of the interviewees (February 10, 2014), it was suggested that interactive distance education systems could be used to develop the

capacity of human capital. With the latest developments in communication and collaborative technologies, expertise and training could be provided to people of all levels anywhere around the country, for instance using 'Google Hangout'. These learning and skill development centers could be established in different regions of the country and connected to each other through a network. Trainers from one end of the country could interact with the trainees in another end. This interaction however should be of a practical nature with dialogue and demonstrations rather than a monologue where the expert only gives a lecture. Further, as mentioned above, this process should be locally owned i.e. the knowledge and skill of local trainers be developed and then given the task of training others. In this manner the activities could be tailored as per the needs of the institutions/country rather than a specific model provided by the donor community.

This approach of developing competence could be of short to medium term, however for a long-term approach the author suggests that in addition to improving the quality of the local educational, vocational and training institutions in collaboration with the developed countries and international organizations, higher education scholarships be provided by the developed countries to the young men and women of the country. Of notice in this regard are the Fulbright and Chevening programs that provide higher education scholarships to qualified youth of developing countries to further enhance their knowledge and skill sets in different fields. The author highly emphasizes on the continuity of such programs and suggests that other developed countries follow a similar approach to assist boosting the potential of the youth of developing countries, which is critical in their development.

4. Personnel Turnover

The author is of the view that the working and living conditions of a developing country are the core factors for personnel turnover. A lack of proper facilities, the numerous social and political challenges, and the sheer amount of stress in working in an uncertain and unpredictable environment challenges the experience, skills, and strength of an individual every moment. This can be noted in the staff turnover of some of the case studies. Improvements can be made to these conditions however they will be limited due to the existing circumstances of the country itself. Incentives could be offered to qualified personnel; however it is an approach that may or may not achieve desired results.

The author offers two suggestions in this regard – increased involvement and employment of qualified local staff and use of technology. Employing local staff to carry out the work will be more effective and productive since they would have already adapted to the challenging environment of a particular area. As the turnover rate of these local staff will be less than other national or expat staff, their presence through a longer period in the project will ensure better focus on and implementation of the project itself. A concern here would be the capability of these local personnel. As discussed above, these personnel could be trained to develop their skills and knowledge level to better meet the project requirements. The second suggestion is the use of technology between the head office and field office. One of the reasons for staff turnover is travelling through insecure areas for project monitoring and evaluation. With the technological developments of this age, this issue could be resolved. The use of smartphones with

internet accessibility would enable video-conferencing between the field staff and head office managers. The field staff could video-conference on a daily basis or as required with regional or head office managers to report project progress or any existing or potential problems. Similarly, the regional or head office managers could see the actual progress of work in the field. This would increase the flow of communication between the two levels of project staff reducing the decision making time, where required, for the senior managers.

5. Corruption

There remains no room for doubt that corruption impedes development and the growth of a country affecting the majority of low-income population by, among others, spreading hunger and poverty. Corruption, which is endemic to most of the developing countries, obstructs the social and economic development, as much of the public funds are banked overseas. Corruption can reduce tax revenues by as much as 50 percent reducing the funds available for public spending. It ‘reduces the quality of public services and infrastructure, affects government spending decisions, decreases revenues, and damages the confidence of the public in the rule of law’ (Otusanya, 2011).

Tackling corruption is a critical challenge to every country, especially a post-conflict one. Afghanistan, for instance, ranks the third most corrupt country in the world (Transparency International, 2014). To deal with the issue of corruption, a number of approaches could be used. The first could be the establishment of an anti-corruption unit. This unit managed by reputable members of society should have broad powers and extensive oversight in the government (Barakat, 2008). Further, it should have the authority to investigate, interrogate, arrest, and prosecute offenders. In addition, it could

also serve as a unit in identifying gaps in the government systems and procedures that are prone to corruption and recommend reforms in eliminating them. Such anti-corruption units have shown positive results in countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong, and Malaysia (Siddiquee, 2010).

To ensure the effectiveness of such a unit, public support will be necessary to report cases of corruption. This could be done in two ways. First, as suggested by one of the interviewees in a personal communication (February 10, 2014), online services could be used to report cases of corruption. As mentioned above, technology accessibility is becoming common in most of the developing countries. Therefore, the use of online services such as *www.ipaidabribe.com*, which is currently being used in India and Pakistan, could be incentivized for public use. Second, the author suggests that as the majority of the public own cell phones, as is the case in Afghanistan, such corruption reporting services could be offered through the use of phones. Corruption cases do not have to be necessarily reported by placing calls to the anti-corruption unit, but rather cell phone platforms could be developed that would ease the reporting procedure and ensure the anonymity of the public.

In addition, since most of the corruption cases happen because of a complex and multi-departmental verification and approval processes, the author believes that provision of single-window services would significantly reduce it. Similarly, electronic or e-government would also greatly help contain corruption. E-government which is a system of governance that has been in use in many developed countries is being implemented in some of the developing countries, including Afghanistan (MCIT, 2014). E-government provides digital interaction between the government, the public, and businesses. People

can complete transactions with the government electronically without having to visit government offices or meet officials (Siddiquee, 2010). This could reduce corruption to a great extent. In addition, cell phones could also be used to make payments to the government offices without interacting with the government officials. A good example in this regard is the “Mobile Money” services provided in Afghanistan. Prior to the introduction of Mobile Money, as much as 30 percent of the pay checks of Afghan teachers and National Police, who were paid in cash, would be skimmed by third party agents. With Mobile Money now, users receive their pay checks directly in their phones, which has become a form of electronic wallet that could be used to send money to other users or pay electricity bills (USAID, 2014).

Furthermore, another approach could be educating the younger generation about corruption at school and other educational institutions. These efforts should aim at teaching noble and ethical values to the youth. In addition, anti-corruption officials should hold dialogues, public campaigns, and seminars to raise awareness of the detrimental effects of corruption on the society and economy of the country, and encourage public participation in reporting corruption cases (Siddiquee, 2010).

6. Accountability

Establishment and enforcement of proper accountability measures and systems can significantly reduce corruption, intentional mismanagement, and misperformance cases. Accountability is a critical requirement in post-conflict and developing countries if further social and economic development is desired. Promotion and implementation of accountability is as an arduous process as that of corruption. To address the issue of accountability, the author suggests that an accountability office be established. Similar to

the anti-corruption unit discussed above, this office be provided with extensive power and authority to scrutinize the activities of the public officials and other development actors. Further, the government and the various development agencies' procurement and contracting processes be reviewed and evaluated. Similarly, the performance of middle to high level officials of these organizations and agencies be also assessed. The reports of all these investigations should be disclosed to the public. This could be done by several means. First, these reports could be made available on the internet. Since only the educated and middle to high income group of the population will have access to this source, these reports should also be published in journals and newspapers available to the local literate public. In addition, these reports could also be broadcasted on the television and radios to inform the percentage of population who are illiterate. Raising the awareness of the public at the societal level about the activities and performance of the government, development agencies, and their officials will help the public more actively participate in criticizing and providing feedback about the government, development agencies and their existing systems.

7. Government-Donor Coordination

Poor government-donor coordination can significantly inhibit effective recovery and development. It is imperative that all the actors involved in this process integrate and direct their activities towards a shared-vision driven reconstruction and development program. This should be a participatory process aiming to gather the input of all stakeholders and be open to further improvements. To achieve this goal, Barakat and Zyck (2009) have suggested a model to promote an effective reconstruction and development program.

This model which is based on the Bureau of Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Aceh and Nias (BRR) established in Indonesia following the 2004 tsunami asks for a highly capable and temporary agency to oversee the process of reconstruction and development. This agency does not have to be a permanent agency or ministry and directly engage in the reconstruction and development activities itself. Rather, this agency should identify the most appropriate implementing partners, ensure compliance with the central reconstruction and development plan, monitor waste and assess the impact of interventions on a regular basis. This agency should be free from the influence of donors or the country and should have the authority to recruit or dismiss personnel as necessary. Upon completion of the objectives of the reconstruction and development program, this agency should be disbanded with its personnel employed in the public sector.

Further, a committee consisting of major donor and civil society representatives should periodically review the performance of this agency to ensure aid effectiveness, quality assurance, and accountability to the people of the donor and aid recipient countries. In addition, community-level feedback mechanisms should be established to measure the overall satisfaction of the people and to further improve the outputs of the reconstruction and development program. Such level of participation will give the people a feeling of belonging to this process which could result in an increased cooperation of these people further improving the management of some of the issues that were mentioned earlier in this chapter.

5.2 Implications for Future Research

Looking back at the literature and findings of this study, a number of issues come to mind further intriguing the curiosity as a researcher. The subject of post-conflict reconstruction and development has been revolving around the academicians and field professionals for years; however there seems to be a gap between the findings of academic research and the practice in the field. Reading the studies of researchers and reports of development agencies, there usually is a reference to the failure of projects/programs labelled as *lessons learned*. This raises the question as to why there are repeated failures despite the presence of much literature and experienced field professionals. It is apparent that there cannot be a general approach to the issue of post-conflict reconstruction and development as the situations and circumstances of each country differ. However, there are commonalities among each case that could serve to better guide the stakeholders of this process to devise a more effective plan resulting in reduced failures while being conducive to the long term social, political, structural, and economic development. Therefore, there is a need to study the findings of both the academic research and field practice and identify methods to bridge the gap between the two. Although, attempt was made to achieve this goal in this study, however it is suggested that a more detailed study of each factor be carried out. Further, identifying similarities among post-conflict situations and finding the commonalities that could be extended and used in other cases should be established.

This study identified a total of seven factors contributing to the success or failure of reconstruction and development projects based on interviews and case studies. Although, efforts were made to have an all-inclusive group of interviewees from various

fields and organizations involved in this process, however there were some potential participants who could not participate in this study due to organizational restrictions. Thus, it would be interesting to find out if the identified factors presented in this study would remain indifferent by including a different group of participants. Further, the selected case studies, though, were from different regions of Afghanistan, yet it did not completely represent Afghanistan in its entirety. There were no case studies found for projects that were implemented in central and central-north areas, although these areas are relatively secure and stable. In addition, all the case studies were projects awarded by USAID. No case studies of projects awarded and/or implemented by other donor agencies such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, or the UN could be found for this study. It would be thought-provoking to find project reports of other donors and compare their performance to those of USAID. The findings of such a comparison should be fascinating and any difference in this regard should be evaluated against the findings of this study.

The methodology used in this study was entirely qualitative with no relevance to any of the quantitative methods. It is yet to be found if the results from a combined qualitative and quantitative research design would be any different. Quantification of the identified issues would pave the way for statistical analysis. Using statistical analysis, the correlation between the issues identified and their significance should be established. This would further narrow down the major factors in this process, and perhaps provide the opportunity to work on more detailed strategies to these issues using the expertise of multi-disciplinary experts.

Although, this study has attempted to answer some of the questions regarding the subject of post-conflict reconstruction and development, however at the same time it has raised many others. As the well-known fiction writer Doris Lessing says:

“That is what learning is. You suddenly understand something you've understood all your life, but in a new way.” (The Four-Gated City, 1969)

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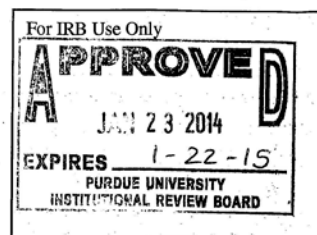
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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Cover Letter to Participants



RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM

IMPEDIMENTS AND CHALLENGES IN THE PROCESS OF SUSTAINABLE RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN POST-2014 AFGHANISTAN

Principal Investigator: Assoc. Prof. Kirk Alter
Department of Building Construction Management
Purdue University

What is the purpose of this study?

The researcher by conducting this study intends to shed some light on the problems and challenges that could prove to be an obstacle in the process of reconstruction and development in Afghanistan after 2014 when the international forces will withdraw. This research further intends to understand the impediments that exist within the national and international organizations involved in this process and identify approaches that could improve this process of reconstruction and development in general.

You are asked to participate in this study because you have worked with an organization that has been involved in this process of reconstruction and development. Being involved in this process has given you a better understanding of all the problems and challenges that surround this subject. It is believed that your knowledge and experience will provide a valuable insight into this issue. To gather the required data, the researcher has asked a total of 15 people, including you, to participate in this study.

What will I do if I choose to be in this study?

If you choose to participate in this study, you will have to send your consent to the researcher by email mentioning your agreement to the contents of this document. The researcher will then send you a word document containing a set of three general questions which you will have to respond to based on your knowledge and experience of the reconstruction and development process in Afghanistan. Once you have completed writing your views to these questions, you will have to email this document to the researcher. The researcher will analyze the information contained in your responses and may ask you further follow-up questions which will be more specific in nature. After receiving these specific questions from the researcher, you will present your opinion and send the document back to the researcher. These two rounds of questions and answers will conclude the data collection process for this study.

How long will I be in the study?

It is expected that you will respond to the first set of three general questions and the second set of specific questions within 10 days each after receiving them from the researcher. The researcher may take one to two weeks to analyze your responses from the first round of questions before sending you the second set of specific questions. Therefore, this whole process is expected to last no more than five weeks.

What are the possible risks or discomforts?

The researcher believes that there are minimal foreseeable risks, stressors, or discomforts that could result as an outcome of participating in this study. These risks, stressors, or discomforts are no more than those of participating in interviews in the media or for organizational reports.

Are there any potential benefits?

There are no direct benefits for you by participating in this study. However, by disseminating your knowledge and experience of the reconstruction and development process in Afghanistan, you may provide an opportunity to those people – both national and international – who are interested in learning more about the potential problems and challenges in this process. Since other individuals from different disciplines have also been asked to participate in this study, their responses combined with yours may provide a holistic picture of the extent of this issue. This may prove beneficial to you as you may get an understanding of what problems are deemed to be present in other organizations who are involved in this process and what these organizations think are the obstacles in other organizations. This understanding of the different issues may prove to be helpful to improve the overall outcome of this process.

Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?

The researcher assures you that he will:

1. Hold in strictest confidence your identity that may be inadvertently revealed in any documents;
2. Not disclose any information received from you for profit, gain, or otherwise;
3. Store all study-related materials in a safe, secure location as long as they are required for this study;
4. Delete all electronic files containing study-related documents from the computer hard drive and any backup devices and destroy any printed material from the electronic sources after the completion of this study.

During the course of this study, all the information that the researcher will receive from you will be stored in a secure room in the West Lafayette Campus of Purdue University. The only person having access to this room and information will be the researcher. The project's research records may be reviewed by departments at Purdue University responsible for regulatory and research oversight. Under no circumstances this information will be shared with anyone who is not affiliated to this research. This information will be kept secured in this room until the completion of this study, which is expected to be May 2014.

Please also note that as soon as the researcher receives your responses for the second round of specific questions, the two documents – i.e. round one and two – that will be received from you will be combined into one and all your identifiers i.e. name, organization, and position will be deleted from the documents. Also, please note that no information that could link you to this study will be mentioned in the textual matter of the study itself. Further, only the required information from your responses will be extracted and used in the study. Your responses will be not directly quoted in the study. Upon completion of the study, all your emails will be deleted and any material printed from the information you provided will be disposed of properly.

What are my rights if I take part in this study?

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or, if you agree to participate, you can withdraw your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you wish to withdraw from this study, all the information that might have been received from you until that time will be deleted upon your request.

Who can I contact if I have questions about the study?

If you have questions, comments or concerns about this research project, you can talk to or email the researcher at any time. Please contact the Co-Investigator Mohammad Ilyas Payab at +1 (765) 421-3919, email mpayab@purdue.edu or the Principal Investigator Dr. Kirk Alter at +1 (765) 494-2454, email alterk@purdue.edu.

If you have questions about your rights while taking part in the study or have concerns about the treatment of research participants, please call the Human Research Protection Program at +1 (765) 494-5942, email (irb@purdue.edu) or write to:

Human Research Protection Program - Purdue University
Ernest C. Young Hall, Room 1032
155 S. Grant St.,
West Lafayette, IN 47907-2114

Documentation of Informed Consent

I have had the opportunity to read this information form and have the research study explained. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the research study, and my questions have been answered. I am prepared to participate in the research study described above.

Appendix B. Delphi Second Round Questions

I. Interviewee A

1. The capacity of the Afghan government is said to be underdeveloped ([Understanding Afghanistan](#), [Falling Short](#)). How effective do you think Public Private Partnerships would prove to be? What challenges would local or western private sectors face in such an initiative?
2. What tax issues do construction and development companies face currently? How could the Afghan government or the international community make improvements in this regard?
3. Afghanistan is a [volatile and high-risk zone](#) which could discourage the western private sector to invest. According to the [World Bank's Doing Business Index](#), Afghanistan ranks 164 out of 189 economies in the ease of doing business. What incentives could the Afghan government and the international community offer to attract the western private sector?
4. If you had to portray the image of a post-2014 Afghanistan, what would it be?

II. Interviewee B

1. In response to question 1, you have mentioned that some of the constraints facing Foreign Direct Investments are political instability, security, corruption, and lack of capacity. How could the government encourage investors and businesses to invest/continue investing in Afghanistan despite these challenges?
2. What variables could prove to be successful in forming a Public Private Partnership? What challenges could prove to be obstacles in such an initiative?
3. Many businesses are discouraged because of a lack of institutions providing line of credit and surety bonds. According to the [World Bank's Doing Business Index](#), Afghanistan ranks 130 out of 189 economies in terms of getting credit. This could be an incentive to attract foreign businesses. What have been the government's efforts in this regard?

4. You have mentioned that to formalize the economy, more focus should be on SMEs. However, with a decline in foreign aid and increase in competition among businesses, some SMEs will be forced to closure and the [political & security uncertainty will limit the growth of the others](#). How could such a program be made viable?
5. In the [Development Cooperation Report of 2010](#) by the Ministry of Finance, it is stated that donor coordination is less than satisfactory, resulting in fragmentation of aid, duplication of programs, and unbalanced and inequitable development. What do you think are the underlying reasons for this lack of coordination? Do you see any improvements in this regard beyond 2014?
6. If you had to portray the image of a post-2014 Afghanistan, what would it be?

III. Interviewee C

1. It is argued that one of the reasons for the weaker government institutions and low capacity personnel is the exclusion of the government institutions from many, if not all, of the reconstruction and development projects implemented by the international community and development agencies, along with higher salaries offered by these organizations attracting qualified Afghans (as stated in the [Development Cooperation Report of 2010](#)). What are your thoughts on this subject? Is the international community responsible for the weaker government institutions and low capacity personnel?
2. Could you provide an example of the ‘administrative bureaucracy’ you have mentioned in response to question 2? Do you think this issue will remain the same or improve beyond 2014?
3. Stability programs such SIKAs are contended to be less conducive to the overall development and economic prosperity of a region as they are to meet, mainly, military objectives ([Development Cooperation Report of 2010](#), [The Evolution of Post-conflict Recovery](#)). What are your thoughts in this regard? Should the international community and the Afghan government continue supporting such programs?
4. In response to question 2, you have mentioned that some developing programs were designed without proper consultation of the government counterparts.

What is the level of incoordination and communication between the government and the international community with respect to project/program design, planning, and implementation? What has been the impact of this on implemented projects/programs?

5. If you had to portray the image of a post-2014 Afghanistan, what would it be?

IV. Interviewee D

1. In response to question 1, you have mentioned that the government was not able to effectively utilize the foreign assistance since 2002. What do you think are the underlying reasons? Do you think this trend will change beyond 2014?
2. As mentioned in your response to question 2, in addition to limited budget and security challenges, what other factors could hamper successful project/program implementation in the recent future?
3. With all the challenges present in doing business in Afghanistan, as mentioned in your responses, how do you think the international community and the government could encourage the national and international private sector to invest/continue investing in Afghanistan?
4. With a decline in businesses and available opportunities post-2014, as mentioned in your response to question 1, it could be inferred that the pool of qualified human capital will increase. What impact will this have on the government institutions and the international organizations, and their planned reconstruction and development programs/projects?
5. If you had to portray the image of a post-2014 Afghanistan, what would it be?

V. Interviewee E

1. In response to question 1, you have mentioned that the investment risk is perceived fairly high and has made investors hesitant to make any commitments. Although, according to the [World Bank's Doing Business Index](#), Afghanistan has been improving its business environment, how else do you think the Afghan government and the international community could encourage the investors to invest/continue investing in Afghanistan?

2. What do you think are the underlying reasons for the incompetence and corruption of the government agencies, as mentioned in your response to question 2? Do you think there will be any improvements in this regard beyond 2014?
3. The Afghan government has repeatedly asked for the donor funds to be channeled through the government agencies to build the much needed experience in order to take lead of the projects/programs in Afghanistan ([DCR 2010](#), [DCR 2012](#)). A significant reduction in the involvement of donors and stronger channeling of donor funds through government agencies, as mentioned in your response to question 2, could be interpreted as the government agencies having developed the capacity to handle these affairs. How effective do you think this change will be? What would be its impact on projects/programs in the recent future?
4. With a reduced availability of contracts for international and national organizations, as mentioned in your response to question 2, it could be deduced that a pool of qualified human capital will become available in the market. Do you think there will be any difference in the planning, implementation, and handling of programs/projects by the government agencies and international community post-2014 with such a change?
5. How would you evaluate the current management and technical skills of Afghan personnel working in the public sector against those working in the private sector? Do you see any improvements in this regard?
6. If you had to portray the image of a post-2014 Afghanistan, what would it be?

VI. Interviewee F

1. Would it be correct to say that one of the reasons there is very little western corporate interest in exploring Afghanistan is the lack of focus on and understanding the local business environment as has been mentioned in your response to question 1? How could the Afghan government and the international community attract the western corporates to invest in Afghanistan?

2. The capacity of the Afghan government is said to be underdeveloped ([Understanding Afghanistan](#), [Falling Short](#)). How effective do you think Public Private Partnerships would prove to be? What challenges would local or western private sectors face in such an initiative?
3. In response to question 2, you have mentioned that the donor nations have trained the Afghan contractors and subcontractors to expect large sums of money for projects with low expectations. What are the underlying reasons for this action? What has been the outcome as a result?
4. In a [report](#) by the International Crisis Group, it has been mentioned that a considerable portion of the aid has gone to waste because of poor programming, evaluation and oversight, corruption and strategic disconnect. Who would you say is responsible for this, the Afghan government or the donor community? Why?
5. In the [Development Cooperation Report of 2010](#) by the Ministry of Finance, it is stated that donor coordination is less than satisfactory, resulting in fragmentation of aid, duplication of programs, and unbalanced and inequitable development. What do you think are the underlying reasons for this lack of coordination? Do you see any improvements in this regard beyond 2014?
6. If you had to portray the image of a post-2014 Afghanistan, what would it be?

VII. Interviewee G

1. In response to question 1, you have mentioned lack of experienced national and international contractors as an obstacle. Afghanistan is a [volatile and high-risk zone](#) which could discourage many national and international companies to do business in. According to the [World Bank's Doing Business Index](#), Afghanistan ranks 164 out of 189 economies in the ease of doing business. How do you think the Afghan government and the international community could encourage these businesses to work in Afghanistan? What incentives could attract them?
2. Low quality of construction materials is mentioned as an issue, in your response to question 1. What measures could the government and private sector take to improve this process?

3. How would you evaluate the current management and technical skills of Afghan personnel working in the public sector against those working in the private sector? Do you see any improvements in this regard?
4. In the [Development Cooperation Report of 2010](#) by the Ministry of Finance, it is stated that donor coordination is less than satisfactory, resulting in fragmentation of aid, duplication of programs, and unbalanced and inequitable development. How would you evaluate the coordination between the donor agencies themselves and the donor agencies and the government? How do you see the project/program planning and coordination between these two bodies i.e. the government and the international community/organizations beyond 2014?
5. If you had to portray the image of a post-2014 Afghanistan, what would it be?

VIII. Interviewee H

1. How would you evaluate the current management and technical skills of Afghan personnel working in the public sector against those working in the private sector? With skilled human resources mentioned as an issue in your response to question 1 and 2, what measures, in addition to the use of media and technology, could yield improvements in this regard?
2. You have mentioned access to finance as an obstacle, in response to question 1 and 2. However, based on a [commercial guide to US companies](#) prepared by the US Department of Commerce, there are US and non-US organizations such as OPIC, IFC, USTDA and so forth that provide access to finance to companies looking to start or grow their businesses in Afghanistan. How would you evaluate the services of these organizations in terms of business growth or program funding in Afghanistan? Are there any particular issues or limitations that could discourage businesses to use the services of these organizations?
3. What kind of incentives do you think could attract more businesses and investors to Afghanistan?
4. If you had to portray the image of a post-2014 Afghanistan, what would it be?

IX. Interviewee I

1. In response to question 1, you have mentioned unavailability of the international organizations and consulting firms as potential obstacles due to, mainly, insecurity and lack of funds. How could the government and the international community encourage these organizations and firms to continue working in Afghanistan despite these challenges? What incentives could attract them?
2. How would you evaluate the current management and technical skills of Afghan personnel working in the public sector against those working in the private sector? With technical human resources mentioned as an issue in your response to question 1, what measures could yield improvements in this regard?
3. In response to question 2, you have mentioned that if the development trend becomes negative and the economic development gets slower, the country will face instability. How would you evaluate the role of the [extractive industry](#) in this regard which has been estimated in trillions of dollars?
4. With the reduction of funds and downsizing of organizations and firms, it could be deduced that a pool of qualified human capital will become available in the market. How do you think will this development affect the output of the government and other local and international organizations? What changes could be expected in the implemented projects/programs?
5. In the [Development Cooperation Report of 2010](#) by the Ministry of Finance, it is stated that donor coordination is less than satisfactory, resulting in fragmentation of aid, duplication of programs, and unbalanced and inequitable development. How would you evaluate the coordination between the donor agencies themselves and the donor agencies and the government? How do you see the project/program planning and coordination between these two bodies i.e. the government and the international community/organizations beyond 2014?
6. If you had to portray the image of a post-2014 Afghanistan, what would it be?

Appendix C. Terms and Phrases Used by the Participants to Describe Issues

INTERVIEWEE	A	B	C	D	E	
MENTIONED ISSUES	1	International Private Sector	Reduction in Aid	Weaker Institutions	Dependence on Aid	Investment Risk
	2	Public Private Partnership	Revenue Collection	Qualified Human Capital	Poor Economy	Reluctance of Investors
	3	Corruption	Political Instability	Insecurity	Incapacity of Government	Down Turn in Economy
	4	Tax Reform	Foreign Direct Investment	Incapacity of Government	Reluctance of Investors	Reduction in Contracts
	5	Procurement Transparency	Security Challenges	Administrative Bureaucracy	Limited Budget of International Organizations	Incompetence of Government
	6	Credit Problems	Corruption	Lack of Communication (Donors)	Security Challenges	Corruption
	7	Lack of Development Budget	Unemployment	Lack of Coordination (Donors)	Qualified Human Capital	Accountability
	8		Qualified Human Capital	Lack of Law Enforcement	Good Policies	Instability/Insecurity
	9		Weak Law Enforcement		Lack of Planning (Govt)	Political Risk Insurance
	10		Economic Growth		Lack of Coordination (Govt)	Patronage
	11		Public Private Partnership		Project Design Problems (Govt)	Capacity Building
	12		Weaker Govt. Institutions		Corruption	Employment Opportunities
	13		Judiciary Reforms		Lack of Public Private Partnership	Qualified Individuals Leaving Country
	14					
	15					
	16					

INTERVIEWEE	F	G	H	I	
MENTIONED ISSUES	1	Lack of Understanding the Business Environment	Security Challenges	Security Challenges	Security Challenges
	2	US Corporate Interest	Qualified Human Capital	Qualified Human Capital	Access Difficulty (Infrastructure)
	3	Lack of Funding	Low Quality Material Resources	Corruption	Lack of Funding
	4	Lack of Legal Framework	Government Capacity	Access to Finance/Credit	Qualified Human Capital
	5	Lack of Transparency	Government Accountability	Foreign Investment	Lack of Material Resources
	6	Corruption	Establishment of Factories		Monitoring Problems (Consulting Firms)
	7	Public Private Partnership	Incentives to Govt. Personnel		Economic Development
	8	Contractors Capacity	Corruption		Unemployment
	9	Business Risk	Donors Coordination		Instability
	10	Instability	Education System		Reduction in International Companies/Orgs
	11	Security Challenges			Government Capacity
	12	Enforcement of Law			Private Sector Investment
	13	Business Investment Reforms			Enacting Laws & Rules
	14	Government Function			Transparency (Govt)
	15				Increasing Domestic Revenues
	16				Legislative & Administrative Reforms

Appendix D. Categorization of the Issues Mentioned by the Participants

OVERARCHING ISSUES		Security Challenge	Qualified Human Capital	Government Capacity	Investment Risk	Corruption	Development Budget Reduction
ISSUES MENTIONED AS	1	Security Challenge	Qualified Human Capital	Incapacity of Government	Reluctance of Investors	Corruption	Limited Budget of International Orgs.
	2	Insecurity	Education System	Lack of Planning	Lack of Public Private Partnership	Administrative Bureaucracy	Lack of Development Budget
	3		Contractors Capacity	Lack of Coordination	International Private Sector	Incentives to Govt. Personnel	Reduction in Contracts
	4		Capacity Building	Project Design Problems	Public Private Partnership	Patronage	Reduction in Aid
	5		Monitoring Problems	Weaker Institutions	Credit Problems		Lack of Funding
	6			Lack of Law Enforcement	Investment Risk		Reduction in International Companies/Orgs.
	7			Incompetence of Government	Instability		
	8			Weak Law Enforcement	Political Risk Insurance		
	9			Weaker Govt. Institutions	Political Instability		
	10			Government Capacity	Foreign Direct Investment		
	11			Enacting Laws & Rules	Access to Finance/Credit		
	12			Lack of Legal Framework	Foreign Investment		
	13			Enforcement of Law	Access Difficulty (Infrastructure)		
	14			Government Function	Private Sector Investment		
	15				Low Quality Material Resources		
	16				Lack of Understanding the Business Environment		
	17				Business Risk		

OVERARCHING ISSUES		Economic Growth	Policy Reforms	Transparency & Accountability	Government-Donor Coordination	Turnover
ISSUES MENTIONED AS	1	Dependence on Aid	Business Investment Reforms	Lack of Transparency	Donors Coordination	Qualified Individuals Leaving Country
	2	Lack of Understanding the Business Environment	Legislative & Administrative Reforms	Enforcement of Law	Lack of Communication (Donors)	
	3	US Corporate Interest	Judiciary Reforms	Government Function	Lack of Coordination (Donors)	
	4	Public Private Partnership	Tax Reforms	Government Accountability		
	5	Business Investment Reforms	Good Policies	Enacting Laws & Rules		
	6	Establishment of Factories		Transparency (Govt)		
	7	Economic Development		Weak Law Enforcement		
	8	Unemployment		Patronage		
	9	Private Sector Investment		Administrative Bureaucracy		
	10	Increasing Domestic Revenues		Lack of Law Enforcement		
	11	Foreign Investment		Procurement Transparency		
	12	Revenue Collection		Accountability		
	13	Economic Growth				
	14	Down Turn in Economy				
	15	Employment Opportunities				
	16	Qualified Individuals Leaving Country				
	17	Poor Economy				