

## Applied Social Science Research in Afghanistan An Overview of the Institutional Landscape

Astri Suhrke, Torunn Wimpelmann Chaudhary,  
Kristian Berg Harpviken, Akbar Sarwari, Arne Strand

**R 2008: 12**



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# 1. Purpose of study, scope, and methodology

This report is a preliminary mapping of Afghan institutional capacity in the field of applied social science research, as well as an assessment of the interest in, and potential for, further capacity building. The report focuses on independent research centers and development NGOs that have research activities, and also includes institutes linked to government ministries, the public university sector and (in one case) to a UN agency. At present these are the principal sources of policy relevant social research.

As with many other aspects of Afghan institutional capacity, the landscape in this field is fragmented, uneven, and highly dependent on foreign resources. The situation reflects both the near-collapse of Afghan academic institutions after decades of violent conflict and the sudden, massive international re-engagement after 2001. Demand for immediate policy-relevant knowledge to serve reconstruction and statebuilding initially led to much short-term importation of skills. At the same time, Afghan authorities and international donors recognize the necessity of building local capacity; Afghan expertise has now started to return, and new expertise is being developed.

The present study is designed to further this process by identifying the principal institutional features of Afghan applied social science research and suggesting strategies for further capacity-building.

The study includes only organizations that in important respects can be said to be Afghan in terms of staffing or organizational structure; virtually all are funded from outside sources. As a rule, international NGOs with offices in Afghanistan were not included, although the dividing line between national and international agencies is not always clear. To map the institutional landscape we collected data on organizational objectives, structure and published output. We recorded strategies for further capacity building as expressed by representatives of the organizations concerned. Information was obtained by accessing electronic and print-based sources, and through a series of structured interviews with organizational representatives carried out in Kabul in July and October 2008.

The research team consisted of CMI-PRO staff and one Afghan researcher.

The research was financed by a grant from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The present report is a general and preliminary overview. It is not in any way an evaluation of the work of individual institutions.

## 2. Overview: Policy-related social science research in Afghanistan

Below follows a brief description of the institutional landscape. More detailed information on individual organisations is presented in table form in the Annex.

### a) The university sector

Social science goes to the very heart of the political conflicts of contemporary Afghanistan. Social science addresses issues that can be deeply controversial and are often strongly contested, such as the nature and legitimacy of the state, rights and obligations of individuals and groups, and claims to resources and their distributions. These questions were at the ideological forefront of the devastating conflicts that shaped the history of modern Afghanistan. The contest between the modernist and traditionalist forces that became a polarizing conflict in the late 1960s and early 1970s was played out on the campus of Kabul University. Both Marxists and radical Islamists drew inspiration from the university community, where they mobilized support and recruited activists. Today, the association of social science with Marxism has placed some branches the field in the political danger zone or outright disrepute. Among traditionalist and conservative Afghans, social science – particularly in its more critical form – can appear as anti- Afghan, leftist or subversive.

The slow pace of reconstruction and the choice of priorities in the rebuilding of tertiary education have adversely affected the social sciences. A comprehensive and ambitious program to develop Afghan public universities was launched in June 2005 by the Ministry of Higher Education and the World Bank. The 5-year program is based on academic partnership with universities abroad, has a 72 million dollar funding frame and includes the 5 provincial universities as well as Kabul University. The program – which is the principal vehicle for reconstruction of the university sector - covers three areas: engineering, English language and the natural sciences. It is unclear if social sciences will be prioritized if and when the program is renewed after 2010.

While formally a national elite institution, Kabul University still has poor basic infrastructure (including unreliable electricity, crowded facilities and limited computer equipment). Salaries are low and library resources are highly inadequate. The administration has been affected by frequent turn-over of leadership (the present chancellor is the fourth since 2001). The Ministry of Higher Education wields considerable administrative power over the universities, although the relationship is being redefined through new legislation.

Kabul University has three social science faculties that are particularly relevant in this connection: The Faculty of Law and Political Science, the Faculty of Economics, and the Faculty of Social Sciences. The faculties have so far played a limited role in policy research. Nevertheless, some research projects have been undertaken in cooperation with foreign institutions (including a recent large project between the Faculty of Law and Political Science and the French government-funded research institution Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) on perceptions of the post-war peace). Schemes for training in social science methods and carrying out research projects have recently been developed in collaboration between these faculties and two donor-supported centers that are physically located at the university campus (see (b) below).

The growing private sector in tertiary education emphasizes teaching of English, administration, business and computer technology. Some have staff with advanced degrees and previous



publications. The capacity for research mostly remains to be developed. That includes the USAID supported American University and Kateb Institute for Higher Education, both located in Kabul.

## b) Kabul University-linked centers

Presently three centers established by foreign donors are located at the Kabul University campus. Although administratively and financially autonomous, the centers have various formal links to the University.

*The National Legal Training Center* was initially funded by Italy (which has primary responsibility for the “rule of law” sector in the donors’ division of labour for reconstruction assistance), and more recently, the United States. The Center provides post-graduate training for legal professionals (judges, prosecutors, Ministry of Justice officials and defence lawyers). It has a new library and modern facilities. The director, an Afghan returnee with a Ph.D. in International Law and Politics from Prague, is concurrently a professor in Kabul University’s Faculty of Law and Political Science. The Center was not designed to do research and has presently a teaching staff, mostly on an adjunct basis, but clearly has a research potential given its professional network and library facilities.

*The National Center for Policy Research* was established by the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) and the Ministry of Higher Education in 2003 and has continuous funding from KAS in addition to other smaller donors. It was designed to serve as a research and training facility in the social sciences. The Center works closely with the social science faculties at Kabul University to provide training in methods and project-based research. A structure has been jointly established that provides a 2-months training session for teachers as well as students in the graduating class, selected on a competitive basis. The training sessions (taught by Center staff recruited from Kabul University and visiting international experts) are followed by a 6-months research project where teachers and students work together on a policy-relevant subject chosen in consultation with the Center. Stipends have enabled students from the provincial universities to attend an intensive version of the course. In 2008, the course was run in cooperation with CPHD (see below), which teaches a new component on Human Development and contributes with supervision. The research reports are published in *Dari* with a summary in English. So far half a dozen monographs have appeared on topics such as causes of poverty in Afghanistan, Afghan perceptions of democracy, and women and employment in post-2001 Afghanistan. Modestly funded by international standards, the project covers the cost of distributing the monographs to government ministries, civil society organizations and public libraries. In addition the Center runs a writing skills course for all final year social science students, in preparation for their final year dissertation.

NCPR also has an ad hoc public lecture series. The Center has a professional Afghan staff of 5, plus the director, who is an Afghan returnee with a Ph.D. in economics from Germany.

*The Center for Policy and Human Development (CPHD)* was set up by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2006 and is a major project in UNDPs governance portfolio in Afghanistan. The Center supports long-term capacity building for research, advocacy and teaching on human development in Afghanistan. Its flagship is the *Human Development Report (HDR)* for Afghanistan, which also consumes the major share of its research capacity. Two reports have appeared so far, and the third is scheduled for 2009. In 2008, the Center participated in the training course for university lecturers in cooperation with NCPR. The course in 2008 has three components: human development, research methods (taught by NCPR) and a research project. For the Human Development component, external lecturers were used, including several from India, and plans are underway to further strengthen South-South cooperation. The Center has a guest

lecture series and plans to expand the capacity-building component. At present it functions as a network center with a small professional staff and pulls in additional research staff when required, above all for the preparation of the HDR. The director ('coordinator') is an Afghan returnee with a Master degree in public policy from the United States. Previous coordinators have also been Afghan returnees with advanced academic degrees. The director/coordinator is an international employee of UNDP.

### c) Government agencies

Two government ministries have established centers to serve departmental functions, primarily through training of government officials. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a Center for Strategic Studies (CSS) under the Deputy Minister for Political Affairs, which conducts training program and hosts visiting lecturers.

The Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Development (MRRD) has a center for training and policy research, the Afghan Institute for Rural Development (AIRD). Originating in training schemes for government officials in the 1950s, the center was re-launched in 2002-3 by the then MRRD Minister, Haneef Atmar. AIRD is modelled on similar institutes in the Asia Pacific Region (Centre on Integrated Rural Development in Asia and the Pacific, CIRDP), which have a structure for collaboration. AIRD has three main functions: research to support rural development broadly understood (including peacebuilding), training and education of government officials, and dissemination. Plans are underway to establish the institute as an agency independent from the ministry.

### d) Other institutes and NGOs

Several independent organisations with a policy research function have emerged or been reinvigorated in the post-Taliban period. With a few exceptions, they are led and staffed by Afghans, many with university degrees from abroad. Most are funded by international donors with a mixture of core and project based funding. About half a dozen of these organizations have significant capacity for social policy research.

The institute sector can be subdivided by principal function:

#### (i) Research and monitoring/evaluation

The oldest and strongest in this category is AREU (Afghan Research and Evaluation Unit), established with Western donor funding soon after 2001 as an Afghanistan-based institution designed to research and monitor reconstruction and development activities. AREU has developed a significant list of policy related research papers and has a relatively large staff, several with advanced degrees, and a library. The director and senior research staff are non-Afghan. The organization has consistently recruited and trained Afghans for research and administrative positions, but Afghans still remain at the level of assistant researchers. While originally set up to do evaluations, this has been a minor function and the Board recently confirmed that AREU's main emphasis will be on policy-related research of the 'think-tank' variety. AREU's numerous reports are readily accessible and widely read and cited.

Several new institutes have recently been established, each with distinct thematic profiling.

### *Strategic studies*

The Kabul Center for Strategic Studies (KCSS), established in late 2007, focuses on political and national security analysis. KCSS has organizational links to a foundation in the United States originally established in the context of the cold war, but its analysis reflects independent views. The leadership and staff are Afghan, several have university degrees.

A Centre for Conflict and Peace Studies (CAPS) was established in 2006 to work on ‘security, terrorism, conflict resolution and statebuilding’. CAPS works closely with the Afghan government on commissioned research for the executive branch, including preparation of socio-political profiles of provinces for the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG). The founder is a close relative of President Karzai. International experts serve as visiting fellows and interns. The provincial profile reports are not in the public domain.

### *Public Policy*

The Afghanistan’s Center for Research and Policy Studies (ACRPS) focuses on public policy issues, particularly in the economic field. Recently established, the Center has a substantial list of ongoing donor-commissioned projects, mostly on macro economic policy issues. The Center is founded and led by Afghans.

The Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) focuses on corruption in government. IWA was established with funds from two international organizations working for transparency and accountability in government (TIRI and the Open Society). IWA has produced several donor-commissioned reports since its founding in 2005, including some based on large surveys. It has an international director and national staff.

### *Development studies*

*Organisation for Sustainable Development & Research* (OSDR) has roots going back to 1987, when the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan created an entity – the Afghan Survey Unit (ASU) - to undertake background research for agricultural development. The organization was re-established this year as OSDR. Continuing the survey research previously done by ASU, OSDR will also run community development programmes. In addition, there are plans to establish a Sustainable Development Institute as a unit under OSDR. This unit would offer accredited degrees in sustainable development, as well as shorter certificates and training programmes, with a particular emphasis on making training available in rural areas.

Over the years, the organization has undertaken numerous surveys and evaluations for agencies such as WFP; FAO, UNHCR, UNOPS and embassies, often through other NGOs such as IRC, SCA, CoAR and ACBAR. Its Afghan full time staff is supported by a large pool of surveyors employed on a project-basis.

#### (ii) Research and conflict resolution activities

The Co-operation for Peace and Unity (CPAU) was established as an Afghan peacebuilding network in 1996 to promote peace and conflict resolution. Many of its original members had strong links with international NGOs and several are now holding key government positions. After 2001 CPAU registered as an NGO and expanded its peacebuilding activities. Since 2005, CPAU has significantly strengthened its research function, including through staff development. Several senior

members have pursued graduate studies abroad. Its research project portfolio remains relatively modest, with most projects initiated and led by international academics.

Established in 2003, the Tribal Liaison Office (TLO) has made the transition from an NGO designed to promote peaceful relations between the government and tribal authorities to an organization with a substantial portfolio of commissioned research for donors. Most of its recent work is producing socio-political profiles of provinces commissioned by donors, with a focus on Pashtun areas in the South and East. TLO was founded and is led by Afghans with international support. TLO has been assisted by senior international experts, has recruited international interns, and employs a pool of local surveyors. The provincial profile reports are not in the public domain.

### (iii) Development and human rights organisations with research activities

Some development or humanitarian NGOs have a modest research portfolio as well, mostly in support of their operational activities. Often lacking a dedicated unit for research, monitoring and evaluation, many NGOs rely on external consultants for research purposes.

Like some other Afghan NGOs, Action Aid Afghanistan (AAA) is affiliated with its international parent organization. AAA has sponsored two major research reports not directly related to its project portfolio. Addressing aid accountability and budget analysis, the reports were prepared by external consultants. Similarly, international NGOs like Oxfam and Care have commissioned research carried out or led by international consultants.

Monitoring and documentation are core functions of human rights organizations, and Afghan human rights organizations have expanded markedly in recent years. Research beyond standard monitoring routines may involve external consultants.

The Afghanistan Independent Human Right Commission (AIHRC) has a Research and Policy Unit. AIHRC research has included survey-based reports on social and economic rights and the situation of children in Afghanistan. It has also done nation-wide surveys on attitudes towards transitional justice, which went into a national Action Plan. The Commission monitors human rights violations countrywide on a continuous basis.

Women and Children Legal Research Foundation (WCLRF) has done research related to its focus area women and children's rights. A recent WCLRF project on women's access to justice was the organisation's most comprehensive research project to date. Earlier publications have been more advocacy-oriented in nature.

In general, development NGOs are also increasingly seeking to develop their capacity for program research, particularly skills required for needs assessments and internal evaluations. Several NGOs contacted expressed a wish to strengthen their capacity to carry out need assessments / baseline studies as the basis of developing project proposals as this has become a common funding requirement of international donors.

### 3. The institutional landscape: Conclusions

#### a) Characteristics

##### *Structure: metropolitan*

Social science research at the universities has been neglected by the donors and is almost non-existent. Outside the university, a market for research, monitoring and evaluation has developed, and the demand is considerable. The sector supplying expertise is, however, quite small. Only a handful of organizations have significant research capacity. What can be called the Afghan contribution in terms of Afghan staffing and leadership accounts for very little of the vast activity of policy-related research, monitoring and evaluation that has accompanied the international program of reconstruction and development in the country after 2001.

The institute sector is specialized but also internally fragmented and intensely competitive in the search for donor funding. Most centers have developed a special niche in the market for commissioned research or donor-supported monitoring (e.g. in survey research, provincial profiling related to the insurgency, corruption, human rights monitoring). The overall structure of the sector is shaped by the importance of the links between the individual centers and their principal donor. A center often relies primarily on one donor, which further cements the relationship.

In contrast, the various centers/institutes have little or no collaboration among themselves (e.g. in the form of seminars, training sessions, exchange of findings, discussion of research agendas or principles of donor-institute relations, or formation of a consortium of like-minded organizations). Rather, the sector is marked by competition among the institutes for both funds and qualified staff. Most institutes/centers, moreover, are quite small. Those that provide information about their budget average 1-2 million dollars annually. This gives them small margins for selecting projects, investing in staff development, and weathering the transition from one contract to another.

The result is that donors active in this market have an extraordinarily strong influence on the research agenda, which typically reflects their own short-term policy interests. Often, access to information takes priority over more thorough social science analysis. Some donors request information that normally would be considered quite sensitive in a country in the midst of armed conflict. Donors are in a strong bargaining position to control the output as well. Some donors do not want some of the reports they commission to be published, a requirement that is detrimental to the development of social science in the country. These tendencies are much less marked when several donors agree on long-term policy of both core and project funding for an institute, as in the case of AREU.

While there are individual exceptions, the general impression is of a set of highly unequal (some would say colonial) relationships that inhibit the growth of an independent Afghan research community.

##### *Personnel: increasingly Afghan*

A number of Afghan returnees with advanced degrees (from both the North and the region) are increasingly providing leadership and high-quality research skills in the institute sector. Some

organization or individuals, moreover, have mobilized funds or received stipends to pursue an advanced degree abroad.

The pool of qualified Afghan social science researchers remains small, however, and the competition for the best persons is intense. Some move into highly paid positions in the internationalized consultancy economy, join international organizations, or take up special pay-grade government positions. Research centers that invest in training their Afghan staff often find they disappear to better paid positions.

*The output: a lot of grey*

The institute sector produces a steady stream of ‘grey’ literature. Some of it is available on the web, and some centers maintain their websites and make their work readily accessible. Other reports are more difficult to find. Most reports are only in English, a few are only in Dari or Pashto. AREU is an exception with a significant number of its publications translated into Dari and Pashto, and a well-maintained website that gives easy access.

## b) Capacity Building

Most of the institutes and organisations contacted for this report called for stronger capacity in a number of areas. Needs assessment, report writing, analysis of data and data management were most commonly mentioned. A few noted project design and conceptualization.

As noted above, a structure for social science methods training and project-based research has been developed at Kabul University in cooperation with donor-financed centers that are located at the University campus. The structure is modest and operates on a shoestring budget. Given those limitations, it appears to function well.

There are no links between this university-based structure and other parts of the institute sector. There is no common training for, or by, the institute sector.

Some of the institutes contacted for this report also suggested several strategies for enhancing their research capacity:

- *exchange*: research staff should have opportunities to study/participate in research projects abroad, if possible, through *long term institutional partnership* with suitable institutions elsewhere.
- *research projects with a capacity-building component*: commissioned research should include resources and a learning structure for capacity-building.
- *scholarship /studies abroad*. One organization said that ‘nothing can compensate for a university degree’. Given the present weaknesses of Afghan universities, it was felt that university studies should be pursued abroad (England, the US, or India were most frequently mentioned, as these are all English speaking countries) and that scholarships should be made available.
- *training program in Kabul*. Although most often brought up by the CMI/PRIO team, representatives of the institutes or NGOs expressed an interest in this option when presented with it. A training program, if established, should preferably be long term (several months at least) and contain an assessment (e.g. a leaving certificate based on exams or submission of written work) for credibility. A diploma for attendance would be insufficient. Some suggested that a certificate issued by an established international research institution would make the training course more recognised and attractive.

## 4. Policy implications: Strategies for capacity development

Social sciences at the university level must be prioritized if the intellectual underpinning of the vast international reconstruction- and statebuilding project in Afghanistan is to have an Afghan imprint. Tertiary education, as Ashraf Ghani and others have emphasized, is necessary to create local ownership and thereby effective states. The present comprehensive university reform program financed by the World Bank does not include the social sciences, nor do other donors have an equivalent program. This gap must be closed if capacity development is to be placed on a solid footing.

In the NGO/institute sector, the modalities identified by organizations and listed above could be the basis for donor- and government supported strategies. Partnership and institutional cooperation have been established with considerable success elsewhere, involving both North-South and South-South institutes. Relevant models include training and institutional capacity building as well, e.g. library, IT etc.

Education abroad has produced the core of present Afghan capacity, and is particularly evident among the returnees, but some organizations and individuals have also marshalled resources for training abroad after 2001. Capacity building strategies in this area would probably require a program in cooperation with the university as now is done under the World Bank program for university reform. There are also less comprehensive and very useful bilateral initiatives that could be emulated (e.g. a joint MA in Teaching between the Universities of Karlstad and Nangarhar coordinated by the Swedish Afghanistan Committee), and programs for donor stipends (e.g. British Council).

In-country training programmes could build on the existing structure at the university or establish a parallel structure for the centers/NGOs. A joint training program open to staff throughout the research sector could also serve to strengthen cooperation and partnership within the sector as a whole.

Finally some broader, cross-cutting points should be mentioned:

Firstly, while the research sector as a whole needs to be supported, particular attention should be paid to female researchers, as these tend to be underrepresented both within the sector and in Afghanistan generally. One possibility could be to reserve a certain number of scholarships for Afghan women to pursue graduate studies abroad.

Secondly, donor coordination can help counteract the negative aspects of the metropolitan and competitive structure. One attractive option here is a multidonor fund to support research and capacity development in the social sciences.

Thirdly, donors could support the Ministry of Higher Education in ensuring that the social sciences are prioritized in the next round of tertiary education reforms.

## Appendix: Overview over the principal organisations

The annex summarises the research activities and training interests of the 22 organisations interviewed for this study. Organisations where research is a major function (as compared to operational peace or assistance activities) are marked with an (\*).

The team was unable to meet with the Center for Strategic Studies (under the MFA). Meetings with OHRD, (previously Coordination for Humanitarian assistance, CHA) and AIHRC did not cover all aspects of their research activities.

| Name of organisation   | Key functions, research activities   | Research capacity  | Recent research output  | Interest in capacity building for research  | Total budget in USD 2007,2008 | Website and key contact persons  |
|--|--|--|---|---|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>1. ActionAid Afghanistan (AAA) Part of Action Aid International</b> | <p>Development NGO with some advocacy and policy oriented research. Ca 10- 20% of budget is spent on research, done by external consultants although an internal steering committee of senior level staff advices on research methodology</p> <p>Current and future research:</p> <p>Sub-national governance ( with Oxfam, Care, DACAR, NRC, Action Aid will lead)<br/>                     Traditional coping strategies ( project by one person, carried out by a international j PhD student)<br/>                     Children's status in Kandahar<br/>                     HIV / Aids in border areas (carried out by two medical doctors)</p> | 20 staff in Kabul (excl. support staff). Mixed of Afghans and internationals. All research so far contracted to international consultants. | <p>-Food Security; 2005-2006</p> <p>-Aid accountability Gap- Economic Literacy and budget analysis of NSP: 2007<br/>                     -Economic literacy and budget analysis of Jawzjan development planning, 2008<br/>                     Both reports done by AAA with assistance from international experts and inputs from the Economic Literacy and Budget Analysis Group (ELBAG), set up by AAA in partnership with parliament and some NGOs. . Reports available from AAA website.<br/>                     -HIV/ Aids 2007- Study on knowledge, attitude, behaviour and practice in high risks and vulnerable groups in Afghanistan. Published jointly by AAA, and research consultant.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing some of their staff with more research skills, e.g. to manage /contract research projects more effectively. Research by AAA must be Action oriented and participatory.</li> <li>Want more Afghan research consultants</li> </ul> | n.a.                          | GB Adhikari, Country Director<br><br><a href="http://www.actionaid.org/afghanistan/">http://www.actionaid.org/afghanistan/</a> |
| <b>2. Afghan Civil society Forum (ACSF)</b>                            | <p>Informal network of national and international civil society groups ( 315 members) , aim to increase the role of civil society in the peace and reconstruction process</p> <p>Civic education ( e.g. before elections) and advocacy<br/>                     Research as yet a minor activity; new research unit just established</p>   | 130 staff in total, including part time and support staff.<br>8 with BA, 30 with MA (mainly in medical or engineer fields)                 | <p>2 recent /ongoing projects:</p> <p>- on forced migration, led by Bern University, ACSF carried out surveys/questionnaires</p> <p>- on popular definition of justice violations</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve capacity in data analysis and report writing, which is usually done in-house.<br/>                     MA-level training for staff of at least 6 months, with leaving certificate.</li> </ul>                                      | 500, 000<br>500, 000          | Aziz Rafiee managing director<br><br><a href="http://www.acsf.af">www.acsf.af</a>  |
| <b>3. Afghan Development Association (ADA)</b>                         | Development NGO focusing on irrigation and agriculture. All surveys and assessments are for programme/project use  | A monitoring and evaluation unit with 5 staff.   | <p>-Poverty reduction assessment (not yet published)<br/>                     -Rapid survey on food crisis in Takhar province (not yet completed )</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop skills in report writing and data analysis.</li> <li>Train two persons in each organisation who can</li> </ul>   | 6,598033<br>Est. 6 mill       | Esmatullah Haidary, Deputy Managing Director   |



|  |  |   |  |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|--|---|---|---|
|  |  |   |  | transfer skills to colleagues..   |   | <a href="http://www.ada.org.af">www.ada.org.af</a>  |
| <b>4. (*) Afghanistan Center for Research and Policy Studies (ACRPS)</b> | Independent Research Institute est. in 2007. Focus on public policy, economic and social issues.   | 3 research staff including director, all Afghan. In process of expanding staff.   | <i>Regional Trade Regime and Declining Rates of Private Investment in Afghanistan</i> (report, April 2008). Around 10 research projects in progress, including baseline studies on trade, investment and private sector development  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long-term partnership with international research institution.</li> </ul>  | 500,000 (about half in kind: equipment /materials from donors) Up to 2 mill USD | Idrees Rahmani, Director<br><a href="http://www.af-crps.org/">www.af-crps.org/</a>                            |
| <b>5. (*) Afghan Institute for Rural Development (AIRD)</b>              | Originally government training center for rural development, reborn in the Ministry (MRRD) in 2003, with broad range of rural development strategies and peacebuilding. Plans to make it a government agency independent of the MRRD for training, education, and policy research.   | 36 full time staff, including 6 advisors on shorter contracts. International TA to aid with programme development.  | One publication in English; <i>Gender Mainstreaming in MRRD Programmes: A Preliminary Review Of The NSP</i> , available at their website. Some working papers available in Dari.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing staff research skills ( data analysis, report writing and dissemination ), preferably through evening courses of minimum 6 months</li> </ul>  | 250000 (2007) Applied for 5 mill USD over the period 2008-2013                  | Ajmal Shirzai , Director<br><a href="http://www.mrrd.gov.af/aird">www.mrrd.gov.af/aird</a>                    |
| <b>6. (*) Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU)</b>            | Established by donors after 2002 as an independent Afghan research & evaluation institute. Emphasis on qualitative and policy relevant research. Has not moved into evaluation. Donor funding a mix of core and program/ project based.<br><br>Thematic areas; Gender, Governance, Health, Livelihoods and human security, Natural resource management Political Economy and Markets | 120 staff of which 65 support staff, 55 programme, research, administration and IT staff. 17 or 18 of these international. All researchers and research managers are internationals (both positions require a PhD); Afghan research assistants and research officers. | Recent research projects include ( all publications available on AREU website ) ; <i>The Changing Face of Local Governance? Community Development Councils in Afghanistan and Subnational State-Building in Afghanistan</i> ,<br><br><i>Factors Influencing Decisions to Use Child Labour</i> ; case studies published<br><br><i>Opium Poppy Cultivation</i> ; various publications<br><br><i>Second generation Afghans in neighbouring countries</i> , various publications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve social science education, in Afghanistan. Short- term training programmes no substitute.</li> <li>Have internal training procedures for staff, but want Afghan staff to obtain degrees abroad (BA or MA).</li> </ul>       | 3,8 mill (2008)   | Paula Kantor, Director<br><a href="http://www.areu.org.af">www.areu.org.af</a>                                |
| <b>7. Afghan Women's Network (AWN)</b>                                   | Women's empowerment and participation: Networking, right awareness and consultation, advocacy  | 34 full -time Afghan staff, 12 with BA, 1 MA, 1 PhD<br>25 staff speak and write English.<br>No dedicated research unit.   | Report on conditions of imprisoned women, 2008 in collaboration with AREU and WCLRF.<br><br><i>The Needs of Afghan Rural and Refugee Women in Postwar Reconstruction and Development</i> , 2004<br><br>Reports only available in hard copies.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop in-house professional team for research and report writing.</li> <li>Staff research training, with large practical fieldwork component; long-term course with leaving certificate. evening (e.g. 2 days a week)</li> </ul> | 709, 661<br>164, 101  | Leada Yaqubi, Deputy Director<br><a href="http://www.afghanwomensnetwork.org">www.afghanwomensnetwork.org</a> |
| <b>8. Afghanistan Watch</b>  | Research organisation in the process of being set up. Applied for registration in July 2008  | 4-5 researchers, all Afghan with MA degrees from Pakistan or Iran   | Research agenda: transitional justice, documenting human rights violations, various aspects of Afghan politics and the insurgency. Geographic focus on North   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership and help with funding</li> </ul>   | Not officially established yet.   | Jalil Benish, Managing Director   |

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|   |  |   | and Central, no field access in South and East   |  |                                  |  |
| <b>9. Agency for Rehabilitation and Energy Conservation in Afghanistan (AREA)</b> | Development NGO. No research, only needs assessment for programme development  | Not applicable  | None   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop skills for needs assessments</li> </ul>   | 624 571<br>2,288,300             |  |
| <b>10. (*)Center for Policy and Human Development (CPHD)</b>                      | UNDP- project established in 2006 to support long-term capacity for research, advocacy, and teaching on human development in Afghanistan.<br><br>Research for the annual HDR.<br><br>Cooperates with NCPR (see below) and Indian institutes on research training course for staff at Kabul University. | 3 research/ programme staff; including coordinator (MSc) and two research officers ( MA) All staff Afghan.  | Afghanistan National Human Development Report 2007 (with contributions from external consultants).   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build institutional partnership with external research organisations, including exchange of staff and project collaboration</li> </ul>  | Ca 700.000 annually<br>2006-2009 | Khwaga Kakar<br>Co-ordinator<br><br><a href="http://www.cphd.af">www.cphd.af</a>                 |
| <b>11. (*)Centre for Conflict and Studies (CAPS)</b>                              | Research center est. in 2006, focusing on Afghan and regional security issues ,  | 25 research/ programme staff, including interns .Afghan leadership, international consultants/interns.  | Main output provincial profiles for the government Independent Directorate for Local Government. 6 provinces, as of July 2008, (Kandahar, Wardak, Logar, Baghdis, Faryab, Kabul). Not publically available.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Junior staff already trained in report writing by American PhD student. Management expressed no need for further training needs.</li> </ul>   | n.a                              | Hekmat Karzai ,<br>Director<br><br><a href="http://www.caps.af">www.caps.af</a>                  |
| <b>12. (*)Cooperation for Peace and Unity (CPAU)</b>                              | Originated as peacebuilding network in 1996, est. as peacebuilding NGO in 2002. Since 2005, increased focus on research.   | 16 research staff, some with MAs (from the UK) Afghan leadership and staff, one Persian speaking MA student based in London working parttime for CPAU     | <i>Afghan Hearts, Afghan Minds: Exploring Afghan perceptions on civil military relations</i> (2008) Report co-authored with two international consultants.<br><i>The Role and Functions of Civil Society in Afghanistan: Case studies from Sayedabad and Kunduz.</i> Paper published by CPAU<br>Religious Civil Society – with CMI/PRIO (Methodology training provided by PRIO)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop skills through project collaboration with international institutions /researchers</li> </ul>  | 1,5 mill<br>1mill                | Kaniskha Nawab,<br>Manager<br><br><a href="http://www.cpau.org.af">www.cpau.org.af</a>           |
| <b>13. Cooperation Center Afghanistan (CCA)</b>                                   | Human rights organisation. Training workshops, advocacy, refugee education, human rights monitoring and rural community development. Surveys and reports on human rights.<br><br>Established by Eng. Ismail Hussaini i 1990, Recent National Endowment for Democracy ( NED) grantee                    | 190 full time staff<br>2 international consultants, recurrent contracts<br>35 have BA degrees, 9 have MAs<br><br>40 staff able to write and speak English | 4 research papers on the relevance of the poet Rumi for peacebuilding today<br>Baseline survey for Wardak and Bamyian on social and economic status<br><br>Research on killings and massacres in Mazar Sharif and Bamyian ( 1997-2001) .n.a (hard copy only) . Also publishes Sadaf, a quarterly magazine on human rights, reconstruction, equal opportunities for women, funded by the National Endowment for Democracy. Published and distributed in Kabul | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop analysis and report writing.</li> <li>Training in needs assessment, (which is required for some donor funding.)</li> <li>Adapt training to staff without university degree, possible supplemented with higher education.</li> </ul> | n.a                              | Sarwar Hussaini,<br>Executive Director<br><br><a href="http://www.cca.org.af">www.cca.org.af</a> |

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| <b>14. (*)Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA)</b>                             | NGO focusing on research and advocacy on corruption, governance and accountability, primarily in relation to aid. Part of the international Tiri network – dedicate to anti-corruption work.   | 6 research staff, including international director, and Afghan final year university students (parttime during term time) and recent graduates. Additional staff are currently abroad doing MAs.                                     | Published 8 reports by July 2008. Recent titles include;<br><i>Bringing Accountability back in: Afghans from subjects of aid to citizens of a state</i> (2008).<br><i>Aynak copper mine: opportunities and threats for development from a sustainable business perspective</i> ( 2007)<br>A survey of perceptions of corruption from eight provinces (2007).  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research training for staff ( writing, research design, analytical skills, English)</li> <li>• Encourages staff to attend training during working hours</li> </ul> | 180 000 EUR<br>250 000 EUR | Lorenzo Delegates,<br>Director<br><br><a href="http://www.iwaweb.org">www.iwaweb.org</a>                                    |
| <b>15. (*)Kabul Center for Strategic Studies (KCSS)</b>                     | Independent research institute est. in Dec 2007, focusing on security issues.  | 17 researchers, full- and parttime. 5 speak and write English. Ca. 2/3 of staff have MA degrees, 1 has a PhD in history /Islam. All staff Afghan<br>Editorial assistance from US-based researchers.                                  | <i>Kabul Direct</i> , subscription based, monthly journal with analysis and interviews concerning security issues   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research training for staff</li> <li>• Develop partnership with international institutions</li> </ul>  | n. a.                      | Waliullah Rahmani,<br>Director<br><br><a href="http://www.kabulcenter.org">www.kabulcenter.org</a>                          |
| <b>16. Kateb Institute for Higher Education</b>                             | Private educational institution (social science, English and computers); aims to undertake research  | 17 researchers, all Afghan: 3 PhD in political science, 2 PhD in Law, 11 MAs (law/ political science or social science), 1 BA. All degrees from Iran.<br><br>30 teachers, ( 10 fulltime,20 part-time) some teachers also researchers | Some researchers have previous published books or monographs. So far Kateb has not raised any money for research; funds are from fees and private donors<br><br>Possible future research topics: prospects and consequences of democratisation in Afghanistan, Islam and democracy etc.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn more about recent research methodologies and debates.</li> </ul>   | n.a                        | Muhammad Hosein Vahidi,<br>Director of Academic Research Unit<br><br><a href="http://www.kateb.edu.af">www.kateb.edu.af</a> |
| <b>17. (*)National Center for Policy and Research (NCPR)</b>                | Established by Konrad Adenauer Foundation and MoHE on the campus of Kabul University in May 2003 to serve as a research and training facility in the fields of Law & Political Science, Economics, and Social Sciences. Organizes courses in methodology and research projects on current policy issues for university staff and students. | 6 staff including Director, 2 Ph.D., rest M.A. or in pursuit of MA degrees. 1 international staff.   | Several monographs based on faculty-student research projects have been published ( in Dari with English summaries) on various topics such as causes of poverty, Afghan perceptions of democracy, and women and employment in post-2001 Afghanistan and distributed to government ministries, civil society organizations and public libraries. Director has a recent book publications on economic development in Dari | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen existing training-teaching structures</li> </ul>  |                            | Hamidullah Noor Ebad<br><br><a href="http://www.ncpr.af">www.ncpr.af</a>  |
| <b>18. (*) Organisation for Sustainable Development and Research (OSDR)</b> | Independent NGO; re-established as OSDR in May 2008.<br><br>Plans for:<br>-Survey and Monitoring unit, to continue work previously done by   | 12 full time staff and pool of 180 reserve staff engaged on a project-basis.   | Numerous surveys and evaluations for organisations such as WFP, FAO, UNHCR, UNOPS and embassies, or for NGOs such as IRC, SCA, CoAR and ACBAR. Ca. 10-15 surveys annually.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop staff skills in qualitative data analysis and report writing.</li> <li>• Evening training.</li> </ul>  | 323,752<br>654,891         | Sultan Mohammad Ahmady, Director<br><br>No website  |

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| <p>(prev. Afghan Survey Unit, (ASU, part of Coordination of Afghan Relief CoAR)</p>           | <p>ASU.<br/>-Development and Income Generation Unit (development programmes)<br/>-Disaster Risk Reduction Unit; (disaster risks reduction programmes)<br/>-Sustainable Development Institute; offers courses, including degree courses, certificates and diplomas (in partnership with SEEDS and Kyoto University.</p> |   |   |   |                                |  |
| <p>19. Rural Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan (RRAA) / Norwegian Project Office</p> | <p>NGO delivering humanitarian /development services in health, agriculture, livelihoods community peacebuilding and infrastructure. Very limited research - participated in a survey on livelihoods with GRSP, CoAR and NCA</p>   | <p>Not applicable (limited research)</p>  | <p>Participation in a survey on livelihoods</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish an evaluation department for its programmes and train staff for this. Training can be during working hours, but not continuously</li> </ul>  | <p>2,210750<br/>2,641633</p>   | <p>Haji Aman Jawad, Deputy Director</p>  |
| <p>20. Shuada</p>   | <p>NGO active in health, education, human rights and livelihoods. No research so far, but plans to establish research unit</p>   | <p>Five independent researchers working as volunteers to help establish research unit.</p>  | <p>No research so far</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs assessment training for programme development</li> </ul>   | <p>1,490 774<br/>1,635 261</p> | <p>Halim Nadiri<br/><a href="http://www.shuhada.org">www.shuhada.org</a></p>                           |
| <p>21. (*)Tribal Liaison Office (TLO)</p>   | <p>NGO est. 2003. Peacebuilding and research with focus on tribal structures in the eastern region, recently expanded to the southern provinces.</p>   | <p>12 research staff in Kabul. 5 senior/ research officer level, rest assistants. Founded and led by Afghans. Internationals serve as senior experts, technical staff and interns</p> | <p><i>Integration of Traditional Structures into the State-building Process: Lessons from the Tribal Liaison Office in Loya Paktia (2006)</i> : Publication series on Promoting Democracy under Conditions of State Fragility - Issue 1: Afghanistan. Berlin: Heinrich Böll Foundation. 59-81 . A series of provincial profile reports prepared for donors are not publically available</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff training needs: Conceptualize and analyze research, interview techniques, data collection and management, project design.</li> <li>Some staff currently attend private universities in Afghanistan</li> <li>Due to work commitment staff could not leave Afghanistan to pursue degrees but would be available for day time training in the country.</li> </ul> | <p>n.a</p>                     | <p>Ehsan Zahine, Director<br/><a href="http://www.tlo-afghanistan.org">www.tlo-afghanistan.org</a></p> |
| <p>22. (*)Women and Children Legal Research Foundation (WCLRF)</p>                            | <p>Est. in March, 2003 by Afghan female lawyers. Research and advocacy projects on women and children rights in Afghanistan.</p>   | <p>21 full-time staff (8 men and 13 women). 9 staff has BA degrees (various social sciences) , 1 has an MA ( medical). Founded and led by Afghans</p>                                 | <p>Most recent report <i>Women's Access to Justice</i>, 1 July 2008, funded by Open Society Institution (OSI). Other recent reports deal with women's economic situation and causes for women leaving or fleeing their families. All reports available on WCLFR websites.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve research skills generally;</li> <li>Improve skills for report writing in English.</li> <li>Training preferred outside work hours and should lead to creditable certificate.</li> </ul>   | <p>n.a.</p>                    | <p>Nelofar Qaderi, Acting Director<br/><a href="http://www.wclrf.org.af">www.wclrf.org.af</a></p>      |



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### **R 2008: 10**

ORRE, Aslak and Christian Larssen, with inputs from Manolo Sánchez: “How can the Elections Help us Quell Hunger?” A Mid-Term Review of Norwegian Support to UNDP’s Trust Fund for Civic Education. Bergen 2008, 46 pp.

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McNeish, John-Andrew and Ana Cecilia Arteaga Böhr: Evaluation: Norwegian Student and Academics’ International Assistance Fund (SAIH) Cooperation with the Bolivian *Unidades Académicas Campesinas* (Peasant Academic Units (UACs)). Bergen, 2008, 42 pp.

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### **R 2008: 3**

WIIG, Arne, Farah Ghuznavi and Alf Morten Jerve: Mid-Term Review of the Country Programme (MoU:2003-2008) between Norway and Bangladesh. Bergen, 2008, 49 pp.

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## SUMMARY

This report is a preliminary mapping of Afghan institutional capacity in the field of applied social science research, as well as an assessment of the interest in, and potential for, further capacity building. The report focuses on independent research centres and development NGOs that have research activities, and also includes institutes linked to government ministries, the public university sector and (in one case) to a UN agency. At present these are the principal sources of policy relevant social research.

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