

Faryab Survey Comparison of Findings from Maymane, 2006 and 2009

Arne Strand
and
Organisation for Sustainable Development and Research (OSDR)

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Chr. Michelsen Institute
P.O. Box 6033 Postterminalen,
N-5892 Bergen, Norway
Tel: + 47 55 57 40 00
Fax: + 47 55 57 41 66
E-mail: cmi@cmi.no
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Introduction and methodology

This is a follow-up to an earlier survey conducted in Maymane district by the Organization for Sustainable Development and Research (OSDR) during a two-week period in early November 2006. In that survey 183 interviews were undertaken in 24 villages, of which 67 were with women and 116 with men. This was part of a conflict sensitivity analysis designed to inform a planned increase in Norwegian civilian involvement in the province. Survey data was included in the report.¹

The present follow-up survey took place in late December 2008 and early January 2009, in the same 24 villages. In all 201 persons were interviewed of whom 78 were women and 123 men. The interviews were supplemented by observations made by the interview team to help interpret the difference in responses between the 2006 and the 2008/9 surveys. The data sheets are not included in this report, but are available upon request.

The questions in the two surveys were identical except for the inclusion of questions regarding corruption in 2008/9. Thus, if there is any form of bias in the data or research methodology this would be reproduced in both surveys. Hence, what is particularly interesting to identify here is the differences between the two surveys.

General characteristics

There was a marked increase in literacy among the respondents, from 46 that said they were literate in 2006 to 82 in 2009 (of which 23 were women). The average age was 39 years for both surveys.

In 2006 59 % of the respondents were *Uzbek*, this increased to 68 % in 2009; 23 % were *Tajik* in 2006 and 22 % in 2009, with smaller numbers of *Pashtuns*, *Aimaqs* and *Hazaras*. Many respondents lived in mixed ethnic villages, making the area fairly representative of the ethnic composition of Faryab.

The findings may not be representative of province as a whole as the surveys were conducted close to the provincial capital, and thus provincial offices and the location of the Norwegian led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) as well.

There were no reports of major armed conflicts in the villages in either 2006 or 2009, though there has been a slight increase in homicide from 2 to 4. In 2006 this was reported as due to 'enmity', while in 2008/9 conflicts "in the home" and "among children" were the main reasons.

While men reported a variety of jobs with farmer in majority, women listed either household chores or teacher/ government officials as their two main occupations, the latter differ from 2006 when rug weaver was more frequently reported.

Farmers reported that wheat was their main produce both years, supplemented by melon and water melon in 2006 and barley in 2009. The difference might be explained by the timing of the

¹ Bauck, Petter, Arne Strand, Mohammad Hakim and Arghawan Akbari (2007), Afghanistan: An Assessment of Conflict and Actors in Faryab Province to Establish a Basis for Increased Norwegian Civilian Involvement Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI Report R 2007: 1) available at <http://www.cmi.no/publications/publication/?2594=afghanistan-an-assessment-of-conflict-and-actors>

interviews relative to the growing seasons. In both periods all farmers sold their products in the bazaar in Maymane.

No respondents said they knew of production or transport of drugs in, or through, the area.

As for corruption, only 11 % of the respondents thought that government funds were used for private purposes, while 10 % reported that they had to pay “bakhshish” to get services from the government. While there is no comparison with 2006 findings, this differs largely from the perceived impression of how extensive the corruption problem is in Afghanistan. A more detailed study on this subject could help identify if the corruption problem is either vastly overstated, understated by these villagers or if Faryab has less of a corruption problem than other parts of Afghanistan.

Main findings

The survey identified two general trends from 2006 to 2009: (i) reduced trust among the population in the UN and ISAF, and (ii) a marked increase in development projects and their perceived quality and usefulness.

1. Sharply reduced trust in the UN and ISAF

When asked who the population trusted the most and the least, the respondents reported a dramatic reduction in the trust in the UN and ISAF. Over four-fifth (77 %) said they have no trust in the UN, compared to 39 % in 2006. Only 2 % now said they had full trust in the UN. About two-thirds (66%) stated that they had no trust in ISAF, compared to 28 % in 2006, and only 5 % had full trust in the international security forces. While about half of those interviewed in 2006 (52%) thought the international forces improved their security, this figure was down to 38 % in 2009.

Very few of the respondents knew the mandate of the international forces, only 8 % in 2009 and 12,5 % in 2006. Although the number who state that they know which country the ISAF soldiers in Faryab is from has gone up from 33 to 45%, most got the country wrong. The overwhelming majority of them answered “American troops”. Only 15 % of those interviewed know the troops are Norwegian while 11 % identify them as “American and Norwegian troops”, and then the rest list various countries or just “foreign”.

This decreasing trust in foreign forces and the UN contrasts with a sharp increase in the trust of the Faryab governor (up from 26 to 85 % trust), the Afghan National Police (up from 33 to 80 % full trust), the Kabul Government (up from 44 to 63 % full trust), the Afghan National Army (up from 30 to 52 % full trust) and NGOs (up from 21 to 45 % full trust and 48 % some trust). Less than 4 % stated that they had no trust in any of these, which is a remarkable improvement from 2006.

The comments from the interview team explained that this change was linked to appointment of a new Head of Police from outside of the area, leading more people to ask the police for assistance. If that trust will prevail over time remain to be seen. The change of Province governor might provide a similar explanation for the increase in the trust in that position. An interesting observation in both cases is that it appears that people hold more trust in a person than in an institution. Though, future studies might help identify if that might change over time with further capacity building of provincial institutions.

Figure 1: Comparison of trust (in per cent) among Afghan and International institutions and organisations

Organization		No trust	Some trust	Full trust	Don't know
ANP	2006	24	41	33	2
	2009	2	16	80	2
ANA	2006	16	50	30	4
	2009	3	43	52	2
United Nation	2006	39	39	16	6
	2009	77	19	2	2
ISAF	2006	30	38	28	4
	2009	66	27	5	2
NGOs	2006	22	51	21	6
	2009	4	48	45	3
Governor	2006	29	37	26	8
	2009	4	9	85	2
Kabul Government	2006	13	40	44	3
	2009	0,5	36	63	0,5

The number of interviewees that reported to have made contact with the provincial authorities was 36 in 2009, a doubling from 17 in 2006. Of these 20 reported that “their problem was solved” in 2009 compared to 13 in 2006.

Asked about the presence of the Afghan National Police, the Afghan National Army and the International Security Assistance Forces, almost 100 % knew that they were stationed in the area. The opinion on which of these forces they regarded as having improved their security varied however largely, with a negative development for ISAF.

Figure 2. Degree to which different institutions improve security in the area

Institution	2006	2009
Afghan National Police	67 %	98 %
Afghan National Army	60 %	67 %
ISAF	52 %	38 %

Here is a notable difference between women and men when it comes to their knowledge and opinion. All women interviewed in the 2009 survey, including 15 teachers and 4 government officials, told that they had no trust in ISAF and in the UN, only 2 women thought ISAF had improved the security, none knew ISAF's mandate and only one thought that ISAF soldiers were from Norway.

In contrast, women almost unanimously expressed trust in Afghan institutions and NGOs.

2. More development projects and higher quality of services

One important factor that might help explain the improved trust in Afghan institutions and the NGOs is the increasing number of development projects implemented in the villages surveyed in 2008/9 compared to 2006.

Whereas 45 % reported projects in their village in 2006, the number was up to 97 % in 2009. The number of project implementers listed was doubled, and while only 3 % knew of the National Solidarity Programme in 2006 it was known to 34 % of the population in 2009, probably due to the expansion of this programme.

The numbers of schools were the same, girls had full access to education, but several of the schools had been upgraded to middle and high schools. There has been a major improvement in the qualification of the teachers: while only 48 % reported on qualified teachers in 2006, the number was up to 99 % in 2009. That same development goes for qualified doctors; the number was up from 30 % reported in 2006 to 70 % in 2009.

There are, however, a number of problem areas. All respondents report a lack of sufficient water for irrigation (while reporting an increase in access to potable water). An amazing 61 % that reported that family members had left the area to find work elsewhere, a development that is a slight increase from 2006. Of these the large majority had sought work in Iran, with a few in Mazar-e Sharif, Pakistan and the Middle East.

At the same time there has been a sharp increase (from 24 to 46 %) of people returning to the villages, primarily due to drought and lack of work in other areas. There was a notable increase in the number of whole families returning in 2009 compared to 2006 (up from 5 to 36 %). This combination of large outward labour migration and growing family return signals an increase in the proportion of vulnerable population in the area.

Comment

The improvements noted regarding the number, impact and quality of development projects might have help explain the increasing trust in Afghan institutions and the NGOs. However it fails to explain the increased trust in the Afghan police and the army and the sharp reduction of trust in the UN and ISAF. This is particularly puzzling as the villagers report no major change in the security situation, which was reported as ‘fairly good’ in both 2008/9 and 2006.

One possible explanation for decreasing trust in the internationals could be the increasing criticism levelled by the Afghan government against the international community, and growing awareness and concern over loss of civilian lives caused by international forces (whom the majority in this survey believe to be “American” in Faryab). While not directed primarily towards the UN as an organisation, a lack of a visible presence and projects in the field might have reduced the population’s support. More generally, it could be a backlash against the large and visible international presence, and reflect disillusionment over lack of progress towards peace and prosperity. A particular concern is the large number of women who express almost a complete lack of trust in the security and development representatives of the international community.

These survey findings, although from a limited geographical area and number of interviews, has identified both a substantial development improvement and major changes in the attitudes towards development and security actors. Given the importance the international community, Norway included, place on development of sub-national governance, ISAF as a security guarantor and the UN as a coordinator of development and governance it will be advisable to pursue further qualitative research to test the validity of these findings, possible also in other areas of Faryab. And, thereby, gain further insight into why such dramatic change in trust (positive and negative) has taken place in over just 2 years.

SUMMARY

This is a follow-up to an earlier survey conducted in Maymane district by the Organization for Sustainable Development and Research (OSDR) during a two-week period in early November 2006. In that survey 183 interviews were undertaken in 24 villages, of which 67 were with women and 116 with men. This was part of a conflict sensitivity analysis designed to inform a planned increase in Norwegian civilian involvement in the province.

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