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Afghanistan: An Assessment of Conflict and Actors in Faryab Province to Establish a Basis for Increased Norwegian Civilian Involvement

How can Future Norwegian Involvement best be Targeted and Organised?

Petter Bauck, Arne Strand, Mohammad Hakim and Arghawan Akbari

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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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I would like to reiterate Norway's deep commitment to supporting joint efforts to bring about lasting peace and sustainable development for the people of Afghanistan. If we are to succeed we must be fully aware of the links between security, political, economic and social development – and that Afghan ownership of reconstruction and development activities is crucial.

(Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre at the London Conference on Afghanistan, January 2006)

For Norway to succeed in Faryab there are three pieces of advice:

1. Respect the religion of the Afghans
2. Ensure that assistance benefits poor people
3. Ensure information to the people of Faryab

(Head of Provincial Council, Faryab, December 2006)

Abbreviations

ACTED	=	Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development
ADB	=	Asian Development Bank
AIHRC	=	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission
ARCS	=	Afghanistan Red Crescent Society
AREU	=	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit - www.areu.org.af
ARTF	=	Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund
ASU	=	Afghan Survey Unit
ASGP	=	Afghan Sub-National Governance Programme
CDC	=	Community Development Committee
CHA	=	Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
CMI	=	Chr. Michelsen Institute
CoAR	=	Coordination of Afghan Relief
DACAAR	=	Danish Committee for Assistance to Afghan Refugees
DDA	=	District Development Associations
DDR	=	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DIAG	=	Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups
GoA	=	Government of Afghanistan
IAM	=	International Assistance Mission
ICRC	=	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	=	Internally Displaced People
IOM	=	International Organisation for Migration
ISAF	=	International Stabilisation Assistance Force
MFA	=	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoAgr	=	Ministry of Agriculture
MoI	=	Ministry of the Interior
MoEc	=	Ministry of Economics
MoRR	=	Ministry of Refugee Return and Resettlement
MRRD	=	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NABDP	=	National Area-Based Development Programme
NCA	=	Norwegian Church Aid
NGO	=	Non-Governmental Organisation
Norad	=	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NPO/RAA	=	Norwegian Project Office/Rural Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan
NRC	=	Norwegian Refugee Council
NSP	=	National Solidarity Programme
PAG	=	Policy Advisory Group
PC	=	Provincial Council
PDC	=	Provincial Development Committee
PDPA	=	People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan
PRT	=	Provincial Reconstruction Team
STARS	=	Skills Training and Rehabilitation Society
UN	=	United Nations
UNAMA	=	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	=	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	=	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNODC	=	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USAID	=	United States Agency for International Development

Time line

1973 – King Zahir Shah replaced through a coup by his cousin President Daoud

1978 – Saur Revolution; PDPA take power. President Daoud killed

1979 – Soviet invasion on 27 December

1989 – Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan

1992 – PDPA regime in Kabul ousted. Mujahideen coalition takes power

1994 – Taliban start emerging in the south

1996 – Taliban take control of Kabul

1997 – Taliban take control of Mazar-i-Sharif in the north

2001 – Taliban ousted from Kabul by coalition of Northern Alliance and International Forces

Introduction

Since the Taliban were ousted from power in Kabul in 2001 and the international community involved itself in the security and development fields, Norway has established an extensive development assistance programme, which in 2005 amounted to NOK 386.2 million. As a member of NATO Norway is involved in the military activities, and is now concentrating its forces in northern Afghanistan where it heads the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Faryab.

As a consequence of this involvement, and based on the growing understanding that increased development efforts are vital for future success in Afghanistan, it was decided in 2006 to channel more resources to Faryab. The Embassy in Kabul reports that Faryab in 2006 received a total of 41,59 million NOK in direct Norwegian support, in addition came support channelled through national programmes. To establish a foundation for this increased involvement, it was agreed with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) that Norad together with Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) should conduct a conflict assessment of the province (Terms of Reference (TOR) included as Attachment 1).

The TOR for this study has been commented on by MFA, the Embassy in Kabul and several departments in Norad and adjusted accordingly before finalized.

The team visited Faryab just a week after President Hamid Karzai paid the province a visit, the first by a Head of State since before 1973. Karzai's appearance had an immediate positive significance for relations between the citizens of Faryab and the Afghan Government, and thus for influencing opinions held in the province. Whether these positive attitudes will prevail is difficult to predict.

While the main focus of this review is on Faryab, it needs to be acknowledged that there are actors and processes beyond the province that influence the potential for increasing or reducing the security risk.

- At the international level the presence of, and policies and strategies devised for, Operation Enduring Freedom and the operations of the NATO-led International Stabilisation Assistance Force (ISAF) have a major impact, as does the general perception of the 'war on terror' and the international presence in Afghanistan. ISAF's policy of not commenting on or intervening in the policies and performance of the Afghan government appears somewhat strange given that it engages itself 'in support of extending the authority of' the same government by providing humanitarian assistance and participating in coordinating assistance. The 'double standards' attributed to the international community might in themselves constitute a security risk, especially when Afghans feel that they have not received what has been promised them, or that one standard is valid for them and another for the international community.
- The attitude and intentions of countries in the region are another factor, especially if they support particular political or ethnic groups.
- At the national level the relationship between the emerging Afghan Government, with its different branches, and the people and institutions of Faryab is a major factor. Within Afghanistan, relationships between power holders, parties, ethnic groups and networks (for example, for drug smuggling) are likely to influence the security situation.
- What is clearly illustrated in Faryab is that security is influenced by relations between the Government structures (Governor versus Provincial Council, Governor versus Ministries, Governor versus Districts, Governor versus police and the judiciary, and the Provincial

Councils versus all governance structures), between the state institutions and local and regional power holders, between different ethnic groups, and between men and women.

These different factors cannot be seen in isolation from each other, and those wishing to worsen the security situation at the national or provincial level are likely to draw on them all.

Moreover, corruption at all levels of society constitutes a threat to security, to governance and to the development potential. Not least, the prevalence of corruption associated with the Governor, the local administration and judiciary and the police sharply reduce the legitimacy of and trust in both the local administration and the Afghan government.

Main conclusions and recommendations

The PRT, operating under a peacebuilding mandate, has exerted a positive influence over the provincial and communal security situation in Faryab. However, it is a costly contribution requiring an exit strategy whereby responsibility is transferred to a respected and functional Afghan army and police force. Much more needs to be done to inform the public about the PRT's mandate and role¹, and the PRT needs to ensure that there is a clear separation in practice between the security and humanitarian mandates. This separation should include provisions that diplomatic/development staff, the police and possibly the Norwegian Mission of Legal Advisers to Afghanistan 'Styrkebrønnen' operate independently of the military forces, are not co-located, use separate interpreters and do not depend on armed military escort when travelling in Maymane or in the province.²

The emergence of a 'Norwegian province', with projects channelled exclusively through Norwegian NGOs or the PRT, is a major concern and a situation that should be avoided. Rather, Norway should strive to ensure a) the involvement of other donors in the province, including sharing the costs of major programmes; b) continuation of national programmes in the province; c) funding for national NGOs and specialised international NGOs operating in the province; and d) support for Faryab-based civil society groups and initiatives, or assistance for establishing such.

As a long term perspective has to be applied on the Norwegian assistance there is a need to ensure more in-depth knowledge on a range of Faryab specific and Afghan and regionally issues holding a major conflict potential before entering into major projects or committing multi annual funding.

Governance needs to be a major focus in the Norwegian engagement in Faryab. Any lack of effort here will reduce the chances of success in the security and development areas. This implies an open and frank debate with the Afghan government, from President Karzai down to the village councils, with the aim of ensuring a capable administration at all levels. It implies using Norwegian professionals with both skills and experience to achieve the necessary respect among the Afghans. A country sending troops to further the influence of a national government holds a strong responsibility for addressing the negative aspects of the government's performance. The strengthening of the governance sector need to be holistic, and must be done in collaboration and coordination with the GoA, multilateral agencies and donors. And with a thorough understanding of the relations between traditional governance structures and new structures initiated as a result of Kabul initiatives, national development programmes or donor initiatives. Experience implies that the traditional structures uphold far stronger legitimacy in the population than any new inventions.

Warlords and regional military commanders still have substantial influence in the province. The main military-political organisation, Jombesh-e Melli Islami-ye Afghanistan (National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan), headed by General Dostum, seems, though, to be in the process of transforming itself into a political party representing the *Uzbek* population. Established economic interests in and outside the province together with emerging political links with Kabul may counter

¹ The survey findings elaborated on later in this report (see then chapter 'Survey Findings') indicate a very low knowledge in the population both on the mandate of the PRT and from what countries the PRT in Faryab comes. 83 % stated that they did not know their mandate, and 62 % did not know which country the soldiers were from.

² If the present PRT base, referred to as 'Banken', is to be used as a base for non-military activities when the PRT move to their new base the activities and external profile must be carefully considered to ensure a purely humanitarian profile. It could be questioned if this will be possible given the very strong connections existing between "Banken" and the former Dostum affiliated forces stationed here. The same could be said about the incident involving the Norwegian PRT in February 2006, upholding the impression of "Banken" as a military stronghold in Maymane.

a future ethnic and regionally based conflict with the centre if carefully supported. Still, we need to bear in mind that there are a large number of men in Faryab and in the north of Afghanistan that are seasoned fighters and whom it might be possible to mobilise quickly for military action if their (or their commanders) interests appeared to be threatened.

Humanitarian and development assistance needs to be carefully planned to avoid generating new conflicts in a very fragile environment that is vulnerable to exploitation both within the province and beyond. Provision of water is a major need, as is job creation for women and men. However, the way it is done might be as important as the outcome. In the water sector, projects must be prioritised that do not lower the water table, but rather add to it, while generating jobs and ensuring communal ownership over the water resources. For women, it is important that jobs are generated outside the home. This is to avoid the domestic violence that many experience, although it is also necessary that such jobs offer a good income and that security is ensured for the journey to and from the workplace.

That stated, there is an urgent need to mitigate the effects of the drought, primarily by generating income opportunities over the winter, by ensuring provision of fodder for livestock to avoid their sale at a time of extremely low prices, and by providing the prospect that the province will benefit from development assistance.

Given the frequent droughts experienced in Afghanistan and the region over the last decade, it is of the utmost importance that the Norwegian authorities support a comprehensive regional assessment of present and future prospects of environmental change, and of possibilities and means of reducing its impact.³

In education, a balance should be sought between constructing schools and improving the quality of the education provided. Short term retraining of teachers included in ongoing programmes is important, but a more long term approach should be aimed at. Support for the teacher training college in the province could be an interesting approach which would at the same time benefit in particular female students and strengthen their job opportunities.

All of the above point towards a strong Norwegian governmental presence in Faryab (but with a diversity in additional funding and presence of humanitarian actors), to 'make a difference for the Afghans' and to ensure a higher degree of continuity in the positions than is the practice today. Development and improved governance depend on a high degree of trust-building and dialogue, which cannot be undertaken by staff on short-term contracts or who do not hold the necessary authority to engage effectively with senior Afghan bureaucrats, warlords and community elders. Rather than continuing the present short term contracts for development staff in Maymane, one could look at the possibility to establish a system of staff rotation between Kabul and Maymane to make posting in Maymane less burdening and ensure more long term contracts.

And finally, experience has taught us that to avoid future conflict it is important to ensure that what is promised is delivered, that people are involved in defining, deciding upon and controlling the delivery of humanitarian and development assistance, that a non-corrupt practice is strictly followed, and that a policy of full transparency of Norwegian funding and delivery is followed. Moreover, in-depth knowledge on a range of issues outlined towards the end of this report is required, given the likelihood of long term Norwegian funding for Faryab and the high possibility of instability and continued power struggle that must be foreseen.

³ The water situation in Afghanistan has been under discussion for years. See also: Peter Schimann (2000) *Water Shortage in Afghanistan: An Approach to the Problem*. Paper from the UNHCS/Habitat workshop, Islamabad, 20 September 2000.

The conflict picture is in continuous transformation. A regular update of the assessment would therefore provide a useful input into planning and implementation. A list of conflict indicators on which to base such updates is proposed in Attachment 4. The establishment of cooperation between an Afghan and a Norwegian research institution to carry out such conflict assessments would in addition facilitate the strengthening of relevant competence on the Afghan side.⁴

⁴ Attachment 5 outlines four different possible scenarios for the developments in Faryab, with key indicators to assess the developments and proposed interventions to be focused on. The proposal should be developed further. The possibility of using scores for the different indicators should be assessed.

Relevance for other regions in Afghanistan

This assessment has been undertaken in Faryab and is related to future development cooperation in Faryab. Several observations will, however, be of general importance for work anywhere in Afghanistan:

- The complex conflict situation, with its local, national and regional actors, will vary in the different parts of the country, but the advice to take a cautious approach and be aware that conflict might erupt again is universally valid. Emphasis on conflict sensitivity in all aspects of future involvements is important.
- The focus on the complexity related to governance should underline the importance of always addressing this issue to strengthen coherence, transparency and participation based on a thorough understanding of the traditional governance structures and power holders.
- A cautious approach is important to ensure a clear demarcation between the military engagement and the establishment of civilian institutions, including the police. Attempts should be made to avoid blurring the distinction.
- To strengthen the focus on women, a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the local circumstances and resources that can promote change will be decisive.

Methodology and outline of the assignment

To conduct the conflict assessment a team consisting of Petter Bauck from Norad, Arne Strand from CMI and two Afghan consultants, Eng. Mohammad Hakim and Arghawan Akbari, was established. In addition, Sarwar Akbari collected information on Faryab in Kabul and input was provided throughout the process by Kristian Berg Harpviken from PRIO.

Based on the TOR, a questionnaire was prepared for male and female teams from the Afghan Survey Unit to conduct a survey around Maymane, the capital of Faryab, ahead of the team's visit. The main purpose of this limited survey was to draw a picture of the main lines of conflict and to identify issues of concern to the population related to economy, governance, and personal and communal security.

In its work the team has drawn on the results of the survey in addition to relevant available documentation and research.

The team conducted extensive interviews with officials from the central and local administrations, the security establishment, religious leaders and other representatives from civil society, women in different positions in society, representatives from international organisations, diplomatic missions and multilateral organisations, in addition to a limited field visit to one district of Faryab (an interview list is attached).

The report has been circulated for comments to the MFA, the Ministry of Justice, the Directorate of Police, the Ministry of Defence, the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Kabul and different departments in Norad. The team is grateful for comments received and have taken them into account when finalizing the report.

Limited basic information, conflicting assessments of important issues⁵ and recent decades of conflict and war add to the complexity of the situation to be addressed. This complexity underlines the importance of a cautious approach and the need for continuous monitoring.

The starting point for this review is the definition by Norad (2006) of what is meant by a conflict sensitive approach:

Being **conflict sensitive** means that development programmes/projects are assessed and adjusted to the context of violent conflict in which they are being implemented, with a view to avoid unintended negative impacts and maximize positive ones. At a minimum, any intervention must be sensitive to the conflict context, and conscious about risks.

For this specific assignment a number of questions have been identified:

1. How does the existing assistance relate to the actual lines of conflict? What conflict factors might be strengthened and/or what factors might be weakened with increased Norwegian engagement. Who might win and/or who might lose, and what might be the effects on the actual lines of conflict?

⁵ The team experienced conflicting assessments in relation to the actual strength of General Dostum in Faryab as well as in Jombesh-e Milli and on the extent of drug production and transportation in the province as the two most striking examples.

2. What types of resource (i.e. personnel, funds, material assistance) might be relevant for the area, and what effects might these have on the lines of conflict?
3. To what extent might an increased Norwegian involvement improve the prospects for central state institutions, whether centrally or locally based, to strengthen their presence and thereby their legitimacy?
4. How should the Norwegian involvement be oriented to help reduce the conflict(s)?
5. What political signal(s) is an increased Norwegian involvement likely to convey, and how might it affect the lines of conflict?
6. How is the gender dimension best understood in a power and actor analysis, and how can an increased Norwegian involvement be oriented to help defend women's interests and strengthen their participation in their various roles and capacities?
7. In which ways might the security situation affect an increased Norwegian commitment, and in which ways might an increased Norwegian commitment impact on the security situation?
8. To what extent is coordination with other international aid donors and national actors possible and relevant in relation to conflict sensitivity?

General issues of importance to Faryab

There are two issues that we have found to hold importance on the future development in Faryab, and thus to be included and discussed in this review. The first is the development of the Afghan security agenda, and involvement of external actors, while the second is the possible conflict between traditional and governmental governance structures.

Afghanistan and the security agenda

All domestic and international activity in Afghanistan will necessarily be influenced by the national and the international security agenda. The international presence since 2001 has been because of the global struggle against terrorism, in Afghanistan identified as Al Qaeda and the Taliban. Furthermore, years of conflict and war have scarred the country since the Saur Revolution in April 1978, when pro-Soviet forces took control in Kabul through a coup, and the following Soviet invasion in December 1979.⁶

This report is not supposed to cover the security situation in Afghanistan, but one cannot avoid taking both it and the security agenda of national and international players into consideration. The international military presence in the country and the continuing focus on security-related issues force anyone to consider the issue.

The rationale behind this report is an assessment of conflict dynamics in Faryab in an attempt to establish the strongest possible basis for future Norwegian development assistance. It is a given fact that conflict-related issues and security need to be addressed when development is being discussed. Likewise, security assessments are key to decisions on how to organise any activity. The question of how to relate to the military forces present in the country is under continuous discussion.

What makes the security agenda in Afghanistan a particularly difficult issue to relate to today is the fact that apart from the domestic security issues, global security concerns are also heavily involved. One would assume that if stabilisation, increased security and development in Afghanistan were the only agenda, former warlords and drug barons would not have been mobilised as partners, as they are today in the US-led struggle against Al Qaeda.

An alarming observation with reference to Faryab is the existing local understanding that either a presumed Taliban infiltration or drug production seem to be key conditions for attracting international development support. As one source stated: "If necessary we are ready to have our local Taliban to get support".⁷ This understanding is reinforced by the transfer of several international organisations from Faryab and other provinces in the north to the southern and eastern provinces, where there is fierce fighting against insurgents and also extensive opium production.

An additional element of the security agenda intruding into the development agenda is linked to ISAF and its security measures and planning procedures. In Faryab this was obvious in the conflict between the security measures of the local PRT and the ability of civilian development coordinators and representatives of the civilian police to move around without being associated with the military

⁶ The Chairperson of AIHRC explained that the Day of Remembrance for victims of violence in Afghanistan, 10 December, institutionalised at the end of 2006, will cover victims from the time of the Saur Revolution in 1978 up to victims of violence exerted by the international forces operating in Afghanistan today.

⁷ The head of UNODC stated in discussion in February 2006 that a similar experience was growing, saying that to get support you had to start growing opium.

through heavy armed protection. The impression is that this conflict in approach has still not been resolved in a way that can accommodate the need for the development agents to be clearly associated with civilian activities. The team learned that several locally-based NGOs refused to meet at the PRT base in Maymane. Several comments were made about medical personnel from the PRT who worked at the civilian hospital in the city arriving under armed protection. With a possible increased presence of Norwegian Police personnel in Maymane, the need for a clear distinction between military and civilian activities will be even more pressing.⁸

Another issue related to the strong presence of the military forces, and thereby their influence, is their stringent and thorough planning and follow-up procedures in all fields, including development activities. To clarify, their direct involvement in development, as one of five pillars in their activity mapping (the others being security, governance, capabilities and coordination), is limited to what the PRTs initiate through funds they control.⁹ Projects and programmes financed by the development agencies and NGOs are outside their planning procedures. But obviously for the civilian players to be relevant in the discussion with the military on the overall situation in the country, relating to their comprehensive planning and follow-up procedures would have a positive impact.

Adding to the importance of this is the scheduled funding from the EU for the development activities of PRTs in governance.¹⁰ The military units should, according to ISAF HQ, identify projects involving capacity building in government on the provincial or district level. Then NGOs or others should be subcontracted for implementation. Knowing that several projects within governance are being implemented or in the pipeline through Afghan governmental agencies and multilateral organisations, there is obviously a great need for strong coordination and development of an understanding as to how, if at all, the military should be involved in governance projects.

Adding to the complexity related to governance are the particular structures established for the southern provinces to assure the best possible coordination of different Afghan institutions with the international forces in the struggle against the insurgents.¹¹ Information indicates that particular ad hoc measures are taken under this umbrella to establish and strengthen governance structures.

Governance structures

The traditional governance structures has been village, family and clan based, often organised through a male council termed *shura* (or *jirga* among *Pashtuns*), a term that also has been adapted by militant groups for their organisations. The primary task of these traditional councils have been to avoid or solve conflicts or address threats and challenges to the villagers/groups. These councils are not permanent standing bodies with a given leadership (beyond the authority of elders or influential individuals). They are called upon when required.

The central, provincial and district government, as well as the judiciary, the army and the police, through the history has been regarded by the villagers as representatives of an oppressive and

⁸ The civilian police in Afghanistan are organised into military ranks and there is thus no clear organisational distinction between the army and the civilian police.

⁹ In Maymane they had supported the building of a mosque in the new Afghan National Army camp, as well as offering support for mosques in the city.

¹⁰ According to ISAF HQ EU funds might be released by March 2007 for projects identified by PRTs where member states are part. Each project should be of the size 100 to 500.000 Euros. PRTs will be encouraged to work with Afghan ministries and provincial bodies in identification and implementation.

¹¹ Headed by President Karzai the Policy Advisory Group (PAG) is supposed to coordinate and focus the efforts of the Afghan Governmental institutions and foreign forces to counteract the influence of the Taliban related forces in the southern and eastern provinces.

extortive authority. Dupree describes the 'mud curtain' he found the villagers to establish to protect themselves towards tax collectors and interference from other governmental officials in the 1960s. To ensure loyalty towards the Kabul Government the King (and later the President) appointed persons in key positions, as the Governor, from other provinces, a system the Taliban adapted. During the Soviet invasion more aggressive means were used to control and subdue the population. Although, in parts of North Afghanistan ethnic *militia* (as the one led by Dostum) were supported by the Kabul government to ensure a degree of stability and to protect government property, as the gas and oil pipelines.

The local administrations that then subsequently were adopted by the *mujahideen* parties, Dostums Jombesh-e Melli and Taliban did neither do much to address the concerns of and protect the interests of the population at large. Their task was primarily to ensure the political and military control of the respective territories and groups, ensure tax collection and forced recruitment for their armies. We might thus assume, as it has been the pattern in other parts of Afghanistan, that the government employees at the administrative level have largely remained the same throughout the different rules. Only the Governors, Deputy Governors, the District Administrators (*woluswal*) and other top administrators and heads of police and army were changed as the political control was handed over or changed from one group to another.

This has left Afghanistan with two legacies. One is an extremely weak government administration, where hardly any performance assessment or capacity building has taken place over the 3 last decades. Though, it should be noted that their appearance vary largely today dependent on whom has been sent from Kabul to head the provincial administration and departments and what financial resources these have at their disposal. The second is the lack of trust the administration holds in the population, where they are frequently either seen as incompetent or as representatives of a (continued) alien or oppressive authority.

While the international community has embraced these authorities and set themselves to reform and improve their governance, at Kabul. Province and District levels, people continues to regards them with suspicion and maintain their distance. And thus, they continue to relate to their village and other councils for conflict prevention and management, rather than referring cases to the central government and their local representatives. There are different types of structures identified among Afghan ethnic groups, the *Pashtuns* holding the longest history of own governance systems through their *pashtunwalil*. As for *Uzbeks* the team was informed that a national council exists, with representation in major cities and areas inhabited by *Uzbeks*. Bylaws are annually revised, and the councils deal with a wide range of issues, including murder cases.¹² But councils can easily be utilised for political purposes, the establishment of a *Turkmen* council, *Shura Turk-e-Tabar*, in December 2006 was by many regarded as an attempt to reduce Dostum's influence in Northern Afghanistan by reducing his influence over the *Turkmen* population.

The governmental effort that has challenged the private, male and village based authority has been the National Solidarity Programme's (NSP's) establishment of Community Development Councils (CDCs) where the village structure has been formalised through election of a leadership and with the introduction of a separate female council (though not applied in all villages). Primarily established for development assistance management, these structures have gradually been regarded as a governance vehicle, with District Development Associations (DDA) possibly taking over the role the Constitution prescribes the elected District Councils to hold.

¹² The different forms of ethnic councils are described in A. Strand (2007) Afghanistan: Blodhemn og Privat Hemn. Bakgrunn og Praksis, CMI Commissioned Report, Bergen, CMI.

That being stated, there are indications that the traditional mechanisms have been resilient to change as in many villages traditionally influential persons were the ones elected to the CDC. Thus bridging tradition and modernity and ensuring a continuation of powers within the village. Only a second round of election to the CDCs will reveal if their influence has been reduced, or if access to external funding through the NSP rather has enhanced their standing within their communities and made them replace the traditional *shuras* when it comes to conflict resolution.

The New Afghan Constitution ensured the establishment of a Parliament and Provincial and District Councils¹³. However, the election law was not adhered to and persons with past or present association with armed groups were allowed to stand for election. This resulted in a rather high percentage of former warlords elected to the Parliament, and varying degrees of representation in the different Provincial Councils. The requirement of female representation did however ensure more balanced representation, although female members continue to voice concerns of being sidelined in the political processes.

Anyhow, there is a lack of clarity as to what authority and influence in particular the Province and District Councils are granted, as the first is primarily seen as holding a supervision and conflict settlement role – and being a link between the population and the governance structures.

While the team recorded different views on the acceptance of the Faryab Provincial Council and their members, the general impression was positive, although they had apparently not yet managed to establish themselves as a major powerholder/conflict solver to replace the role of the local councils, despite being involved in negotiations in a number of political conflicts.

This leaves us with three main observations that need to be taken into account when discussing risk assessment. One is that traditional governance and judicial structures continues to be preferred by the population in Faryab, rather than the structures formed by the government and supported by the international community. Secondly, while the elected Provincial Councils struggle to find their role and establish a form of authority, the regular government administration continues to be weak and distrusted, and the entire structure is in need of going through the long awaited civil service reform (though possibly a more in-depth reform is required). And thirdly, while the Community Development Councils emerge as more democratic village entities it remains to be seen if they will continue their activities if/when funding from NSP and other donors come to an end. And, moreover, if the ‘upscaled’ CDCs, the District Development Associations and finally the Provincial Development Committees (where the PRT, Donors and humanitarian agencies are included) will be accepted by the population and the Provincial Councils.

An additional concern related to the legacy of the different governance bodies is the extent to which these different bodies establish their position in society purely based on their access to international funding. With the elusiveness of international funding in mind, the future sustainability of such structures should be questioned.

¹³ Till date only representatives for the Parliament and Provincial Council have been elected. Elections for District councils was postponed.

Description of Faryab

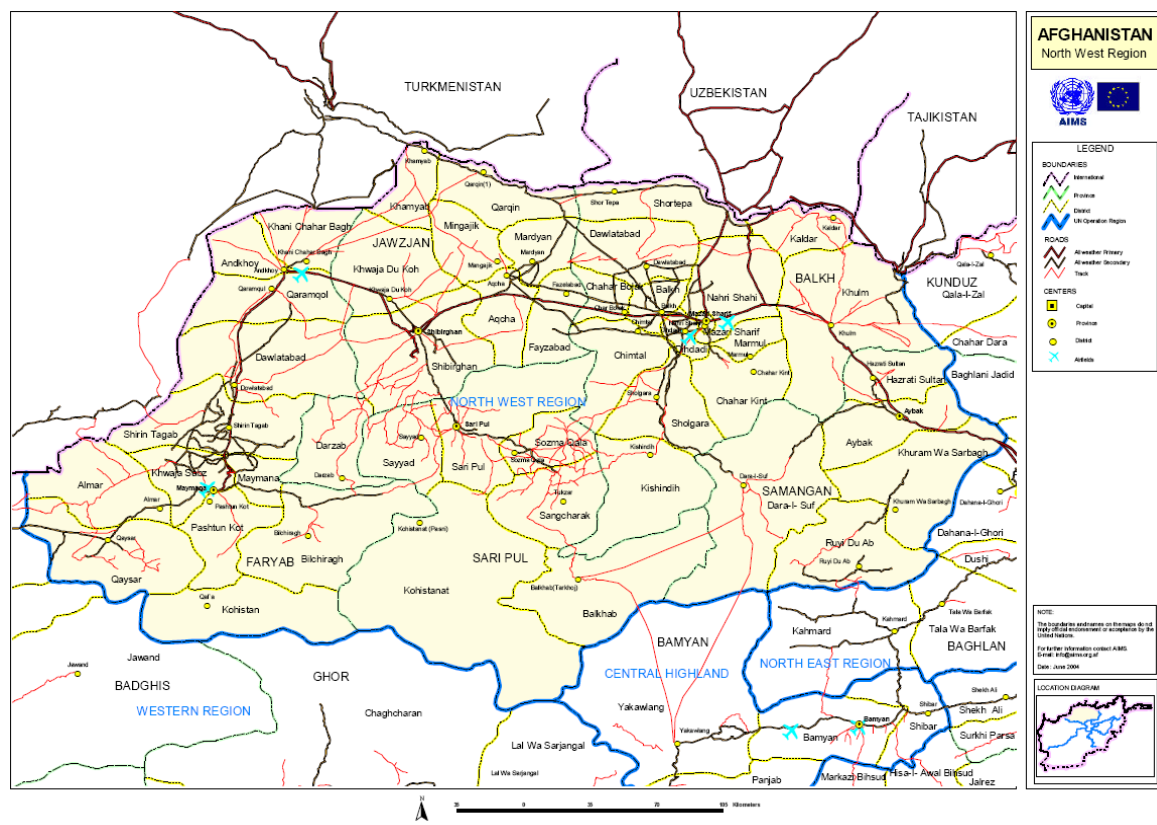


Figure 1- Afghanistan: The North West Region

Faryab is situated in northern Afghanistan, bordering Turkmenistan to the north and adjoining the provinces of Jawzjan and Sari Pul to the east, Ghor to the south and Badghis to the west. Population estimates vary from 825,000 to 1,300,000.¹⁴ The province is divided into 14 districts with Maymane as the provincial capital.

Faryab is the only Afghan province with an ethnic *Uzbek* majority (56.8 %), and holds therefore a symbolic national significance for this Afghan minority. *Tajiks* are the second largest group (21.4 %), *Pashtuns* come third (14.1 %) and *Turkmens* fourth (4.5 %), while there is a minor *Hazara* presence (2.3 %) (UNAMA 2006). The large majority are *Sunni* Muslims, with a small *Shia* Muslim presence.

¹⁴ According to the Central Statistics Office the population in 2005/06 was 840,400, with 743,800 living in rural areas and 96,600 in urban areas. See also: www.cso.gov.af



Figure 2 - Faryab Province with districts

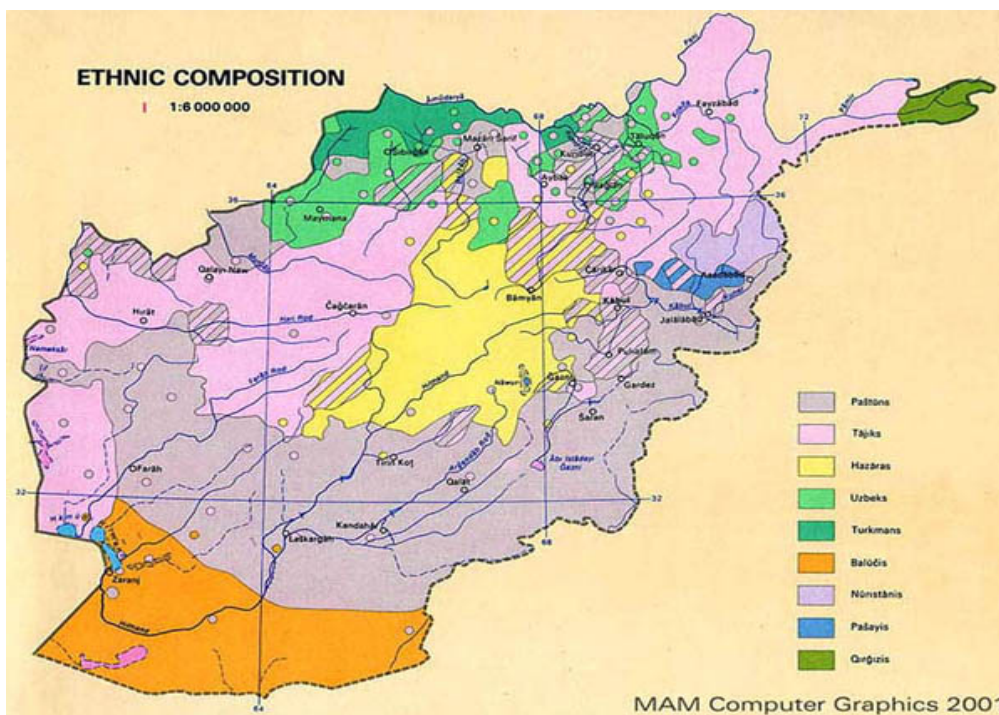


Figure 3 - Ethnic Composition (CIA World Fact Book)

Although the province borders Turkmenistan only a limited official border trade goes in either direction, which includes a small northward flow of drugs.

The literacy rate is less than 40 %, and some reports indicate that female literacy is only 5 %. Interestingly, more girls than boys seek higher education in Faryab, as teaching is the preferred career choice for women and teacher training is the main higher education available in the province.

While women has a much more independent role in society compared to other parts of Afghanistan, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) and other sources report an extremely high prevalence of violence towards women, including rape. While the use of drugs and alcohol might partly explain domestic violence, some local observers attribute it to a lower respect for women among *Uzbeks* than among other Afghan groups, and to powerful actors seeing it as their privilege to misuse and exploit both women and men.¹⁵ The situation is ascribed more to long-established tradition than to the recent years of conflict and war.

Most of the conflicts in the province are settled locally, through councils of elders, with only small numbers being referred to the police or the government's legal system. The use of Sharia law is frequently drawn on in addition to tribal codes of conduct. Even at national level an *Uzbek* council mechanism is reportedly in use to resolve intra-ethnic disputes. It is based on an annually revised bylaw, which according to one informant 'has rules for everything, including how to deal with theft and murder'.¹⁶

The major income of the province is from agriculture. Traditionally, Faryab has been a major provider of wheat and wool from the *kharakoul* sheep. A range of fruits and vegetables is produced, primarily for local consumption. In addition, the province is renowned for its carpet and keelim production, which is traditionally undertaken by women.

Both irrigated and rain-fed agricultural production is common, and while estimates differ it appears that rain-fed irrigation is prevalent. As much as 90 % of the ploughing of the land is done by oxen. The drought that has struck parts of Afghanistan in recent years, combined with the occurrence of sunpest in some parts of the province, has led to an 80 – 90 % crop failure in 2006. Indications of people selling their livestock are thus alarming, as their ability to reclaim the land rapidly might be jeopardised if the availability of oxen is reduced. Likewise, a reduced availability of wool from sheep might seriously hamper the carpet industry.

The Directorate of Agriculture in Faryab reports that 67 % of the households have less than 1 jerib (2000 m²) land or are landless, 30 % are farming a land area between 1 and 30 jeribs while only 3 % hold land above 30 jeribs. Sharecropping is very common, and most frequently the landowner only provides the land while the sharecropper is responsible for all seeds, fertiliser (if used), ploughing and labour. The agricultural yield is shared between the landowner and the sharecropper according to an agreement, in terms of which the sharecroppers receive less if the land is irrigated (DACAAR 2006).

Faryab is faced with a severe lack of safe drinking water (84 % lack access) and water for irrigation. Some areas report increased salt content in the groundwater, while others report a lowering of the groundwater table. The water from the Amu Daria border river is a potential water source for Faryab and for Afghanistan. Presently Afghanistan utilises less water from Amu Daria than the present water treaty allow for, signed between the then Soviet Union and Afghanistan.¹⁷

During the violent conflicts experienced since 1979, a large proportion of the population sought refuge in Iran and to a lesser extent in Pakistan. At the height of the Soviet occupation 40 % of the population was reported to have left their habitats. Many families left male family member(s) behind when repatriating, thus establish a financial safety net and a network for continued work

¹⁵ It was explained that due to an extremely high bride price, there are instances of rape 'with consent' so as to escape the financial responsibility as the groom is then forced to marry his intended bride.

¹⁶ Pashonwali, the Pashtu code of honour, is discussed in an article 'Honour among them' in the Economist, 19 December 2006.

¹⁷ For details see Gry. G. Rønningen, *Kampen om vannet i Sentral-Asia*, Kronikk, Dagbladet, 22.01.2007.

migration, primarily to Iran.¹⁸ The downside is the high prevalence of drug addiction among the labourers in Iran, causing problems upon their return to Faryab. Following the fall of the Taliban in 2001 many *Pashto* inhabitants were forced out of northern Afghanistan, including Faryab, ending up in IDP camps in Kandahar and Herat. While some have been able to return, there has been tension as they have claimed rights to their lands and a degree of ethnically based antagonism has been noted (Norwegian Refugee Council 2006).

¹⁸ There is presently an organised system of job migration with Afghans obtaining passports and visas for Iran, though a major concern would arise if Iran decided to repatriate all Afghans or the international community imposed sanctions on Iran over its nuclear programme.

Conflict actors and causes

The long lasting Afghan war has certainly influenced on the present conflict situation and level of violence found in Faryab. Although the province experiences less warfare than other parts of Afghanistan, the situation remains fragile and vulnerable to regional and national developments. The high level of violence against women is of particular concern, and it is a major challenge to ensure that they benefit from a general improved security situation and the development initiatives.

Political and military actors

In Faryab the major threat to stability is most frequently attributed to Abdul Rashid Dostum and the Jombesh-e Melli. Holding the present (honorary) position of Chief of Staff in the Afghan National Army, he is rather more renowned as a militia leader from the mid-1980s onwards, initially fighting on the side of the Kabul government, but later switching alliances a number of times. Feared for cruelty towards both external enemies and those he perceived as internal competitors, Dostum and his *Uzbek* forces gained a significant militarily and political position in Afghanistan, and emerged as a defender of *Uzbek* interests. The latter position is, however, strongly contested by a large number of *Uzbeks* that appear to be ready to advocate the need for a political *Uzbek* initiative rather than continued reliance on Dostum's military force.¹⁹ His recent erratic behaviour towards an *Uzbek* parliamentarian²⁰ and murder of his own bodyguard has further reduced his standing among his former supporters, as has his reduced income from border taxes and rumours that he is no longer welcome in Turkey and Uzbekistan. Reportedly, even his staunchest followers in the youth faction of Jombesh-e Melli are divided over their support of him.

That stated, it is evident that Jombesh-e Melli still holds a strong political and military position in Faryab, with Dostum obtaining 73 % of the votes during the 2004 presidential election. There are, however, local competitors to its hold on power, notably the Azadi and Jamiat-e Islami parties, which are sometimes used by the Kabul government (or elements within it) to reduce Dostum's influence. In addition, there is a range of smaller political parties and groups, some of which maintain an *Uzbek* agenda (for example, Groh-e Kar).²¹ However, in general Faryab has been relatively peaceful over recent decades, as it has not been at the forefront of any of the major military campaigns as these have been fought in other parts of Afghanistan. Given this experience, the presence and military and political strength of Dostum and Jombesh-e Melli can also be viewed as a stabilising factor.

Clashes between political groups, notably between Jombesh-e Melli and Alzari, are of greater concern to the population, as is the behaviour and misuse of authority by commanders and even the police, including competition over the drug trafficking routes. During the mujahedin period parties such as Jamiat-e Islami and Hezb-e Islami (Hekmatiar) held influence in the province. These are, though, marginalised now, except when they might link up with networks based in Mazar-e-Sharif (such as that of Governor Atta) or in Kabul, (such as that of Marshal Fahim, a former Minister of Defence), or with a former Hezbi commander now holding the position of Deputy Governor in Jawzjan Province. A recent example is the establishment of a new *Turkmen shura*, apparently aimed at reducing Dostum's influence through disengaging *Turkmens* from Jombesh-e Melli. The move has

¹⁹ This is also referred to in Thomas Ruttig, 'Islamists, Leftists – and a Void in the Center. Afghanistan's political parties and where they come from (1902-2006)', Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Kabul, 2006.

²⁰ The parliamentarian, when interviewed on TV, refused to explain his bruises.

²¹ The establishment of the party dates back to 1972; it was later merged into Jombesh-e Milli but now distances itself from a military approach and advocates more of a social democratic policy.

been strongly objected by Jombesh-e Melli followers in Jawzjan as well as members of Parliament, and accusations are made of foreign interference.

A constant concern in Faryab is what might result from a further diminishing of Dostum's influence, or what might happen when he passes away. Most observers are of the opinion that this will not cause any major security upheaval in Faryab, for several reasons. One is that Jombesh-e Melli will continue as a political party with successors to the leadership holding strong support among the *Uzbek* population, and people being more inclined to seek political than military solutions. A second argument is that none of the other political parties, or even the main commanders, exert sufficient political and/or military influence to cause major security problems. A third is that the *Uzbeks* as a group are not willing to put at risk either their considerable financial investments, not least in Kabul, or the political influence they have gained in Parliament and in various ministries.

Conflict between centre and periphery

The relationship between Kabul and Faryab holds a major potential for conflict, not least when the political power struggle is combined with drug smuggling and regional interests. Traditionally, the provinces have remained largely independent, and have opposed being controlled and directed from Kabul, whilst accepting financial assistance. The Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) and Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) processes have only to a limited extent reduced the influence of armed groups and warlords, over both the population and the central government. Given the military importance of General Dostum for the Northern Alliance, attempts have been made by some forces to keep him allied to the GoA, while others have opted to strengthen his opponents in an attempt to reduce his influence.

In such a fragile environment the appointment of government officials, especially the Governor and Deputy Governor but also the District Administrators, is important, and is necessarily understood as part of the power struggle. While formally the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior (MoI), in effect it is President Karzai that appoints and replaces the Governors and Deputy Governors. As is the case in many provinces, the appointments in Faryab are highly contested. The Governor is opposed by the population, with strong accusations of corruption, while the Deputy Governor is opposed by Jombesh-e Melli as they regard him as a political opponent. Either way, the Kabul government is associated with either a corrupt or an imposed representative, which is a constant challenge to stability and centre/province relations.

The survey team's description of people's sentiment towards the authorities is thus alarming:

'...nobody is pleased with the authorities of either the provincial government or the district governments, and the people don't respect them, calling them thieves, tyrants, etc. However, the people fear these authorities a lot.'

Another major issue, nationally and locally, is the tension and unclarified authority between elected bodies, in particular the Parliament and the Provincial Councils (PCs), those appointed by

presidential decree and the various ministries operating with funding from the development budget and through trust funds such as the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF). In the last category are the Community Development Committees (CDCs) at village level and the District Development Associations (DDA), as well as the new Provincial Development Committees (PDC). This latter body, responsible for the provincial development plans, is placed under the Provincial Governor, although the secretariat function is to be provided by the Ministry of Economics (MoEc), which has a limited presence in many provinces. Among its members are representatives from the PC, the DDA, the PRT, UN and NGOs. Of the projects identified by the Faryab PDC, only three have received funding. The bulk of the finance for the province continues to be channelled through the various ministries independently of provincial influence, notably the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development's (MRRD) National Solidarity Programme (NSP).

GOVERNANCE CHANNELS

	PRESIDENT (by decrees)	PARLIAMENT (elected acc. to Constitution)	MINISTRIES (funding channel)	NATO/ISAF (funding channel)
NATIONAL/ KABUL		Upper and Lower House	Ministries	PAG headed by the President
PROVINCE	Governor PDC (Secretariat MoEc) with participation of PC, Ministries, DDCs, PRT, donors and NGOs	PC (monitoring and supervising role)	Ministerial repr. at provincial level (MRRD, MoAgr etc.)	Governance projects with EU funding through PRTs by contracting NGOs
DISTRICT	District Governor Administration		DDC Cluster CDCs	
VILLAGE			CDCs – as part of NSP	

Figure 4 - Governance structures and their interrelationship

This is a situation neither the Governor nor the PCs are satisfied with, each arguing that it represents the central government and the people of the province. They are equally in disagreement over the extent of the PC's mandate to supervise and control the Governor's office. The emergence of a 'new' set of elected bodies, the CDCs and the DDAs, from the grassroots with funding access is likely to cause tension even if they are meant to constitute a safer and less corrupt channel for development assistance.

Equally confusing seems to be the role of the various ministries in the Afghan government. MoI is responsible for the bodies established through the Constitution and is working with UNDP to introduce the Afghan Sub-National Governance Programme (ASGP) (GoA/UNDP 2006), of which it is proposed to establish a pilot in Faryab. MRRD is responsible for programmes such as NSP, which is supported by several donors and co-sponsored by the World Bank, and is introducing CDC as a replacement at the local level for the traditional *shuras* or *jirgas* with bylaws enacted by a presidential decree. For their part, the Parliament and the PCs are striving to increase their influence by expanding their formal powers.

The team observed that at the village level the establishment of CDCs seems to correspond to a great extent with the traditional *shuras* or *jirgas* (council of elders), which are supplemented if needed according to the rules established for proper representation. On the provincial level, within the different ethnic groups and on the national level there are indications that a traditional system of *jirgas* and *shuras* exists in parallel to the system outlined above.²² A better understanding of these structures and the interaction between them and governmental structures needs to be developed.

Through extensive discussions with donors and government representatives alike the team tried to get a clear picture of how the different elements are supposed to fit together and how transparency and accountability should be addressed. In particular, the role of the elected bodies as representatives of the people was discussed. The team could reach no clear conclusion apart from admitting that much work remains to be done to establish a comprehensive structure that properly addresses the accountability challenges.

An additional challenge to be addressed is the delicate balance between the central state structures in Kabul and the provincial and local structures in different parts of the country. Apart from securing local ownership of the governance structure, the power balance between Kabul and the different parts of the country should be defined. In this context it is worth noting that one of the arguments used by opponents of the international presence in Afghanistan is that its aim is to strengthen the power of Kabul at the expense of the periphery. A long established balance of power in Afghanistan, involving centre and periphery as well as the different ethnic groups, has been thoroughly shaken during 25 years of conflict and a new and stable balance should be reached to limit future conflict.

A substantial number of donors add to the complexity arising from the existing contradiction between a central government trying to establish itself amidst continuous conflict and miserable economic conditions and provinces trying to secure their interests, be it for developmental or more doubtful economic or political purposes.

Ethnic composition and possible tension

Historically, there has been only limited tension between the ethnic groups. Among *Tajiks*, the second largest, many were historically traders, who established themselves in the towns. The *Pashtuns* came into the north as a result of King Abdur Rahman's forced transfer in the early 1900s, combining a relocation of those in opposition to his rule in the south with the establishment of *Pashto* pockets across the north. Later, during the reign of President Daoud, there was a need for *Pashto* teachers in the government schools, of whom many were paid by receiving state land and subsequent settlement. Some *Pashto* nomads, the *koochies*, who had their migration routes through

²² The team was informed that *shuras* (councils, in *Pashto* areas often termed *jirgas*) exist among all ethnic groups and that there are even multiethnic *shuras*. It was said that in some *Pashto* areas the appellant body for the local *shuras* was the Taliban, which is judged as far more reliable than the governmental system. The initiative launched by President Karzai and President Musharraf in 2006 to call for *jirgas* to consolidate the situation in the border area between the two countries indicates the importance of the traditional system of governance in a society where the tribal structures still play an active role. An article in the *Economist* ("Honour among them", 19 December 2006) describes it thus: "But Pushtunwali is not all fierce imperatives. The code also contains many flexible means of preventing conflict through consensus and compromise. Chief among these is the *jirga*, of which each of Afghanistan's main groups, *Uzbeks*, *Tajiks*, *Pashai*, *Hazaras* and *Baloch*, has its version. By one estimate, *jirgas* settle over 95% of Afghanistan's disputes, civil and criminal. The figure for northern Pakistan is perhaps only slightly lower. This is not just because the regular courts are incompetent and corrupt (Afghanistan's were recently reformed by Italy). It is because, given high levels of illiteracy, many Afghans and Pakistanis find it easier to understand unwritten customary law, in *Pashto* termed *narkh*. And, where authority is contested by a well-armed citizenry, the *jirga*'s verdicts, delivered with the warring parties' consent, tend to be more enforceable than off-the-peg legal or Islamic judgments."

the north, established themselves as semi-nomadic herders, *maldars*, using communal grazing lands. As elsewhere in Afghanistan, this frequently caused conflict over access to pastures and water. *Turkmens*, *Hazaras* and *Arabs* have very limited influence. There are no reports of the presence of any groups associated with Al Qaeda.

With the Taliban occupation of Northern Afghanistan in 1997 the ethnic conflict came to the forefront, with the Malik brothers siding with the Taliban (and handing over Ismael Khan, the former Governor of Herat, to them) to gain the upper hand in their power struggle with Dostum. Some *Pashtuns* joined them, and influential *Uzbeks* left for other parts of Afghanistan or for abroad. The revenge following the Taliban's fall in late 2001 was far bloodier. Not only were a large number of Taliban prisoners executed by Dostum or exchanged for a handsome ransom, but many *Pashtuns* were forced to leave their houses, properties and herds throughout the north. Most of these sought temporary shelter in camps outside Herat (Mashlaq) and Kandahar (Zare Dasht), and a visit, reconciliation and return programme was established with the assistance of the Ministry of Refugee Return and Resettlement (MoRR), UNHCR and the AIHRC. NRC has been involved in the provision of shelter and legal advice to those volunteering to return.

While there has been some tension over landownership, and not exclusively for the returning *Pashtuns*, the majority of the cases have been solved through local *shuras* (councils).

There is some concern that the Taliban might try to regain influence in the north, drawing on their previous contacts. One recent attack on a police post is, according to several sources, not necessarily attributable to the Taliban, despite claims to that effect.

Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence is a major concern in Faryab, and was clearly expressed by women through interviews and by the local representation of the AIHRC. The predominant continued use of *burqa* in the province must be seen as a sign of female insecurity. Rape of women is frequent. Such abuses are mostly handled through the council of elders, not the official judicial system. If it is established who the rapist is he (or someone he appoints, if influential) is expected to marry the woman. Influential people can also extract themselves from any penalty for such an assault by paying money to the victim's family or through a marriage between the victim and a subject of the molester. While maintaining the peace locally through ensuring their marriage, the interest of the women is not the prime concern of such arrangements. Given the extremely high bride price rates, some couples use a rape accusation to evade the bride price, though thereby sacrificing the honour of the women raped.

The women interviewed in Faryab stated that poverty, lack of jobs and income, and lack of education were what they regarded as the main reasons behind gender conflict and domestic violence against women. Furthermore, they listed:

- use of abusive language against women,
- beating of women,
- forced marriages of women of very young age to older men, often for money,
- no right of decision of any kind,
- greater vulnerability to rape while carrying water from remote places.

AIHRC statistics of cases reported to its office in Maymane go some way towards illustrating the extent of different forms of violence against women, notably beating and forced marriages. Rape appears to be underreported compared to local information sources, which indicates that even amongst women it may be regarded as a private matter.

Kind of violence	Maimana	Pashtoon Kut	Khwaja Sabz Push	Sheerin Tagab	Dawlat Abad	Andkhuy	Al mar	Qaisar	Total
Beating	11	2	0	1	0	2	1	1	18
Bad ²³	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Forced Marriage	5	0	2	2	0	2	2	2	15
No Livelihood ²⁴	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Suicide	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Excluding from social activities	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Taking women's assets ²⁵	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Rape	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	3
Total	25	3	3	3	0	5	3	3	45

Figure 5 - AIHRC: Violence against women

The main conclusion is that gender-based violence is a major concern, and one that cannot be address through the presence of more international forces, a better trained army or better armed police. It is a question of allowing women job opportunities outside their homes and providing secure ways of commuting and collecting of water, and for women to be able to express themselves in an environment not used to responding positively to female voices. A strengthened human rights focus, including by the AIHRC, and information channels geared towards both women and men are desperately needed.

Moreover, to increase its standing amongst the people the PRT really does need to ensure that information about its mandate and presence in Faryab is delivered directly to women – by women who are not under armed protection by male soldiers – in schools, at health clinics or in dialogue with, amongst others, female members of the PC, the DDAs and the CDCs.

²³ Exchanging a girl against a crime.

²⁴ Some husbands punish their wives by refusing them food and other livelihood needs.

²⁵ This includes assets such as land and property.

Economic factors in Faryab

There are a range of economic factors in Faryab that needs to be taken into account, though keeping in mind the challenge posted by the present prime dependence on income from agricultural production and from work migration.

Agriculture and animal husbandry

Agriculture and animal husbandry are the main economic activities in the province. With huge differences in the control of arable land, a substantial number of families live on rented land or as day labourers. Related to husbandry, Faryab has for generations been renowned for its carpets, knitted as well as woven keelims, which are traditionally a female-dominated handicraft.

Ownership of land has traditionally been registered with the authorities. With the departure of a substantial number of refugees and IDPs from the province during recent years, huge areas have been left behind either in the custody of neighbours or family or with no follow-up. Areas have been taken over in particular by provincial warlords and commanders. With the return of refugees and IDPs in recent years, disputes over land rights have emerged. Through mainly traditional *shura* systems (60%) and to some extent through the official courts, these disputes have been resolved.²⁶ But since a number of refugees and IDPs still remain outside the province, new conflicts will occur in the years to come when they return.

Availability and access to water

Faryab has been named the wheat basket of Afghanistan. The availability of water has not been a major problem in the province with the exception of drought, which occurs at irregular intervals. The droughts of recent years are regarded as having been more severe and much more frequent than previously experienced. A lack of maintenance of water management systems during the recent years of conflict has combined with the ongoing drought to generate severe shortages of water all over the province

Apart from rain-fed fields, irrigation has been organised through dams and channels and according to some sources through underground karez systems. To some extent shallow wells have secured additional water supplies. Due to geological conditions the groundwater in parts of the province is salty and not suitable for drinking.

To counter the present situation the main focus in the province is on dams and check dams, both to provide storage of water for irrigation and drinking and also to counter the ongoing lowering of the groundwater level. Several projects to repair dams or build new ones have been identified, and representatives from the local administration say that some of these projects are to be implemented soon, according to the central authorities. Private control of water springs is said to be a possible problem for wider distribution of scarce resources. In some of the areas with salty ground water, deep wells are seen as the only way out if healthy drinking water is to be secured. To avoid private control of these assets a publicly owned distribution network should be established. It is worth noting that in relation to deep well drilling the province has already experienced problems with a lowering of the groundwater level and the drying up of several shallow wells.

²⁶ NRC is running a Legal Aid projects in Faryab to assist in matters related to land claims. Their experience is that the local *shura* system has been the best way to settle these conflicts.

Water from the Amu Daria river is another potential watersource. However, given the limited availability of water in Tadjikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan a major diversion of river water into Afghanistan might become a source of conflict if not clarified with the neighbouring countries.²⁷

Carpet production

Related to animal husbandry, carpet weaving and knitting have been handicrafts producing high quality products that have been widely acclaimed. Previously dominated by the *Turkmen* population, the refugee situation during recent decades and the serious drought situation have resulted in additional families entering carpet production as an important economic activity. Another shift is the increased involvement of men in what has traditionally been a female activity.

Production is mainly organised within extended families with the exception of a few more industrialised units. In particular, in the lower social strata a higher indebtedness to traders has resulted in heavier workloads for women without their say in economic decisions in the family having been strengthened. Credit schemes for women involved in carpet production have enabled more women to engage but at the same time have resulted in deteriorating working conditions due to worsening terms of trade. In households with few women, carpet production is often combined with agricultural and house work. The related wool trade and treatment and the trading of carpets, locally as well as nationally and internationally, are completely male dominated.

It seems that all ethnic groups are participating, with the *Pashtuns* heavily involved in transportation. The few traditional traders that remained in Faryab during the years of conflict seem to have lost ground compared to those who fled to Pakistan and during their time as refugees developed an international network for their carpet business. A change in priorities from traditional patterns and methods to production streamlined for the international market seems to have been promoted by these new traders, not the least with their return to Faryab and neighbouring provinces in recent years.²⁸ Information the team received indicates that those described as large traders today have a strong position in the carpet market in Kabul and through this position might have a conciliatory effect on the relationship between the capital and the province.

Opium production and trade

Opium cultivation is a still limited but steadily growing concern in Faryab. Compared to the other provinces in the north, Faryab registered the highest increase in production volume in 2005.

²⁷ For details see Gry. G. Rønningen, *Kampen om vannet i Sentral-Asia*, Kronikk, Dagbladet, 22.01.2007.

²⁸ "Understanding markets in Afghanistan: a case study of carpets and the Andkhoy carpet market", Adam Pain and Moharram Ali, Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit.

PROVINCE	Production 2005 (mt)	Production 2006 (mt)	Change 2005-2006 (mt)	Change 2005-2006 (%)	REGION
Jawzjan	68	92	24	35%	Northern
Balkh	420	291	-129	-31%	Northern
Kunduz	11	4	-7	-64%	Northern
Faryab	103	162	59	57%	Northern
Samangan	150	81	-69	-46%	Northern
Baghlan	99	134	35	35%	Northern
Sari Pul	125	106	-19	-15%	Northern
Badghis	115	73	-42	-37%	Northern
Bamyan	5	0	-5	-100%	Northern
Northern Region	1098	945	-153	-14%	

Figure 6 - UNODC: Afghanistan Opium Survey 2006 on the provincial level

According to UNODC's Opium Survey 2006, all districts in the province will produce in 2006, as they did in 2004 and with the exception of 2 in 2005. Up till 2003 only 4 districts had been registered as producing poppy.

Province	District	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2,006
Faryab	Almar											239	57	338
	Andkhoy											15	13	31
	Bilchiragh							6		26	232	24		322
	Dawlat Abad											78	133	27
	Khani Chahar Bagh											205	6	490
	Khwaja Sabz Posh											129	451	375
	Kohistan											640	50	84
	Maymana							1				248		218
	Pashtun Kot							11		1	281	429	97	60
	Qaramqol											55	138	43
	Qaysar							16			150	1,050	579	880
Shirin Tagab							3			103	137	1,141	172	
Faryab Total		0	0	0	0	0	0	36	0	28	766	3,249	2,665	3,040

Figure 7 - UNODC: Afghanistan Opium Survey 2006 on the district level in Faryab

According to other sources, the extensiveness of production in the province varied from all districts to 4-5 districts. Given the comprehensive study done by UNODC, the differences in opinion might relate to the recent change from mainly 4 provinces being involved to all in 2006.

An additional comment of interest was that due to a serious shortage of water even production of opium in the province was hampered. Figures from UNODC for 2005 and 2006 indicate a more than 10% increase in hectares used for poppy. UNODC indicates, though, that increased availability of water in the province will not necessarily result in increased cultivation. The level of production is still such that an increased focus on development and less scarcity of water may result in an upsurge of agricultural activities and animal husbandry. The province could still join the number of provinces reducing the production of poppy and strengthening the poppy-free belt dividing the north and the south of the country.

Experiences from Balkh may be relevant: *“For the Balkh irrigation scheme, therefore, the fundamental issue is the way that rules of water distribution work in practice. This issue will be very difficult to resolve given the extent to which demand for water now exceeds supply. Until this problem is addressed, for those locations with just sufficient water to cultivate opium poppy, the lack of viable legal farm-based income opportunities will diminish the risk of eradication. For those opium poppy cultivators with water and legal income opportunities, eradication will only become a risk when there are changes in the insecurity regime.”*²⁹ Eradication of poppy fields has until now received little attention in the province, although in December 2006 the Governor called a meeting with district governors and police to inform them that no cultivation would be tolerated in 2007, a message circulated from the President’s office.

A recent Dutch report states very clearly that *“It sometimes feels as though politicians look at the Taliban, drug traffickers and opium fields with a similar distorted logic – viewing each of them as malign elements, which have to be killed, arrested and eradicated to reduce their numbers until the problem disappears. But the causes underlying the current developments in Afghanistan are deep-rooted and complex, and quick fix solutions based on this destructive logic are illusory. After some initial promising steps, peace-building efforts, reconstruction and sustainable approaches to reduce the country’s dependence on the opium economy are now rapidly losing ground.”*³⁰

The importance of opium trafficking is disputed. Three different routes are described: transit from the northeast to the south, transit from Afghanistan to Turkmenistan and transit from the northeast to the west along the ring road.³¹ The direct or indirect involvement of key provincial institutions in trafficking is a common opinion.³²

Any Norwegian involvement in opium-related projects should aim at avoiding experiences identified in other parts of the country: *“While there is no clear proof that eradication leads to a reduction in opium cultivation, the evidence of the negative impact it has on farmers is overwhelming. When sharp decreases in opium poppy cultivation have been achieved, these have resulted in the uprooting of rural livelihoods, increased indebtedness, migration to other districts and provinces or neighbouring countries, growing frustration and a lack of trust in the government”*³³

Farmers do not simply depend on opium as a cash crop. In an economy dominated by opium, access to credit, land and water is only possible by growing opium, an experience that could easily be valid also in Faryab. It *“provides access – sometimes the only access – to other assets, including credit and land, as well as allowing households to maximise their returns on one of Afghanistan’s most scarce agricultural resources – irrigated land.”*³⁴

²⁹ Opium Poppy Eradication: How to raise risk when there is nothing to lose? p. 13.

³⁰ Transnational Institute: Losing Ground. Drug Control and War in Afghanistan, TNI Briefing Series No. 2006/5, Amsterdam, 2006.

³¹ According to UNODC, the trafficking in or through Faryab is limited, and relates in particular to the movement of goods along the ring road and across to Turkmenistan. A further assessment of the role of the Road Police would, according to UNODC, be important for focusing attempts to curb the trafficking.

³² It was clearly stated that extensive trafficking would only be possible if the Governor and Police were involved in one way or another.

³³ Transnational Institute: Losing Ground. Drug Control and War in Afghanistan, TNI Briefing Series No. 2006/5, Amsterdam, 2006.

³⁴ Ibid.

Oil and gas resources

Oil and gas production and reserves researched or under research in Afghanistan are located in two provinces neighbouring Faryab: in Jawzjan and Sari Pul, both located to the east. Before the Soviet invasion in 1979 and during the Soviet occupation, the USSR assisted Afghanistan in exploration and a lot of the gas extracted was supposedly transported through pipelines across the border, partly in repayment of loans and commodities.

In the period from 1989 till 2001 income from the exploration is said to some extent to have financed major warlords in the region, in particular General Dostum and the Jombesh-e Melli. This general knowledge is, though, not reflected in a recent study on market mechanisms within the petroleum sector, including a short description of the developments, probably because the information is deemed too political.³⁵

Today there is a limited production of oil and gas in the north, primarily in Shibergan, and the profits gained are marginal

In a study published in September 2006 by USGS, substantial additional oil and gas reserves are listed, the main focus being on the northern region of the country, including the northern parts of Faryab. The estimated reserves are disputed.³⁶

Knowledge in the province of these possible reserves seems limited. No concern was voiced about the possible consequences for the province and the region of an eventual exploration of gas and oil. Nor were the potentially sensitive issues of control and possible benefits of the reserves raised. Given the very recent experience of profits from this sector being used to strengthen particular organisations and warlords in the northern region, a cautious approach to the development of the sector should be applied.

Other resources

There is a salt mine in Dowlat Abad district and some marble resources. The income is said still to go to Dostum.

³⁵ Anna Paterson, *Understanding Markets in Afghanistan. A Study of the Market for Petroleum Fuels*, AREU Case Study Series; Kabul, 2005.

³⁶ Econ: *Afghanistan – Overview of the hydrocarbon sector*, Oslo, 2006.

Development actors in Faryab

The overall goals for development activities in Afghanistan today are to re-establish security and to rebuild and strengthen the governance structure bolstering the sustainability of the Afghan state.

National programmes

After the establishment of an Afghan government based on the Bonn process, several national programmes aiming at a variety of development objectives were initiated, often with extensive support from multilateral organisations and bilateral donors. At the level of the national government the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) and the National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP) should be mentioned in particular.

NSP is organised by MRRD in collaboration with the World Bank (WB) and aims at supporting locally prioritised development activities of a limited size. At the same time the programme promotes the establishment of Community Development Councils (CDCs) to strengthen local governance and the participation of both women and men in the development process. NSP has still not been initiated in all districts in Faryab, but its activities and the role of the CDCs seem to be well known.³⁷ The indication is that where they have been established CDCs play a role and that their composition is closely related to the traditional *shuras*, with the requirement that all ethnic groups, women and a set number of educated members participate.³⁸

Through NABDP, area-based development plans for the country are being planned, financed and implemented. Furthermore, UNDP, with the Ministry of Interior (MoI), is preparing an Afghanistan Sub-national Governance Programme (ASGP) with the aim of developing “capacity and systems to ensure effective implementation of the governance strategies outlined in the Afghan National Development Strategy and the Afghanistan Compact”.³⁹

Large infrastructural programmes to upgrade the ring road through several of the provinces in the north are being implemented through the Ministry of Public Works with finance from the Asia Development Bank (ADB).⁴⁰

National and foreign development organisations

The presence of foreign development organisations in Faryab is limited. Due to the increased focus on security and development efforts in the south and east, several have recently reduced their presence or indicated a reduction. USAID is phasing out. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and Intersos are closing their offices. Multilateral organisations have only a limited presence. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the main humanitarian coordinator, is represented by one very experienced local staff member, as is the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), resulting in heavy dependence on the

³⁷ Initially, NSP was prioritised for areas with an expected high flow of returning refugees, and with high vulnerability.

³⁸ The NSP was evaluated in 2005/6; the report is available at <http://www.cmi.no/publications/publication.cfm?pubid=2446>

³⁹ GoA/UNDP, Afghanistan Sub-national Governance Programme (ASGP), Project Document, 2006 (?)

⁴⁰ AFG/0301801 Super Corridor: Rehabilitation of Mazar-e-Sharif - Sheberghan - Ankhoy Road (197 kms) and AFG/0301901 Super Corridor: Rehabilitation of Andkhoy-Qaissar Road (210 kms) – National Development Budget for year 1385.

regional offices in Mazar-e-Sharif, a cumbersome journey away. The World Food Programme (WFP) has a local office with one expatriate member of staff.

Among internationally based NGOs are in particular the French ACTED, acting as a key operator in the NSP programme in the province, and DACAAR, with extensive involvement in the water sector. Save the Children has an office, and the International Assistance Mission has international staff on their health related programmes, as has ICRC and the ARCS. Of the Norwegian NGOs, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) has an office in Maymane with expatriate and local staff running programmes for refugees and IDPs related to shelter, legal aid and education. Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) is planning to establish an office, at least with representation from one of their partner organisations. Due to NCA wanting to become a NSP implementing partner in one of the districts, a more solid presence will probably have to be organised. Among NCA's Afghan partner organisations that have been invited to establish themselves in Faryab are NPO/RRAA in the water sector, STARS for women projects and CoAR for agricultural projects. Another major Afghan NGO is CHA, which is involved in the Accelerated Learning Project. None of the Afghan partner organisations have a former permanent presence in Faryab, but have been working in neighbouring provinces.

The survey revealed that most people neither have much information about the NGOs and the UN organisations, nor condone them. Evidently, the humanitarian organisations have not provided sufficient information about themselves and their activities to the local authorities and their beneficiaries. Thus, the general sentiment is that hardly anything has been provided to the population, though this view was contested by the head of the PC and a senior member of Almar district administration. The head of the PC commended an Afghan NGO for providing them with project information, while being critical of the lack of information shared by government representatives.

Women in development

In Faryab, with its majority of *Uzbeks*, women play a more prominent role than in many other provinces. Even if *burqa* as a dress code is still widely used in the urban areas as a remnant of the Taliban era, it is generally accepted that women in Faryab (and some of the other Northern provinces) are more visible in social life than in other parts of Afghanistan. In agriculture and in carpet production, they play a key role. Statistics show that the number of women completing higher education in the province equals the number of men, while the number in primary education is dramatically reduced by puberty for girls and some years later for boys. Girls aiming at postgraduate education face limited possibilities in the province. At present, teacher training is available in Maymane as well as an agriculture faculty, where about 20 % of students are female. It is planned to establish postgraduate education in basic medical knowledge (nursing) and in the technical skills.

Agriculture is mainly family based and as a consequence female networks within families play a prominent role. In the education sector the number of schools for women and the fact that the majority of students in teacher training are female indicate a presence of a network that can be engaged. Within the health sector, similar clusters of professional women can also be found. Among the political parties in the province the team's information indicates that a women's branch exists in Jombesh-e Melli but the team did not succeed in meeting with its representatives and was informed that the women are usually not present in the office.

Survey findings

Through the survey in Maymane ahead of the team's visit, important information was gathered indicating:

- Knowledge of and involvement in development activities in the province,
- To what extent work outside the province is part of people's livelihood,
- To what extent educational and health services are available,
- Trust in the police and military,
- Knowledge about and trust in the foreign military forces (PRT),
- Trust in government in Kabul, district authorities and UN organisations,

The survey was conducted in Maymane district during a two-week period in early November 2006, with 183 interviews undertaken in 24 villages, of which 67 were with women and 116 with men. Of these, only 46 were literate, the average age was 39 years and as many as 108 were *Uzbeks* (59 %), 42 *Tajiks* (23%) and smaller numbers *Pashtuns*, *Aimaqs* and *Hazaras*. Most lived in mixed ethnic villages, ensuring a fairly representative provincial selection. The interviews were supplemented by a written observation report, in which the team was asked to reflect upon its findings and general impressions from the areas where interviews were conducted.

While men reported a variety of jobs, women listed either household chores or rug weaving as their two main occupations.

Farmers reported that wheat was their main produce, supplemented by melon and water melon, and all sold their products in the bazaar in Maymane. While 108 said that there had been no development projects in their village, 82 had participated in projects that primarily involved well digging, school construction and road building and several villagers indicated that they had benefited from different types of assistance. The majority of these credited the projects to the government (55 %), although as many as 30 % stated that the implementer was unknown; the remainder listed NGOs, UN organisations and the ICRC. There is no doubt that water is the main development priority of both women and men, as both drinking and irrigation water was the main priority, often supplemented by the need for job generation, road and hospital construction and access to electricity. The present prime water source is wells, with canals as number two. It is more surprising that 143 believed their water sources to provide safe water, while only 40 believed them to be unsafe. Everyone denied that there was any poppy production in their villages and none was aware of any gas or oil reserves.

It is more interesting that 106 of those interviewed, or 58 %, reported that family members had sought work outside the village, and that of these the vast majority worked in Iran. With one exception, all reported having schools in their villages and that they sent their children there, the majority of the schools offering teaching up to 12 Grade and with access for girls. It is, however, alarming that as many as 52 % stated that the teachers were not qualified.

The coverage of health facilities is low: as many as 64 % reported that there were no health facilities in their village, and on average the distance to the nearest facility was more than 5 kilometres. The qualifications of the health workers appear as a major concern among those interviewed, as many as 69 % stating that the doctors were not qualified for their job.

As many as 65 % reported that people from their village had sought refuge outside the Faryab during the various conflict periods, the majority going to Iran. Only a minority appears to have returned, and among these many had family members remaining in Iran.

Everyone interviewed said that there was a police post in their area. Asked if their presence had improved their security, 67 % were positive while 33 % disagreed. Within both groups trust appeared to be low as many reported that the police took bribes from them and one stated that ‘..There is no real police, they are robbers.’ Many were aware of the presence of the Afghan army in their area and 60 % believed that they improved security, but views seemed fairly equally divided as to whether they patrolled or not, many stating that they had not been to their areas.

Turning to the international forces, which in this case comprise the Norwegian-led PRT, all except 16 all indicated knowledge of their presence, though only 52 % believed they had improved the security. Far more worrying was that 83 % stated that they did not know their mandate, and 62 % did not know which country the soldiers were from. Although many of these knew the soldiers were from Norway, quite a few thought them to be from the US and Denmark as well, implying that the cartoon case has had an impact on people’s belief – and/or that the PRT had either not been good enough at informing the population, or had not been believed.

Equally alarming is the finding that none reported having contacted the district authorities and only 18 of all those interviewed had requested the provincial authorities to assist in solving problems, although 28 thought that they had helped solve their problems.

It is thus more reassuring that no major conflicts were reported from the villages during the last year, and only three murders, due to ‘enmity’.

Asked to list who they regarded as most influential in their area, a majority listed the Afghan Police, though many included the Jombesh-e Melli and a number the Governor and General Dostum.

For the future, the majority wished for ‘a good life and good security’, though many hoped for jobs.

Finally, requested to list which organisations were most and least trusted, the picture is less clear, although the UN and the District Administration appear to hold less trust, with the Kabul government scoring highest.

Organisations/ institutions most trusted by people	No trust	Some trust	Full trust	Don't know
Afghan Police	44	75	60	4
Afghan Army	29	91	55	8
United Nations	71	71	30	11
ISAF	55	69	51	8
NGOs	40	93	39	11
Governor	53	67	48	15
Woluswal	73	23	31	56
Kabul Government	22	74	80	7

Figure 8 - Survey findings

Norwegian development interventions

In its long-term development cooperation with Afghanistan Norway has prioritised three sectors:⁴¹

- Governance
- Education
- Rural development

Funds are to be channelled through national development programmes administered by national authorities and/or by multilateral organisations and through NGOs. This thematic prioritisation has been addressed during interviews in Faryab and Maymane, and is found to be relevant. However, from a conflict sensitive viewpoint the team wish to address some challenges that might be encountered in these sectors, and discuss the selection of channels.

Governance

The governance structure in Afghanistan is based on the Constitution, which institutionalises the Parliament, the Government and the Judiciary as the three main pillars. On the provincial level, elected Provincial Councils are established. The different initiatives and players in the field of governance have been outlined earlier in the report. The main conflicting interests have been described.

In Faryab, Norway supports or plans to support several programmes and projects within governance, namely NSP with the establishment of CDCs;⁴² capacity building at the provincial and district levels through ASGP, with a planned pilot in Faryab; capacity building and supervision of police by the Norwegian Police Project; and a possible capacity building project in the judicial sector through the Norwegian Mission of Legal Advisers to Afghanistan (Styrkebrønnen). Through the latter, a proposal that Norway could assist with land consolidation judges has been floated as the problem of land disputes in the province is said to be prominent.⁴³

Within the governance sector there seem to be several striking issues that need to be dealt with if any support is to avoid fuelling potential conflict and be able to deliver sustainable results:

- The future structure of the governance sector should be carefully addressed and uncertainties clarified. The relationship between different structures at the central and local levels should be established.
- In all projects the legitimacy of governmental structures and institutions at the central and/or local levels should be a key concern.
- Relations should be established with the traditional structures of representation and governance at the local level.
- A long-term approach should be the basis for any support, given the time needed to establish legitimate structures.
- When selecting personnel to work in training and supervision, the importance of seniority in age and qualifications should be carefully addressed.⁴⁴

⁴¹ St.prp. no. 1 (2006-2007) and Virksomhetsplan 2007 for the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan.

⁴² NCA has applied to MRRD/NSP to be accepted as implementing agency for NSP in one district in Faryab. A decision is expected shortly.

⁴³ This idea was presented in the meeting with representatives of the Ministry of Justice and the Police Directorate.

⁴⁴ A proposal raised in the meeting with the Ministry of Justice and the Police Directorate to focus more on Norwegian junior police lawyers for the work in Afghanistan was strongly opposed in the discussions the team had with senior judges

- Drawing a clear distinction between the military presence and the support to the judicial sector and the civilian police will be important.⁴⁵

Education

Several reports depict a sector in great need of support. Only a small number of existing schools in Faryab have proper buildings. The number of actual schools still lags behind the needs according to the number of children. The survey conducted reveals a concern in the population that the teachers at large are not properly educated.⁴⁶

School attendance in the province follows well known patterns with an early decline in female participation when the girls reach puberty while male participation drops some years later. An interesting trend in Faryab is that female students equal or outnumber the males in postgraduate education. Probably this is limited to Maymane and other urban areas with female schools. An additional factor is that the postgraduate teacher education in Maymane is the sole opportunity for higher education for girls from the province, if they are not allowed to go to Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif or abroad.

Norwegian support for education in Faryab is today channelled mainly through NRC with support to the construction of schools and the retraining of teachers through short courses.

For the future it seems vital to address the following issues when support to the education sector is assessed in a conflict context:

- Construction of more schools is needed and should be undertaken in a way that creates more job opportunities in the province.
- The quality of the education given should be addressed, in particular through strengthening formal postgraduate teacher education. Demonstrated higher quality in education will strengthen the credibility of the authorities in their service delivery. At the same time, such a focus will strengthen job opportunities for women in the province and as a consequence increase the availability of primary education for girls.
- Additional postgraduate education and vocational education programmes should be established in the province with the aim of strengthening economic activities in general but also job opportunities for women.

Rural development

As already described, Faryab is mainly an agricultural province. In addition, handicrafts in the form of carpets play a vital role.

Severe drought in recent years has undermined agriculture severely. In addition, the long period of war and conflict has resulted in a lack of maintenance and new construction of dams and water management systems. The result has been a dramatic decrease in agricultural yields, while

and police lawyers at present working in Afghanistan. Their experiences were that seniority also counted a lot professionally in an Afghan setting, perhaps more than it would have done in a Norwegian setting.

⁴⁵ This will not be the least important to address when a decision is reached on the future use of the present base of the PRT in Maymane. Likewise, an independent presence for the Norwegian Police Project in Faryab should be secured. Continuing military protection of the police would blur the necessary distinction between the two different state powers. It is worth remembering that the police in Afghanistan today have a military setup. Any support should be organised so as to demilitarise the police rather than uphold the military appearance.

⁴⁶ These observations correspond with what is stated by Oxfam International in 'Free, Quality Education for Every Afghan Child', Oxfam Briefing Paper 93, November 2006. "Expanding the scale of education provision is as important as ensuring its quality".

deteriorating pastures are less accessible, production of silk has ceased and a growing number of families have turned to carpet production as an economic safety net. Opium growing is in addition on the increase.

Apart from the strengthening opium element in the economy, which implies corruption and extra-state power networks, the deteriorating economic situation in the province might increase tension both with the local authorities and towards Kabul and the international presence.

Norwegian support for improving the livelihood in Faryab is today channelled mainly through programmes under NABDP that are run through NCA and its partner organisations. A request for support in the water sector is being assessed.⁴⁷

No doubt support for improved livelihoods is needed. Water is singled out as by far the most important. Several informants said that a solution to the water scarcity would facilitate a solution of conflicts in other sectors. The following points seem to be of importance in a conflict context:

- To be able to address the sector in a sustainable way, the question of possible lasting climate change as the reason behind the droughts experienced should be assessed.
- The need for emergency support should be assessed, including the need for animal fodder to avoid families having to slaughter or sell their animals.
- A variety of approaches to secure the water supply should be assessed, encompassing the need for both irrigation and drinking water. The danger of lowering the groundwater level further should be addressed, in particular when the drilling of deep wells is discussed. When implementing water projects, the question of job opportunities in the local communities should be duly considered.
- Local water management systems should be utilised as part of the governance system for securing a fair and reliable distribution of water. Additional structures should preferably be avoided.
- Support to carpet production should address the preference for production facilities outside family workspaces to lower the extent of domestic violence against women.
- Re-establishing silk production in the province could be a long-term project with potential for female employment.

Alternative channels for support

Today, Norway channels support in particular through national development programmes, in part in cooperation with multilateral organisations and the World Bank, in part through Norwegian NGOs and to a limited extent through the PRT. The latter support seems mainly to be financed from funds made available by the Ministry of Defence or Chief of Staff.

To assess the selection of channel several aspects, some of them outlined earlier, should be addressed:

- Support to development activities should be based on the assumption that future development in Afghanistan will gain from a clear distinction being made between the military and civilian sectors of society. The provincial governor remarked in particular that the Norwegian PRT supported development activities to a lesser extent than PRTs in other provinces. To this it should be said that an increased involvement by the PRT in development activities would further blur the distinction between the military and civilian dimensions and would de facto undermine the process of creating a stronger popular

⁴⁷ Norad/NORPLAN, Analysis of Water Situation in Faryab Province, Afghanistan: Water Resources, Drinking Water, Sanitation and Irrigation', Oslo December 2006.

legitimacy for a civilian and democratic government at the central and local levels. An increased tension in the province due to a lack of economic development, something that should not be excluded, would then easily focus any opposition on the international military presence.

- Support through national development programmes should have a particular focus on strengthening the local and central governance structures, bolstering their legitimacy and reaching a sustainable balance between them. Ensuring local ownership at both levels might be the best way to avoid fuelling existing conflicts.
- Strengthened cooperation and coordination among all donors under the guidance of the Afghan authorities should be supported. The proposed strengthening of UNAMA, in particular in the humanitarian field, will be supportive.
- Support through Norwegian NGOs should be promoted when these have comparative advantages and proper knowledge of the local context and the field of support. In a recent study of NGOs in armed conflicts, Goodhand (2006) concludes that NGOs usually show a greater willingness to take on risk and show flexibility than governments and multilaterals, but that when they receive more or less all their financing from official sources, these advantages are weakened. Goodhand's conclusion is also that knowledge of the local context is more important than experience from conflict situations in general, since each conflict situation has its very specific characteristics.⁴⁸
- As an integral part of a Norwegian Code of Cooperation, regular information should be given on Norwegian support to Faryab to the Governor as well as the Provincial Council and to the extent possible also to the population at large. Additional channels for dissemination of information could be through radio and TV channels trusted by the population. However, this needs to be complemented with direct visits and discussion with religious authorities, women groups and to be extended into the more remote parts of Faryab.

⁴⁸ Jonathan Goodhand, 'Aiding peace. The Role of NGOs in Armed Conflict'. Lynne Rienner Publishers, London 2006. It is worth noting that neither NCA nor any of their local partner organisations have any previous experience from Faryab. The ambition to be selected as implementing agency for NSP in one district will furthermore engage the organisation in a role contrary to its previous role in Afghanistan.

Concluding remarks: Addressing main questions and proposals for further studies

The TOR requested reply to 8 questions, and although these have been discussed throughout the report we will here provide short responses to these summarising our findings. And moreover, we have through this limited review identified some important areas for further studies.

Addressing the main questions, the findings are:

1. How does the existing assistance relate to the actual lines of conflict? What conflict factors might be strengthened and/or what factors might be weakened with increased Norwegian engagement? Who might win and/or who might lose, and what might be the effects on the actual lines of conflict?

The assistance provided in 2006 appears well tuned to the needs of the area, including projects that address possible conflicts as the NRC judicial support. The challenge, as witnessed in Maymane, is the unclear borderline existing between the PRT and MFA staff and the demand for military escort when the MFA employee venture outside the military compound (and the Norwegian police outside Maymane). Relations to the Governor and the police are a challenge, as these do not enjoy a high degree of trust in Faryab. Balancing distance and influence on these, and on the political parties active in Faryab, will remain a major challenge that might influence on the conflict lines. The expressed goal of the PRT to stabilise the province and help strengthening the position of the representatives of the Kabul government adds to the complexity of this challenge, especially if not offering a corrective to negative practises.

2. What types of resource (i.e. personnel, funds, material assistance) might be relevant for the area, and what effects might these have on the lines of conflict?

There is an urgent need to address pressing humanitarian needs caused by the drought, though in a way that helps the farmers overcome the winter without selling livestock and by generating income from construction work for public benefits. However, the Norwegian perspective has to be long term, and the more of the funding spent through national NGOs, businesses and in building civil society, the better. There appears to be a very limited need for external personnel, except for short term assessments and quality control, and purchases and local entrepreneurs should primarily be sought locally to increase the impact of the Norwegian assistance.

The team, however, recommends an increase in staffing in Maymane to two persons (one preferably a women) to be seconded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, not least to be able to expand the contact with NGOs and civil society groups and play a more active role in their development.

To enhance the possibility of more long term contacts for the staff in Maymane a system of rotation with the staff at the Embassy in Kabul could be explored.

3. To what extent might an increased Norwegian involvement improve the prospects for central state institutions, whether centrally or locally based, to strengthen their presence and thereby their legitimacy?

This will largely depend on the ability of different state institutions to reform, improve performance, reduce corruption and gain the trust of the Afghan citizens. Norway might contribute towards this end, but the end result will fully depend on the Afghan government and elected bodies will and ability to address these pressing challenges. Before this happens one has

to expect that Afghans seek to traditional and local institutions for their security and for conflict resolution, albeit severely neglecting the interests of women in these processes.

4. How should the Norwegian involvement be oriented to help reduce the conflict(s)?

Norwegian assistance needs to ensure that the assistance is not used to the benefit of armed groups or individuals seen by the population as oppressors or criminals, or businesses or NGOs established by these. The assistance should address publicly identified needs through projects generating a high degree of employment and income for a high number of persons. Consultations need to be secured with the public and local communities, ensuring that property rights and maintenance is clarified. The Provincial Council as well as relevant CDCs and local shuras should be consulted on development priorities and types of interventions, and be asked to monitor that the implementation of the projects is in accordance with agreed priorities.

Moreover, Norway needs to continue to ensure a clear demarcation between the military and civilian engagement and to publicly and locally provide information on project details, implementing agency and project budget.

5. What political signal(s) is an increased Norwegian involvement likely to convey, and how might it affect the lines of conflict?

Assistance provided in any conflictual environment might cause or increase conflict, and be used by the parties to the conflict to further own interests. It is therefore of outmost importance that Norway clearly conveys to the Afghan government, the public, humanitarian agencies, NATO and other donors their security and development intentions, plans and budgets, and the rules laid out for implementation. As this study has documented there is a strong need for especially the PRT to explain their mandate and rationale to the public, and especially towards women.

6. How is the gender dimension best understood in a power and actor analysis, and how can an increased Norwegian involvement be oriented to help defend women's interests and strengthen their participation in their various roles and capacities?

Women are in an extremely vulnerable situation in Faryab, despite the fact that they enjoy less restriction on movements and dress code and have easier access to education and public jobs. Much of the violence against women take place at home, or is committed by powerful individuals and groups (including the police). A further strengthening of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission and support towards female Afghan human rights and interest groups is essential to build up local awareness of the problem. An emphasis on higher education for women and job opportunities outside the home will help largely in ensuring women further access to education and income, and in a safe environment. Preventive health measures, improved training of birth attendants and knowledge of sanitation and safe drinking water is essential to improve the living conditions of women.

7. In which ways might the security situation affect an increased Norwegian commitment, and in which ways might an increased Norwegian commitment impact on the security situation?

If there is an outbreak of armed conflict between two or more groups in Faryab or the national army strive to secure total military dominance in Faryab (or in neighbouring provinces) this will hold severe implications on the security and ability to deliver humanitarian assistance and engage in development activities. However, such conflicts are not expected to be of a continuous affair, if not developing into a major ethnic based conflict. In the short term the presence of a PRT might help reduce the likelihood of an outbreak of major armed conflicts. In the longer run the development of a trusted and professional police and army force, a functional

governance structure and a viable civil society might be the best remedy against future violent conflicts.

8. To what extent is coordination with other international aid donors and national actors possible and relevant in relation to conflict sensitivity?

Formalised coordination and information exchange is an important factor in ensuring transparency, avoid duplication and aid misuse and foster linkages to and understanding of national and provincial development strategies. The question, however, is to find the best form for coordination – and link efforts at national, provincial and districts levels, including the widest range of actors possible. The formal responsibility for the coordination has to rest with the national authorities, and efforts have to be made to train government officials and help facilitate coordination meetings. The military could be observers, but should not take any part in organising development coordination.

In the above we have emphasised the need for Norway to seek further knowledge on issues of importance to future development and governance interventions in Faryab, where those to be prioritised are:

- Review the short and longer term consequences of regional environmental changes, and to what extent this might influence on feasibility of planned irrigation and livelihood interventions.
- Review the legal and strategical implications of existing water treaties with neighbouring countries, taking into account present environmental and political realities.
- Assess skill-levels and capacities in the province and district administrations, including the different Ministerial departments, and thereby identify prioritised areas for capacity building.
- Seek a better understanding of the relations and division of roles and responsibilities between traditional council, the project management structures and the governance establishment, with the aim of identifying which functions and bodies that hold trust, and what might be done to clarify roles and responsibilities and ensure targeted capacity building.

SETTING A DEVELOPMENT STANDARD AND CODE OF COOPERATION

Ensure that information on the Norwegian contribution reaches all stakeholders – including funding amounts

Engage the Provincial Council and local councils in debates and decisions on development priorities and practices

Guarantee a non-corrupt practice – immediate termination of funding and announcement of such if corrupt practices are identified

Attachments

1. Terms of Reference

Afghanistan: Konflikt- og aktøranalyse som ledd i økt norsk satsing i Faryab-provinsen.⁴⁹
Hvordan kan framtidig norsk innsats innrettes og organiseres?

Betydningen av konfliktsensitivitet:

I forbindelse med utkast til notat om oppfølging av statssekretærbesøket i Afghanistan i april 2006, pekte Norad på viktigheten av at økt sivil innsats i Faryab-provinsen vil kreve en mer omfattende vurdering av forhold som er av betydning for en konfliktsensitiv tilnærming i identifisering av prosjekter og samarbeidspartnere. Det blir spesielt pekt på de intrikate maktforholdene i provinsen, med en relativt svak provinsledelse, en sterk krigsherre med sin maktbase innenfor en etnisk gruppe og klare utfordrere innenfor samme etniske gruppe. Også andre forhold knyttet til etnisitet i Faryab kan være av betydning gitt det faktum at området var blant de hvor myndighetene på 1920-tallet etablerte kolonier av pasthonere. Lokale aktører i det sivile samfunn bør også kartlegges. Innslaget av opiums-økonomi i den lokale økonomien vil også være av betydning i forhold til eksisterende og framtidige konfliktlinjer. Opplysningene om at store gassreserver skal være identifisert nettopp i Faryab-provinsen vil også kreve aktsomhet.

Formålet med studien og forventede resultater:

For en nærmere konflikt- og aktørvurdering i tilknytning til økt satsing i Faryab-provinsen, vil fokus rettes mot sentrale spørsmålene i Norads manual for konfliktsensitiv bistand (2006):

1. Hvordan relaterer eksisterende innsats seg til de aktuelle konfliktlinjer? Hvilke konfliktfaktorer kan styrkes og/eller hvilke faktorer kan svekkes ved en økt norsk innsats. Hvem vinner og/eller hvem taper, og hva er mulige effekter av dette på aktuelle konfliktlinjer?
2. Hvilken type ressurser (eks. personell, penger, materiell) kan det være aktuelt å bringe inn i området og hvilken effekt kan dette ha på konfliktlinjene?
3. I hvilken grad kan økt norsk innsats påvirke muligheten for sentrale institusjoner i samfunnet, sentralt og/eller lokalt, til å videreføre eller styrke sitt arbeid og derigjennom styrke sin legitimitet?
4. Hvordan bør norsk satsing innrettes for å kunne bidra til å dempe konflikter?
5. Hvilke politisk(e) signal(er) vil økt norsk satsing mest sannsynlig sende ut og hvordan kan dette påvirke konfliktlinjene?
6. Hvordan kan man best forstå kjønnsdimensjonen i en makt og aktøranalyse og hvordan kan økt norsk satsing innrettes for å bidra til å forsvare kvinners interesser og styrke kvinners deltakelse i deres ulike roller og kapasiteter?
7. På hvilken måte vil sikkerhetssituasjonen kunne påvirke økt norsk satsing og på hvilken måte kan økt norsk satsing påvirke sikkerhetssituasjonen?
8. I hvilken grad er koordinering med andre internasjonale givere eller nasjonale aktører mulig og relevant i forhold til konfliktsensitivitet?

I tilknytning til Faryab og spørsmålet om økt norsk innsats i provinsen vil det være av interesse å se på bl.a. følgende:

⁴⁹ Det henvises også til vedlegg som skisserer den historiske og nasjonale sammenhengen en slik analyse må plasseres inn i.

- **Den etniske sammensetningen av befolkningen, endringer over tid og mulige framtidige spenningsfelter; eksempelvis:**
 - Forholdet mellom usbekene og andre etniske grupper,
 - Pashtonere
 - Kutchier (nomader)
 - Tadjiker
 - Arabere
 - Forholdet internt i usbekiske befolkningen
 - Forhold til etniske grupper i naboprovinser
 - Forhold knyttet til internt fordrevne (IDPs)
 - Andre mulige konfliktfelter, inklusive en vurdering av det lokale konfliktnivået
 - Hvilken sammenheng kan man se mellom etnisk struktur, politisk struktur (inkl. krigsherrer) og økonomisk struktur i provinsen?
 - Endring i konfliktpotensialet hvis Dostum faller fra, og hva som kan influere på dette?

Kjønnsdimensjonen bør inngå i disse vurderingene.

- **Eksterne aktører og deres allianser med lokale aktører; eksempelvis:**
 - Forholdet mellom Kabul-regjeringen og provinsledelsen,
 - Forholdet mellom Kabul og lokale krigsherrer
 - Forholdet mellom provinsledelsen og lokale krigsherrer
 - Forholdet mellom lokale krigsherrer
 - Forholdet mellom lokale og regionale krigsherrer
 - Forholdet mellom aktører i provinsen og aktører i naboprovinser,
 - Forholdet mellom kvinner som aktør i Faryab og kvinnelige aktører andre steder i Afghanistan/i utlandet.
 - Forholdet mellom aktører i provinsen og utenlandske aktører
- **Politiske aktører i Faryab; eksempelvis:**
 - De sentrale politiske aktørene i provinsen,
 - Hvilken rolle spiller Taliban-tilknyttede krefter i provinsen?
 - I hvilken grad er det innslag av aktører fra andre land (inklusive Uzbekistan) som opererer i provinsen eller har tilknytningspunkter av betydning?
 - I hvilken grad og på hvilken måte spiller kvinnene en politisk rolle?
 - Hvordan vurderes konfliktbildet av ulike aktører?
- **Økonomiske aktører i Faryab; eksempelvis:**
 - Hva er bærebjelkene i den lokale økonomien? Hvilken rolle spiller jordbruk?
 - Er det konflikter av betydning knyttet til tilgangen på/kontrollen over vannressurser?
 - Er det konflikter knyttet til kontroll over land?
 - Er det konflikter knyttet til kontroll over handelsruter?
 - Er det konflikter knyttet til skattlegging av ressurser og/eller handel?
 - Hvilken rolle spiller opiumsøkonomien i provinsen/i naboprovinserne?
 - Hva kan de store gassreservene komme til å bety i forhold til nye økonomiske aktører, eventuelt styrking av eksisterende aktører?
 - På hvilken måte utgjør kjønnsdimensjonen en sentral faktor på en eller flere av disse økonomiske arenaene?

- **Utviklingsaktører i Faryab; eksempelvis:**
 - Hvilken rolle spiller nasjonale utviklingsprogrammer i provinsen i dag?
 - Hvilket innslag er det av sivilt samfunnsaktører i provinsen?
 - Internasjonalt baserte,
 - Nasjonalt baserte
 - Lokalt baserte (provins/distrikt)
 - Hvilken rolle spiller kvinner i provinsen? Gir deres rolle seg organisatoriske uttrykk av betydning?
 - Hvilken rolle spiller private næringslivsaktører?
 - Hvilken rolle spiller multilaterale aktører ut over de nasjonale utviklingsprogrammene?

Det er ønskelig at denne gjennomgangen så langt mulig svarer på følgende spørsmål:

- Gitt fokus på de samme innsatsområdene som man allerede har identifisert for norsk innsats i Afghanistan; utdanning, landsbygduitvikling og styresett;
 - Er det spesielle forhold som norsk støtte til disse områdene i Faryab bør ta hensyn til? Målsettingen at kvinner skal trekkes aktivt med som aktører og mottakere skal vektlegges.
 - Er det prioriterte områder som bør revurderes?
 - Er det andre sektorer som bør vurderes prioritert?
- Gitt ønsket om gjennom økt innsats til sivil sektor å bidra til å styrke den norske totale tilstedeværelsen i Faryab;
 - Er det spesielle tiltak innenfor de skisserte områdene, eventuelt alternative innsatsområder som peker seg ut?
 - Er det spesielle tiltak Norge kan ta for å sikre støtte til kvinner med mål å styrke deres stilling, ref. S.C.res. 1325.
- Gitt ønske om gjennom innsatsen i Afghanistan, også i Faryab, å bidra til å styrke afghanske demokratiske myndigheter sentralt og lokalt;
 - Er det spesielle hensyn man bør ta i forhold til valg av kanal for norsk bistand og aktører å samarbeide med? Hva kan bidra til å mobilisere kvinner som en aktør?
 - Er det spesielle hensyn man bør målbære over sentrale og/eller lokale myndigheter?
 - I hvilken grad utfordrer nye strukturer tradisjonelle legitimitetsmekanismer (Provincial Council vs. Ulema Shura etc.)
 - Menneskerettighetsaspekter knyttet til ulike myndighetsstrukturer med spesiell fokus på kvinnes stilling og situasjonen for etniske minoriteter.
- Gitt ambisjonen om å legge til grunn en konfliktsensitiv tilnærming i innsatsen i Afghanistan;
 - Er det spesielle forhold man bør være oppmerksom på; fallgruver man bør være seg bevisst når nye tiltak skal vurderes eller eksisterende tiltak skal forlenges?
 - Er det spesielle forhold man bør være oppmerksom på i forhold til relasjonen mellom utviklingsinnsats og andre norske aktører; det være seg det norske militære engasjementet så vel som aktivitet fra norske frivillige organisasjoner?
 - Er det forhold knyttet til andre eksterne aktører i provinsen/området man bør ta hensyn til?

Gjennomføringen:

Arbeidet gjennomføres i et tett samarbeid mellom CMI v/Arne Strand, ambassaden, den/de sivile norske rådgiverne som er engasjert i Maymane, Utenriksdepartementet og Norad.

Som ledd i arbeidet åpnes det for bruk av lokale afghanske konsulenter/ressurser (Afghan Survey Unit, Mohammad Hakim m.fl.) både til å samle inn underlagsinformasjon og bistå i kontaktarbeidet.

CMI v/Arne Strand vil inngå separate kontrakter med disse og utarbeide oppdragsbeskrivelser. Det er en målsetting at minst en kvinne inngår i teamet.

Det forutsettes at man i arbeidet også har kontakt med relevante institusjoner på myndighetssiden.

Utenriksdepartementet vil bistå konsulenten med å få tilgang til de vurderingene som gjøres fra forsvarer/Forsvarsdepartementet når det gjelder konfliktbildet i Faryab.

I begynnelsen av november 2006 organiseres det et feltbesøk som, basert på allerede innsamlet informasjon, gjennomfører intervjuer i Kabul og i Faryab-provinsen. Dette besøket gjennomføres av Petter Bauck fra Norad, som leder, Arne Strand fra CMI og en kvinnelig afghansk konsulent med bidrag fra Kristian Berg Harpviken fra PRIO. Om mulig deltar ambassaden og den sivile rådgiveren i Maymane.

Feltbesøk til Faryab vil være avhengig av den lokale situasjonen. Om et slikt besøk skulle vise seg vanskelig, vil man så langt mulig søke å basere innsamling av data på lokale krefter.

Det utarbeides en rapport som sammenfatter underlagsinformasjonen og resultatet av intervjuene og presenterer en analyse med vurderinger relatert til de skisserte problemstillingene. Hovedrapporten bør ikke overskride 20 sider, men kan suppleres med vedlegg som utdyper sentrale problemstillinger.

Utkast til rapport på engelsk med anbefalinger skal foreligge til 30. desember 2006. Utkastet blir sendt på høring til relevante avdelinger i departementet, til Norad, til ambassaden og eventuelt andre relevante aktører. En endelig rapport vil foreligge innen utgangen av januar 2007. Rapporten skal i utgangspunktet være et dokument som Departementet/Norad kan dele med samarbeidspartnere med det siktemål å styrke den konfliktsensitive tilnærmingen til innsatsen i Faryab (og hvor relevant andre steder i Afghanistan).

VEDLEGG:

I arbeidet med å vurdere nasjonale utviklingsplanene og konkrete utviklingsinnsatser i Afghanistan har man i stadig økende grad lagt til grunn en del sentrale forhold ved Afghanistan som man mener vil være av stor betydning:

**** Nasjonal identitet i en multi-etnisk stat – etniske spenningsfelt:***

Afghanistan er en multi-etnisk og multi-linguistisk stat hvor mange av de samme folkegruppene lever på begge sider av de nasjonale grensene. Staten ble etablert på 1800-tallet som en buffer mellom datidens ekspanderende stormakter Storbritannia og Russland. Afghanistans endelige utforming og grenser ble etablert for å unngå at de to mektige aktørene skulle ha felles grense i Sentral Asia.

Denne rollen som buffer har bidratt sterkt til å utvikle den nasjonale identiteten blant afghanere, på tross av viktige og sterke motsetninger, både mellom regioner og mellom urbane og rurale strøk, mellom etniske grupper og i noen grad med religiøse dimensjoner. Motsetningene mellom den dominerende folkegruppen pathanerne og hazzaraene har sine røtter tilbake til 1800-tallet. Den har en religiøs dimensjon – sunni mot shia, en sosial dimensjon med hazzaraene som en klart lavere plassert sosial gruppe og den har vært viktig ikke minst når regionale aktører har valgt sine samarbeidspartnere i de ulike konfliktperiodene siden 1978.

Tidlig i forrige århundre ble større grupper med pathanere tvangsflyttet til områdene befolket av andre etniske grupper, spesielt i nord Afghanistan. Formålet var å styrke kontrollen fra Kabul. I løpet av de siste 25 år har mange av etterkommerne etter disse bosetterne flyktet til Kabul eller til eksil. Forsøk i de siste årene på å flytte tilbake har blitt møtt med til dels sterke reaksjoner i lokalområdene.

Det er verdt å merke seg at ikke på noe tidspunkt i denne konfliktperioden har noen etnisk gruppe ytret ønske om å forlate det nasjonale fellesskapet Afghanistan. Tilsvarende har heller ikke noen tatt til orde for at en eller flere etniske grupper skulle utelukkes. Her ligger en viktig styrke i forhold til utfordringen om å reetablere den afghanske staten.

*** Strategisk beliggenhet og regionale aktører:**

Afghanistan har en historie som en smelting for folkevandringer, handelsekspedisjoner og hærtog. Kontroll med dette uveisomme landet har vært viktig for regionale aktører som ønsket å styrke sine posisjoner. Både Storbritannia og Russland forsøkte, i den perioden landene konkurrerte om hegemoni i Sentral Asia, å sikre seg kontroll i Kabul. Denne situasjonen har bidratt til å styrke den sterke følelsen av uavhengighet som afghanerne hele tiden har satt og setter høyt. Storbritannia så vel som Sovjet har erfart dette. Også i dag er det et utbredt syn i Afghanistan at man ønsker slutt på den utenlandske innblandingen. Her ligger noe av grunnlaget for at man fortsatt registrerer en mobilisering til støtte for Taliban i deler av landet, spesielt i sør og øst.

For regionale aktører har Afghanistan gjennom historien stått fram som et strategisk viktig og til dels truende land. For britene var det på slutten av 1800-tallet avgjørende å passivisere grensen mellom Britisk India og Afghanistan. En grenselinje ble trukket i 1893 (Durand-linjen). Den er seinere av afghanerne oppfattet som en avklaring av ansvarsdeling, mens britene har hevdet og hevder at den er å anse som en statsgrense. Uenigheten om dette spørsmålet var årsaken til at Afghanistan som eneste land i 1947 stemte mot at Pakistan skulle aksepteres som medlem i FN. På 50-tallet var grensen mellom de to landene i perioder stengt. Når vi tar i betraktning at halvparten av den pathanske folkegruppen bor på pakistansk side av Durand-linjen, ser vi konturene av sterke nasjonale krefter som spiller på en samling av alle pathanere. Fra pakistansk side har betydningen av et vennligsinnet regime i Kabul som ikke reiser spørsmålet om 'Pashtonistan' (pathanernes land) vært viktig når alliansepartnere skulle velges i de siste 25 årene. Den aktive støtten Pakistan ga til motstandsbevegelsen (mujahedin) mot Sovjets okkupasjon og seinere til framveksten av Taliban fra 1993 henger nært sammen med en slik vurdering. Motsetningene mellom nabolandene India og Pakistan har også hele tiden spilt inn på de to landenes politikk i forhold til konflikten i Afghanistan.

*** Spenningen mellom sentralmakt og lokale aktører:**

Med sin spesielle historie og sammensetning har Afghanistan tradisjonelt ikke hatt noen sterk sentralmakt. De ulike områdene har hatt stor grad av autonomi. Den største folkegruppen pathanerne, som utgjør rundt 50 % av befolkningen, har med et kort intermesso i 1929, sittet med kongemakten i Kabul fra 1700-tallet fram til 1973, da republikken ble innført.

Den sovjetiske invasjonen i 1979 og den etterfølgende motstandskampen fram til 1989/1992 hadde en konsekvens i det afghanske samfunnet som lett oversees; med omfattende utenlandsk støtte ble motstanden organisert og til dels basert regionalt og etnisk. Ulik situasjonen før den sovjetiske invasjonen, ble det etablert væpnede organisasjoner over hele landet. Blant disse var det flere som var etnisk fundert, som Shura e-nezar (tadsjiker), Dostums Jumbesh-i-milli (usbeker) og flere Hazzara-organisasjoner. Mange organisasjoner var pathan-baserte, også Taliban. Det som raskt ble klart var at den tidligere balansen mellom de etniske gruppene, som lå til grunn for pathanernes kontroll med kongemakten, var historie. Et framtidig regime i Kabul må, om det skal vinne oppslutning over hele Afghanistan, basere sin makt på en relasjon til de ulike regionene og etniske gruppene som ivaretar denne endringen.

*** *Motstridende økonomiske interesser:***

I kjølvannet av motstandskampen mot Sovjet og deres støttespillere i Afghanistan, utviklet flere av de etablerte organisasjonene seg til maktbaser for ledere fra ulike etniske grupper og ulike regioner. Ofte var dette ledere som etablerte sin innflytelse på militær styrke og utenlandsk finansiering i motsetning til de tradisjonelle maktstrukturene, som ofte baserte seg på et rådssystem hvor de eldste spilte en avgjørende rolle. Flere steder så man utviklingen av lokale "war-lords" som brukte sin ervervede våpenmakt til å sikre sitt økonomiske fundament, gjennom skatting og promovring av den uformelle økonomien, heri også inkludert narkotikaproduksjon. Militis, som tidligere støttet Sovjet, inntok en tilsvarende stilling (Dostum). Med den infrastrukturen som var etablert for utradisjonell handel århundrer tilbake gjennom den ikke ubetydelige nomadebefolkningen i Afghanistan, lå mye til rette for utstrakt smugling, både av tradisjonelle varer, men også våpen og narkotika, internt og over de nasjonale landegrensene.

Av nyere dato er opplysningene om at det bl.a. i Faryab-provinsen skal være store uutnyttede gassreserver i bakken. Allerede i 1968 ble det første gassledningen fra Shibarghan vel 100 km øst for Maimana til datidens Sovjet åpnet. Over 20 år hvor de afghanske gassreservene inntok en sentral plass i det økonomiske samarbeidet mellom Afghanistan og Sovjet startet. Verdensbanken har i 2006 allokert midler til et prosjekt for å legge til rette for private aktører i sektoren.

2. Interview list

Faryab

- Amir Latif, Governor of Faryab
- Said Fakhruddin Shah Jinab, Head of the Provincial Council, Faryab
- Saidullah Paiwand, Head of AIHRC
- Eng. Amanullah Salimi, Head of the Department of Rural Rehabilitation, Faryab
- Khalil Ziayi, Chief of Police, Faryab

- Sharifa Azimi, Head, Department of Women Affairs, Faryab
- Aziza Joya, Head, Women Social Works Office, Faryab
- Salima Sultani, Member of the Provincial Council, Faryab
- Dr. Fawzia Salimi, Head of National Hospital, Maymane, Faryab
- Several of the female staff at the National Hospital, Maymane, Faryab
- Saraya Jaan, Head Teacher, Sitara Girls High School, Maymane, Faryab
- Female teachers and students at Sitara Girls High School, Maymane, Faryab
- Rahima Jaan, Manager, Radio Quyaash, Maymane, Faryab
- Deputy Principal, several female teachers and students at the Faculty of Pedagogy, Higher Education Institute, Maymane, Faryab
- Two groups of housewives (one illiterate, one educated) from Maymane, Faryab

- Head of the Legal and Rights Department, Almar District
- Head of CDC, Khodaymat Village, Almar District
- Members of CDC, Noghali Village, Almar District
- Mullah Hajji Mir Hakim Shah "Hashimi", Head of Shia Shura, Maymane, Faryab

- Sakhi Mohammad, Provincial Representative, United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA), Faryab
- Xhemil Shahu, local representative of UNHCR, Faryab

- Leif Petter Sommerseth, Chief of Mission (ended mid-December 2006), PRT, Maymane
- Paul Haug, Chaplain (ended mid-December 2006), PRT, Maymane
- Representatives from PRT, Maymane
- Bård Vandvik, First Secretary, Norwegian Embassy, Maymane

- Jon Sverre Thorset, Police Adviser, Norwegian Project for Support of the Police in Afghanistan, Maymane
- Jon Ivar Evjen, Police Adviser, Norwegian Project for Support of the Police in Afghanistan, Maymane

- Sveinung Lystrup Thesen, Assistant Project Coordinator, NRC, Faryab
- Ahmed Nassir Hakimi, Legal Adviser, NRC, Faryab
- Mohammad Noor Ibrahim Kheel, Administrator, NRC, Faryab
- Zobair Joya, Legal Adviser, NRC, Faryab

Kabul

- Ustas Saltanat Kohi, Member of Parliament from Faryab

- Fawzia Raufi, Member of Parliament from Faryab
- Abdul Malek Sediqi, Deputy Minister, Ministry of the Interior
- Waiz, National Coordinator, NSP, MRRD
- Hayatullah Fazil, Deputy Executive Director, NSP, MRRD
- Mr. Mia Jan, Planning and Strategy Adviser, Ministry of Education
- Mr. Arian, Planning and Strategy Adviser, Ministry of Education
- Sima Simar, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC)
- Paul Lundberg, Manager, Afghanistan Sub-National Governance Programme, UNDP
- Stephan Massing, Senior Programme Officer, UNDP
- Mithulina Chatterjee, International Programme Officer, UNDP
- Doris Buddenberg, outgoing Representative, UNODC, Kabul
- Christina Gynnå Oguz, new Representative, UNODC, Kabul
- Eng. Naim Salimee, Director, COAR
- Dr. Sayad, Head of Veterinary Department, COAR
- Mr. Haideri, Head of Agriculture Department, COAR
- Several members of survey teams, Afghan Survey Unit
- Seema Ghani, Consultant, Kabul
- Erik Leikvang, Ambassador, Royal Norwegian Embassy, Kabul
- Inger Sangnes, Counsellor Development, Royal Norwegian Embassy, Kabul
- Merete Dyrud, First Secretary, Royal Norwegian Embassy, Kabul
- Andreas Løvold, Second Secretary, Norwegian Embassy, Kabul
- Torolv Groseth, Head of Mission, the Norwegian Mission of Legal Advisers to Afghanistan (“Styrkebrønnen”), Kabul
- Olav Tofte Larssen, Senior Police Prosecutor, the Norwegian Mission of Legal Advisers to Afghanistan (“Styrkebrønnen”), Kabul
- Norwegian members of ISAF HQ
- Claire Harkin, ISAF HQ, Development Section
- Claire Rove, ISAF HQ, Political Section
- Ann Kristin Brunborg, Regional Resident Representative, NRC, Kabul
- Gry Synnevåg, Resident Representative, NCA, Kabul
- Mr. Fairdoon Daoudzai, NCA, Kabul
- Dr. Hassan Hamid, NCA, Kabul

Oslo

- Tom Brunsell, Director, Ministry of Justice, Oslo
- Sissel Wilsgård, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Justice, Oslo
- Stephan Torp, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Justice, Oslo
- Iver Frigaard, Head of International Section, Directorate of Police, Oslo

- Grete Stornes, International Section, Directorate of Police, Oslo
- Hans Olav Ibrekk, Senior Adviser, Norad, Oslo
- Thor Oftedal, Adviser, Norad, Oslo

- Stig Traavik, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo
- Arvinn Eikeland Gadgil, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo
- Cathrine Løchstøer, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo
- Rannveig Skofteland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo
- Torun Dramdal, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo

- Aksel Olsson, Lieutenant-Colonel, Ministry of Defence, Oslo

- Astrid Sletten, Previous Manager Education, NRC, Afghanistan
- Petra Storstein, Desk Officer, NRC, Norway

- Elisabeth Mustorp, Acting Head of International Department, NCA, Oslo
- Guri Wenås, Desk Officer, NCA, Oslo

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4. Conflict indicators

To facilitate a continuing conflict assessment the team would like to present a list of indicators that can be followed by Afghan researchers/surveyors on a half-annual or quarterly basis, depending on actual changes on the ground, and assessed annually by Norad and external consultants.

- A) Political and governance development, including satisfaction with national and local authorities and the Provincial Council, and the development of political parties and movements in Faryab and among ethnic and religious groups.
- B) Relations between Faryab, the region and the Kabul government, including trade opportunities and influence on political decision making.
- C) Security situation at a provincial, district and family level, with a special focus on how women perceive their own security, and perceived threats to security.
- D) The stabilising role of the PRTs, including people's perception of their role and mandate.
- E) People's perception of and attitude towards the police and the judiciary, and the extent to which they trust these institutions.
- F) Development indicators, including to what extent people seek employment in the province and the region, to what extent emergency situations are avoided, and the degree of development in key areas such as agriculture, livelihoods, education, health and, specifically, the position of women.
- G) People's knowledge of humanitarian actors and of the assistance provided.

5. Alternative Scenarios for Faryab

Based on the conflict assessment presented in this report alternative scenarios could be developed for the future involvement in Faryab. A proposal with 4 levels is presented for further elaboration. However, the uncertainty about a scenario development is the likelihood that the various elements might develop differently. To respond to this challenge a more basic indicator table is developed (see below), allowing for rough conflict assessments and recording of trends over time. A more detailed list, with sub indicators, can be developed to enable more precise and specific recordings.

1. Overall positive developments

This level is characterized by a positive development on most of the major indicators listed and no major negative developments:

- The links between Kabul and Faryab develops in a positive way
- The transformation from political- military to political organisations continues
- The economic developments move in a positive direction
- There is no increased tension/conflict in the province and the region
- The legitimacy of the provincial leadership is strengthened

As a consequence the following guidelines could be the base for Norwegian development and security cooperation:

- Contribute to targeted capacity building of government officials and elected bodies, including the judicial system
- Ensuring a permanent emergency response capacity in province and district administrations
- Strengthen technical education and business management to further economic development, with a particular focus on women
- Maintain a high degree of communication with government bodies, religious groups, parties and civil society groups
- Ensure continued support for AIHRC, transfer of responsibility to them for training of the police and army on human rights and protection issues
- Transfer of responsibility from ISAF to Afghan Army and police, troop reduction/ withdrawal plan announced

2. Partial positive developments

This level is characterized by a positive development on some of the major indicators listed and no major negative developments:

- The links between Kabul and Faryab is stable or move slightly in a positive direction
- The economic developments are weak but somewhat positive
- Drought continues to be a threat
- The transformation of the political military organisations remains unclear
- There is a certain change in the leadership of the province that strengthen the legitimacy of the government.

As a consequence the following guidelines could be the base for Norwegian development and security cooperation:

- Capacity building of government officials and elected bodies, including the judicial system

- Development of the agricultural and related sectors, with a particular focus on securing income for women
- Generate manual jobs and ease market access through building check dams and roads
- Help build up an emergency response unit in the Province administration
- Help introduce improved water management techniques
- Continued focus on education and preventive health (including training of teachers and female health workers)
- Campaign to address corruption, advocate dissemination of information on projects/activities from all ministries
- Help develop and strengthen the role and performance of the Provincial Council and district administrations
- Disseminate information on military aims and development activities to government bodies, religious groups, parties and civil society groups - and especially women
- Support AIHRC in building up their capacity, including in HR training and gender advocacy
- Targeted training of the Afghan Army and police, focus on HR and protection of women
- A visible military low key presence, including visits of female soldiers to BHUs, hospitals, schools and to female CDC's

3. No major changes

This level is characterized by neither major positive development nor major negative developments:

- The links between Kabul and Faryab is stable or move a little in a positive direction
- The economic developments are unstable
- Drought remain a problem
- The conflict picture in the province is unclear and unstable
- The leadership of the province is unchanged

As a consequence the following guidelines could be the base for Norwegian development and security cooperation:

- Capacity building of government officials and elected bodies, particular focus on the judicial system and extended dialogue with the traditional council system
- Develop and consult on strategy to improved agricultural output, focus on extension work and agro credit, with a particular focus on loan opportunities for women
- Priority on generating manual work and income for as many as possible through jobs that encourage developments, as building check dams and roads
- Train and fund an emergency response unit in the Province administration and the districts
- Prioritise education and preventive health (including training of teachers and female health workers)
- Campaign to address corruption, advocate dissemination of information on projects/activities from all humanitarian agencies
- Help develop and strengthen the role and performance of the Provincial Council and district administrations
- Disseminate information on military aims and development activities to government bodies, religious groups, parties and civil society groups - and especially women
- Support AIHRC in building up their capacity beyond Maymane
- Targeted training of the Afghan Army and police, focus on HR and protection of women
- A visible but low key military presence in all parts of Faryab

4. Overall negative developments

This level is characterized by no major positive developments and major negative developments:

- The leadership of the province is unchanged
- The links between Kabul and Faryab develops in a negative way
- The economic developments are negative
- Drought persist, agriculture fails
- The conflicts in the province are on the increase/intensifying, perhaps also with the introduction of insurgents more organised and active.

As a consequence the following guidelines could be the base for Norwegian development and security cooperation:

- Dialogue with Ministry of Interior and President Karzai on ensuring capable and qualified Governor and Deputy Governors in Faryab, and (with the international community) advocate a transparent system for nomination and alternation of Government officials in the provinces and in the districts
- Capacity building of government officials and elected bodies, assessing the impact and possibly adjusting the UNDP/GoA programme
- Maximised agricultural output, focus on improved irrigation and carpet factories that should employ (and protect) women
- Negotiate for the extension of NSP to all districts of Faryab (if meeting NSP criteria)
- Initiate extended job opportunities through building check dams, roads and projects identified by local communities (as schools and health clinics if teachers/health staff is available)
- Initiate an emergency response unit in the Province administration
- Prioritise education and preventive health (including training of teachers and female health workers)
- Dissemination of information on projects/activities from all humanitarian agencies
- Help develop and strengthen the role and performance of the Provincial Council and district administrations
- Disseminate information on military aims and development activities to government bodies, religious groups, parties and civil society groups - and especially women
- Support AIHRC in building up their organisational capacity in Maymane
- Targeted training of the Afghan Army and police, focus on HR and protection of women
- A visible military presence, in all parts of Faryab

Scenarios Faryab				
Issues	Bad	Uncertain	OK	Good
Relationship between Faryab and Kabul				
Regional relationship				
Legitimacy of provincial leadership				
Legitimacy of the police				
Legitimacy of the Afghan Army				
Transformation from military to political organisations				
Corruption				
Economic development				
Drought/natural disasters				
Agricultural yield				
Poppy production/smuggling				
General violence in province				
Violence against women				
Ethnic/religious disputes				
Disputes over land/water				
Attitude towards ISAF				
Attitude towards humanitarian organisations				

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SUMMARY

The situation in Faryab province in northern Afghanistan is characterised by a substantial military and political uncertainty. Violent acts could at any moment hamper the humanitarian and development efforts. At the same time the risk is great that Norwegian development actors might be associated with a provincial administration, a police and a judicial system the population regard as corrupt, oppressive and inefficient. It is a great challenge to balance this relation and at the same time assist in developing these governmental bodies to strengthen their professionalism and legitimacy.

This is one of the main findings in the risk assessment assessing the conflict and actors in Faryab.

The report further point out that relation and the balance between the central state in Kabul and the local authorities on provincial and local level are of utmost importance for any future developments.

The report recommends a clearer demarcation between the Norwegian military involvement and the humanitarian and development activities.

Questions related to governance are both important and challenging. Not least given a rather unclear situation where some governance bodies draw their legitimacy from the constitution, others grow out of development programmes while the traditional structures often continue to hold the strongest legitimacy in the population.

The report underlines that the ethnic dimension constitutes a possible line of conflict, not only in Faryab but generally in Afghanistan.

Lack of information in the local population about the mandate of the Norwegian military presence through the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) should also be viewed as a challenge for the humanitarian engagement. A wider dissemination of information on the PRT Mandate and activities financed by Norway needs to be secured.

Violence against women has a high occurrence in Faryab. Norway should prioritize to make work outside the homes available for women and to strengthen the availability of higher education.

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