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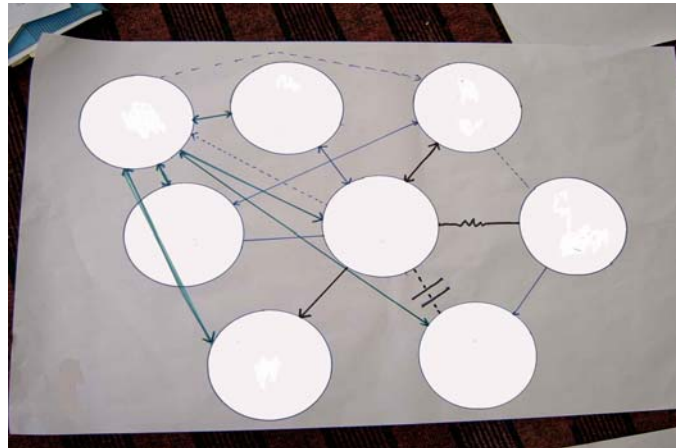
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Afghanistan

Conflict Areas, Challenges and Entry Points for Peace Building

Analysis
of international conflict analysis and peace building

Desk Study for the German Development Service (DED) by Cornelia Brinkmann

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Contents

0. Introduction

After twenty three years of war and violent conflicts and the international intervention against the Taliban in 2001, Afghanistan has had some success in the process of establishing a government. Important steps include the Bonn Petersberg Process, the establishment of a constitution by the Constitutional Loya Jirga in January 2004, the election of President Karzai in October 2004 and the election of national and provincial parliaments in September 2005. The election of district councils is pending. But Afghanistan is still far from having a stable peace.

The burdens of the former wars still remain: heavily mined land, the destruction of infrastructure, agriculture, water supply supplies, and social structures by war, and the high rates of crime, atrocities, human right violations, fear, loss of family members, handicaps and other traumata.

Afghanistan is the third poorest country of the world. Corruption is widespread. Afghanistan produced in 2005 around 87% of international opium. A high percentage of the national budget comes from international donors.

There is still an ongoing war against the Taliban, mainly in the southern part of the country. The security situation is tense with threats against and killings of pro-government Afghans, threats against and killings of the Afghan army and police, suicide bombings and attacks on the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), and attacking of international agencies' personnel.

Reasons for a peace and conflict analysis
The German Development Service/Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst (DED) is working in Afghanistan also in the field of peace building and conflict transformation. The Civilian Peace Service is a specific instrument supporting these processes. But other programmes could also contribute to peace building and conflict transformation processes. The implementation of DED's development work is closely linked to local and international partner organisations.

So the question is: What could the specific contribution from development Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) working in Afghanistan in the field of peace building and conflict transformation be in the area
- to reduce violent conflicts;
- to prevent new violent conflict;
- to heel the wounds of former violence; and/ or
- to support a sustainable peace building in Afghanistan?

An important step is a general peace and conflict analysis, because every organisation has to develop a peace building strategy that matches their mandate and profile. Peace building is more political than pure aid and development work, consequently it can cause and increase internal irritation despite its self understanding of being neutral and politically independent. Without clear knowledge of the main conflict lines and sources as well as of peace potentials it is difficult to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate a programme or project in the field of peace building. There is the need to know which crisis or conflict is to be transformed, which peace process is to be supported.

Sources for peace and conflict analysis
In recent years the international market for peace and conflict analysis has increased. Before commencing one's own conflict analysis, to minimise expense it is a good idea to check

available analysis. A good and professional conflict analysis needs many resources: such as personnel, time and finance. The expectation of the range of an analysis differs in relation to the stakeholder and their main target groups (e.g. politicians – local people) and their main sectors of influence, e.g. security, government building, drugs. There is the need for a focus. For that reason this desk study gives an overview of the results of international and national conflict analyses, with specific relevance to development NGOs and their fields of activities. Each organisation has to do their own homework to discuss the results of a peace and conflict analysis and to adopt the results into their strategy, administration and activities. To support this homework the desk study amasses the available soft-copies of peace building and conflict analysis to better provide access to the sources of available information.

This desk study searched sources as providers of a high level of professional standards in conflict analysis and/or peace building, with a focus on Afghanistan.

The criteria for the list of references were:
- **Availability:** Fast, low-budget and available as soft-copy due to the expense of printing, and the possible unavailability of printers in conflict areas. Only very important most up-to-date documents without soft copy are mentioned.
- **Most recent:** As things in Afghanistan change very quickly this desk study presents documents from between 2003 and 2006. Only very significant older documents are included.
- **Relevance to civilians:** The study is geared to civilians, as future development activities will be by civilians with civilians using civilian means. Government and their administration are defined as civilian.
- **Language:** DED is working with national and international partner organisations and most analyses are in English. Only selected documents are in German or other languages.

Results
Reliable and up-to-date general conflict research and analyses are available and those for specific conflict sectors are more from international than national sources and are based more on conflict-related than on peace related sectors. The results differ because of the different analysis methodologies on conflict profiles, roots of conflict, stakeholders and trends and because of the different perspectives of military or civilian, government or NGO, research or political instruments. But nevertheless it is possible to get a clear picture of the complex conflict profile in Afghanistan The complexity of the conflicts and their close links with each other are an enormous obstacle to peace building.

Chapter 1 gives an introduction to a profile of Afghanistan and an overview of the history of conflict, type's of conflict, expansion of conflict and a summary of root causes of conflict and peace building potential.

Chapters 2 to 6 focus on the key areas of challenge and the identified root causes of conflict in Afghanistan. These are
- State and Government Building,
- Security,
- Economy and corruption,
- Drug economy, and
- Tension between centre and periphery.
Each area of challenge outlines in more detail the conflict profile, main stakeholders, works out possible trends and describes opportunities for peace building.

Chapter 7 discusses general obstacles and challenges for peace building in Afghanistan. It reflects some specific entry points for peace building activities for NGOs and gives an idea of how to use a peace and conflict analysis as a tool to improve the peace building capacities of an organisation and as an entry point for peace building activities.

1. Summary

1.1. General country profile

The official name of the country is *The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan*. It gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1919. Afghanistan has a land area of 647,000 square kms and has borders with Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to the north, China and Pakistan to the east and south and Iran to the west. In July 2005 Afghanistan was estimated to have a population of 29,92 million inhabitants with 42% Pashtun, 27% Tajik, 9% Hazara, 9% Uzbek and 13% comprising smaller ethnical groups such as Aimak, Turkmen, Baloch and Nuristani. 99% are Muslims, 80% of whom are Sunnis and 19% Shiite. The official languages are Dari (50%) and Pashtu (35%) Turkic languages are spoken by 11% of the population and there are other thirty minor languages. In October 2001, of the estimated four million refugees in October 2001, 2.3 million Afghans have returned home. (CIA World Factbook, last update 10.01.06)

The capital is Kabul with around 3 million inhabitants (US embassy estimate, 2005). Afghanistan has thirty four provinces. The provinces are organised into districts. A district is a collection of mantequas and/or villages. As the boundaries between districts and between villages are often flexible, and changing, they will be described as "local level". The smallest unity is the family with around eight to ten family members. The organisation on the local level differs: it can be by governor, by elders, by khan, by mullah, former commander, warlord, or others.

1.2. History of conflict

After the capture of Kabul in 1989, the mujahedin fought against each other and in this period killed more people, caused greater refugee streams and destroyed more houses than in the previous ten year fight against the Soviet army. During this time the mujahedin developed a war economy with drug production, weapons dealing, customs revenue, road tolls and trafficking.

Since 1994 the Taliban (religious students) fought to liberate themselves and the country from the tyranny of the warlords. They were armed by the Pakistan intelligence force, and were supported by the Afghan people. By 2001 they had 90% of the country under their control using a very strong Islamic regime. They gave Osama bin Laden sanctuary. He developed training camps for fundamental Islamic fighters. After the destruction of the Buddha-Statue in Bamiyan, the ongoing repression of women and the kidnapping of staff from Shelter Now, the regime was very much isolated by the international community. After the terror attacks in the United States on 11th September 2001, there was a clear suspicion that most of the terrorists were trained in Afghanistan. After the refusal of the Taliban to give up co-operation with Osama bin Laden the US waged a war against the Taliban.

1.3. Types of conflict

In 2005 there were worldwide two wars and twenty two serious crises (a serious crisis is described as a conflict were violence is both repeated and organised). Afghanistan is one case of serious crisis in the conflict barometer of the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research. Conflicts in Afghanistan are usually based on
* Ideology/ political system,
* Regional predominance, and
* National power, i.e. between the Taliban and the Afghan government of President Hamid Karzai.

(HIIK-Konfliktbarometer 2005)

The Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kriegsursachenforschung (AKUF) identify two conflict types in Afghanistan:
* Since 1978, an ongoing anti-regime-war between a conservative-traditional resistance movement and the radical-Muslim movement of the Taliban against the communist government until 1992, the mujahedin government until 1996, the Taliban until 2001 and the new government under reconstruction with international help since 2001.
* Since 2001 an anti-terror-war between the US-lead coalition, Afghan army and Pakistan against Al Qaida and the Taliban.

1.4. Expansion of conflict

In reality Afghanistan has internal conflicts and in the south and east internal war, with international support. The influence of these conflicts on neighbouring countries is low and the influence of neighbouring countries is high, because it is in their interests to maintain the conflicts in Afghanistan until they expand in Afghanistan. This interest is especially true of fundamental Islam. Iran and Pakistan have an interest in sending refugees back to Afghanistan.

The fear of internationals is that Afghanistan will return to a state supporting international terrorism and/ or narcotic state.

Afghanistan gets a lot of support from internationals for transforming their political, economic and social structures into a more democratic system.

Afghanistan is very far from stable, and there remains a constant possibility that widespread conflict will return.

1.5. Root causes of conflict

Political factors
After twenty three years of external and internal war the main state and government structures and bodies have been destroyed. In the meantime a constituency has been established and national and provincial parliaments have been elected. Unclear roles and mandates between these bodies still remain. The implementation of the rule of law and the Human Rights (HR) situation are weak, the governmental bodies and administration are corrupt and on the local level almost non-existent.

Security related factors
The security situation for the military and civilian internationals and the Afghan people is very tense, especially for pro-governmental institutions. War against terrorism continues, security

sector reform increases but still the army and police are not adequate and further training is needed. There is widespread corruption in the police and outside Kabul local strongmen and their independent militia rule many areas.

Economic factors

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world with high maternal mortality, a life expectancy of forty five years for men, high illiteracy and high unemployment. Because of the war important infrastructure such as roads, electricity and water irrigation have been destroyed and the widespread use of mines cut production substantially. Opium is the most important cash crop. Corruption and lack of security are the most important barriers to business. The Afghan government income is primarily from drugs, secondly from international aid and thirdly from government functions.

Drug factors

Two million people were involved in opium cultivation in 2005. Such cultivation produces the highest income for Afghanistan and is perhaps the highest risk factor for the future for Afghanistan because it is closely linked to corruption and anti-government development. As there are no real alternatives to poppy cultivation, eradication will incite very high tensions against internationals and will strengthen anti-government tendencies.

Centre versus periphery

The political influence from the national level in Kabul to the province level is decreasing. The election of district councils remains to be implemented. Large parts of the country suffer from weak, ineffective and in some places corrupt government. Local mechanisms of management are connected with formal and informal bodies, such as shura and Mosque. Former commanders are often still influential. Security is sometimes controlled by former militia.

Entry points for peace building

Much has to be done, best quickly and simultaneously. There is a need for each organisation to analyse their specific entry point or strategy. NGOs should be aware of in which conflict fields they have natural access and how they can improve their performance there so that they do no harm, can show quick results, and support conflict transformation and peace building processes. An open discussion around a peace and conflict analysis is a good entry point in peace building.

2. Challenge 1: State and Government Building

In war-torn-societies, state and government building is one of the main areas necessary to build political, judicial, administrative, security, economic and social stability in a country. Free and fair elections are an important aspect of state building, of political culture, of developing a political decision-making system and for legitimating political power holders. The acceptance of joint values such as the HR law is an important basic cultural factor. War-torn societies have to face specific transitional justice questions, for instance how to deal with perpetrators and victims of former war and crisis related violence. The existence of an active, free and independent civil society is a basic need for a democracy developed by the people and for the people.

The first *Failed State Index*, a project of Policy magazine and the Fund for Peace dated June 2005, identifies that six of the top seven failed states are in Africa. Iraq was ranked 4. Afghanistan is ranked 11, Haiti was ranked 10 and Rwanda 12. The report concluded that uneven development "was the most common symptom of failed state among all states on the index, suggesting that inequality, rather than poverty, most determines instability." Other major contributing factors were demographic pressures and high crime levels. (Foreign Policy 2005)

Although Afghanistan took some very important steps on the route to government building (constitution, elected president, elected national and provincial parliaments) it is still a fragile state. It suffers from internal on-going war against the Taliban, former commanders are fighting against each other, there is an insufficient and corrupt state administration, an insufficient and corrupt legal system, insufficient and corrupt security systems, lack of acceptance of government especially on the local level, a drugs-based economy, proliferation of weapons, porous boundaries, competition between religious systems (e.g. Sunnis, Shias, Ismaelis), competing ethnicities with different cultural patterns, two main languages Dari and Pashto with other local languages, a high rate of external and internal refugees, competition between different value systems such as HR, Islam and local traditions.

There are people based both within and outside the country, particularly in Pakistan, who are trying to overthrow or destabilise the current system. (Rubin 2005)

2.1. Stakeholders

Main political figures
- **Hamid Karzai** (Pashtun) was elected president in October 2004.
- **Yunis Qanuni** (Tajik) was one of the deputies of the former Northern Alliance leader Ahmad Shah Massud. He was interior minister and education minister and is now the speaker of the lower chamber of parliament.
- **Mohammed Qasim Fahim** (Tajik) was Ahmad Shah Massud's successor as leader. He was defence minister and vice-president in the Afghan Interim Administration (AIA) and the Afghan Transitional Authority (ATA). After the presidential election he got no other cabinet position, but he is still a powerful and influential figure.
- **Dr. Abdullah Abdullah** (Tajik-Pashtun) was foreign minister and has now been dropped from the new cabinet.
- **Abdul Rashid Dostum** (Uzbek) was former communist leader of Junbish-I Milli-yi and controlled, until 1998, much of northern Afghanistan. After exile he returned to Mazar -e–

Sharif and controls four northern provinces. He resigned as leader of the political party and is, since April 2005, Chief-of-Staff to the commander of the armed forces.

- **Ismael Khan** (Tajik) is former governor of Heart and was dismissed as governor in September 2004. Now he is minister for energy and water.
- **Zahir Shah** is the former Afghan king. He lived in exile for a log time and is now "father of the nation" without a political mandate but as a symbolic figure.
- **Mohammad Omar** is a former mujahedin and spiritual leader of the Taliban. He has been in hiding since the fall of the Taliban.
- **Osama bin Laden** is leader of Al Qaida, a close ally of Mohammad Omar, and has been in hiding since the fall of the Taliban.

Civil Society

The cultural pattern of social organisation in Afghanistan is along families and tribes, is male-dominant and age-orientated. Tradition and religion are important frameworks with strong hierarchies. So their representatives such as elders, mullahs/maulawis or arbeb/malik (majors) are influential. The shura or jirga is the local management body for decision-making. The power relation will differ from local area to local area.

After long periods of war, the activities of civil society are reduced and, when existing, mostly divided along conflict lines. This is also the case in Afghanistan.

With the international support for Afghanistan new social bodies for project implementation purposes were created, in some cases with access to a huge amount of money. Sometimes they are formally organised as NGOs, sometimes internationals created development or women shura additional to or in co-operation with traditional local shura. The National Solidarity Programme (NSP) is a programme of the Afghan government for community development, to support Afghans to identify, plan, manage, and monitor their own reconstruction and local development projects. Communities elect the members for a Community Development Council that is responsible for co-ordination, decision-making and management.

Research on Afghan civil society by Counterpart states : "The legal enabling environment for civil society is still weak, with many areas of confusion and lack of clarity, exaggerated by the speed with which new organisations are being created by donors in the absence of a clear framework of typology." (Counterpart 2005: 7)

Countries

- The **Soviet Union** occupied Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989. During the Taliban regime it support anti-Taliban fractions in the north because of concern about the threat of Islamic fundamentalism. Now the Afghan government is trying to strengthen ties with Russia.
- **Iran** is concerned for the welfare of the Shia Hazara minorities, has the hope that the Afghan refugees in Iran will return home and is in opposition to the drug trade. Iran hosted Ismael Khan, Abdul Rashid Dostum and Hekmatyar. Iran has a close relationship with Khan and had close economic relations with Herat.
- **Pakistan** persistently tries to influence Afghanistan and trained young Afghan Islamists in the 1970s in the fight to resist the increasingly pro-Moscow government. They backed the Hezb-I-Islami leader Hekmatyar after he failed to consolidate power, and they created the Taliban together with the Inter-Service Intelligence agency. In 1996 Pakistan was the first country to recognise the new Taliban regime. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on September 11th 2001 General Pervez Musharraf became one of the most important allies of the US. Today the relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan is both close and tense. Afghanistan accuses Pakistan of not doing enough to suppress the remnants of the Taliban based in north west Pakistan.

- **Usbekistan** has a close relationship with General Dostum, an ethnic Usbek. They want to prevent hardline Islamists infiltrating Usbekistan and fuelling conflicts with neighbouring Tajikistan. To date they support General Dustom.
- **The US** supported the mujahedin in the 1980s as a means of destabilising the Soviet-backed regime. It observed the development of Osama bin Laden and Al Qaida after they were held responsible for an attack on a US base in Saudi Arabia in 1996 and for bomb attacks on the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1996. After the attack on September 11th 2001 and the refusal of Mullah Mohammad Omar to hand over Osama bin Laden, the US started their military intervention in Afghanistan. They promoted Hamid Karzai as political leader of Afghanistan. Up to now they are present in Afghanistan with the Enduring Freedom Operation and with support on nearly all levels.

International Donor Community
Forty one international organisations are participating in the governmental process. (CIA World Factbook, update 10.01.06)

In 2002 the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) was established to support the process of state building. With the parliamentary election the so-called Bonn Process comes to an end. With the *Afghanistan Compact* the UN continues to support the Afghan Government in their effort of state and government building.

Lead countries: In co-operation with the Afghan government the international community took over responsibilities for specific important sectors. Lead countries are
- The US for military reform,
- Japan for the Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) programme,
- Germany, for the police reform,
- UK, for the eradication of drugs,
- Italy, for the Judicial Sector Reform.

Some experts argue that the international community is providing an inadequate amount of assistance and resources to deal with the goals set for Afghanistan by the international community. (Waldhams 2005: 11)

The evaluation of the contribution of the international donors for the reconstruction of Afghanistan is mixed. Afghans criticised the international community, and NGOs in particular, for squandering aid money on international staff and for hiring foreigners from neighbouring countries to implement jobs. Afghans expressed frustration that many projects could be carried out at a much lower cost than the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) subcontractors. Furthermore, foreign NGOs and contractors have greater difficulty monitoring the contracts because they are vulnerable targets. (Wadhams 2005: 11)

Much money is spent in Kabul and less reaches the rural areas: this sharpens the existing difference between Kabul and the rest of the county.

2.2. State Building

The cultural identity is diverse: by religion (e.g. Sunnis, Shia, Ismaelis, Sufis), ethnicity (e.g. Pashto, Tadijks, Hazara, Uzbek), language (two main languages Pashto and Dari), and tradition. This diversity makes it difficult to form an Afghan common identity as a joint cultural pattern.

Borders with neighbouring countries are discussed, e.g. from Pakistan. Afghans have the opinion that Afghan territory is occupied by Pakistan. Borders can be crossed easily without

any controls on great stretches of the border. This allows ease of movement of people and drugs into and out of the country.

2.3. Government Building

After the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001 the International Coalition Force Afghanistan, with considerable international support, started a government-building process after twenty three years of war. In December 2001 the Bonn Accord was signed with a political road map for the Afghan Interim Administration (AIA). This process has been supported by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) since 2002. In January 2002 at the Tokyo Donor Conference, USD 4.5 billion were pledged for reconstruction. In June 2002 a national Loya Jirga selected Hamid Karzai as the Head of the Afghan Transitional Authority (ATA). In March 2003 the first official government budget was presented at the Afghanistan Development Forum. January 2004 a Loya Jirga approved the constitution with strong links to Islamic values. President Hamid Karzai signed the new constitution, which paved the way for elections. In October 2004 the people elected Hamid Karzai as president with 55.4% of the votes (the voter turnout was 70%). The parliamentary and provincial elections in September 2005 strengthened the government structure with the legitimacy of the national and regional parliament.

12.5 million voting cards were handed out. 120,000 ballot boxes were distributed to 6,300 voting centres. This was an enormous logistical task. 249 members of Parliament and 34 Province councils were elected. There were only parliament and provincial elections because it was not possible to get agreement on the boundaries at the district level. Up to now there is no date for district elections. The election was monitored by the EU-Commission and local election observers.

In the run-up to the election and during it approximately seven candidates and seven national election workers were killed. The polling day itself was very calm.

The acceptance of the election as a political process was weak. The reasons are various. Among them are: dissatisfaction with the results of the Presidential election, intimidation, too many candidates (5,800 presented with picture, name and personal symbol), many former commanders and warlords on the lists, illiteracy, lack of understanding of the election system, the election of persons and not of parties, two votes at the same time (National Parliament and Provincial Council), complexity of ballot papers, e.g. in Kabul there were 400 parliamentary candidates resulting in the ballot paper in Kabul being the size of a newspaper.

Many of the elected are warlords with ties to armed groups, this despite the existence of a law which should disqualify such people. Former communists achieved an unexpectedly poor result while some former Taliban won seats. Women were guaranteed a 25% quota of all seats in parliament. (FAST 2005: 7)

The participation of the voters in the parliamentary election on the 18th September 2005 was 50%, 25% less than the preceding year for the presidential election. Because of irregularities and fraud the announcement of the results were on the 12th November 2005 for the *Wolesi Jirga* (national parliament) and the thirty four representatives of the provincial parliaments. (HIIK 2005: 56)

300 representatives of the *Wolesi Jirga* (House of People) and *Meshrano Jirga* (House of Elders) came together for the first elected parliament the National Assembly on 19th December 2005. This was the first elected parliament since the overthrow of the monarchy in 1973. Most of the government's power is concentrated in the hands of the president.

Afghanistan has never before had a parliament integrated in a more or less democratic constitution. Consequently this election was primarily about moving politics away from militarisation and into civilian competition. (Rubin 2005)

2.4. Rule of law

According to the new constitution, no law should be "contrary to Islam". The state is obliged to create a prosperous and progressive society based on social justice, the protection of human dignity, protection of human rights, realization of democracy, and to ensure national unity and equality among all ethnic groups and tribes. The state shall abide by the UN charter, international treaties, the international convention signed by Afghanistan, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The law system is very weak because the framework is not complete. Different sources such as tradition, Sharia, democratic standards and human right standards have to be harmonised in a framework.

The judicial sector has become more dominated by Islamist. Supreme Court chief Fazl Hadi Shinwari, an ally of the Saudi-backed fundamentalist leader Rasuf Sayyaf, has appointed Pir Mahammad Rohani as administrative chief to the Supreme Court. Rohani served as the rector of Kabul University during the reign of the Taliban. (FAST 2005: 5)

Human Rights (HR)
A separate Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) established by the Bonn Agreement is charged with investigating human rights abuses and war crimes. (CIA World Factbook)

Afghanistan signed the UN Charter of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with international treaties and convention. HR are fixed in the constitution of Afghanistan, but this constitution also declares in Chapter 1, Art. 3, that "no law can be contrary to the sacred religion of Islam and the values of this constitution". In practice this is a wide open door for very sensitive discussion and future dilemmas for people arguing the HR issues. On this point the constitution gives no clear orientation, the opposite is the case with many possible difficult implications for the future transformation process, e.g. for the development of the rule of law, justice or administration.

The hot discussions in Afghanistan about the Danish caricature of Mohammad (January 2006) and about the conversion of an Afghan to another religion (March 2006) shows a very strong interpretation of Islam. It makes clear the different Islamic interpretations of the HR declaration.

Freedom of expression, which includes the development of a free and strong media within society, is one of the principals of democracy that respects HR. The development of private and state media is increasing with an estimated 300 print publications, thirty eight radio and four private television stations in 2005. The Afghan Constitution and international treaties support the freedom of expression, but they give no guarantee of these rights. Editors and journalists sometime have to deal with arrests/detention, sentences in jail and being on probation, threats, and loss of employment. For example if they publish sensitive material such as controversial articles on religious freedom and women's rights, critical remarks against a governor, satirical articles that offend provincial authorities and some religious leaders. Afghan journalists very often practice self-censorship due to conservatism, warlordism, and the control of power by corrupt authorities. They do not propagate ideas or values that contradict mainstream values, for example Afghanistan's interpretations of Islam. (UNAMA 2006: 6)

Transitional Justice

Due to the violent history, victims and perpetrators changed their roles several times causing the population to encounter a wide experience of violence, atrocities, fear and death. Without a national programme of rehabilitation and reconciliation for war crimes the wounds of history will continue to be the source of future violence and can be a hindrance to the state and governance building processes.

Every war-torn society making the transition to peace faces the challenge of addressing past atrocities in order to build a more secure future. The strategies of accommodation and accountability were controversially discussed in Afghanistan. In 2002 President Karzai mandated the AIHRC to consult Afghans on how to address past crimes. The survey involving 4,100 Afghans and focus groups of a further 1,500 approximately is published in *A Call for Justice* with the following findings:

- 68% say that they or a member of their immediate family have been victims of war crimes.
- 94% support establishing justice for past crimes.
- 76% believe bringing war criminals to justice soon will increase stability. Only 8% thought it would weaken stability.
- While there is strong support for truth seeking (95%) and reconciliation (90%), Afghans are three times more likely to place a greater priority on criminal justice. (UNAMA 2006: 8)

Based on its findings the AIHRC presented to the President the *Peace, Reconciliation, and Justice Action Plan*. It provides a road map for addressing the atrocities of the past in a way that promotes security and the rule of law. The broad consultation process of this second finding in November 2005 showed additionally widespread disappointment with the Parliamentary election. A strong majority believes accountability for past crimes is essential to peace and to Islamic principles of justice. Most Afghans described the parliamentary elections – both the process and results - as a setback to security, justice and governance. In fact, when asked who they would want to see face a war crimes tribunal, everyone named individuals who now sit in Parliament or hold senior government posts. People see corrupt elements as gaining power by force, fear and fraud. The political discussion of the two strategies continues. If the risk of instability created by war criminal tribunals is compared to the status quo, most Afghans prefer the smaller risk of disruptions caused by trials and vetting which they say pales next to the larger, growing risk of perpetrators using drugs profits to coerce and corrupt formal and traditional authorities. (UNAMA 2006: 9)

2.5. International contribution

The London conference – a follow-up to the Tokyo conference of 2002 with the award of USD 13 million and the Berlin conference of 2004 which awarded USD 8.2 million – was held between 31 January and 1 February 2006. It confirmed, in *The Afghanistan Compact*, the contribution from the international donor community of USD 10.5 million (Euro 8.75 million) to consolidate and strengthen the institutions of the Afghan state in the following working fields:

- Security,
- Governance, Rule of Law and HR, and
- Economic and Social Development.

The elimination of the narcotic industry will remain an important theme that impacts on each of the other areas.

The Afghanistan Compact will be linked closely to the *Afghan National Development Strategy* (ANDS) of the government. The Afghan Government and the United Nations will coordinate and monitor the implementation of this agenda.

The Afghanistan Compact was negotiated by more than fifty state actors and approximately ten of the larger international organisations. It claims to be a contribution to national, regional and global peace and security. Because of international involvement in Iraq, Israel/Palestine and the massive support in response to the Tsunami of December 2004 and the strong earthquake in Pakistan/Kashmir in October 2005, there has been some concern that Afghanistan would be forgotten by aid donors. The Compact is a clear signal that international involvement in Afghanistan will continue to be high at both governmental and non-governmental levels. This involvement is for conflict transformation and peace building very supportive.

2.6. Trends

It is questionable how professional the new parliament will be. As a consequence of the voting system and the sidelining of political parties it is fractured and weak. It remains unclear how voting blocs will form. Since people move up from the next place of the list if one member of the parliament dies or is killed, this will most likely (and has already) result in several assassination attempts in the future. (FAST 2005: 8, Human Rights Watch 2005)

There are serious concerns about the parliament's make-up and ability to get consensus on important issues such as poppy cultivation and drug trafficking, transitional justice, poverty eradication, corruption, the legal weight of Islam, women's rights and the presence of foreign troops. Independent observers believe that around 15 per cent of Members of Parliament (MPs) are commanders, Taliban defectors or drug traffickers. HR groups criticise the fact that war criminals have not gone on trial. Instead they are given more power and authority in the decision-making process of the country. (UNAMA 2006: 4)

Election should be not the end of government-building, it has to be the beginning of a long-term process.

The Afghanistan Compact declares there will be
- Public Administrative Reform by end 2010 (AC 2006: 7),
- Rule of law: The legal framework will be put in place, distributed to all judicial and legislative institutions and available to the public by end 2010 (AC 2006: 8),
- HR: An Action Plan on Peace, Justice and Reconciliation will be completed by end 2008 and the government's capacity to comply with and report on its human rights treaty obligations will be strengthened by end 2010.

The Human Rights Declaration is not a standard for Afghan politics, is not accepted by traditional leaders, nor is it compatible with the interpretation of Islam in Afghanistan. Consequently the discussion of HR for Afghanistan will be intensive. The AIHRC plays a very important role as an Afghan organisation in informing on the HR situation and in raising standards in political, security and legal systems.

The HR is an entry point for women to improve their situation. But the analysis shows how long a route this has to go.

2.7. Opportunities for peace building activities

State building
- Training of Members of Parliament (MPs) in administration of government in understanding their roles within the parliament of the new Afghan government.

- Training of judges and members of the court in understanding the rule of law and their roles in the process.
- Supporting the development of political parties with democratic roles.
- Training of parties and representatives of political lobby organisations to understand their roles within the new Afghan government.
- Discussion of comparability and differences of values between HR and Islam and the consequences of these differences for government.
- Using the time before district elections to start an open and offensive information process on the value and rights of freely elected democratic government, instead of pushing district elections.
- Introduction of information on the new political bodies into school books.

Public debate
- Support a public debate on governance and its functioning, their representatives, their roles and duties.
- Information and open discussion on the constitution and its values.
- Informing and discussing people's rights in a democracy.
- Discussing the duties of the state (e.g. security) and duties of the people (e.g. paying tax) and the contribution made by the internationals.

Monitoring of state building
- Preparing and supporting local people or groups in monitoring government, representatives of the government, administration, justice and the security sector.
- Media information of power abuses or misuse of public services.

Do No Harm (DNH) of international community
- Code of conduct: a transparent organisational philosophy.
- Examples of good governance by internal organisations such as training on the job for Afghan staff to learn other patterns of governance (transparent, accountable, reliable in decision-making, leadership, management).
- Strengthening and supporting the Afghan government in all parts of its work also on the local level, but no support for competing structures within the government as long they are working properly or for those wanting to weaken governmental structures.

For women
- Awareness-building in HR, political rights and other rights.
- Training in organising, presenting, moderating, decision-making, leadership, to be able to fulfil their duties professionally.
- Facilitating a long and natural process of women's liberation, coupled with economic, political, social and other liberties, with intensive discussion with men in influential roles.

3. Challenge 2: Security

Security, besides good government, is a basic need for the safety of the people, for a prosperous economy and is the basis for sustainable aid as well as the development and reconstruction work in the country.

The security situation is very tense. Internal stakeholders (e.g. warlords, former commanders) are fighting against each other or against the government. Outside of Kabul local strongmen and their independent militias rule many areas. The United Nations Organisation estimates there are approximately 1,800 local commanders with "self-defence" militias in remote areas. Some of the militia have been accused of human rights violations, coercion, corruption, demanding tributes from Afghans and generally running roughshod over citizens within their regions.

Today the Taliban and other insurgents are using guerrilla-tactics, suicide bombing and killing, mainly in the southern part of Afghanistan with borders to Pakistan. Their hard targets are the coalition forces and their supporters, such as the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) and soft targets such as pro-governmental politicians, MPs, election workers, moderate religious leaders and international and Afghan staff of NGOs.

Afghanistan complains that Pakistan allows Taliban fighters and members of Al Qaida to live undisturbed close behind the frontier in the south and east of Afghanistan in Pakistan. There are suggestions that the Taliban have been allowed to re-organise, unmolested by government. New flexible Al Qaida training camps are expected in the same area of Pakistan.

Crime, such as kidnapping, murder and robbery, is a great problem for the Afghan people. More than 1,200 people were killed in the first six months of 2005. (Wadhams 2005: 2)

Afghanistan has more weapons per capita than almost any other country. (Rubin 2005)

3.1. War against terrorism

The US-led anti-terror war against the Taliban goes on and continues to cause conflict. The military activities of the US-lead coalition force Operation Enduring Freedom (18,000 US soldiers, costing USD 53.8 billion, Congressional Research Service, March 2005) a counter terrorism mission, continues, with 129 dead in 2005. The expectation is that NATO will take over more responsibility for maintaining an international security presence. The UN mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) of 9,000 soldiers is focussed on peace keeping, responsible for stabilisation and for giving support for the reconstruction of state structures. The twenty two Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) should bring more security from Kabul to the provinces. In joint international civilian-and military partnership, they also assist in the reconstruction, disarmament programmes, training of army and police and help the government to increase its spheres of influence.

3.2. Security Sector Reform

The reconstruction and training of the army and the police was supported by specific lead countries.

ANA is trained by the US force and French, British and other partner forces. In June 2005 it exceeded 23,000 troops. On the other hand 31,000 have been trained suggesting that some desertion and absence problems exist. (CRS June 2005: 29)

More than 3,800 police were trained by the United States and Germany. (CRS June 2005: 31) ANP is corrupt and incompetent. Many police officers gain their position by patronage rather than by professional qualifications, and many are known to have direct connections to commanders, governors and other officials. It is possible that the police are in the pay of local commanders or working as militia, although technically disarmed by the DDR programme. (Wadhams 2005: 5)

In July 2005 UNAMA completed its Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) programme of former combatants. Around 63,000 militia fighters formerly registered with the Afghan Militia Forces were disarmed. This number is only two-thirds of the planned 100,000 fighters.

Afghanistan is one of the most heavily mined counties in the world: The UN estimates that 5.7 million landmines still remain. 400,000 Afghans had been killed or wounded by mines. UN teams destroyed 1 million landmines and are now focussing on clearing residential and commercial properties and land surrounding Kabul. (CRS June 2005: 40)

Despite some progress, official structures such as police forces and the judiciary are still frequently factionalised and corrupt and are not trusted by most Afghans. Traditional structures such as councils of elders (known as shura or jirga) do still function in some areas. They often reflect a very narrow, traditional view of authority. But when they are functioning they solve many of the daily village problems.

3.4. Trends

The risk assessment for countrywide stability and forceful events of FAST/swisspeace (June-November 2005) indicated the following:

* The war on terror continued to be dominant over the past six months but the security situation deteriorated. In the aftermath of the parliamentary elections, which were held in a relatively calm setting, a sharp increase in the numbers of attacks against international personnel as well as Afghans in connection with pro-governmental functions was witnessed. In 2005 so far 1,500 Afghans were killed along with 90 soldiers, which is twice the number killed in 2004.
* The Taliban increasingly attacked police stations, which resulted in more than 200 policemen killed in 2005.
* Along with frequent attacks against the ANA deployed alongside coalition forces, this lead to a noticeable increase in the number of desertions. Half of the 205th ANA corps, which is deployed outside Kabul, has deserted. Experts estimate that 8,000 trained people have gone missing.
* The insurgents changed their tactics significantly. They are more sophisticated and able to reach new levels of co-ordination and technological knowledge, for example suicide bombers struck in waves, a tactic known from Al Qaida also in Kabul, a city which was thought to be relatively safe.
* The relation between warlords in the provinces and the central government is still tense.

- Even though the US military officially sees the shift in Taliban tactics as born out of desperation, it is a clear sign of considerable assistance from outside. Technological improvements and tactics used in Iraq have been copied.
- It is most likely that in the course of a strategic shift within the insurgency international development organisations become more prone to violence.

Afghan Ministry of Finance reported insufficient revenues available to pay ANA. If ANA reached the planned establishment of 70,000 troops it would require 17% of Afghanistan's annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This is unsustainable. Most countries aim to spend not more than 4% of their GDP on military expenditure. (Wadhams 2005: 5)

The Afghan central government needs to pursue security sector reform and the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of fighters into society, which can improve the overall security situation, restore the rule of law, and build confidence in processes of political and social reconciliation. This in turn should create the conditions in which local level measures that will remain the only means for solving many problems can be effective.

Following are some committed benchmarks and timelines of *The Afghanistan Compact*:
- Afghan National Army: A nationally respected, professional, ethnically balanced ANA will be fully established with 70,000 personnel by the end 2010.
- Afghan National Police and Border Police: a fully constituted police up to 62,000 persons will be able to effectively meet the security needs of the country by the end of 2010.
- Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups: All illegal armed groups will be disbanded in all provinces by the end 2007 .
- Mine Action and Ammunition: The land area contaminated by mines and unexploded ordnance will be reduced by 70% by the end of 2007 and the rest by the end of 2010.

3.5. Opportunities for peace building activities

The responsibility for security lies normally in the hands of the police, controlled by the government. This is not the case in Afghanistan where the army is forced to bring stability. The contribution of NGOs as non-governments actors is naturally less in this sector. But NGOs should support the transformation processes of the security sector because it is necessary for the sustainability of their work and is linked to basic needs of the people.

- Conceptual clarification: In the long-term the differences, linkages and responsibility of ANA and ANP are still unclear. There is a need for clarification because this can be a source of problems with high escalation potential from the national to the local level.
- Informing and discussing the role of police and army and the Geneva Convention.
- Monitoring police and army, to evaluate their levels of responsibility. Misuse of their roles should be documented and reported.
- Supporting the integration of former combatants into society.
- Supporting local mechanisms for non-violent conflict management.
- Clarification of the roles of NGOs and the civilian ISAF and the PRT's contribution in the aid sector, development and reconstruction. Clarification of the relationship between these actors, especially with regard to visibility on the local level.
- If ISAF and PRTs are carrying out development work they should follow the same standards of development work as NGOs.

4. Challenge 3: Economy and corruption

The Afghan economy is dominated by agriculture, which has traditionally accounted for up to 50% of GDP and employed 80% of the population, although output has always been far below potential. (EIU 2005: 21)

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world. It is ranked at 173 out of 178 countries in the UN Human Development Index 2004. 70% of the population lives below the poverty line (UNDP 2005). In certain regions, Afghanistan has the highest rate of maternal mortality ever recorded in the world. Infant mortality remains at 115 per 1,000 births. The life expectation is only 45 years for men and 44 years for women, that is at least 20 years lower than all of its neighbouring countries. Only 14% of Afghan women are literate; in rural areas only 8% are literate. (Wadhams 2005: 10, 11) The Afghan government estimated total unemployment in 2004 to be approximately 32%. 5 million children attend school, of these 1.6 million are females.

An investment climate survey conducted by the World Bank came to the conclusion that 53% of respondents indicated corruption as a major or severe obstacle to doing business in Afghanistan, after lack of electricity at 64% and access to land 60%. (World Bank 2005:VII-VIII) It is estimated that firms allocate 15% of their revenues to security infrastructure, compared with 2.2% in Pakistan (World Bank 2005).

Security and corruption are the most important barriers to business growth in Afghanistan, others are lack of skilled labour, inadequate infrastructure and weak banking practices. (International Monetary Fund 2006: 14)

4.1. War and drought reduced agriculture, livestock and infrastructure

Years of fighting, the consequent displacement of large sections of the rural population, the scorch-earth policy pursued by the Soviet forces and the widespread laying of mines cut production substantially, leading to persistent food shortages. By 1998 total agriculture output was only about 45% of the 1978 level. Only 12% or 7.9m of the total land is arable land, only one-half is actually cultivated because of limited access to water. Afghanistan faced a drought that reduced the output and lead to food shortage. (EIU 2005: 21) The livestock population was reduced by the war and later by the drought. Opium is the most important cash crop. (For further information on drugs see chapter 2.4)

Only 23% of the population have access to safe drinking water while only 12% have access to adequate sanitation. (Wadhams 2005: 11)

Years of conflict and war and a lack of maintenance have severely damaged the road infrastructure. Also the power grid is obsolete and inefficient, and only 10% of the population have access to electricity and for short periods of time each day. Telecommunications infrastructure has significantly improved over the last four years as cellular and internet services have become available in all of the major cities. (IMF 2006: 17, 18)

4.2. Relation of Afghan Government income, international aid and drugs

The GDP in 2004 was estimated to be USD 21.5 billion (purchasing power parity). The external debt is USD 8 billion bilateral, plus USD 500 million multilateral. The budget revenue is USD 269 million and expenditure is at USD 561 million (FY 04-05 budget). (CIA World Factbook)

Barnett Rubin describes the relation as follows: "So the government collects 5 percent of the GDP in taxes, and it spends 10 percent of the GDP. The other 5 percent come from foreign aid, which is directly spent by donors themselves, bypassing the government. (...) Income from drugs is twice as large as income from foreign assistance. So in terms of where Afghan people are looking for assistance and incomes: First, drugs. Second, foreign aid. Third, the government." (Rubin 2005)

4.3. Corruption in Afghanistan

The anti-corruption chapter of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy analyse following obstacles:

- Reliable information on corruption is unavailable.
  The Transparency International Corruption Perception Index 2005 positioned Afghanistan on rank 117 of 159 surveyed countries, between Zimbabwe (rank 116) and Bolivia (rank 118). (TI 2005: 7)

  A Freedom House report ranked Afghanistan as the third most corrupt of thirty developing countries surveyed in 2004. (Wadhams 2005: 7)

- An unreformed public administration creates incentives and opportunities for corruption. Low public sector salaries encourage those in public office to extract bribes in return for what should remain standard public service.

- Legal and regulatory framework governing Afghanistan is embryonic. The incomplete legal framework, limited influence outside Kabul, low access to justice, low expectation for the justice system and low capacity of justice from civil servants all create an environment in which citizens routinely have to buy their rights. In recent years, the government has created laws for promoting accountability, but a weakened judicial system prevents successful prosecution of these laws.

- External oversight bodies are in the process of being established.

- Central government has limited the reviewing of sub-national administration.

- Continued reliance on foreign aid makes government vulnerable to misuse and poor management of aid agencies.

- Insufficient regulation and monitoring enables abuse of NGO status.

- Private and public sector involvement in the opium economy leads to bribery, concealment, and money laundering.

- Media and other institutions responsible for informing the public are still emerging.
(ANDS-Volume 1: 104-105)

4.4. Trends

The Afghanistan Compact declares (selected points):
- Energy: Electricity will reach 65% of households, 90% of non-residential establishments in urban areas and at least 25% of households in rural areas. At least 70% of the costs will be recovered from users by end 2010.
- Urban Development: Municipal government will have strengthened capacity to manage urban development and to ensure that municipal services are delivered effectively, efficiently and transparently. Investment in water supply and sanitation will ensure that 50% of households in Kabul and 30% of households in other major urban areas will have access to piped water by end 2010.
- Anti-Corruption: The UN Convention against Corruption will be ratified by end 2006, national legislation adapted accordingly by end 2007 and a monitoring mechanism to observe implementation will be in place by end 2008. (AC 2006:7, ANDS 2005: 104)

4.5. Opportunities for peace building activities

Long-term well-managed development service by international community
- The international community needs to commit to a well-funded and well-managed effort of economic development for the long-term (ten years or more). (Wadhams 2005: 12)
- NGOs to use their economic power to support the political and economic transformation process.
- Accountable, transparent and professional management of NGOs and partner organisations.
- DNH sensitivity in the distribution of aid and development goods.

Local benefits
- Employment-generation programmes should be a key priority. Donors should also use more local services and buy more goods locally. (Wadhams 2005: 12)
- The Afghan government and international donors should find partners in local government and civil society for reconstruction projects. (Waldhams 2005: 12)
- Capacity building of local partner organisations and their management for sustainable infrastructure of private enterprise and/or civil organisation.

Government building
- The national Afghan government, local government and their servants have to work professionally and fairly. More responsibility should be given to government and local organisations as soon as they are functioning reliably.
- International community should develop possible links to good governance, when they accepted or build up parallel structures to the government in former times.
- Training of government, private and local capacities in transparent management and decision-making processes, finance management and auditing.

Anti-corruption, NGO measures
- Clear anti-corruption strategies for NGOs and how to deal with internal and external corruption.
- Anti-corruption selection criteria for local, national and international partner organisations and local staff.
- Anti-corruption strategies in the international community for the distribution of aid.
- Monitoring and documentation of corruption in government and administration service and systems.

5. Challenge 4: Drug economy

5.1. Drugs: Significant and complex obstacle

The areas under poppy cultivation reduced in 2005. In 2005, 4.1 million tons of poppy were cultivated, 87% of the world poppy. The number of households involved in poppy cultivation fell by 13%. But nevertheless 300,000 households involving 2 million people, nearly 9% of the total population, were involved in opium cultivation. The drop of 21% areas under cultivation compared with 2004 is made relevant by the small decrease, only 2.4%, in actual opium production, which was due to good weather. Consequently, the value of the drugs was estimated to be close to the level of 2004. The Afghan Government expects GDP of USD 5.2 billion for the year 2004-2005. (UNODC September 2005: 1)

The *Drug Use Survey* 2005, undertaken by the UN Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) with the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics and the Ministry of Public Health, came to the conclusion that there are nearly a million drug users in Afghanistan. Included in this figure are approximately 50,000 heroin users and more than a half million hashish users. Nearly half the drug users interviewed said they use more than one type of illicit drug. In total there are more rural drug users (732,000) than urban (188,000). (UNAMA 2006: 11)

Karzai and others identify that drugs are a larger more difficult problem than terrorism for Afghanistan.

There are many links between the Afghan government and other top provincial government officials to the drug economy. An unofficial document by the now resigned Interior Minister, Ali Ahmad Jalali, listed the names of 100 officials with connections to drugs, including members of Karzai's cabinet.

5.2. Trends

The relationship between the opium poppy economy and conflict is less clear and differs from commonly held expectations. In Badakhshan, for example, the rise in production and widening access to this economy thus far has instead relaxed pressure on other resources within diverse livelihood strategies. From a local point of view it appears to be an important coping strategy for the resource poor and an attractive strategy for further accumulation for the resource rich. The immediate risk for conflict aggravation around this criminal economy is connected to a combination of growing dependency of the resource poor on poppy cultivation and its new patrons with imminent interdiction measures. We expect that any successful but untargeted enforcement programme would certainly have a very negative effect on the debt-dependency and food security of this resource poor group that only recently managed to upgrade their survival strategy to coping, thanks to their access to fringes of the opium poppy economy. (Koehler 2004: vi)

"Although the illegal opium economy provides livelihoods for many impoverished Afghans, it enriches only a few. This illegal Afghan economy is being built on informal, untaxed opium revenues and thrives on the weak security environment and the lack of a well-developed system of rule of law. This deprives the public sector of income that could be used to build much needed infrastructures." (Senlis Council 2005: 4) That would strengthen the public sector, especially the governmental structures, enabling them to take responsibility for the Afghans and become independent of international donors.

Senlis Council presented ten recommendations to solve the drug problem in Afghanistan with such measures as

- Licensing the poppy production for medical purposes,
- Developing alternative crops to drugs, such as saffron or rose oil,
- Getting support from jirgas and shuras in an opium licensing enforcement strategy,
- Placing alternative livelihoods and development at the forefront and avoiding the increasing militarisation of drug policy.
  (Senlis Council 2005: 2-3)

The decrease in the area of land under poppy cultivation in 2005 is accounted for almost entirely by the 96% drop in production in one of the leading opium producing provinces – Nangahar. As promises intended to lead to the reduction of production were not fulfilled (alternative livelihood) an increase in production can be anticipated. This, in turn, will lead to conflict when the government and the international community try to enforce eradication. These unfilled promises can be linked to the general feeling that Afghans have of their political, social and economic situation which is marked by frustration and is likely to increase Confrontational Non-Governmental Events. The feeling of being sidelined by inferior candidates in the election might enhance this even further. (FAST 2005: 6)

The proportion of injecting heroin users is at 15%, more than 7,000 individuals. Needle sharing is a major path for the transmission for HIV/AIDS and other diseases, and while today the number of reported HIV/AIDS cases in Afghanistan is very low, the number of injecting users indicates a point of vulnerability for broader transmission. (UNAMA 2006: 11)

Eradication will be not sustainable because there are no real alternatives to compensate for 40% of the economy.

5.3. Opportunities for peace building activities

Searching for alternatives
- Searching for alternative livelihoods.
- The entire reconstruction effort has to develop concepts that take into account the societal contexts and the dependencies of the opium growers. Acceptable alternative products or compensation schemes have to be developed.
- Developing an economy that is not dependent on drugs.

Monitoring
- Monitoring of links between government, administration, police, and governors in drug affairs.

NGO measures
- NGOs should ensure that they do not support, either directly or indirectly, the drug economy.
- Clear regulations on how to deal with those breaking the rules.
- DNH-monitoring of how aid and development work undermines eradication efforts.
- DNH analysis of how aid and development work by the free distribution of products, e.g. wheat purchased from outside the area, undermines existing alternatives for poppy.

6. Challenge 5: Tension between centre and periphery

6.1. Local challenges to state building

The political capital of the state of Afghanistan is Kabul, but its political influence is decreasing from the national to the provincial to the district level. In Afghanistan it was only during the soviet occupation and the Taliban regime that the state had a presence throughout almost the entire country, with little exception, for example in the province of Badakhshan.

A Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) analysis in March 2005: Although there have been improvements in fiscal and administrative processes, large parts of the country still suffer from weak, ineffective and in some places corrupt government. However, in the absence of an overall vision or strategy for local government, a multitude of uncoordinated and potentially contradictory bodies are being established at province and lower levels, sometimes with access to large sums of donor funding. (Lister 2005: 1)

The constitution of Afghanistan states that, in addition to elected members to the Upper House of the National Assembly, provincial councils are to have an advisory role and to be involved in development activities related to their province, but it provides no further guidance. The specific role of district councils is even more vague- to provide opportunities for participation in local administration and to organise activities. (Lister 2005: 5)

The first election of the district councils was postponed in 2005 and no alternative date is scheduled at the moment. That means a lack of democratic linkage between the district and provincial/ national level, but this could also be seen as a window of opportunity for clarifying political concepts, linking responsibilities and processes.

6.2. Local main conflict related issues

National conflict analyses are not adequate at the local level. Local conflict analyses are very rare. A local conflict analysis for Badakhshan in 2003 of the main area of conflict locally undertaken by GTZ/AKDN/ARC came to the following result:
• Natural Resources
• Poppy/Opium
• Border
• NGO Activities
• Youth and Generation conflicts
• State Building
• Key Positions
• Discrimination
• Religion.
  (Koehler 2004; Gosztonyi 2004: 14, see appendices: Example of a regional conflict analysis: Badakhshan)

These conflict areas were ranked by the Afghan staff of two aid agencies in two different peace building training programmes in 2005 with the result that conflicts concerning natural resources - poppy/opium, - religion, discrimination and NGO activities were their main obstacles to dealing on a local level. (See appendices: Ranking of regional conflict analysis: Badakhshan)

An interesting point is neither state building nor security nor corruption, were seen at the local level as obstacles.

In fact general international conflict analysis does not give much attention to main local conflict arenas. Poppy growing and tension with regard to natural resources could be the main crosscutting issues for national and local analysis.

6.3. Local mechanism of conflict management

Local disputes frequently flare into violence and lead to wider problems. In some areas local problems can be solved by traditional shuras and/or mullahs. But local commanders often exploit these disputes to consolidate their positions, further weakening the authority of the central government. Most disputes are over
- Land and water,
- Ethnicity, often linked to land and water, but also to the struggle between political parties,
- Family – frequently revolving around women.
  (ICG Asia report No 64 2003: i)

Tackling conflict and providing security in Afghanistan requires a greater effort at a local level. This frequently flares into violence and leads to wider problems, often taking political and ethnic dimensions if not tackled properly. Although these attract less attention than the threat from the resurgents, they are important as they produce an environment of insecurity that destroys all quality of life for ordinary civilians and undermines the legitimacy of the Afghan government. Also, traditional mechanisms for conflict resolution do not apply proactive measures: they are merely reactive. (FES 2005: 5)

The analysis of local formal and informal bodies of decision-making revealed the source of many obstacles:
- Mostly three formal and informal systems are working parallel: local governance, religious institutions (Mosque) and traditional systems (e.g. shura, meeting of the elders).
- The rules of these systems are different: legal (mostly not available at local level), Sharia, tradition.
- The values of these rules are different and lead sometimes to completely different interpretations and results, e.g. HR, Islam, tradition.
- The influence of these rules on the local level is different: local governance has less influence than the others; tradition has greater influence than religion. Yet sometimes the reverse can apply.
- Local governance, security bodies, legal systems and administration do not function on the local level, they lack legitimacy and are perceived as incompetent and corrupt.
- Power is spread among many different people, but it is also possible that one person is not only a representative of government, a khan, but is also a mullah/maulawi, an arbeb/malik (major) and in some cases also a former commander.
- Not only locally accepted power holders but also armed former commanders and the new drug elite try to increase their influence on the local level, mostly using a combination of clientism, combined with bribery, threat and force.

6.4. Local challenge to security

Former militia leaders have control or strongholds in many parts of the country beyond Kabul, and in these regions the influence of central government can be weak. Particular concerns

surround issues such as tax collection and the enforcement of law (including the eradication of opium poppy cultivation). (Economist Intelligence Unit 2005: 6)

Local commanders often exploit disputes to consolidate their positions, further weakening the authority of the central government. In such a turmoil situation, manipulation of the prejudices by the warlords in Afghanistan has been a consistent strategy, that has not only reduces trust, co-operation and positive interaction between different social groups, but also creates a lot of hatred and enmity. (FES 2005: 5)

6.5. Trends

Most ordinary Afghans want peace, they are tired of fighting. They accept the presence of the international forces and they expect that after the collecting in of all weapons, peace will come.

With generally low capacity available at province and district levels, there is a danger that human resources will be concentrated in other, better-resourced bodies. The lack of financial and human resources could have a negative impact on the perception and legitimacy of government and democratic processes, if elected bodies fail to perform. (Lister 2005: 5)

There is a lack of transparency in the international community about the implicit assumptions of the value and appropriateness of decentralisation, even though there is an unclear constitutional mandate and no widespread political buy-in for even modest devolution of central government functions. It is alarming that there appears to be little recognition that decisions about specific activities or structures, including the role of elected bodies, need to follow on from a political consensus on broader strategic issue. (Lister 2005: 2)

Disarmament and disbanding of militias, or their incorporation into national security bodies, remain priorities. There are fears that the new provincial assemblies may become tools for former warlords or the Taliban will turn against the government. (Economist Intelligence Unit 2005: 6)

When the state expands its influence to the local level tension with the local power stakeholders such as elders, mullahs/maulawis, khan, arbeb, former commanders, can be expected.

More regional conflict analysis would be very important for increasing knowledge about local mechanisms of leadership and decision-making, the role and responsibilities of power related stakeholders, the local legitimating process and successful local structures and mechanisms for conflict management. The available local peace and conflict related research shows that there is, at the moment, no general pattern visible. Generally local design could vary from village to village and, as government influence increases, will change.

6.6. Opportunities for peace building activities

Government building
- Open discussion with public and government about different decentralisation concepts, their benefits and weaknesses.
- Open and broad-based consultative processes around the roles and mandates of provincial and district councils. (Lister 2005: 8)
- An appropriate legal framework should be established to encourage accountable government and broad-based citizen participation in governance. (Lister 2005: 9)

- Meshrano Jirga: Training of representatives to understand their role and the function, funding and linkages of these councils.

Research
- Research on the local mechanism of leadership and decision-making, the roles, responsibilities and arrangements between power related stakeholder, on local legitimating processes and successful local mechanisms of conflict management is necessary.

NGO activities
- Internationals have to clarify their understanding of decentralisation and should reflect the impact for Afghanistan.
- General monitoring of activities to bring things into line with the next step of government building.
- Pro-active use of the cross-cutting role between national government and local government, between international relationship and local access, between different value systems, to be an example for good governance.
- DNH-analysis of activities, especially their connectedness with governance building on the national and local level on the long-term.
- National and international agencies of humanitarian aid and development working on the local level can contribute to filling the gap between Kabul and the village level with the latter's knowledge and experience.
- Developing a simple and practical analysis tool that could be used by Afghan staff and/or practitioners in the field to get basic information about peace and conflict-related issues.

7. General obstacles, challenges and entry points for development NGOs in peace building

7.1. General obstacles

Islam versus Human Rights
There is a lack of open public discussion about the relationship of HR and the interpretation of Islam in Afghanistan. All relevant documents for Afghanistan such as the Constitution or the *Afghanistan Compact* relate to HR, but "no law can be contrary to the religion of Islam". In reality the right of free media, women rights or actually the right for free choice of religion are limited by the interpretation of Islam. With the domination of representatives of fundamental Islam in justice, development more than HR will strengthen Islam as a legal framework. An open public dialogue between the different interpretations of Islam in Afghanistan is needed. But is also needed between the international community, with their basis on HR, and Islam because their assumptions are contradictory. Differences between basic values are a high risk factor for sustainable peace building.

Cultural intervention: tradition versus modern
For most parts of Afghanistan especially in the rural areas traditional pattern are the basic for social life. This includes a diversity of traditions because of region, tribe, ethnicity and/ or religion. These traditional patterns are different from whose of the international community and those which are basics for the modern ideas of democracy and good governance. For example with values like women rights, freedom of decision-making or speech, transparency, non-violence or participation. A transformation process of cultural pattern will need generations and it needs the wish of the people. The internationals push too much in a too short timeframe on transformation process based on cultural pattern, this is a high risk factor of loosing legitimacy and for escalation of cultural based conflicts with high violent potentials.

Diversity of political assumption and concepts
There are many implicit and explicit different political concepts of government and democracy between the Afghan government and the international community: Such misunderstood concepts include central values, the role of religion, centralisation and decentralisation, the degree of participation of civil society and women. The asymmetric economical situation, because the Afghan government but also because society, is dependent on international finance, will hold back an open clarification process that could build up deeper understanding and trust. Without agreement on the meaning of central political assumptions and priority there is a high risk that the Afghans and parts of the international community will follow different agendas. This could lead, in the short to mid-term, to disappointment or lack of agreement on local ownership that would weaken the sustainability of international development involvement.

Working with a weak state: many unclear roles, mandates and responsibilities
Many roles and mandates of representatives of the government on all levels are unclear. The differences between the roles, responsibilities and mandates of army and police for the people's security are not clear. Corrupt administration and security servant, lack of security, non existing legal structures in many parts, corruption and illegal economy, all contribute to making difficult a framework for international development work. The place and sharing of roles and responsibilities between Afghan government and international community are in many sectors also not transparent or interrelated.

That opens the door to the unrealistic expectations of the people about the responsibility of the government. All these points could produce dissatisfaction, have the potential to escalate conflicts high, weaken each other and give those who want to weaken government-building many opportunities for destabilisation. They would also provide easy entry points to corruption.

Development work can be only one stakeholder among others. There is a high risk of failure and of being used by conflicting parties, when activities are not well communicated, coordinated and well designed.

Difficult balance between ambitious goals and unrealistic expectations
For a transformation process it is important to have coordinated goals. The *Afghanistan Compact* is a very positive example for a joint effort of the Afghan Government and the international community. But the goals in the *Afghanistan Compact* are in many points too ambitious: Do those who should be measured have the access and the resources and the decision-making powers? Who has responsibility for what? Who is responsible for the resources? Is the timing realistic? The risk is that too-ambitious goals will unrealistically raise expectations and when these expectations are not met lead to middle-term dissatisfaction whereby the stakeholders (Afghan government and international community) will lose legitimacy in the eyes of the people. The possibility that the Afghan government and the international community will blame each other for failures is very high.

Poppy eradication will do harm
Afghanistan is already one of the poorest countries in the world. Eradication without alternatives brings more poverty to the local people. The internationals will lose the confidence of those farmers who are dependent on growing poppy (300,000 households involving two million people in 2005) without alternatives. These farmers will cooperate with those supporting them or those on whom they are dependent. This is an extremely high risk factor in the government building and security sector because it will strengthen those with anti-government and illegal goals.

Cooperation with civil society
The expansion of civil society and their culture is different in different countries. After long periods of war, the activities of civil society are reduced and, when existing, mostly divided along conflict lines. This is the case in Afghanistan. The cultural pattern of social organisation in Afghanistan is along families and tribes, are male-dominant and age-orientated. This blocks the development along the needs and interests of a free and diverse civil. This is not in line with the concept of, experience with and expectations for civil society, of many Internationals. Not having these differences in mind could be a risk factor for the development of a democratic government, for the development of an independent civil society, for development work and a deterrent to courageous Afghans.

Do harm by international cooperation
There is competition between many of the international organisations about good local partners and qualified local staff. The presence of internationals increases the rent for office space and accommodation, the living costs for locals. Internationals contribute to confusion and conflict in local society regarding the distribution criteria, the weakening of the local economy through the distribution of free goods, per diem payment for training, and many other factors. The behaviour of the internationals does not present a good example of co-operation and co-ordination and could raise problems and different sorts of friction.

7.2. General challenges for peace building

Windows of opportunity
The coming years are a window of opportunity
- For the Afghan government to get the trust of the people and the international community,
- For the international community to support good Afghan governance and to make them more independent of the drug economy and international financial support,
- For the people to develop realistic expectations of the government and to support the development of a good government.

Joint transformation process
A transformation process includes all, including the international community.
- Each country develops its own political settings and process of transformation. Externals can support this, but they have to accept country-specific variations. They should support clarification instead of producing more confusion.
- Transformation means that there will be several steps over a longer time with the opportunity to learn by experience and also to rectify mistakes. A transformation will usually not be linear and only in rare circumstances will it reach its goal at the first attempt.
- The transformation of social and cultural patterns take a long time (from ten years to two generations), because systems and people need information, time to discuss and understand and time to change attitudes, behaviour and systems.

Maybe less is more
- Slower progress will bring more progress in conflict transformation and peace building.
- Reducing the tempo to mean taking more time to build up trust and long-term relationships. Maybe this will be more effective and efficient in the longer term.
- The amount of money is not the sole indicator for the need of international involvement. Such money should be used to meet the needs of Afghans and not the guidelines of the donor organisations. There should be willingness among the Afghans to take more responsibility in co-operation with the international donors. There is an expectation among locals of continuing to obtain from international organisations.

Local expertise first, then training on the job
International organisations should use their economic and management powers to work with local experts and to build up sustainable local capacities. But this requires that trained people are responsible for using their new expertise, and do not keep it to themselves and should not be prevented from using it by their employers as is often the case. This also entails reducing the tempo because building up local capacities needs time.

7.3. Entry points for development NGOs

Quick impacts are important
Quick impacts are important to encourage the continuation of a transformation process, because it evidences success. Entry points for quick visible and measurable impacts of development work could be progress in the typical fields of development such as education, health, electricity, water, reconstruction of agricultural supplies, poverty reduction, all linked with the reduction of violent conflicts, for peace building and conflict management.
- Connecting these fields with a peace and conflict impact assessment (PCA).
- Connecting these fields with peace and conflict sensitivity. (DNH analysis).
- Transformation of local conflict management styles: information and training in different conflict management styles.

- Start with those activities that can be best achieved more easily and successfully.
- Less is more, but starting with something that will have quick visible results is important.

Peace is not for free but cheaper than other things
Projects in conflict transformation and peace building need resources. The capacity for and additional qualification of staff in peace building and appropriate space for meetings and dialogue are important. These are more an investment in human capacity than in technical items. It is more an emphasis on something additional than on something new. It could increase the sustainability of development work.

Building government
- Strong and fair monitoring of national government,
- Information for and training of parliament and government administration,
- Information and training of lawyers in HR,
- Public discussion of sensitive issues of HR in Afghanistan, e.g. women rights, free media, etc. ,
- Training in specific aspects of HR for men, e.g. women rights,
- NGOs as Third Party or Mediator between the Afghan government and the local level,
- Contribution to government building, especially as a bottom-up process,
- Capacity building in the monitoring of civil society,
- Supporting open public discussion on government issues and HR.

Security
- Monitoring of the army and police, a documentation system for abuses.

NGOs support the national anti-corruption process
- Until 2009 NGOs support government implementation processes in anti-corruption (Trust-building, joint effort): advice, training, monitoring, publication.
- If the government reaches their anti-corruption strategy goals by 2009, the NGOs hand over progressively more management and budget responsibilities to the Afghan government.

Drugs
- Research for alternative livelihoods,
- Searching for acceptable alternatives instead of eradication.

Centre versus periphery
- Transforming parallel systems into adaptable good governance systems,
- Lobby-work for good governance, by integrating local and traditional management experience and wisdom.

Civil Society
- Information on government: constitution, role, mandate and responsibilities of the government for the people,
- Information on civil rights,
- Development of relevant and simple peace and conflict analysis tools for the people in the field,
- Training in different conflict management styles.

7.4. Peace and conflict analysis as an entry point for peace building

A peace and conflict analysis can be used for an internal clarification process of an organisation with their local partners. This reflection of analysis and consultation process is just a part of peace building. There is a need to inform, of joint reflection for a deeper mutual understanding, to learn and share knowledge and experience from each other, to be transparent, to build up confidence and to develop ownership, all open to analysis. This process will show differences like disagreements, fears, frictions, will make implicit assumptions explicit and can show and cause problems. This should be dealt very seriously and is a part of a clarification process where the organisation can show their ability to manage difficult dialogs in a transparent and professional way.

Following is a design of eleven steps in three modules for such a process.

Internal and external reflections and consultation processes (analysis and strategic planning)

1. Internal consultation: Are analyses, common ground and differences shared? Can things be interpreted differently? What can be changed that can be subjected to analysis and used as guidelines for future work – conception, strategy development, decision-making, planning, monitoring, evaluation of programmes and projects?

2. The results of step 1 should be discussed with relevant stakeholders and partner organisations. Questions should be asked – is the analysis shared, what are the common grounds and differences? Are things interpreted differently, if so, why? What can be changed, and why? Can the results of this analysis be shared, to be used as a guideline and for better co-operation?

3. Internal reflection on the external consultation process: discussion of common ground and differences, advice and wishes for change. What can be shared? What should be proved? Which additional information is needed? Where are the disagreements and why? How are these differences confronted?

4. Finalizing: There is the need for finalising a peace and conflict analysis for internal use It would be better if this analysis is for use with stakeholders and partners but sometimes this is not possible. If necessary the consultation process, using step two and three, can be repeated.

Internal decision-making on peace and conflict relevance (political will and portfolio)

There is not the need to press for everything in the peace and conflict pattern, although it seems to be politically correct at the moment. Nobody can achieve everything. Priorities are important, therefore it is better to clearly define in which areas to be involved and how this can be implemented.

5. Where is the institutional commitment by constituency, mandates or other relevant bodies in the field of peace and conflict? What fit is there to the mandate, personnel and financial structure, resources and experience? Does something have to be added or changed to get a mandate or resources?

6. Where are typical activities with access to peace and conflict-relevant issues? Does something have to be added or changed to improve them? What could risk factors be? How much would such implementation cost: politically, in personnel, technically, from the budget?

7. Decision-making: Decisions on programmes and projects with a clear institutional mandate and resources (personnel, infrastructure and budget) are needed for peace and conflict-related programmes and projects.

Implementation in planning, management, monitoring and evaluation tools

8. Peace and conflict assessment (PCA) of those programmes and projects that should have impact on peace and conflict processes including or with additional project partners: What are

the desired goals? What is necessary to reach such goals? What correspondence is there with peace and conflict transformation? What improvements can be achieved? What should be changed or added? Do we work with the appropriate partners or should we change something (training, additional, new partners)? What are the risk factors?

9. A Do No Harm analysis of these programmes and projects is necessary: What should be changed? How can things be improved?

10. Developing indicators and monitoring/ evaluation instruments to measure peace and conflict-relevant developments.

11. Evaluate the need for information and/or training for staff or partners to improve the peace and conflict-related programmes and projects. Calculate the budget for that.

Appendices

Abbreviation

AC	Afghanistan Compact
AIA	Afghan Interim Administration
AIHRC	Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANDS	Afghan National Development Strategy
ANP	Afghan National Police
AREU	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
ATA	Afghan Transitional Authority
DDR	Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration
DED	Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst, German Development Service
DNH	Do No Harm
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HR	Human Right
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNODC	UN Office on Drug and Crime

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Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
www.carnegieendowment.org

Center for Strategic and International Studies www.csis.org
Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project

Chr. Michelsen Institut www.cmi.no

CIA-Factbook
www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/af.html

Economist Intelligence Unit www.eiu.com/schedule

Foreign Policy www.foreignpolicy.com
Failed state index

Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER) www.fewer.org

The Fund for Peace www.fundforpeace.org
First annual Failed State Index

Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) www.gtz.de/drogen
Development-related drug programme

Heidelberger Institut für internationale Konfliktforschung www.konfliktbarometer.de

Human Rights Watch www.hrw.org

International Crisis Group/ ICG www.crisisweb.org
Afghanistan Briefing, Asia Report, Crisiswatch, Monthly Bulletin, Policy Briefing

International Monetary Fund www.imf.org

Swisspeace/ FAST www.swisspeace.org/fast
Annual Report, Quarterly Risk Assessment, Country risk framework

Transparency International www.transparency.de
Corruption Perceptions Index, Global Corruption Barometer

United Nation Assistance Mission in Afghanistan www.unama-afg.org

United Nations Development Programme- Afghanistan www.undp.org.af
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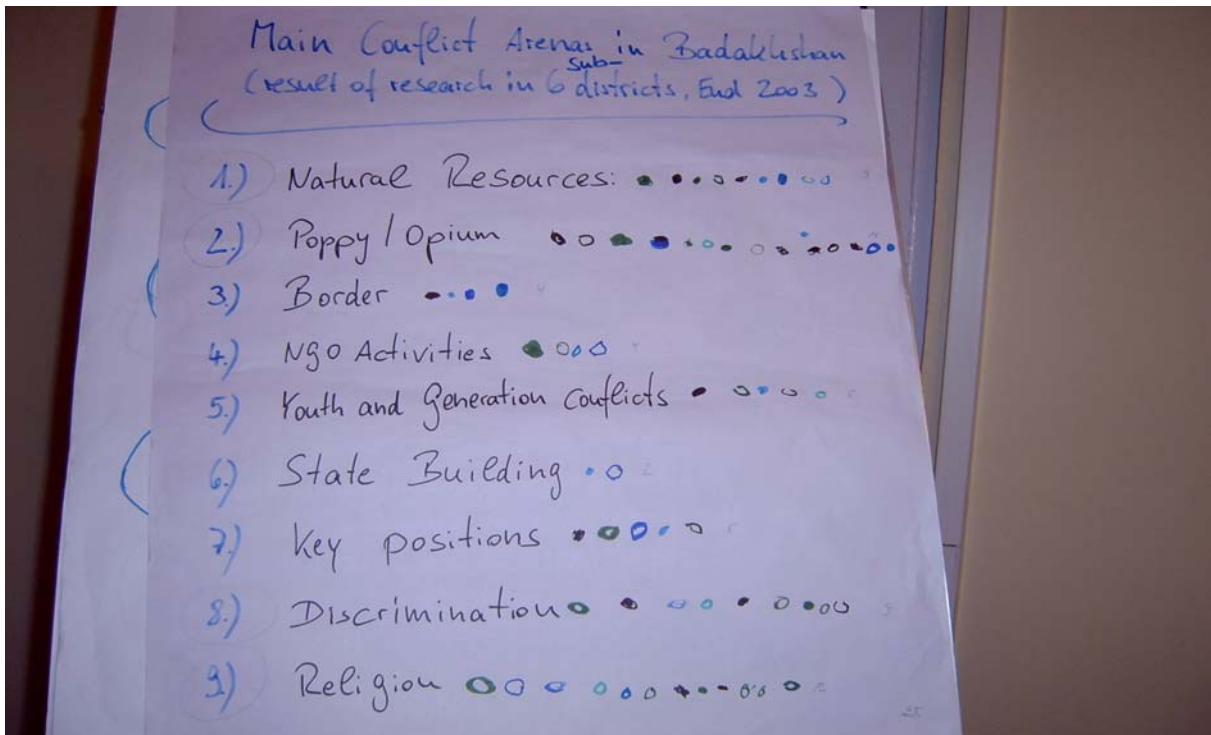# Example: regional conflict analysis Badakhshan

1. The Main Conflict Arenas in the Research Area

The starting point for the further analysis of the empirical results is the concept of *conflict arenas*. We understand the term conflict arenas to mean clusters of conflict that share certain common and dominant features, e.g. resource conflicts, conflicts about discrimination, etc. These conflict clusters or arenas were developed in a participatory manner in the initial training workshop and adjusted empirically during fieldwork and in the final workshop.
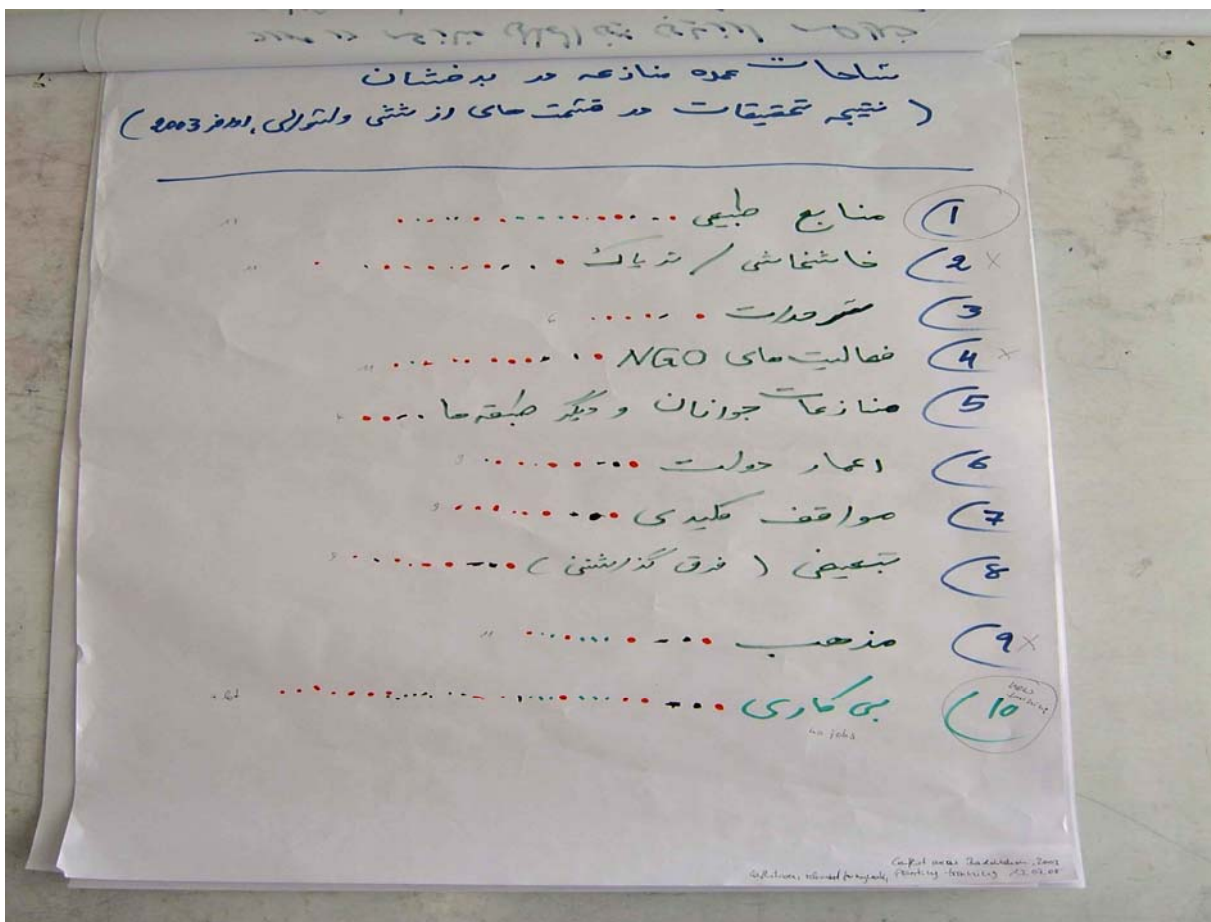
The empirical research has identified nine main conflict arenas in the six research locations (see Table 1). Please note that the conflict arenas are not listed according to prominence:

1. **Natural Resources:** The research identified conflicts about arable land and pastures, forest use and water (more precisely the use of the water for irrigation channels). Two factors play a role in these conflicts: the severely depleted natural resources and ecological degradation in the region on the one hand and the insufficient institutional control of resource distribution on the other. During more than twenty years of war, traditional institutions of conflict management and resource distribution have lost a lot of their power. Instead, brute force or 'the logic of the gun' have frequently overruled the decisions of these institutions.

2. **Poppy/Opium:** This conflict arena actually refers to two different sets of conflicts: (a) about opium consumption – this mostly affects Ismaili villages and frequently has a generation and a religious conflict aspect; (b) about poppy/opium production and smuggling.

3. **Border:** The conflict 'border' is comprised of two different types of conflicts: (a) One is related to all kinds of clashes between Russian border guards on the Tajik side of the border and the local Afghan population on the other. The Afghans perceive a creeping occupation of small pieces of land by the Tajik side through the redirection of the Panj River, which means it erodes more land on the Afghan side. Interestingly, research in Tajikistan has shown that the Tajik side perceives the Afghans to be the main aggressors in the border disputes. On the Afghan side again, informants reported occasional incidents in which people were shot, apparently without reason, by Russian border guards. (b) The second type of border conflict is related to drug trafficking.

4. **NGO Activity:** Assets brought by NGO projects can represent the most significant economic resources in impoverished regions.[4] It is therefore no surprise that the distribution of NGO-project assets can trigger intense conflicts within communities. Naturally, the well-off and the powerful are best positioned to appropriate these assets. In addition, in the changing environment of post-war Badakhshan, commanders appear to be in greater need of legitimising their positions. Taking undeserved credit for NGO activities is one such legitimising strategy that was observed. Additionally, commanders also tend to misuse NGO projects running in their area to reward their clients (e.g. soldiers or relatives) by manipulating the projects so as to give them jobs or additional benefits.

5. **Youth and Generation conflicts:** Though by no means the most crucial conflict type, in a number of locations the research teams observed a generational aspect to ongoing conflicts. Most notably, these conflicts can be subdivided into conflicts (a) about opium consumption (usually affecting Ismaili villages) whereby the younger generation opposes the opium habit of their parents; (b) about accepting or rejecting the traditional Ismaili authorities (*shahs*). The younger generation tends to reject the authority of the *shahs*. Once again this conflict type affects Ismaili villages. (c) In Wardooj a conflict was observed between certain *mullahs* and the changing lifestyles of some of the young people.

6. **State Building:** One of the key and most explosive conflict arenas; in the course of the peace process the Afghan Transitional Administration (ATA) slowly tries to extend its reach into the provinces and comes thereby into conflict with commanders and other local power holders who are not willing to cede power to the government or who attempt to take over or co-opt the state.

7. **Key Positions:** This conflict arena summarises struggles that are fought for positions of power in a certain region. Locally it appears as the most prominent field of conflict. In principle it can designate conflicts that are fought for state positions, i.e. who will be the next governor, *wolliswol* etc., or outside of the framework of the state, for positions of traditional authority such as the khan, the local commander, etc. On occasion it can take place between a state position and a non-state authority – in such a case it might overlap with the conflict arena of 'state building'.

8. **Discrimination:** Three manifestations of conflict were observed in this arena: (a) between Ismailis and Sunnis whereby the respective majority tended to discriminate against the respective minority. Occasionally (b) these conflicts overlapped with ethnic discrimination (e.g. Wakhan). Lastly, (c) the discrimination of women is a pervasive fact of life in Afghanistan and of course in Badakhshan, too.

9. **Religion:** Two subsets of conflicts were observed in this broader arena. (a) On the one hand, the *farman* of the Aga Khan that abolished the traditional authority of Ismaili *shahs* in the region and established new councils instead has led to significant local conflict between adherents of the new councils and the devoted followers of the traditional *shahs*. (b) On occasion, conflicts around religion could also be observed among Sunnis, e.g. between followers of Wahabi and Hanafi interpretations of Islam.

(Gostonyi 2004: 14)

Ranking of regional conflict analysis Badakhshan

Main Conflict Arenas in Badakhshan
(result of research in 6 Sub-districts, End 2003)

1.) Natural Resources: ● ● ● ○ ● ● ● ○ ○
2.) Poppy / Opium ○ ○ ● ● ● ○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ● ○ ● ○ ○
3.) Border ● ● ● ●
4.) NGO Activities ● ○ ○ ○
5.) Youth and Generation Conflicts ● ○ ● ○ ○ ○
6.) State Building ● ○
7.) Key positions ● ○ ○ ● ○
8.) Discrimination ○ ● ● ○ ○ ● ○ ○ ○
9.) Religion ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○

07.03.2005, Afghan staff of one agency from three provinces

13.07.2005, Afghan staff of two agencies working in Badakhshan, 9 conflict areas plus poverty