

CONFLICT AND STABILITY IN AFGHANISTAN: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

JAN KOEHLER, KRISTÓF GOSZTONYI AND JAN R. BÖHNKE

ABSTRACT

In this paper we present the design of an ongoing mixed method research assessing the impact of the international intervention on stability in north-east Afghanistan. Designing a qualitative / quantitative research measuring changes in stability in the contemporary north-east Afghan context faces significant conceptual and practical challenges. The main thrust of the article is describing these challenges and the solutions we developed to overcome them. The first difficulty relates to the definition of stability. Since stability is not a clearly defined concept in social sciences, we had to develop our own working definition. Relying on social scientific classics we defined stability as being composed of four functional fields: physical security, governance institutions, economic development and the capacity to adapt to changing circumstances.

Following the discussion of stability and the indicators applied to measure performance in the four stability fields, we turn to discussing the practical difficulties associated with the research. The challenges range from dealing with security threats, to problems establishing a semblance of representativity in a country without a reliable census and where the administrative boundaries are not or only insufficiently delineated. Turning to the research itself, we present three tools (stakeholder maps, governance zones and scaled indicators) we developed to describe and measure stability in our target districts (the district level is our central unit of analysis). We then present two district case studies to illustrate the use of these tools. In the last section of our paper we present initial results regarding the relationship between some of our security and governance indicators. The presented results are not conclusive, but rather serve to illustrate how we approach the analysis of our data and what questions we intend to investigate in the future.

INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

In 2001 the US and its allies attacked Afghanistan and toppled the then ruling Taliban regime. With the Taliban gone, any semblance of a state structure that could be used by a new government to govern the country also disappeared. What was left filling the power and governance vacuum were more or less autarkic villages, in some areas tribes and warlords with their commanders, sub-commanders and militias dominating virtually every corner of the

country. To make things worse, after 20 years of jihad and subsequent civil war the infrastructure of the country was in tatters.

The outlines of the new post-Taliban order first began to take shape at an international conference held in 2001 near Bonn, Germany (the so-called Bonn-Conference). Hamid Karzai was selected to head the Afghan Interim Administration and after confirmation by a *loya jirga* (grand council) in July 2002 the Afghan Transitional Administration. At this point in time Karzai headed a state virtually without a state administration, or an army or police to protect it. The state itself would thus have to be reconstructed.

This became the task of a vast international mission headed by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and supported by a large number of international donors and NGOs; security for the mission was provided by the UN mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) originally only deployed to Kabul but later expanded to the whole country. Both components of the international state building and reconstruction effort were mandated to assist the emerging Afghan government to build up state institutions and capacities (cf. Brahim 2001).¹ This state-building effort suffered serious difficulties. On the civilian side, UNAMA never managed to effectively coordinate relief, international development and institution and capacity building efforts (Larsen 2010:6-7). On the security side, ISAF only started to project security beyond Kabul in 2004 (until then ISAF was limited to Kabul). The building up of an efficient police was not seriously begun until 2008-9 (Cordesman 2013:9-10), and only took up pace in 2009 following the announcement of President Obama's surge and (subsequent) withdrawal strategy.² The challenges were aggravated by a resurgent insurgency composed of three allied groups, the Taliban, the Haqqani Network and a militant faction of Hizb-e Islami led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. Evidence has been mounting, that the insurgency is also significantly supported by Pakistan (Rashid 2008: 219-239; see also Collins 2011).

In spite of the shortcomings of the international intervention, by 2010 Afghanistan presented a thoroughly changed picture as compared to 2001 when the Taliban were toppled. The physical infrastructure of the country had been mostly reconstructed and upgraded and the state clearly became a major actor reaching from Kabul down to the provincial and district levels in many parts of the country. On the local level a system of elected development councils were offering increasingly effective governance services to their constituents. Simultaneously to these positive developments, the insurgency also intensified and in 2010 controlled significant parts of the country though between 2010 and 2012 the US led surge retook large areas in the south, west and north from the insurgents. The key challenge in these areas was to fill the governance gap left by the withdrawal of the Taliban with Afghan administrative and societal structures.

Given the broad-based international state-building effort, measuring the intervention's impact purely in terms of security and its capability to keep the insurgents at bay is insufficient. This is especially so, given that will 2014 mark not only the hand-over of security responsibilities to the Afghan state, but generally the return to full Afghan sovereignty. A more or less functioning army and police will not suffice to sustain an Afghan state that will increasingly have to rely on its own means and efforts to survive.

¹ The concept of state-building with a light external footprint is attributed to the Brahim-report (Brahimi 2000) even though the term itself is not used in this report (cf. Sedra 2011; Koenigs 2010).

² The withdrawal began in July 2011 and marked the beginning of the transition to full Afghan security responsibly. By the end 2014 most US troops are scheduled to have left the country.

To catch the multi-dimensionality of the effort required to sustain the Afghan state beyond 2014, we turned to the concept of “*stability*”. Since stability is not a clearly defined concept in social sciences, we operationalised “*stability*” as being composed of four functional fields, security, legitimate institutions, economic reproduction and development, and the capacity to adapt to changing circumstances. The higher a country or region in a country performs along these four dimensions, the more stable it is assumed to be. We thus ask *to what extent the international intervention succeeded in stabilising Afghanistan?*

Aside of simply measuring the success or failure of the international effort in Afghanistan, operationalising stability along these four dimensions also allows us to pose and assess some of the key questions surrounding international state-building interventions in conflict states. After all, international interventions usually undertake simultaneous efforts in the functional fields of security, governance and development / economy. The question in how far society is willing and able to adapt to those efforts defines the fourth functional field of stability. In particular we are interested in understanding how efforts in the four functional fields of stability interact with each other. *Does the improvement of governance institutions have a knock-on effect on security? How do improvements in the economy and progress in development affect security and the performance of governance institutions?* It is after all a key expectation of counter-insurgency operations that the provision of development benefits can motivate populations to reject insurgents. Lastly, international state-building interventions also seek to introduce new forms of political organisation, governance and, hence, change in the social and political order.

To answer these questions we designed *a longitudinal study to investigate the impact of the international intervention on stability*. The research concentrates on 25 districts in four provinces of north-east Afghanistan – a comparatively stable area of this war torn country – and combines quantitative and qualitative methods. The baseline was carried out in 2010 and 2011. Currently we are conducting the first follow-up research, the results of which are expected in 2013.

In the *first* part of the paper we give an overview of the current situation in north-east Afghanistan and describe the various modes of governance present at the sub-national level in this area. In the subsequent *second* section we will discuss the methodological approach of the research, present a working definition of stability, and describe the shared assumptions underlying the stabilisation programmes described above which we intend to test. From our stability definition and impact hypothesis we derive indicators and data needs. The *third* section describes three tools we developed to depict and measure programme inputs and capture indicators for stability. In this section we also provide the exemplary description of two of our target districts to illustrate the use of our research tools. At the end of the paper we will offer initial observations restricting ourselves to the examination of the interrelation between *governance* and *security* – two of the four components of our stability model.

THE RESEARCH AREA

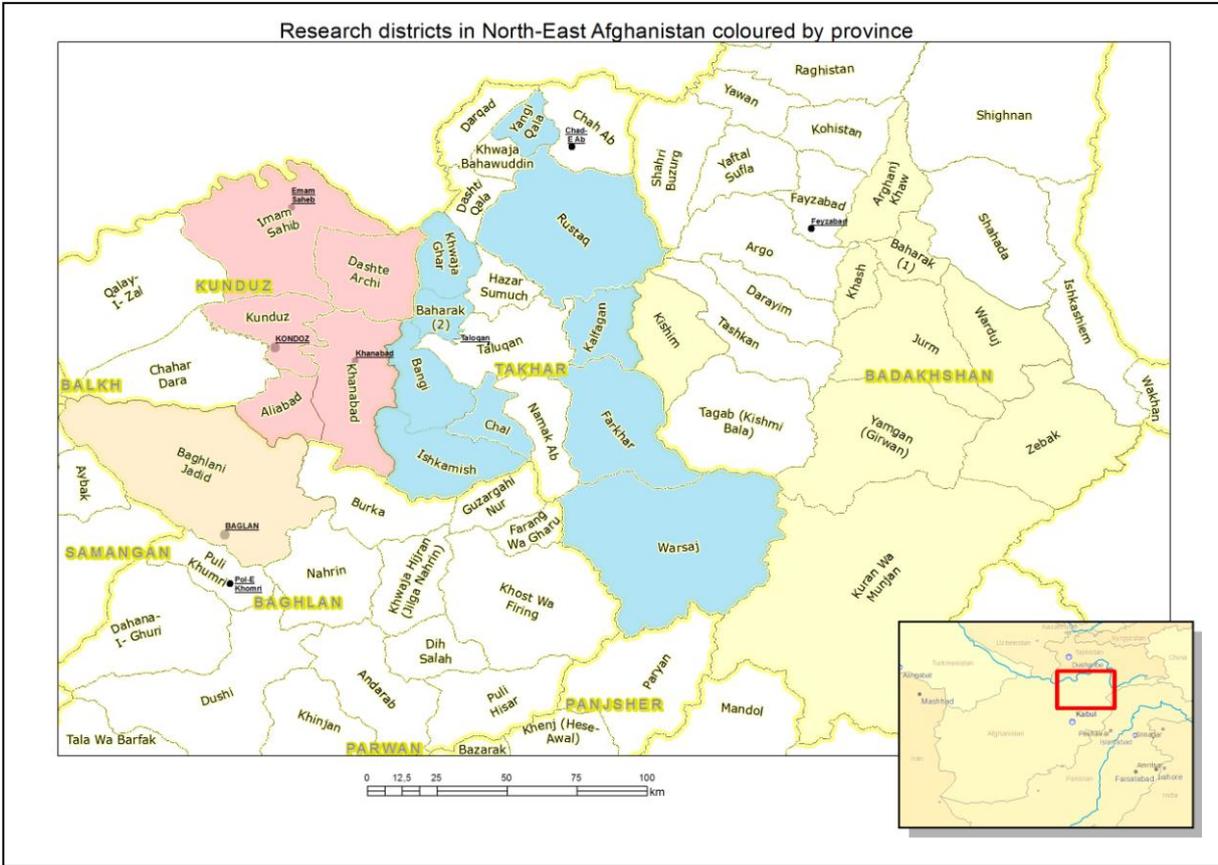
AN INTRODUCTION TO NORTH-EAST AFGHANISTAN

Our research focuses on north-east Afghanistan, more specifically on the provinces Kunduz, Baghlan, Takhar and Badakhshan. The area is dominated in the south and south-east by the

Pamir mountain range reaching heights of 5000m and above and in the north by low-lying plains. Rainfall is scarce allowing large populations only to flourish in the flatlands where rivers originating in the Pamirs make irrigated agriculture possible.

The area is home to a large number of ethnic groups, most importantly Tajiks (speaking a version of modern Persian called *dari*), Uzbeks and Pashtuns. In addition to the three major groups in the north-east, a number of further ethnic groups have significant presence in the area such as the dari speaking Hazara and Aymaq, and the Turkic speaking Turkmen. Concerning its religious composition the area is majority Sunni, with sizable Shia and Ismaili minorities (the latter is a minority sect of Islam often considered heretic by fundamentalist Sunnis such as the Taliban).

During the Soviet military intervention several of the main Mujahedin factions had a strong presence in the north including the Tajik dominated Jamiat-e Islami and the Pashtun dominated Hizb-e Islami. The outbreak of the civil war following the Soviet withdrawal and the collapse of the communist government saw the emergence of a new party, the Uzbek dominated Junbesh-e Milli. Most of our interview partners in the north and north-east experienced the civil war as significantly more traumatic than the preceding anti-Soviet jihad. This period was characterised by the arbitrary rule of local commanders with extortion, murder and rape being common against the back-drop of constant in-fighting between the various factions and sub-factions.³



³ In a series of 40 village history interviews we conducted together with local colleagues in four districts in 2007 a clear pattern emerged that attributed the most disturbing violence to the period of jihad that followed the already very violent Soviet occupation (cf. Koehler 2008; a detailed analysis of this data is forthcoming in 2013 as part of a PhD thesis of Koehler).

This was the anarchy which the Taliban movement vowed to end and in the Pashtun south and east of the country did, indeed, end (Rashid 2001: 17-30; Zaeef 2010: 57-65). While pax Talibana was initially welcomed in the south, their message was less convincing in the ethnically mixed north. As a mostly ethnic Pashtun movement itself, the Taliban found support among northern Pashtuns, but were overwhelmingly resisted by the other non-Pashtun ethnic groups who joined forces in what came to be known as the Northern Alliance to resist the onslaught of the Taliban (Rubin 2002: xviii-xxi).

9/11 and the subsequent US invasion changed the defining faultlines of the conflict. With US help the Northern Alliance swiftly recaptured the north and went on to push out the Taliban from the rest of the country. A period of increasing peace and stability followed the fall of the Taliban. For a short period “the rule of the gun”, as Jihadi commander rule is often referred to in Afghanistan, was on the wane and the emergence of a peaceful and stable northern Afghanistan seemed a realistic possibility.

The tipping point in the North was 2007-08⁴ when the Taliban, after re-establishing themselves in the south, used its contacts to its former – mainly Pashtun – supporters in the north to systematically re-launch the insurgency in this region as well. Between 2009 and 2011 the insurgency managed to destabilise significant parts of the north and some areas even came under full insurgent governance in this period (Gosztonyi/Koehler 2010; Giustozzi/Reuter 2011).

While the insurgency was still dominated by Pashtuns, the Taliban also made inroads among northern Uzbeks, allegedly through the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU),⁵ a Taliban affiliate originating in Uzbekistan but now believed to be headquartered in the Pakistani tribal belt. As of 2012 the insurgency now also has reached certain Tajik areas.⁶

Since late 2009 the emergent Taliban presence led to the establishment of local anti-Taliban militias (occasionally referred to as *arbakees*) in several districts of the north-east (Lefèvre 2010; Giustozzi/Reuter 2011; Gosztonyi/Koehler 2010). Despite high US-Army hopes, the track-record of these militias is at best mixed (Government of the USA 2010; Hulslander/Spivey 2012). Some credit them with significant successes against the Taliban, while others observe cooperation between militias and Taliban (even opportunistic changes of allegiance) and fear that atrocities committed by the arbakees might further delegitimize the Afghan state (AIHRC 2012).

Presently the US troop surge has significantly disrupted insurgent structures and managed to take back large areas which until late 2010 were entirely lost for the government. The sustainability of these gains is, however, questionable, especially as the US withdrawal scheduled for 2014 draws ever closer and with the handover of security responsibilities to the

⁴ In fact, the infiltration of the north-east likely began in 2005 with 2007-2008 experiencing the first significant outbreak of violence in the form of terrorist attacks and first skirmishes (cf. Giustozzi/Reuter 2011; Koehler 2008).

⁵ Locally the network is usually referred to by the name of its deceased leader, Tahir Youldash. International observers, however, tend to identify this group as IMU (e.g. Lachmann/Flade 2009; Clark 2011).

⁶ For example the successful effort of insurgents to take control of one strategic district in Tajik-dominated Badakshan Province, namely Wardooj. Here the insurgents prefer to call themselves Mujaheddin (rather than Taliban) but appear to be linked to the country-wide Taliban insurgency (authors as well as field team interviews in Fayzabad, Baharak and Wardooj, September 2012).

Afghan government forces being well under way. The insurgents have partly adapted and the north-east now presents a picture of intense guerrilla fighting in some areas, but with few, if any, areas being under full insurgent control and governance. Yet other areas are largely stable with very little violence occurring.

GOVERNANCE IN NORTH-EAST AFGHANISTAN

Sub-national governance in the north-east is highly complex, combining institutions of the state administration and influential civil society organisations⁷ In addition, on the local level one can find a number of “older”⁸ institutions, which provide governance services, too, as well as governance provided by the insurgents. Most areas of insurgent (Taliban) governance were dismantled in 2011 but are partly re-emerging since mid-2012 as the example of Wardooj shows, see FN 6). These different levels and forms of governance delivery sometimes co-exist, sometimes complement each other and sometimes compete with each other.

At present there are 34 provinces in Afghanistan. **Provinces** are headed by provincial governors (*walis*). Responsibility for appointments lies with the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), a government agency directly responsible to President Karzai. In addition, provincial governors invariably have powerful protectors or patrons in Kabul who appear to lobby for their appointment with Karzai. There is strong evidence that these patrons stake claims towards Karzai to staff certain posts in regions under their influence. Karzai as the supreme patron derives his power from balancing these patronage networks and playing them off against each other. In effect a classic divide and rule strategy. On occasion this strategy backfires and triggers open conflict.⁹

Provinces are subdivided into **districts**, the lowest partly *functioning* tier of constitutionally recognised state administration in Afghanistan. The precise number of districts is unclear with estimates ranging between 360 to 400 (Nixon 2008b: 9). District boundaries were repeatedly changed in recent years and remain poorly defined. Government as well as international agencies often work with differing and incompatible definitions of district boundaries.¹⁰

The administrative setup of districts closely resembles that of provinces. Districts are headed by the district manager (the *wolliswol*), a political appointee. Similar to their provincial superiors, district governors require Kabul-based political patronage. Districts also have their own police department, prosecutor, and district court as well as departments of the line ministries such education, health and agriculture. All these bodies are nominally independent of the *wolliswol*.

Nevertheless, even though the *wolliswols*’ power is formally limited to coordination, in practice they are usually very powerful on the local level often described as ‘gatekeepers’ who control

⁷ The most important of these programmes is the National Solidarity Programme (NSP).

⁸ We use “older” in the sense of predating the current Afghan government established following the US invasion in late 2001.

⁹ One such example with wider implications has been the conflict between Kabul backed Juma Khan and Governour Atta in Balkh province (see Gosztonyi/Koehler 2010).

¹⁰ The authors have repeatedly experienced lack of clearly defined borders and areas of responsibilities by different district administrations as challenge when preparing surveys. NATO and the UN are, for example, for official purposes still using the district boundaries based on the (mujahidin-driven) Rabbani-reforms of the early 1990. They are completely outdated but a reformed reference-map available since 2007 has never passed parliament. Hence, there is no official delimitation of districts that corresponds with reality.

access to service delivery as well as to the higher levels of government. Wolliswols also play a critical role “as the face of government with which most people come into contact, and their interest in and ability to help people greatly influence people’s attitudes toward the government as a whole” (Foundation 2008:6).

The next unit below the level of the district is the **village**. The Afghan Statistical Office identifies 40,020 villages in the country, the boundaries and location of which are, however, not defined (Nixon 2008a). As administrative units, defined by government policy papers, villages are not functional (Lamb 2012:13): Elections for formal offices (village councils) have not been held and no formal official appointments to such posts were made either.¹¹

Instead, the governance vacuum on this level is filled by more or less formalised local institutions, such as **Community Development Councils (CDCs)** or traditional village shuras (councils).¹² CDCs are formed from the elected representatives of up to 300 families and were initially supposed to administer the spending of a block grant¹³ for development-related purposes. Their tasks included the identification of the projects, organising community contribution and monitoring the implementation. However, from the beginning on the establishment of CDCs served an additional goal, too, namely to lay “the foundation for a sustainable form of *inclusive local governance*” (MRRD 2009: 8). CDCs are not officially recognized government bodies, but have, in the meantime, developed into the main local level governance institution, defining development priorities, organising collective works and providing the framework for the resolution of local conflicts (Nixon 2008a; Koehler/Gosztanyi 2011).

CDCs often overlap with villages (i.e. 1 village = 1 CDC), though especially in mountainous areas where villages are small a CDC can contain as many as 4-5 villages; in contrast, the large villages of the irrigated lowlands can on occasion comprise 2 or more CDCs.

Building on the CDC structure, two additional institutional innovations have been implemented from 2007 onwards. Within the framework of the National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP) CDCs elected representatives to **District Development Assemblies (DDAs)**.¹⁴ DDAs were designed to provide an interface between CDCs (whom they represent) and government agencies at the district level as well as with the nationwide Provincial Development Planning (PDP) process.¹⁵ Similar to CDCs, DDAs are not just organisations

¹¹ In some districts wolliswols decided to informally keep or revive the older system of village headmen (*maleks, qariadars*). Yaftal in Badakhshan is a case in point.

¹² CDCs are formalised in that they are constituted based on written procedures and have defined positions with job descriptions (MRRD 2010); since 2006 they also have an official status, owing to a bylaw that regulates some of their competences (MRRD 2006). They are not, however, a constitutional governance institution. While foreseen in the constitution, elected village councils and district councils have not been formed to date. (cf. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan 2010).

¹³ The size of the block grant depends on the size of the CDC with the maximum possible amount being US\$60,000 (MRRD 2009: 2)

¹⁴ As with the CDCs, the DDAs are not an official replacement for the constitutionally foreseen though never implemented elected district councils. There is considerable institutional competition between the MRRD (i.e. the rural development ministry) “owning” the existing shura-complex (CDCs and DDAs) and performing through them *de facto* local governance functions and the IDLG (i.e. the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, directly controlled by the president) that claims responsibility for local governance provision, but whose administrative bodies, the district and village councils, have not been established yet (See Gardizi et al. 2008).

¹⁵ For more on the process, see Shah 2009.

focusing on development-related issues in their area, but are increasingly also being entrusted with governance functions, such as conflict resolution (MRRD 2006, Annex G; interviews by the authors in September 2012 in Takhar, Kunduz and Badakhshan Provinces).

A recent additional institutional innovation linked to the MRRD relates to **CDC cluster organisations**. In contrast to CDCs and the DDA, CDC clusters are not official bodies foreseen by Afghan law or the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS). They have been established by the MRRD for the sole purpose of electing the DDA (CDCs are gathered in clusters which then jointly send representatives to the DDA). NGOs seized the opportunity and started working with clusters for identifying and implementing projects that are above the CDC level, but below the district level in scope (e.g. schools). *The programmes that have established and are supporting these grassroots representative local governance systems (“the CDC-shura complex”) are the actual focus of our research and thus of this paper.*

In addition to the state administration and the MRRD-dominated CDC-shura complex, there are further structures that provide governance, or at least influence governance provision on the local level.

First and foremost among these are **elders** and the “**traditional shuras and jirgas**”.¹⁶ There exist a large number of different shuras in Afghanistan. Some are *ad hoc* in nature – members are called to join in according to the issue at hand that needs to be solved (e.g. a certain dispute); others are more strongly formalised and hierarchical. On the lowest level, one usually finds local shuras based around a mosque. A number of mosque shuras can join to elect a higher-level shura (e.g. for a large village or a section of a town). Lastly, in a number of areas (e.g. Kunduz) district and even province-level shuras are also functioning. In all cases lower-level shuras, i.e. local or town shuras, nominate representatives into higher-level shuras, e.g. to the district shura. In recent years we increasingly see a replacement of traditional shuras by CDCs respectively of a merging of the two types of shuras within the CDC.

In contrast to the south of the country, **tribal organisations** are weak or non-existent in north and north-east Afghanistan and are mainly limited to areas inhabited by Pashtuns, Balooch or Uzbek and Turkmen groups. In many communities, **clerics** (mullahs, maulawis) also represent important informal authorities providing governance services to people in their area. There are great regional differences as to the power of Islamic clerics and their capability to provide governance services. It is generally common for mullahs or maulawis to mediate in family disputes; in some areas of the north-east, however, mullahs have gained importance far beyond this relatively limited area. E.g. in eastern Badakhshan in the districts of Baharak and Wardooj groups of Salafi clerics came to dominate a number of clusters – coming close to supplanting CDCs as the main source of local governance provision (Gardizi et al. 2008; cf. also interviews by the research teams of the authors in 2010 and 2011 in Badakhshan).

¹⁶ Shura, originally an Arab word meaning “consultation”; in the Afghan context it is used in the sense of council. In Pashtu the comparable institution is called “jirga”, most likely deriving from the Mongol term for circle. There are differences between the institutions and the usage of the terms have changed with Pashtuns also using the term “shura” for elected village councils today. Locally jirgas remain issue-related gatherings of people competent to deal with the issue and process it towards a consensual decision (cf. Wardak 2004).

The Jihad against the Soviet Union and the subsequent civil war led to the emergence of a new class of local level power-brokers, the Jihadi **commanders**. Commanders' influence on local governance has undergone interesting changes. Following the fall of the Taliban in 2001 Jihadi commanders were the main local power-brokers throughout the north-east. Their presence was mostly, though not always, associated with bad governance and arbitrary rule (e.g. Gosztanyi/Fararoon 2004: 17-18). As mentioned, since 2003, on the village (CDC) level the influence of lower-level commanders has significantly decreased. For commanders to exert power solely based on force is now the clear exception, and even in cases where high-ranking commanders gained powerful positions in the new Afghan state, arbitrary rule and abuse of power has decreased – at least as compared to the early post-Taliban years.¹⁷ The recent establishment of anti-Taliban militias (also called arbakees) risks reversing this positive, post-2001 trend. It is often the former Jihadi commanders or their sons who now come to the fore to organise the militias. There are increasing complaints of infighting between these groups and atrocities committed by them (Human Rights Watch 2011; AIHRC 2012).

A very different type of informal (non-state) governance institution is represented by the insurgents, mostly the **Taliban**. Governance provision by the Taliban is mostly limited to the field of security, repressing common crime and violence, and the field of justice and conflict resolution. In areas firmly under Taliban control, other forms of governance services are either not provided (e.g. there is little or no development taking place in these areas); or in some cases, low-level government-provided services are tolerated, e.g. in the field of education and partly in health. Schools in Taliban-controlled areas usually continue to function, albeit often with limitations regarding girls' attendance.

Contrary to commonly held beliefs, in the north and north-east (outside of the firmly insurgent-controlled areas which we were not able to enter recently) Taliban governance is not generally viewed as a more preferable alternative to governance by the Afghan state. There are, nevertheless, features of Taliban governance that many interview partners emphasise positively. The most distinctive, positively evaluated feature of Taliban governance is security. "People would like to have the Taliban's security and the Karzai Government's freedom", as a Pashtun interview partner from Baghlan put it (Interview by the authors on 1 December 2010 in Mazar-e Sharif, Afghanistan).¹⁸ This is widely appreciated by most interview partners – with the exception of those who suffered atrocities under the Taliban's rule in large sections of the north and north-east (killings, beatings, torture) from 1999 to 2001. The popular evaluation of the frequently mentioned Taliban courts is more ambivalent. There is general agreement that Taliban courts decide quickly and are very strong in enforcement, even in areas outside of Taliban control. At the same time, however, the judgements are harsh and tend to favour those ideologically closer to the Taliban – or according to some – the party who complained first.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Following the introduction of the research area, in this section we proceed to present our research design. We will proceed by first discussing the challenges a robust research faces in the

¹⁷ This result is in line with quantitative surveys conducted by one of the authors within the framework of the SFB 700/NEA:LTS project, see Koehler/Zürcher 2007 and Koehler 2008.

¹⁸ In the course of 2010 Baghlan Province had both Taliban and government controlled areas.

Afghan context. Subsequently we will proceed to offer a working definition of stability. From this working definition we derive indicators and determine our data needs.

SPECIFIC CHALLENGES: WORKING IN AFGHANISTAN

Before proceeding to the research design, a brief note is necessary regarding the specific challenges Afghanistan poses for both qualitative and quantitative field research.

As explained above, the main administrative units such as the district are not clearly demarcated. Moreover, ongoing redrawing of boundaries resulted in significant shifts with some districts' territory changing by up to one third (e.g. the district of Aliabad and Khan Abad in Kunduz Province). At present not all political, administrative and even international actors adhere to the new boundaries. This administrative imprecision has serious implications on research, raising questions such as which district is actually responsible for a certain sub-district area we chose to survey: is it actually governed by our target district, or is it de-facto controlled by another district administration? In other words it reduces confidence in the selection of the proper unit of analysis.

The fact that the location and boundaries of villages are not defined and villages often have several context-dependent names is also problematic. In this situation several challenges arise (cf. Mielke/Schetter 2007). On occasion, our teams had problems clearly defining the boundaries for their sampling or "slipped over" into neighbouring villages. Sometimes the qualitative and quantitative research teams (who on occasion worked separately) had difficulties identifying the same villages and in some qualitative interviews respondents did not use the same "definition" of village that our quantitative teams have applied to delineate their sampling (e.g. referring to a larger "extended" version of village). Locating surveyed villages on the map was further complicated by the fact that researchers refused to use GPS devices in areas with known Taliban presence as the insurgents are believed to execute anybody on the spot who is caught with a GPS.

A further problem is that there is no census available for Afghanistan. Estimates of a district's population by different domestic or foreign agencies can vary by as much as a factor of two. Estimates of further relevant demographic factors are even less reliable (e.g. the ethnic or religious composition of a district or a province). It is thus impossible to construct a representative sample in the sense of a pre-defined random sampling frame on either the district or the provincial level.

The last challenge to mention is security. Even in the comparatively safe northeast of Afghanistan, insurgents are present and carry out terrorist or guerrilla operations in many districts, though areas of full insurgent control and governance have been largely dismantled in 2011. Reacting to the increasingly threatening insurgent presence, international and national military forces have carried out numerous operations against militants ranging from police operations and searches, over targeted killings to full-scale military operations. On one occasion our teams had to flee suddenly as a Taliban group launched an attack to seize the district centre where they were carrying out initial interviews for the survey. In three districts (including the above mentioned) we had to wait for several weeks until a temporary lull in fighting allowed us to enter and visit our target villages.

On other occasions, e.g. Aliabad District in Kunduz Province or Yangi Qala District in Takhar Province, our researchers refused to enter certain parts of the district then under full Taliban control. In such cases we occasionally surveyed the area by “proxies”, i.e. contacting local counterparts from inaccessible target villages who after a brief training in the district centre would carry out the survey in their home areas. In another instance, we received permission from the “shadow representative” of the Taliban to enter an area and carry out the survey.

WORKING DEFINITIONS

Turning to research design, we first need to define and operationalise the concept of stability. The term is, in spite of its frequent use in peace-building interventions, vague and undefined. We can rely on two distinct fields of thought for deriving a working definition: one is a debate among aid organisations to conceptualise stability and identify possibilities for supporting the emergence of stable social orders (see e.g. Verstegen et al. 2005, Klingebiel/Steurer 2002; Stabilisation Unit 2012). A second line of thought goes back to classic social scientific theory on “dynamic stability” (cf. Elwert 2002; Elias 1983, Dahrendorf 1968). By integrating these two sources of literature we arrive at a *working definition* of stability that is composed of four pillars or components:

1. Security: Stability is defined by low levels of socially *unacceptable* violence (some forms of violence, e.g. regulated blood feuds, may be socially accepted and are therefore not detrimental to stability). Basic *physical security* is therefore a defining component of social stability.

2. Governance institutions: Stability is further defined by *functioning governance institutions*. The more complex a society and its segments get, the more important reliable and legitimate institutions become. This includes

- Reliable and predictable problem solving capacity (including conflict processing as a principle function of social cohesion)
- Sustainability of (state as well as societal) conflict-processing institutions
- Legitimacy of the institutional architecture of the political and social order

Legitimate governance, understood as institutionalized modes of coordination through which collectively binding decisions are adopted and implemented to provide common goods (cf. SFB 700 Teilprojekt A1 2009), is thus a defining component of social stability.

3. Economic reproduction / development: Stability of society is also defined by the ability of society as a whole as well as of its individual components to materially sustain themselves: *Economic reproduction* is therefore a further defining aspect of stability.

4. Capacity to adapt (“modernisation”): A last critical component of stability is the capability of societies to *adapt to changing circumstances* – in particular regarding the above mentioned three aspects of stability, i.e. physical security, governance and economic reproduction. Normatively we define this pillar as “modernisation” in order to capture openness to explicit or implicit core values of the international intervention in Afghanistan – core values that relate to a normative concept of modernization and require a degree of change to local social, political and economic organisation. We are aware of the fact that the notion of “dynamic adaptation” is broader than merely the challenges of (normative) modernisation. However, it is especially with regard to a

Western-biased modernisation that the international development intervention challenges the capacity of local Afghan communities to adapt and cope.

The international intervention we investigate in this study directly (and consciously) targeted three pillars of our working definition. These pillars are the field of “governance” (through capacity building and knowledge transfer); the field of “social and economic development” (through infrastructure development projects), and the field of security (through direct military intervention, and through the training, equipping and logistic support of the Afghan National Security Forces, ANSF).

In addition, the intervention directly and indirectly also massively challenged the recipient Afghan society in the field of “modernisation”. The challenges relate among others to issues such the role of women in society, economic relations, grassroots organisation and representation and ways of relating to the state.

Derived from the above working definition we came up with a set of indicators to measure change regarding the four components of stability: security, governance institutions, social and economic development and modernisation. We depict these indicators in the below diagramme. A full register with explanations of the indicators is in the annex. (We also provide a detailed explanation of the indicators used for the functional fields of security and governance institutions in section “*Scaled indicators*” below)

Correlations

13.05.2013

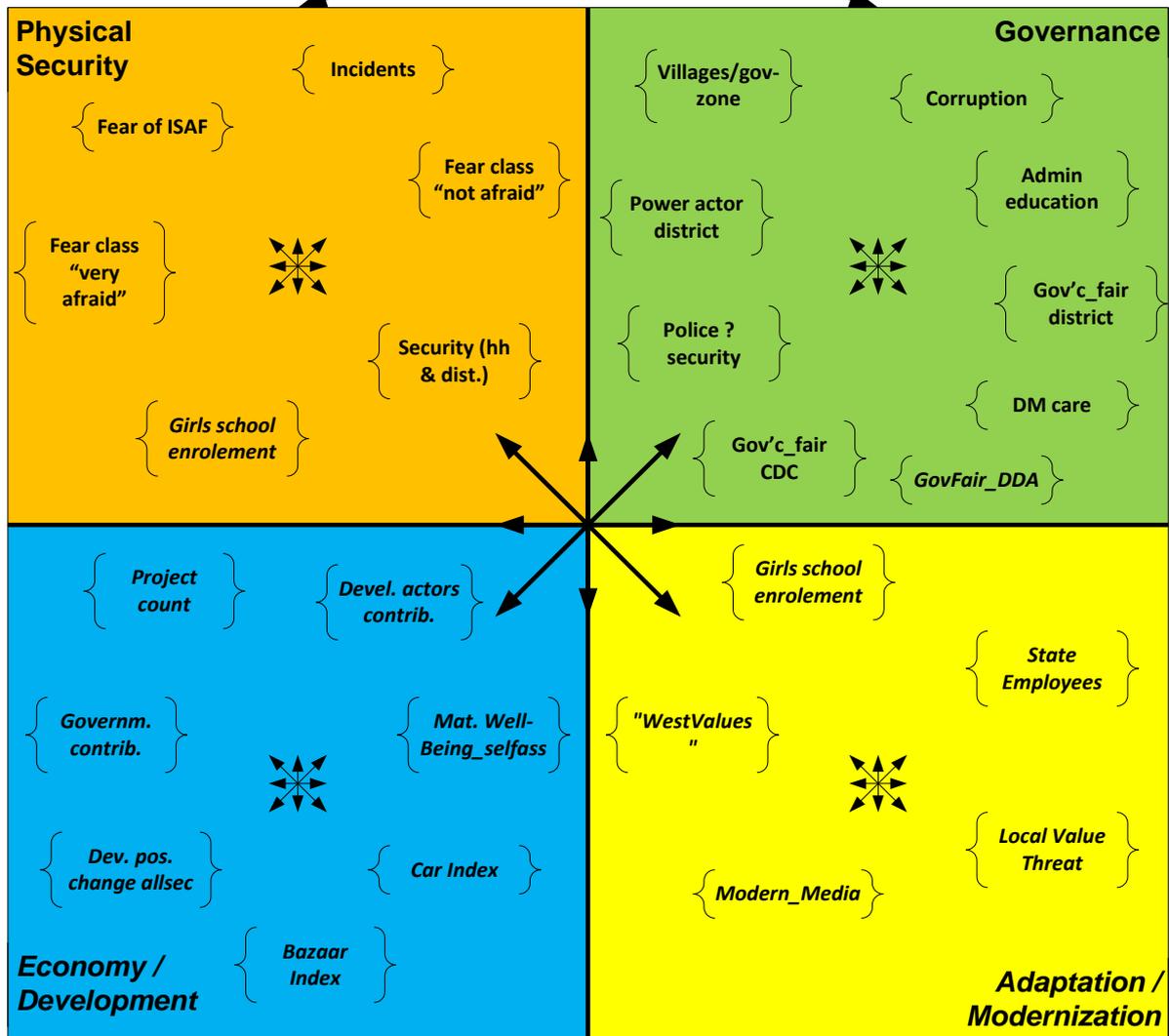
External Variables: y/n

{ Compact Pashtun population: village / cluster / district }

{ Bad neighbourhood: insurgent control / contested }

{ Criminal Economy: village / cluster / district in OPE-infested environment }

{ Are there arbakee / militias active in the village / cluster / district }



UNIT OF ANALYSIS

The principle unit of analysis of our research, at which we aggregate the stabilisation indicators of each of the four fields of intervention, is the district, the lowest and for the most part *functioning* level of formally recognised administration in Afghanistan. It is the level at which most Afghans "experience" the state. Realising the importance of the district, since

approximately 2006 international and national development programmes began to target this level implementing, among others, numerous infrastructure, rural development and governance capacity building programmes.

In spite of the importance of the district, information that could be used for statistical evaluation is sparse and unreliable at this level. We circumvented this problem by defining smaller sub-units below the level of the district that we deemed fit to represent major stability-related issues at district level. This approach meant, however, that all indicators developed on lower levels must, eventually, be aggregated to district level.

APPROXIMATING REPRESENTATIVITY FOR THE DISTRICT

As starting point to represent our principle unit of analysis we use household interviews and comprehensive village profiles in order to gather information on this basic level. Since the sample of interviewed heads of households is statistically representative for the households of the village community, we are able to arrive at robust indicators for the sample villages.

The next higher level of aggregation is the *village cluster (organisation)*. Village clusters are groupings of several villages established by the MRRD to identify representative for the District Development Assemblies and are used by international NGOs seeking a local counterpart for projects above the very local level but still below the district level. Clusters often, though not always, coincide with locally meaningful geographical concepts of *mantaqa* (area, often part of a valley in the mountains, encompassing settlements that conceive of themselves as an extended neighbourhood) and *qaria* (large village or settlement cluster, usually in the plains devoid of geographic demarcations like valleys or rivers).

Hence, we aggregated village-level information on the cluster level and also collected further information via cluster profiles on these entities. Since the clusters can be defined not only as a group of settlements but also as geographical areas, we used a buffer of one to two kilometres around each member village of the cluster to approximate an immediate impact area for the cluster as a whole (one kilometre was used in densely settled clusters, two kilometres in sparsely settled clusters; in most cases 1.5 km was used). We assume that events (security incidents and development projects) taking place within this area have an immediate effect on the cluster as a whole.

SAMPLING STRATEGY AND SAMPLING LOGIC

Based on the above considerations we developed our sampling strategy using three levels of aggregation in which surveyed households represent the *village*, the surveyed villages represent the *cluster* and the surveyed clusters represent the *district*.

Sampling within the village community was representative. On the next level of aggregation, the cluster level, we sampled two villages per cluster: the village of the cluster representative on the district level, and a random other village within the cluster (few exceptions occurred in case of very small clusters where we only sampled one village). On the third level of aggregation (the district), we sampled five clusters per district. The clusters were pre-chosen according to maximum variance across the following criteria:

1. Remoteness vs. good integration
2. Ethnic composition

3. Religious composition
4. Access to resources (especially irrigation vs. rain-fed agriculture)
5. Size
6. Security

DATA NEEDS AND METHODS OF DATA ACQUISITION

The starting point for our research lies in in-depth institution centred conflict analyses which we have been conducting since 2003 in the target regions (north-east Afghanistan: Gosztonyi/Fararoon 2004; Koehler 2004a; Gosztonyi/Koehler 2010). We used conflict analysis not only to understand conflicts but in a wider sense as a heuristic tool to indentify, analyse and understand local social order and disorder (see Zürcher 2004; Koehler 2004b; Koehler/Zürcher 2004). This first approach to the field relies heavily on anthropological fieldwork and comparative case studies of conflict processes.

Based on the qualitative knowledge of local order, its syntax and semantics we then designed the more structured assessment methods of social science research: structured interviews, monitoring sheets, profiles and, finally, questionnaires for large-n surveys (cf.).

The research was designed with a baseline (carried out in two phases in 2010 and 2011) and follow-up assessments scheduled for 2012, 2013 and possibly 2014 (the preliminary results presented in this paper use data from the 2010 baseline assessment). Due to the fact that all districts of the research region have received similar development inputs (in terms of the main MRRD funded projects, NSP and NABDP) it was impossible to construct a credible control group. Attributing causality thus relies on qualitative tools (process tracing) and intra-group comparison (e.g. villages / CDCs that have more or less capacity building or infrastructure development).

Based on our hypotheses, the indicators identified to test the hypotheses and the selected sampling strategy we developed our methods of data collection:

- (a) *Three-level profiles (village, village cluster and district)*; profiles compile relevant information on issues such demography (e.g. estimate of number of households, estimates of ethnic and religious groups), economy (e.g. estimates of irrigated vs. rain fed lands, number of agriculture machines, livestock, etc.) history (focusing on the last 40 years) and socio-political situation (e.g. existence of militias, insurgents, violent incidents, history of recent protests, etc.). Information for the village and village cluster profiles were collected by local researchers in the course of lengthy (up to three-four-hours-long) interviews with village and village cluster *shuras* (councils). Information for district profiles stems from interviews with the district administration as well as with relevant district level actors (e.g. local mullahs, traders, etc.).

The profiles also ask for information on infrastructure development and capacity building projects implemented in the target villages, clusters and districts as the key input variable of the programmes we intend to examine.

- (b) *Quantitative survey* encompassing interviews with over 5,000 heads of households; we chose head of household interviews as in Afghanistan it is generally the household head who decides on political, economic and social issues regarding the extended family unit.

The questionnaire covers all four functional fields of our stability definition (i.e. security, institutions, development / economy and modernisation).

- (c) 10-15 qualitative guideline interviews with pre-defined categories of interview partners in each district, e.g. district governor, chief of police, head of various departments, traders, mullahs, etc.

(In the currently ongoing follow-up we included three village / cluster level guideline interviews with community leaders (one representing traditional values, e.g. a mullah; another representing the shura complex, e.g. a CDC head; while the third representing the village intelligentsia, e.g. a teacher). The interviews are mainly on the semantics of stability in the local Afghan discourse.)

- (d) Available secondary data; relevant secondary data includes project lists by various aid organisations and donors (e.g. USAID, MRRD, German Governmental Aid), and data on security incidents (we use IMMAP, a limited source database prepared by a Kabul based organisation supported by British Embassy). We use this secondary data (project inputs and security incidents) together with the above mentioned profiles (see item “a” above) to measure the input variables (capacity building and infrastructure development) as well as the main intervening variables (e.g. security incidents and development projects not following the principles of stabilisation programmes).
- (e) Georeferenced project data; during the currently ongoing follow-up we have compiled further georeferenced data on development projects received by the target villages, clusters and districts.

The guiding principle behind the proposed methodology was to develop stability indicators that are relevant for the local context in order to test hypotheses on the relationship between programme activities and stability. In order to achieve this aim it is not sufficient to consider development programme outputs, but also other intervening variables, such as military operations, changing strategy or tactics of the counter-insurgency and the insurgency. These variables need to be identified and, if possible, measured or if measurement is not feasible, at a minimum, assessed (see point (d) above).

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Following the discussion of our data needs, we now turn to three instruments we designed to depict stability on the level of the district:

- a mapping of patronage networks
- the mapping of governance zones and
- scaled indicators from quantitative survey and profiles as well as coded qualitative data from interviews and field research, measuring stability in the four areas of intervention.

In the following we will briefly describe these tools and present their use in the exemplary description of two districts of our research. Our aim is to provide a picture of the realities on the ground in north-eastern Afghanistan and illustrate the use of our “stability-assessment tools”.

STABILITY-ASSESSMENT TOOLS

ACTORS MAPPING

For each district we mapped the main actors and the relationship between them with specific focus on existing patronage networks. The mapping was a joint exercise conducted by the qualitative research teams of our local partner and the authors during de-briefing. Mapping identified the main actors and their patronage networks as well as the relationship between the various actors (e.g. conflict, allies, command and control, etc.). We used a commercial visual intelligence and investigative analysis software to chart and analyse the networks. Similar software is used by military, law enforcement, intelligence and commercial agencies to chart relationships.

GOVERNANCE ZONES

In the course of previous qualitative research we observed the existence of distinct patterns of governance based on the quality and type of governance services provided and regarding the actors providing these governance services (Gosztonyi/Koehler 2010; Koehler 2012). Moreover, these distinct forms of governance provision often have clear geographic demarcations. For the purposes of the analysis we used expert codings supported by the inputs of the qualitative research teams during our de-briefing sessions in Mazar-e Sharif.

The six governance zones we identified for north-east Afghanistan are the following:

Governance by government; the official institutions (state as well as society) provide the key governance functions. This is not equivalent to the normative concept of ‘good governance’ but can be seen as prerequisite of good governance. This type of governance is still a rare occurrence in Afghanistan and we find it only in parts of some of the target districts covered. In many respects it remains an ideal type with only very few empirical cases confirming the existence of this governance form.

Hybrid governance describes governance functions delivered via official institutions (i.e. the district government) but the ability of these official institutions to assert themselves is to a large part based on the informal power of the people running or controlling those institutions (e.g. former commanders or important local / regional power-brokers). Hybrid governance may look at first sight as governance by government but often involves a degree of state capture by informal strongmen or powerful local elites. This form of governance is very widespread the research area.

Arbitrary rule refers to the absence of reliable governance functions and to a situation dominated by power rather than rules. In the northern provinces, this type of rule is mostly exercised by former commanders either in political offices or protected by political patronage (completely autonomous entrepreneurs of violence have become the exception rather than the rule in virtually all districts covered by the survey). Contrary to areas of “hybrid governance”, only very little or no governance functions are provided and the threat or use of arbitrary violence is widespread.

(Remote area) self-governance comprises various forms of local self-organisation in the absence of external power-interventions by the state or other hierarchal organisations. It usually coincides with areas that are difficult to access or are of no strategic importance for either the state or its competitors (like the Taliban).

Contested governance we call an environment in which governance delivery itself is the issue at conflict. Here, not only power is contested, but the right and ability to deliver certain governance functions to the population. Currently contested governance relates to more or less violent competition between the state on the one hand and the Taliban as an alternative governance provider on the other hand. If other alternative governance providers emerge, this theatre of contest might become even more complex (as, of late, in case of the so-called Mujaheddin in Wardooj district, see FN 6).

Taliban governance refers to a situation where the Taliban did not only manage to drive the official state institutions out of an area and subdue local societal institutions of self-government, but where they also deliver governance functions and enforce their own rules (in particular in the fields of security, justice and partly education).

SCALED INDICATORS

Subsequently, within each area of intervention we developed scaled and normed indicators for our main hypotheses related to stabilisation. The indicators are composed of three sources:

- the results of our quantitative survey (5,000 household interviews),
- of quantifiable data derived from our qualitative survey (e.g. number of vehicles in a survey village; presence of militias in a village) and
- of available secondary data (e.g. incident lists or lists of projects implemented by aid and development organisations).

When selecting indicators, we constrained ourselves to those indicators that proved to be quantifiable and scalable.

Some of the indicators are composites from different questions or sub-questions, e.g. the “admin_Education” indicator merges the education levels (degrees) of six district level officials ranging from the wolliswol (district manager) to the head of the agriculture department into one measure; other scales are constructed from one source only, e.g. “Fear of ISAF / NATO” is based solely on Question 7a of our survey.

The indicators refer to the four identified areas of intervention and are scaled from 1 to 10 with “1” being the lowest and “10” the highest possible value indicating very high stability in a certain field. This meant that we had to “turn” certain indicators around, e.g. a high number of incidents would receive a low score in our scales; conversely low levels of perceived corruption regarding village level conflict resolution result in high scores as we consider it to be conducive to stability.

The main indicators for the two areas of intervention we are concerned with in the current paper, i.e. security and governance institutions, are the following:

Security: With regard to security we considered in particular five indicators, one of which is an objective indicator while the remaining four are subjective indicators. The objective indicator is the number of “INCIDENTS” derived from the IMMAP geo-referenced database. The first subjective indicator is an assessment of interviewed households of the security situation in the district and the household of the interviewee (“SECURITY HH & DISTR.”). The three further indicators measure fear. The first of these specifically asks for fear of international forces (“FEAR OF ISAF / NATO”) and is thus an indicator first and foremost of respondents’ attitude towards the international military intervention. The latter two are fear classes generated by *latent class*

analysis of fear ratings of the survey regarding a number of different armed actors such as the “Taliban”, “external armed men”, “criminal groups”, “police”, “local militias” or “Afghan army”.¹⁹ Latent class analysis revealed the existence of a number of fear classes two of which we found particularly interesting: One class was afraid of practically all the above actors (“FEAR CLASS “VERY AFRAID”), while the other class was afraid of none of the above mentioned (“FEAR CLASS “NOT AFRAID”).

Governance: We selected eight indicators to depict governance. Four of these indicators describe the village (CDC-level), while four describe the district level. The indicator “FAIRCDC” describes the perceived fairness of conflict resolution by the CDCs, which, as mentioned above, appear as the most trusted conflict body of conflict resolution. The “CORRUPTION” indicator once again refers to the CDC / village level and asks whether respondents believed that force (violence), relations (clientelism) or bribes were used to influence the decisions of the CDCs (high scores on this indicator mean low levels of corruption, clientelism or force affecting the conflict resolution process). Lastly the “STATE_EMPLOYEE_INDEX” is derived from the village profiles and calculates the number village members working in state employment. Typically such employment includes soldiers, policemen, teachers and administrative staff in the district or provincial administration. Occasionally villagers mentioned high-ranking politicians or powerful members of the executive. The last CDC / village level indicator “POWERVIL” asked respondents to assess who was the most powerful person in the village. Possible answers included the head of the CDC, a mullah, a (Jihadi) commander, Taliban representative, etc. Actors conforming to the normative definition (“good governance”) received high scores, e.g. the elected head of the CDC shura; actors not conforming to this definition, e.g. commanders who gained their position by force, received low scores.

District level indicators (“POLICE” or “POLICE -> SEC”) include a question whether the police contributed positively to security; “DM CARE” (or “WOLLISWOL_~E” in the statistical analysis in the next section) describes whether the wolliswol (the district administration) is perceived as caring about the issues and problems of the village. “POWERDISTR” or “POWER ACTOR DISTRICT” ask for an assessment by respondents of who the most powerful person the district was. Responses included, among others, the wolliswol, chief of police, a commander, elders (often former powerful commanders), a mullah. Similarly to the “*powervil*” indicator we gave scores to the various actors according to their compatibility with our good governance definition. “GOVFAIR_STATE” and “GOVFAIR_DDA” (in the statistical analysis merged into The “FAIRDISTR”) indicator scales responses regarding the perceived fairness of district level actors providing conflict resolution (these actors include, among others, the wolliswol, the judge and the head of the DDA).

EXEMPLARY DESCRIPTION OF TWO DISTRICTS

The situation described in the following two illustrative case studies describes the political, military and governance related situation as it was in late 2010 when we conducted the baseline survey.

¹⁹ For a description of the latent class approach to identify relevant “mixes” of fear from the data see Böhnke et al. 2013.

Note of caution: we decided to anonymise district-level actors. We are talking about real people in real places and need to take both informant as well subject-security seriously. Since we are dealing in this paper with methods rather than with descriptive analysis of a specific region we feel that this approach does not infringe on the quality of the paper.

KHWAJA GHAR

District overview

Khwaja Ghar District lies in Takhar Province in northern Afghanistan along the Panj River that forms the border with Tajikistan. The district is characterised by irrigated agriculture along the Panj – this is the most densely populated section of the district – and a combination of irrigated and rain fed agriculture along the two tributary rivers of the Panj in the southern sections of the district. The hills surrounding the rivers offer pastures for domestic animals – mostly sheep and goats.

Khwaja Ghar's population is estimated by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development at 44,909²⁰ (the corresponding estimate by the Khwaja Ghar district administration is 100,000²¹). According to the woliswoli, the population is mixed with Uzbeks forming the largest group (estimated at 60%) while Tajiks and Pashtuns are estimated at 20% each.

In spite of the abundant presence of irrigation water along the Panj the main economic potential of the district derives not from agriculture but from its location at the border with Tajikistan, which facilitates trade in both legal and especially illegal goods. While opium poppy cultivation was abandoned in 2007 and there are no reports of heroin processing laboratories in the district, its location and easy accessibility – good connections to the main traffic routes in northern Afghanistan – suggest a prominent role in cross-border narcotics trading. The low number of “interregional traders” – a proxy to assess the number of drug traffickers – identified by our field teams suggests a strong centralisation of the trade in the hands of a few. Nevertheless, Khwaja Ghar bazaar is one of the largest in the northeast indicating that the district benefits from cross-border trade.

Patronage and power in Khwaja Ghar

By the end of the anti-Soviet struggle and the subsequent civil war two Jihadi factions came to dominate the district: the Tajik dominated Jamiat-e Islami²² and Ittihad-e Islami led by the Pashtun warlord Abdul Sayyaf, even today a powerful and much-feared political figure in Kabul. In-fighting between the two parties continued until the Taliban take-over in early 2001. Many residents of Khwaja Ghar remember this time as being the worst episode in the more than twenty-years of violence the district had experienced. The fall of the Taliban in the wake of the US invasion saw the re-emergence of the Ittihad-e Islami as the dominant power in the district with its former commander, Mullah Mohammad Omar²³, now being the woliswol (district manager) of Khwaja Ghar. Since early 2010 this dominance is under challenge by Uzbek insurgent fighters linked to Tahir Yuldash's Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), a Taliban

²⁰ 2007 Survey of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD); in spite of the seeming precision of the figure, it is only a very rough and imprecise estimate.

²¹ Interview with the executive director (the *de facto* deputy district manager) of Khwaja Ghar on 21 November 2010.

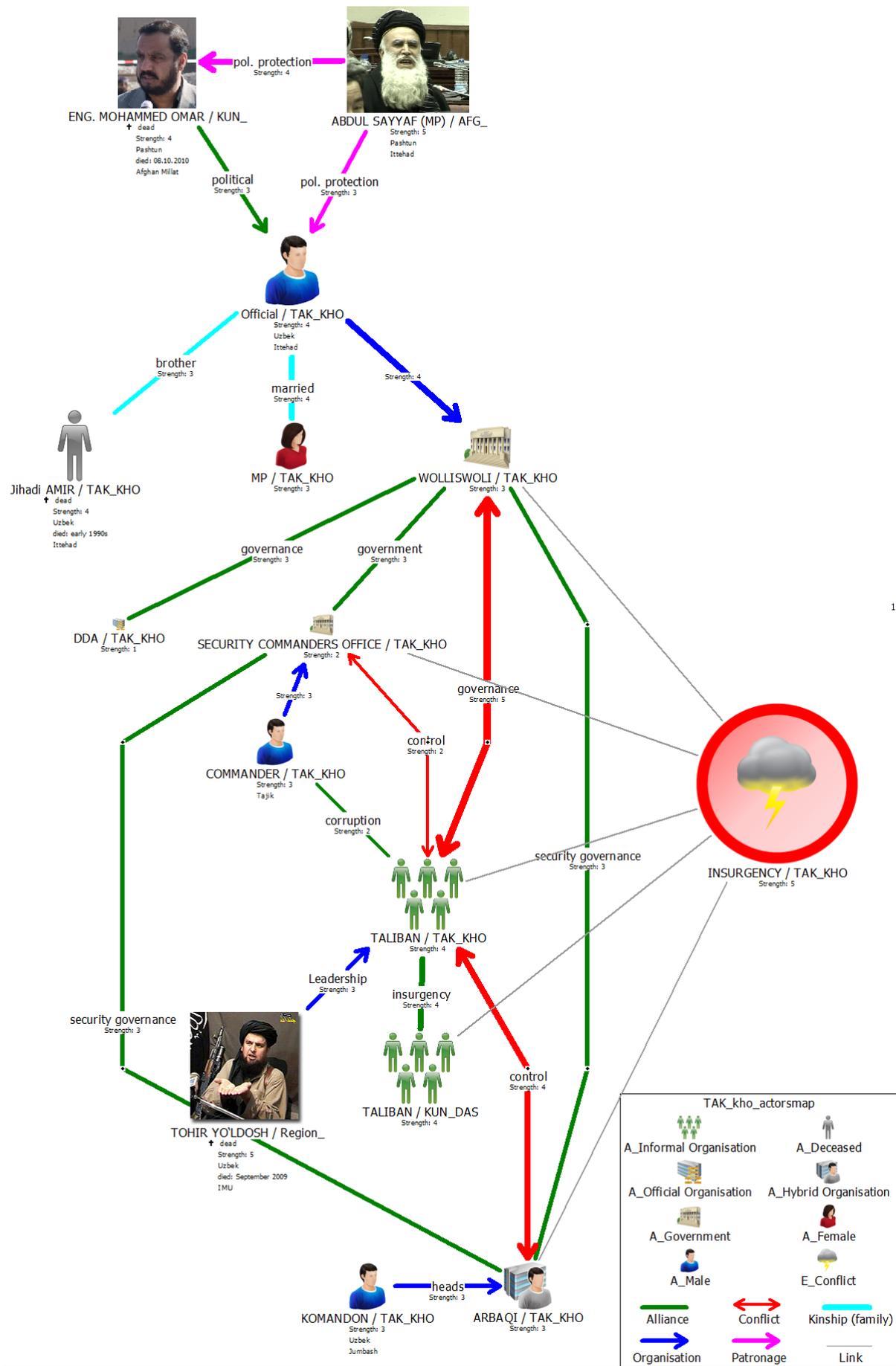
²² The recently assassinated Burhanuddin Rabbani was a prominent member of Jamiat.

²³ No relation to the leader of the Taliban, Mullah Mohammed Omar.

affiliate. In 2010-2011 they received support from the mainly Pashtun Taliban in neighbouring Dashti Archi District (to the west of Khwaja Ghar in Kunduz Province).

In response to the growing insurgent threat villagers supported by the wolliswol and the Afghan security agencies began to set up local militias. Our researchers visiting Khwaja Ghar in November 2010 described the situation as being reminiscent of Jihadi times with armed but not uniformed men dominating the district centre. The setting up of the militias was probably also meant to compensate for the failings of the Afghan National Police (ANP), whose soldiers refused to fight the insurgents in a battle in late 2010 after allegations emerged that a high-ranking police officer, sold ANP arms to the insurgents.

A depiction of the main district level actors and their relations to each other shows Abdul Sayyaf as the main patron (in dari: *pushte-ban*) of the district supporting the wolliswol Mullah Omar. Until his death at the hands of the Taliban in September 2009, the powerful governor of neighbouring Kunduz Province, Eng. Omar, himself a client of Sayyaf, also appeared as a powerful ally of the wolliswol.

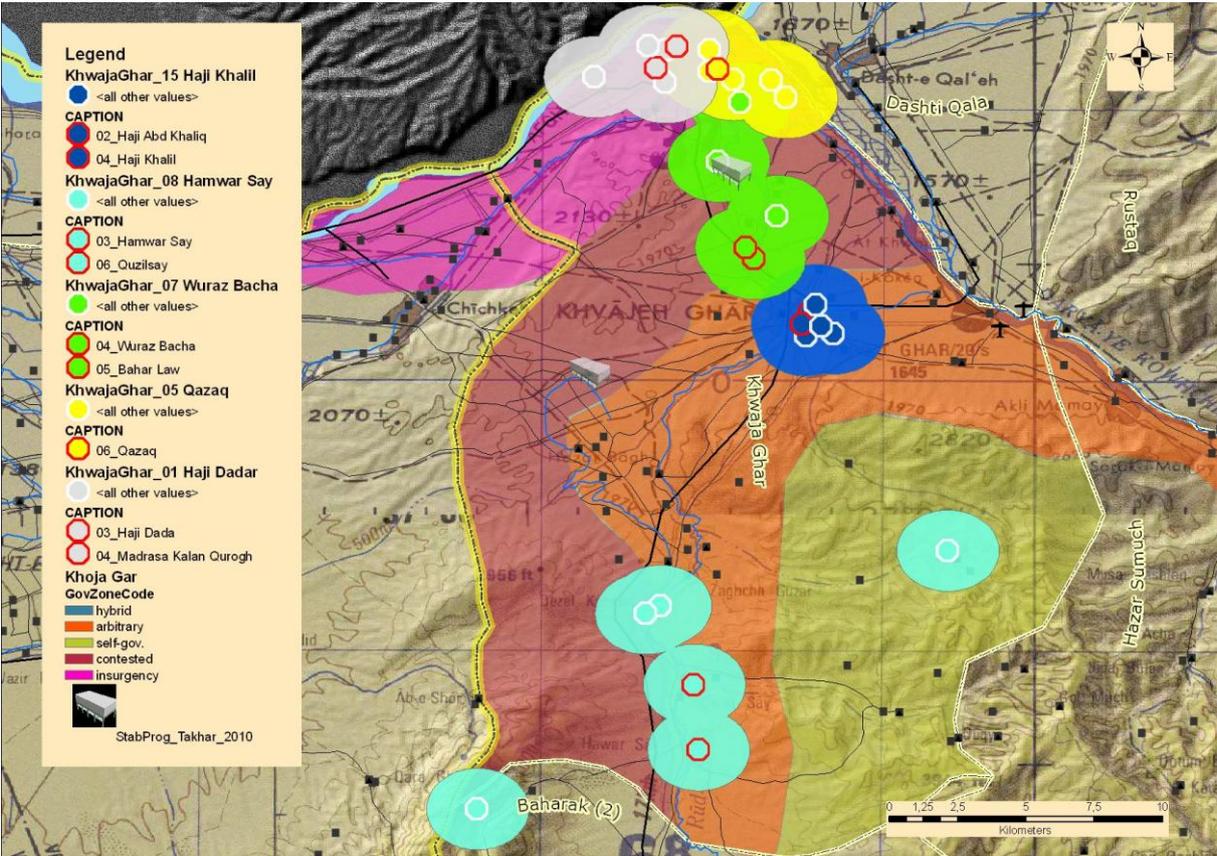


The leading commander of the militias closely cooperates with the wolliswol and the police – though we could not establish whether he is directly subordinate to the district governor. The insurgents on the other hand are dominated by the IMU command structures and receive support from Taliban forces based in the neighbouring Dashti Archi District (to the west of Khwaja Ghar).

Governance zones

Given this politico-military set up, we identified four distinct zones of governance provision at the time of our survey in late 2010. Along the Panj River reaching into Dashti Archi District there was a zone of **Taliban governance** (pink area on the map) where insurgents taxed the local population and installed their shadow administration providing services in the areas of security, conflict resolution and justice (the Taliban governed area was dismantled in 2011). The complexity of the Afghan condition is well-demonstrated by the fact that government schools and the CDC system partly continued to function even in this zone, though the schooling of girls was reportedly discouraged (but not fully prevented) by the insurgent shadow administration.

Map 1 Governance zones in Khwaja Ghar (pink=Taliban governance; wine-red=contested area; brown-red=arbitrary rule (drug-smuggling gangs); khaki=(remote area) self-governance; The triangles are survey villages. The dark grey area in the upper section of the map (north) is Tajikistan.



A **contested zone** (wine-red) is located adjacent to the Taliban governed area encompassing the district centre as well. This area experienced constant fighting in the course of 2010 seriously disrupting the delivery of governance services by either the government or the insurgents, none

of whom had the upper hand in the struggle. A strip of land to the east and south-east of the contested area, lying along the tributary rivers of the Panj is dominated by powerful landowners and increasingly by militia groups who can easily override the decisions of either the government or of the CDC structure. This area thus displays characteristics of arbitrary rule (brown-red).

Remote area **self-governance** (khaki) characterises the disadvantaged and impoverished villages in the south-east of the district with no access to irrigation. Their poverty and remote location means that there is little incentive for powerful landowners or violent entrepreneurs to control the area leaving these villages to their own means and allowing them to provide their own governance.

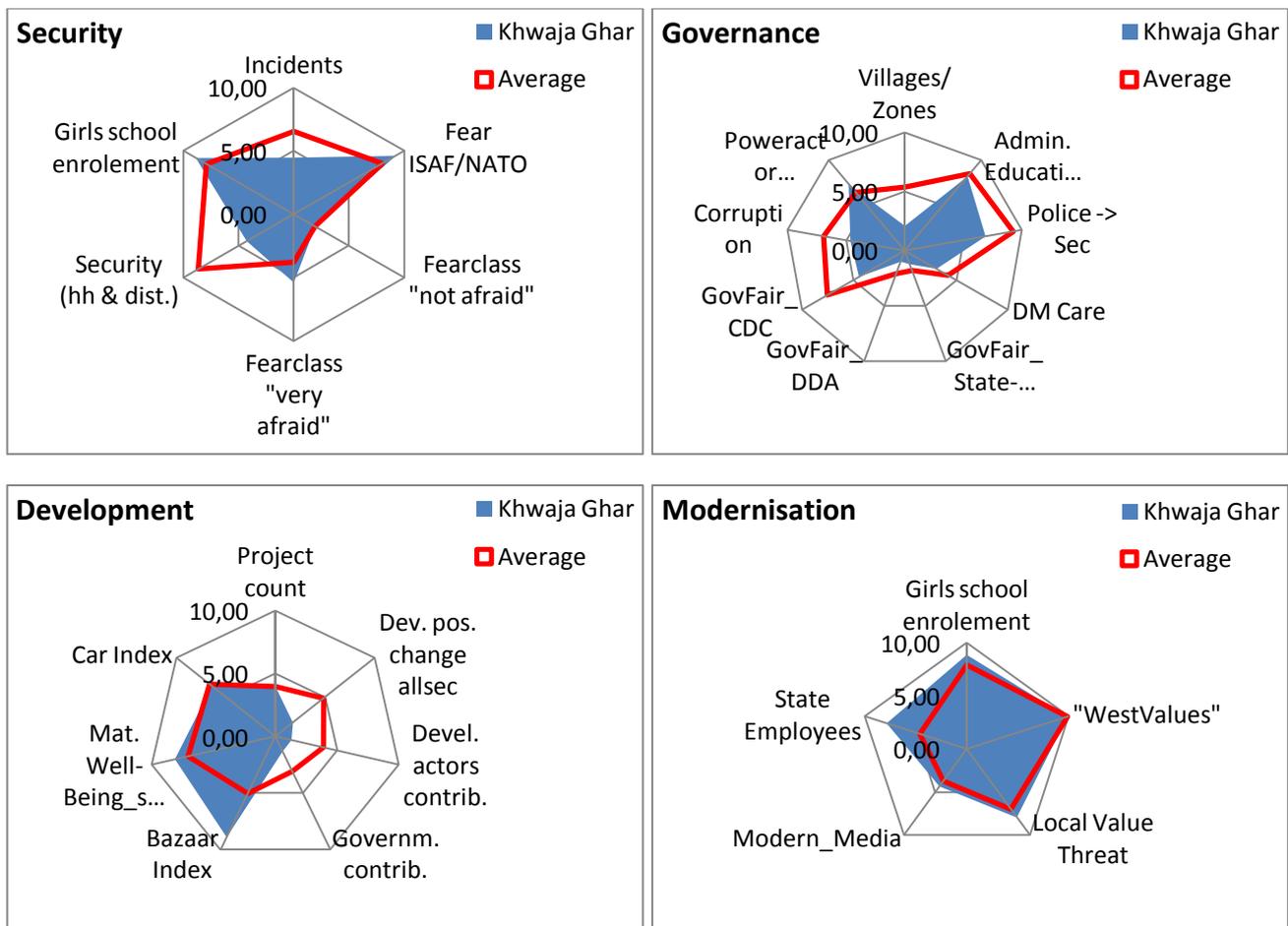
Stability in Khwaja Ghar: scaled indicators

Corresponding to the dire conflict situation in the district, indicators in the field of security show partly negative results for Khwaja Ghar. High rates of incidents (resulting in low scores in our chart) correspond with a negative assessment of the district's and the households' security (the blue area on the spiderweb diagram). Both values are well below the average of the 15 survey districts (red line). Interestingly, subjective indicators of fear (fear classes "not afraid" and "very afraid") do not correspond with the objectively bad security situation and are instead around the survey average. A dissociation of subjective fear indicators and objective measures of security is a repeated – and surprising – feature of the survey.

Governance indicators show one of the most dysfunctional districts of the survey. The district level governance indicators are dismal: while the education of the district administration is just somewhat below average, the contribution of the police to security (rated very positively in most survey districts) is only in the mid-range in Khwaja Ghar. This rating appears to be linked to the alleged double-dealing of the police chief with the insurgents and the consequent demoralisation of the police forces. The district administration ("DM care") is perceived as particularly unresponsive and the evaluation of conflict resolution on the district level is also below the district average. Usually local level governance (provided by the CDCs and traditional institutions) compensate for bad governance on the district level – but not in Khwaja Ghar. The dominance of large landowners and lately also of militia groups seems to have undermined these usually quite responsive institutions resulting in below average scores.

Our indicators show little state and NGO provided *development* in Khwaja Ghar. Instead, economic development that is independent of development aid is strong in the district: A mid-range car index (comparatively large numbers of cars in the survey villages) and a high-range bazaar index (one of the largest bazaars in the survey) point at significant economic activity. This is undoubtedly linked to (legal and illegal) cross-border trade with Tajikistan. *Modernisation* levels are high, with the only low score pertaining to the use of modern media, which, for some reason, are not popular in Khwaja Ghar.

Figure 1 Spiderweb Diagram: indicators assessing district performance in the four fields / pillars of stability (the red lines depict the average of the 15 surveyed districts)



KALAFGAN

The second district we present as an illustration is Kalafgan. In many respects Kalafgan is the opposite of Khwaja Ghar: security is good, there is little (if any) involvement in the drug trade and governance provision is among the best in our survey.

District overview

Kalafgan lies in eastern Takhar Province along a main highway linking the provincial capitals Taloqan and Fayzabad. The district can be divided into roughly two sections: a broad longitudinal valley in the centre where also the highway passes through and a northern section characterised by loess hills that is only linked by dirt roads and footpaths to central section of the district.

Kalafgan's population is estimated at 28,122 by the 2007 MRRD survey (the corresponding estimate by the district administration was 6,000²⁴). The overwhelming majority of the district is Uzbek (approx. 99%). In spite of Kalafgan's good access to a main road, the district is backward and underdeveloped with only limited possibilities in terms of agriculture. Small patches of irrigated land in the west and centre of the district contrast with the northern loess

²⁴ Interview with the district administration on 30 September 2010. This figure is clearly too low.

hills that only allow for rain fed agriculture and livestock breeding. Given the scarce and unpredictable rainfall in Afghanistan, rain fed areas invariably signal hardship and poverty for those who live in them. Accordingly, most villages are located in the centre along the Taloqan-Fayzabad road, with only a scattering of villages in the remote hills of the north.

Kalafgan is opium poppy free since 2007 and there are no indications of any heroin labs operating in the district. Some drug transports might pass through the district but there is no indication of any financial payoffs benefiting this poor and underdeveloped district.

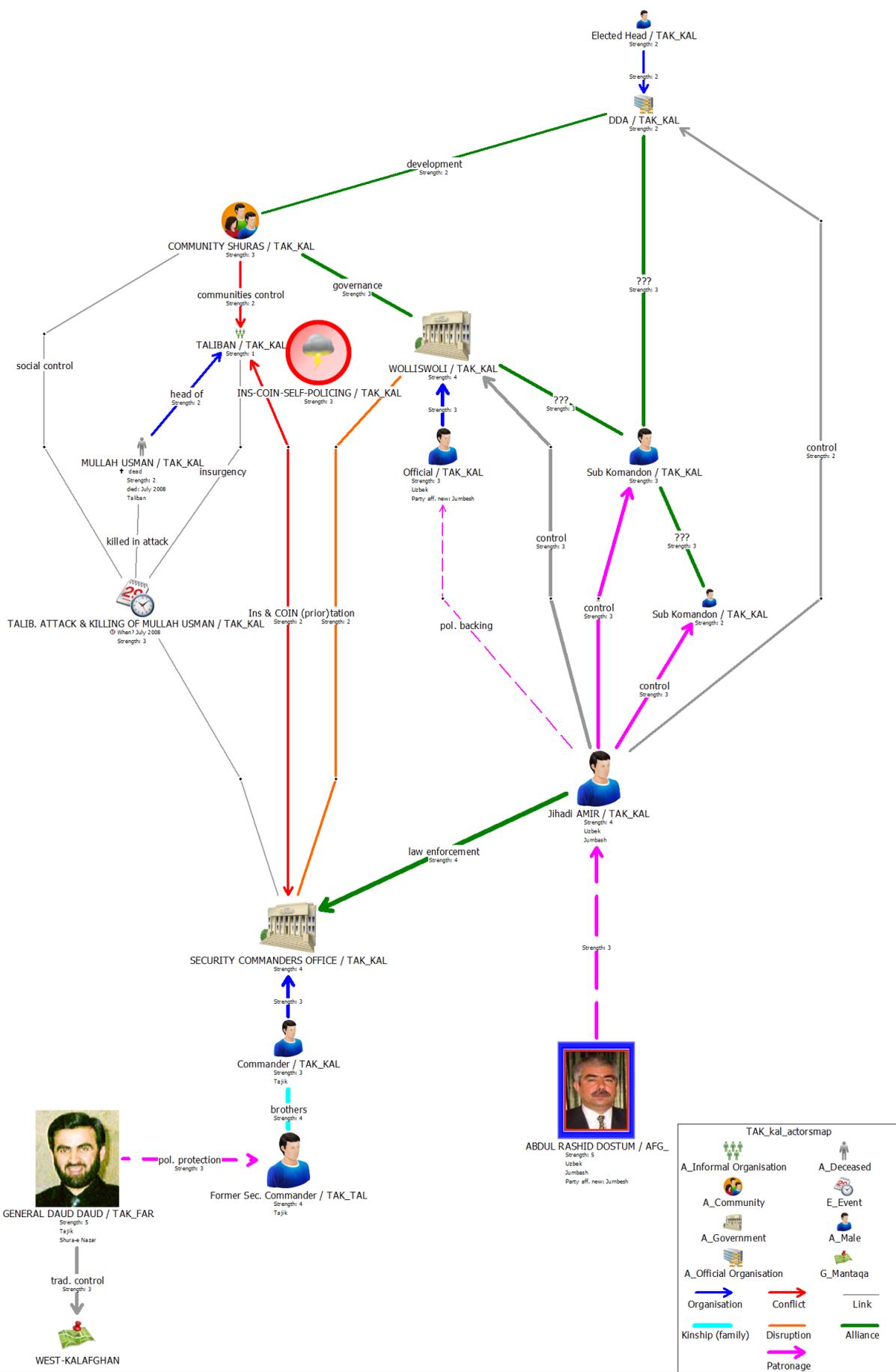
Patronage and power in Khwaja Ghar

Regarding its recent history, soon after Soviet invasion Kalafgan fell to the mujahedin and remained so despite occasionally harsh retribution by Soviet and Afghan communist forces (a number of interviews report the targeted killing of Mullahs and youth activists in this time). The district was originally controlled by the Jamiat-e Islami mujahedin faction but switched during the civil war (1990s) to the faction of the Uzbek General Rashid Dostum's Junbesh-e Milli party, which to this date remains the dominant force in the district. Throughout the 1990s Kalafgan remained a stronghold of the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance with only one village briefly experiencing control by the Taliban in 2001.

Kalafgan is one of the most stable and peaceful districts of the sample. Initial infiltration of insurgents in 2009 was brought to a halt when the local Taliban leader, Mullah Usman, was killed in a clash with ANP. Community elders then approached the remaining insurgents requesting them to remain peaceful or to leave the district. At the time of our survey (late 2010), insurgents were believed to have a very limited presence in only one village of Kalafgan. They were described to us as "quiet Taliban".

A mapping of patronage structures shows two dominant patrons on the government side. One is General Dostum extending support to the former mujahedin commander of the district, whose protégés now dominate the district administration and the District Development Assembly.

The other main power-broker on the government side is the capable and very powerful General Daud Daud (assassinated in May 2011 by the Taliban). Daud Daud was Deputy Minister of Interior for Counternarcotics and at the time of the survey the commander of all police forces in the north (303rd Regional Northern Zone Commander). In spite of the generally positive assessment of General Daud Daud among his national and international counterparts, "there were persistent allegations that he played a key role in the drugs trade he was meant to stop" (Doucet 2011). Through patronage and through official command structures Daud Daud firmly controlled police forces in Kalafgan.

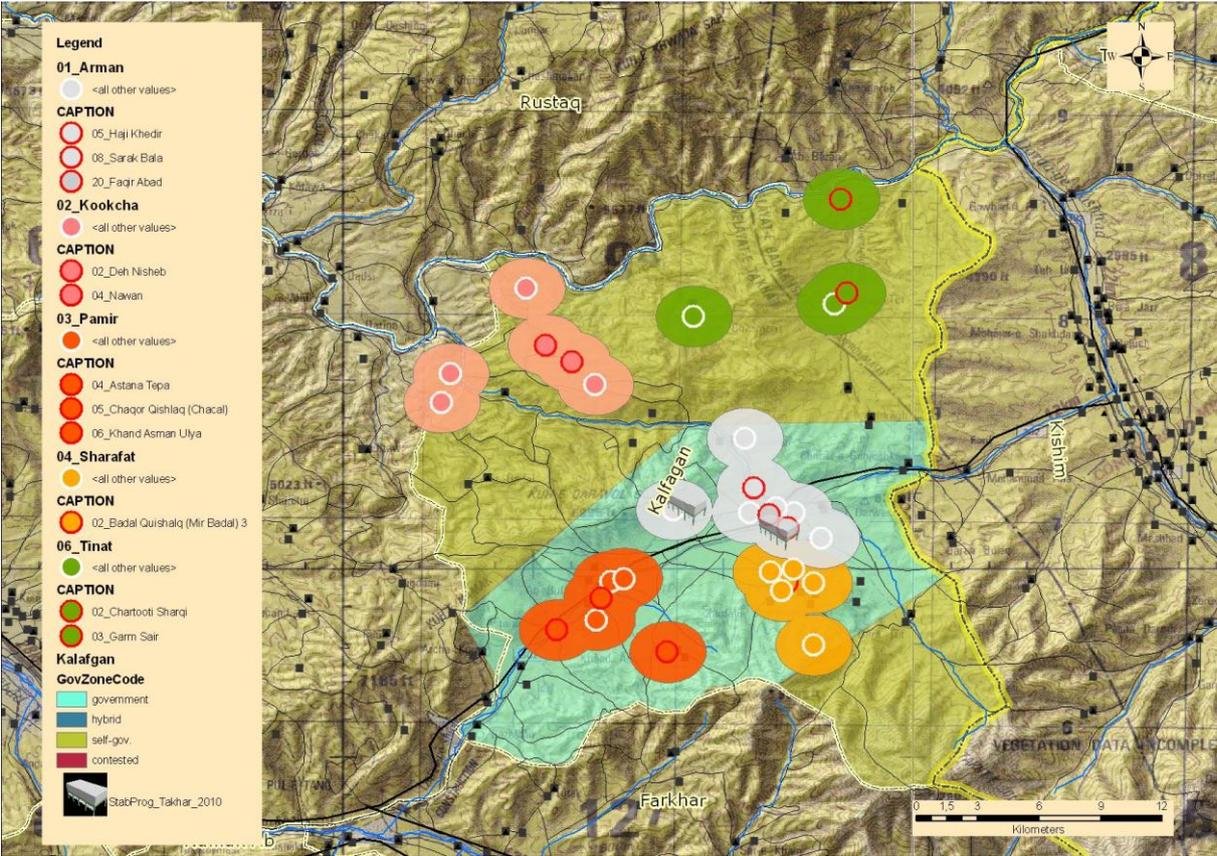


Governance zones

Governance in Kalafgan can be subdivided into two zones: a government-dominated zone in which the government is the main and unchallenged governance provider. This zone includes the district centre and the main valley along the Taloqan-Fayzabad highway. The recently appointed young wolliswol, Reza Shah Sarasengi, appears to have contributed significantly to the improvement of governance in the district. So have two disarmament and demobilisation programmes²⁵ which in Kalafgan successfully contributed to the withdrawal of many commanders from more public roles. “The Jihadi commanders after being disarmed are working as farmers” explained our profilers to us. Lastly, the fact that Kalafgan occupies no strategic position with regard to the drug trade might have made it easier to establish unequivocal state control.

Areas to the north and south of the central zone are characterised by remote self-governance due to their distance from the district centre. These areas are difficult to reach even during the summer and early autumn and are probably cut off from communication with the outside world for some part of the winter. Here self-governance prevails via the CDC shura structure and to a lesser extent via elders.

Map 2 Governance Zones in Kalafgan (turquoise=governance by government; khaki=(remote area) self-governance)



²⁵ Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) from 2003-2005 and Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) from 2005 onwards.

Stability in Kalafgan: scaled indicators

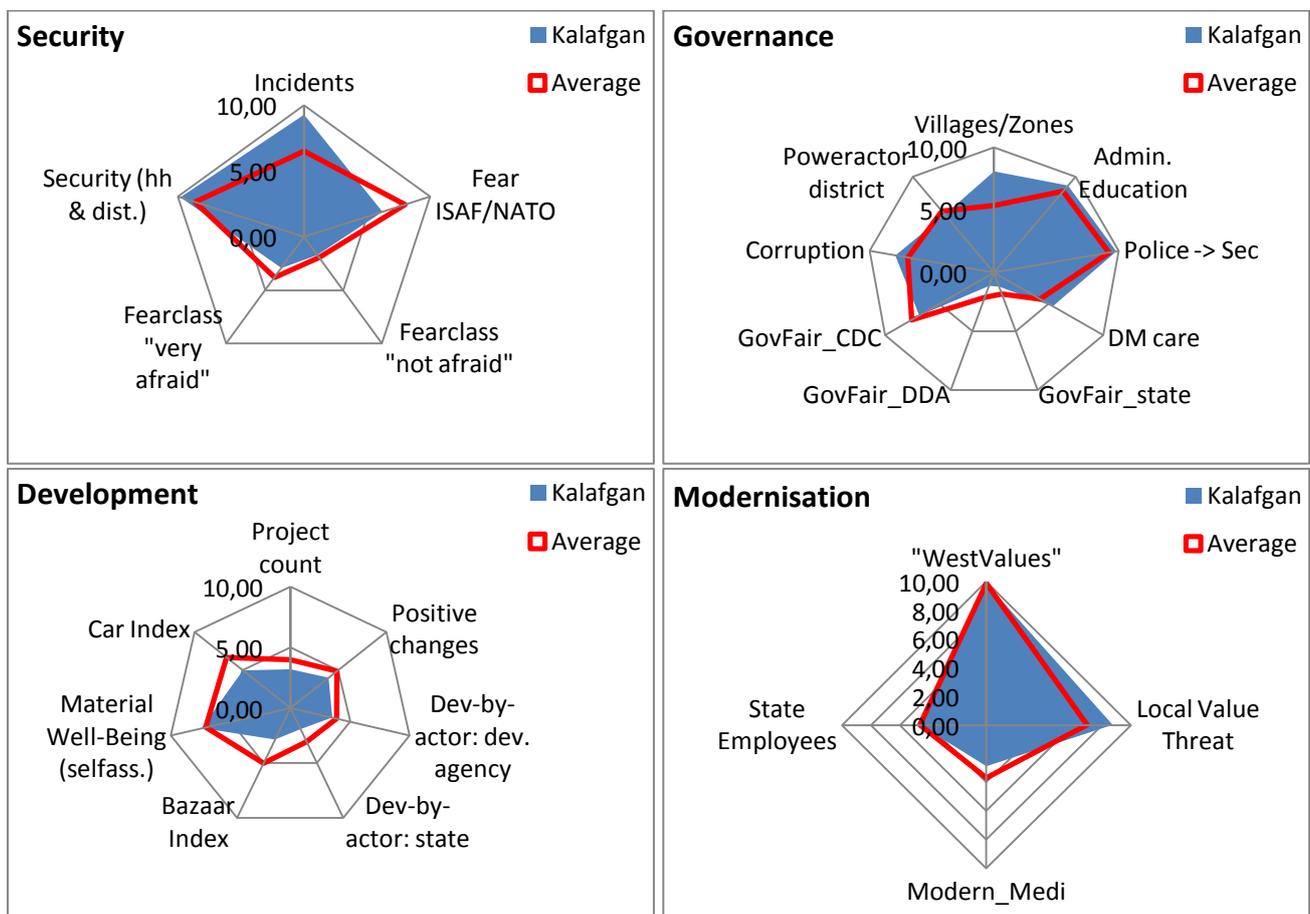
Objectively, security in Kalafgan is good (low rates of incidents, good perceived security in the district). Fear levels are however, high with Kalafgan showing the strongest fear of ISAF and NATO in the entire survey. In Kalafgan, too, one can observe a pronounced detachment between objective security indicators (low number of incidents), a corresponding subjective assessment of the district's and the household's security by respondents (respondents acknowledge that security is good) and fear levels, which are high *despite* of the good security.

Governance is, even on the district level, rather good. Only district-level conflict resolution shows very low scores.

Kalafgan has received little development aid and related perceptions of development-associated change are consequently also very low. Economic development outside of the framework of development aid is very low, too, with only the self-assessment of material well-being showing average results.

Modernisation follows the average: High approval ratings of "western values" and low threat levels linked to development go together with mid-range state employment and low use of modern media.

Figure 2 Spiderweb Diagram: indicators assessing district performance in the four fields / pillars of stability (the red lines depict the average of the 15 surveyed districts)



PRELIMINARY RESULTS

So far we have described a research design to measure changes in stability as a result of specific “stability programmes” that offer a combination of capacity building and participatory implementation of rural infrastructure programmes. We also offered a working definition of stability and presented three tools designed to capture the situation in the survey districts and to measure the degree of stability regarding the four pillars of our working definition of stability.

In this final section of our paper, we will present initial results regarding two pillars of the stability definition: *security* and *governance*, as well as the *nexus between these two components (i.e. the link between security and governance)* in the stabilisation process. As mentioned, a full investigation of all four pillars of our stability definition is outside the scope of the current paper.

In particular we ask the following questions:

Security:

- **As an intervening variable we intend to understand if there is an ethnic dimension of insecurity in the north-east?** The Taliban insurgency is often seen as a mainly Pashtun movement though it is clear that it made inroads among non-Pashtun communities as well (e.g. Giustozzi and Reuter 2011). We thus posit that *districts and CDC clusters with high concentrations of Pashtuns will have worse security indicators (number of incidents, security ratings by respondents and higher levels of fear)*.
- **Does “objective” physical insecurity predict subjective insecurity perceptions?** NATO and security forces often use incident figures as the lead indicator to assess the success and failure of military stabilisation efforts. We thus posit that *incident figures are the key indicator with which our remaining security indicators will correlate*.

Governance:

- **Does the quality of district level governance predict the quality of village level governance?** Below the level of the Afghan province we can observe two levels of governance: the district and the village. As the district level is in theory more powerful, we posit that that *governance quality on the district level will have a strong impact on the village level*. In other words, good village level governance is only likely in districts with better district level governance.
- **Does good governance come as a functional package?** As an implicit but in our opinion central assumption of the good governance literature, we assume that *features of good governance (e.g. a responsive administration, lower levels of perceived corruption, and accountable leadership) systematically go together (correlate)*. In other words where leadership is more accountable, administration will be more responsive, justice will be perceived as more just, etc.

The nexus between governance and security:

- **Does good governance lead to improved security?** The assumption of correlations between good (better) governance on the one hand, and better security is at the core of

our research (ultimately with causality pointing from better governance towards improved security). We thus assume that *good district level governance will correlate with higher levels of objective as well as subjective security.*

- **Does bad governance lead to worse security?** Conversely, *bad governance indicators correlate with worse performance regarding security.*
- We assume similar linkages for the village (CDC) level: *good village level governance goes together with better security and worse village level governance goes together with worse security indicators.*

As at present we are only in the in baseline phase of our research, we will only look at correlations between the individual components.

SECURITY

As a first step, we will check for an ethnic factor that might influence our security indicators. We check for ethnicity as the Taliban movement is often believed to be dominated by ethnic Pashtuns. We would thus like to know if security indicators yield different results in districts or district sections with high concentrations of Pashtuns as compared to districts with only few or no Pashtuns.

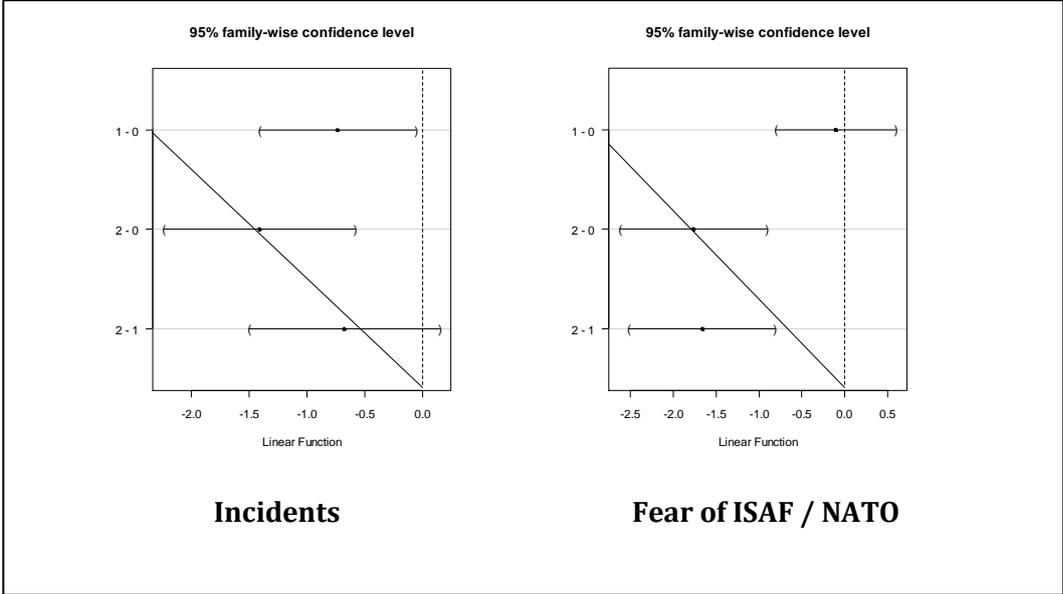
Introducing a dummy for Pashtun population (2=an estimated Pashtun population of 30% or more in a district; 1=Pashtun presence below an estimated 30%; 0=no Pashtun presence) confirms the suspected ethnic aspect to the insurgency. Surveyed villages in districts with high Pashtun presence show more incidents, are more afraid of ISAF / NATO and generally have lower ratings regarding fear classes (less respondents belong to fear class “not afraid”, while more fall in the category “very afraid” of all violent actors).²⁶

A similar cluster level analysis (as a reminder a village cluster is a unit comprising of a number of villages, i.e. a unit between the village and the district) leads to fairly similar results: clusters with higher concentrations of Pashtuns are more afraid of ISAF / NATO and are generally more fearful. In other words, the presence of Pashtuns changes fear and security perceptions not just on the district level but also on a sub-district level.

Interestingly, the results for Pashtun presence in a cluster and incidents in the cluster were not significant ($p=.11$) probably suggesting that it requires a larger, district level concentration of Pashtuns for militant activity to thrive. A mere local concentration of Pashtuns in an otherwise non-Pashtun ethnic environment is not sufficient for militants to become active. It must be noted that security incidents don't necessarily take place within the locality of insurgent control or high insurgent concentration. However, over the longer run, significant insurgent presence

²⁶ In the second baseline survey of our research (Phase 2 carried out in 2011) we once again investigated the link between the presence of larger Pashtun populations and our security indicators. The results were very similar to Phase 1 (i.e. the results presented in this paper): districts and clusters with high concentrations of Pashtuns were more afraid of ISAF, were generally more fearful and have experienced more incidents. This time, however, we specifically also checked for Pashtun ethnicity (as opposed to only Pashtun presence in an otherwise mixed district or cluster) in relation to the above mentioned indicators. The results were surprising. Being a Pashtun ethnic correlated with higher than average fear of ISAF and NATO. Other than that, Pashtuns were, however, less afraid than the survey average.

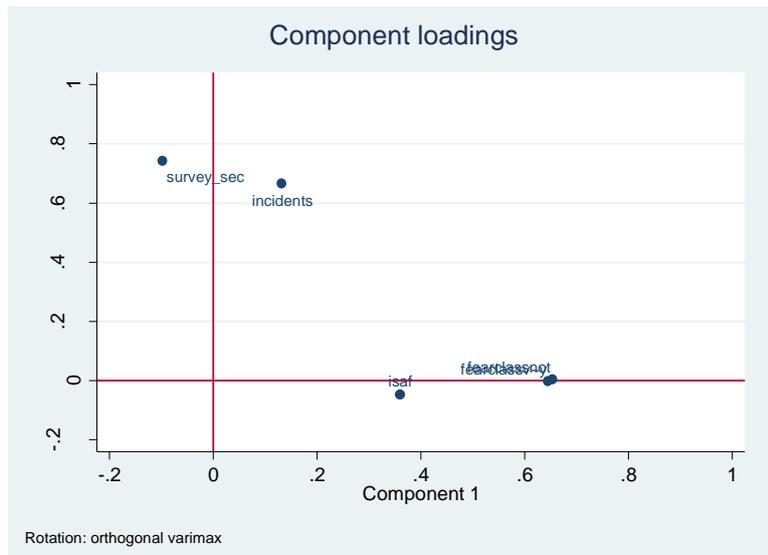
tended to draw forceful response from international military and / or Afghan security forces thus leading to higher incident levels.



The causality regarding the above findings is likely to lead from higher levels of Taliban infiltration of Pashtun communities through family, tribal and ethnic networks to higher militant activity, to increased counter-insurgency operations by Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and ISAF / NATO.

Turning to the interrelations between our security indicators, we applied *principal component analysis* (PCA) to examine the relationship between the individual indicators (see figure below). PCA tries to identify indicators / items that belong closer together. For this it tries to identify a number of "components" that explain as much of the variance in the indicators as possible (and hence the correlations between the indicators). A loading in the graphic can be explained roughly as the correlation between the indicator and the component, e.g. "ISAF" has a loading of about .35 on component 1 and can therefore be said to correlate with about $r = .35$ with the component. The meaning of the components has to be inferred from the indicators loading on a component. A loading of zero would mean that an item does not correlate with that component, as is e.g. the case for ISAF and the two fear classes on *component 2* (C2) or survey_sec on *component 1* (C1).

In the figure the loadings of the items on two components are displayed. There can be in principle more than two components, but we tested for the number of components needed ("parallel analysis"), which resulted in two components.



Two clusters of items emerge in the PCA. One grouped around C1 contains the two fear classes with high positive loadings and ISAF a moderate loading. We tentatively identify this component as "actor based/ oriented security ratings". The strong correlation of the two fear classes is not particularly surprising. As we have normed our indicators to describe stability, high values on fear class "very afraid" signify simply that few respondents fall in the very afraid class. High values in the "not afraid" class suggest that a large number of respondents fall in this class (we conceptualise low levels of fear as an integral component of stability). The strong correlation thus shows that the more respondents in a village fall in one class, the less will fall in the other. What is interesting, however, is the lack of any correlation between the subjective fear indicator and the objective incident indicator within the security stability field.

The second cluster of indicators grouped around C2 is defined primarily by "Survey_Sec" (a composite of the subjective assessment of security in the district and the household) and "incidents" (high loadings on C2, near "0" on C1). We tentatively identify this component as the "general security assessment". The marked correlation suggests that the subjective assessment of respondents tends to reflect objective security situation as depicted by incident numbers.

The interesting and partly surprising result of the PCA test on security is the strong dissociation of concrete fear perceptions on the one hand and the objective as well as subjective assessment of (general) security on the other hand.

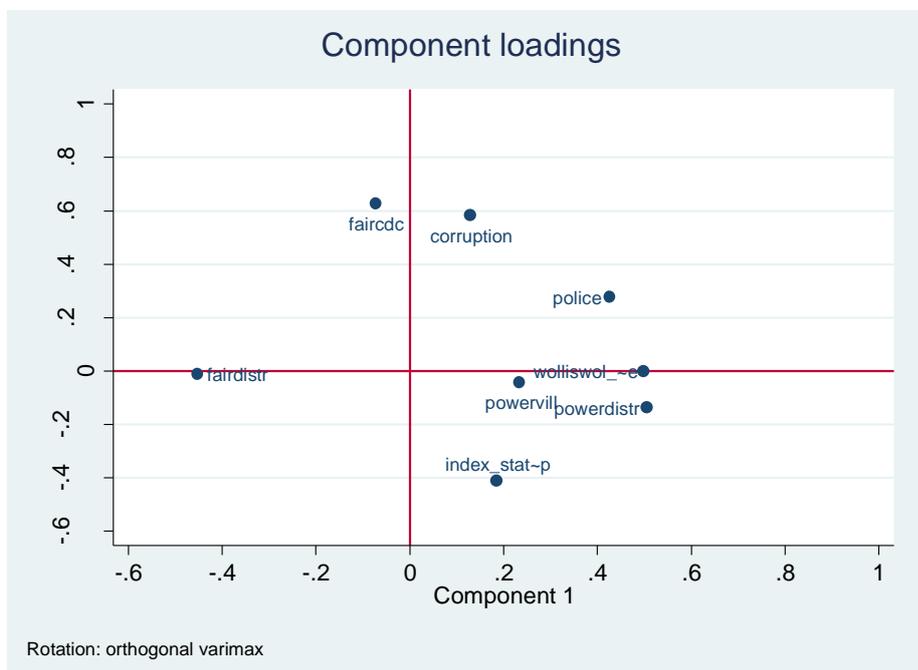
A disjuncture between an abstract security perception of the population and manifest fear of concrete actors is also reflected in another longitudinal research two of the authors have been conducting since 2007 (together with Christoph Zürcher, University of Ottawa; see Böhnke et al. 2010): while fear of most armed actors "exploded" between 2007 and 2009 the assessment of security of household and district worsened to a much lesser degree. Also, areas we coded based on qualitative assessments as areas of arbitrary rule by local commanders did not correlate positively with higher general insecurity perceptions (see also below on the nexus between governance and security indicators). The reason for this may well be that Afghans widely link insecurity to nothing short of military action, armed clashes and civil war. So the measuring rod of insecurity on the side of Afghan villages is quite different from what would be considered insecure by western observers.

GOVERNANCE

Checking for relationships between the different indicators describing governance yields interesting results. Once again we applied PCA which resulted in the identification of two dimensions (components) with approximately two clusters of interrelated items.

The first component (C1) seems to be defined by the *wolliswoli* caring (“*wolliswol~e*”) and “positive” actors being named on the district and village level as being powerful. As mentioned above positive actors are those we defined as compatible with our good governance definition, e.g. the *wolliswol* being the most powerful person in a district. A negative example would be a Jihadi commander or the shadow Taliban governor of the district being named by respondents as the most powerful person. Positive contribution of the police to security also shows a substantial loading on this component (and only a smaller one on the second component.) in summary, a number of good governance indicators seem to be related to each other and are pulling in the same direction.

Interestingly, perceptions of whether conflict resolution on the district level is just, show a marked negative relation with the remaining indicators of good governance. One, fairly farfetched possibility is that districts with better governance indicators follow more closely the officially suggested route of conflict / dispute resolution referring more cases to the courts. Courts are, however, the second most distrusted conflict resolution institution of the survey with only Taliban courts receiving worse results. In a number of districts with comparatively bad governance indicators we are aware of *wolliswols* actively seeking out cases to adjudicate (for a fee) on occasion openly competing with judges.



The second component (C2) is defined by high positive loadings of *faircdc* and *corruption* regarding village level conflict resolution. Since the “corruption” indicator was scaled in a way that high scores indicate low levels corruption, the strong correlation between the two components simply means that CDCs are perceived as fair when conflict resolution is also perceived as being honest (showing low levels of corruption).

While the perceptions of a fair CDC and low levels of corruption correlate strongly, the state employee index (*index_stat~p*) has a high negative loading on the second component. The negative correlation between fairness of conflict resolution by the CDC and low levels of corruption²⁷ on the one hand, and high levels of state employment on the other, appears to be linked to clientelism. Villages with more state employment either had better clientelistic support to begin with (and were thus more likely to gain state employment), or employment in the police or in other state services enables members of these villages to build up better clientelistic ties with the outside world. In both cases these clientelistic networks can be utilised to influence decision-making in disputes.

Interestingly, there is no relation (a loading below .2) between power in the village (*powervil*) and the rest of the village level indicators. This is likely due to the fact that there is hardly any variance in responses to this question: 89% of respondents described either the head of shura or elders as the most powerful in the village both receiving high grades in our normative coding. The next highest scores were a mullah (6.7%) and a commander (2%) – both with low ratings.

The strong separation of the governance indicators along two components, one pertaining to the village / CDC, the other the district strongly suggest that these are two very separate worlds which at present have relatively little impact on each other. In other words, the situation on the village level has little influence on the district level, and vice versa.

GOVERNANCE AND SECURITY

Finally we can examine the relationship between governance and security. Is there any link or correlation between governance and security?

Once again we applied principal component analysis (PCA) to examine the relationship between our security and governance indicators. The PCA now identified three components to explain the relationships between these variables. Since the presentation of loadings for three dimensions in a graphic is not very clear, the results are summarized in the following table. (Components with loadings lower than .2 are not shown in this table.)

The results only partly confirm our initial hypothesis that good governance indicators are linked to security.

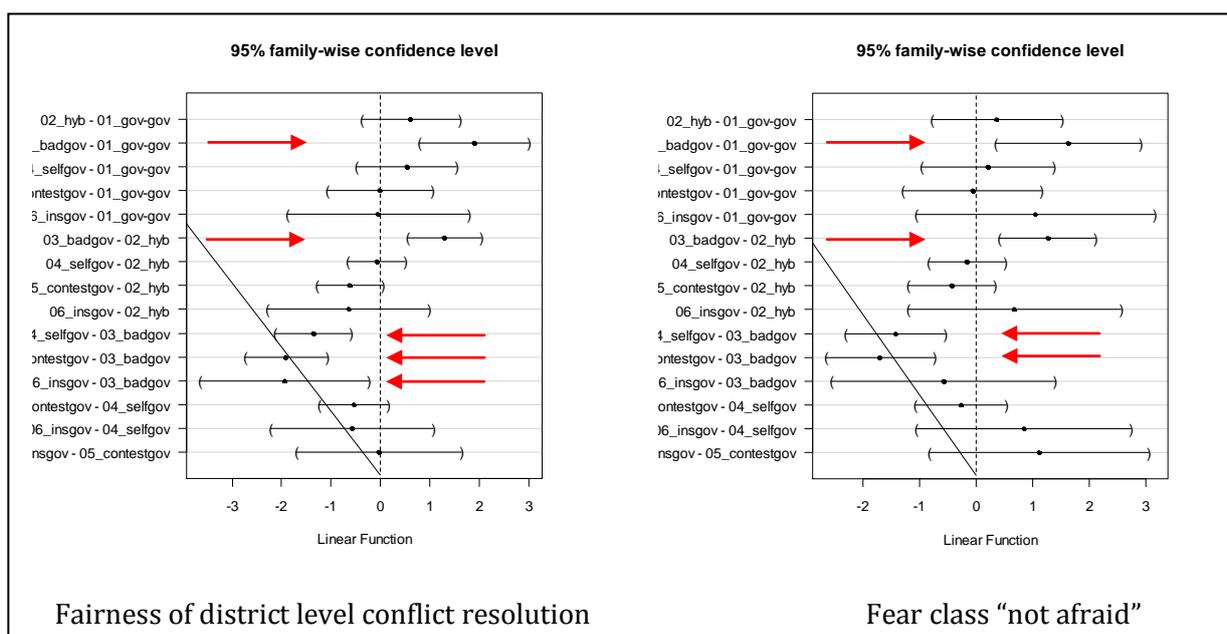
The **first component** is defined by positive loadings (above .2) of the fear classes (high results in fear class “not afraid” while simultaneous low figures in “afraid of all”), “fairdistr” (comparative perceived fairness of district level conflict resolution), and a negative loading of “powerdistr” (meaning a prevalence of actors not compatible with our normative definition of good governance, e.g. commanders or mullahs, were seen as being powerful in the district). In these cases positive police contribution to security and a responsive wolliswoli also load negatively, while fear of ISAF is positive (little fear).

²⁷ As mentioned the “*corruption*” indicator refers to the district level and asks for the assessment of respondents how often force (violence), relations (clientelism) or money (bribes) are used to influence the outcome of conflicts. The wording of the survey question is as follows: “Parties to a conflict may use various means to influence the outcome of the conflict in their favour. How often do you think that the following means are applied in your district?” Possible answers included: “connections / kin ties / qaum”, “money” and “force”.

Rotated components (blanks are $\text{abs}(\text{loading}) < .2$)

Variable	Comp1	Comp2	Comp3	Unexplained
incidents		0.2789	-0.2627	.6647
isaf	0.2657		0.2202	.6096
fearclassv~y	0.4193			.3415
fearclassnot	0.4200			.3378
police	-0.2355	0.4569		.2488
survey_sec		0.6714		.1734
powervill				.9096
powerdistr	-0.4045	-0.2353		.3903
faircdc			0.6580	.2368
fairdistr	0.4361			.3393
corruption			0.5108	.3719
wolliswol_~e	-0.2728	0.3561		.4345
index_stat~p			-0.3641	.7436

The existence of this combination of governance characteristics is further confirmed by an ANOVA test of governance zones looking at the same issue areas. We opted for an ANOVA test as, in many respects, governance zones resemble categorical indicators rather than scaled indicators. Therefore, they are analyzed by means of analysis of variance with corresponding *post-hoc* tests to identify which governance zones differ for a given variable. The ANOVA tool tests whether the difference between the lowest and the highest mean of a dependent variable (here e.g. fairness of district level conflict resolution) in given groups (here the governance zones) is so big that it cannot be due to chance. This is indicated by the overall significance test. After that so-called *post-hoc* analyses are conducted that test whether additional means differ. All governance variables not described here were not significantly correlated with the governance zones.



Our results are rather surprising: they show that areas with “bad governance” (the arbitrary rule governance zone) are associated with more positive perceptions of the fairness of district level conflict resolution and lower levels fear (as expressed by our two fear classes).

One possible explanation of this at first glance counter-intuitive finding is that powerful “enforcers” have two valuable things to offer to populations living under their control: less fear (of abuse or attacks by **outsiders**) and what is **perceived** as fairer justice (represented by informal procedures of conflict resolution on the district level). Both results are highly relevant to our non-normative definition of stability. It has to be noted, however, that the offer of stability by a socially embedded commander is ultimately incompatible with a normative stability definition relying on the *good governance* concept. This result thus also feeds into the debate about “good-enough governance” (Grindle 2005).

In other words bad governance that is “our” local bad governance may be a comparatively acceptable form of governance in the Afghan context and may even be preferable to official, but weak and often corrupt forms of governance provision.

Stronger patronage support by “bad governance actors” might explain the finding. In Afghanistan households but even villages without a strong patron are vulnerable. Our case studies, for instance, show how villages which once possessed powerful patronage support were cut off even from irrigation water once the patron was killed.²⁸ Villages within the range of a strong commander might enjoy precisely such a protection vis-a-vis other villages. The more positive assessment of district level justice might also partially relate to patronage support in case of conflicts that cannot be resolved locally. Alternatively, it can also show better access to arbitration as opposed to a court ruling.

Component 2 shows high positive loadings of police, “*survey_sec*” (the subjective evaluation of district and household security by respondents) and the responsiveness of the wolliswoli (“*wolliswol_~e*”); the number of recorded incidents (“*incidents*”) loads low but as well positive on this component. “*Powerdistr*” shows a small negative loading on this component.

This clustering of positive governance indicators at district level (wolliswoli cares and police contributes positively to security) and two important security indicators (low number of incidents and subjective assessment of district security) is meaningful as it hints at a possible confirmation of one of our hypotheses that good governance can have an impact on security. Interestingly, the combination of these indicators shows no correlation with fear perceptions. The concept of insecurity on the side of Afghan villages explained above may well play in part explain this observation.

²⁸ The case relates to Baharak District of Takhar Province where a Pashtun and Tajik minority (both approx. 20%) lives among an Uzbek majority (approx. 60%). For several years the Pashtuns of the district enjoyed the powerful patronage support of Eng. Mohammed Omar, the provincial governor of neighbouring Kunduz Province, who originally came from Baharak and whose family and relatives continued to live in the district. Following Eng. Omar’s assassination by the Taliban in September 2010, the Pashtuns of Baharak were suddenly left without any protection at the mercy of the vengeful Uzbeks and Tajiks who resented their preferential in the years prior to the assassination. Reportedly even irrigation water has capped (or at least strongly reduced) to the Pashtuns by their numerically more powerful neighbours (interview with a Pashtun from Baharak District on 13 May 2011).

It has to be emphasised that we are at baseline-level research and hence causality could go both ways: certain good governance indicators might contribute to the provision of better security *or* these good governance indicators might only emerge in areas with relatively good security. Qualitative research can help us here. A number of case studies we gathered show that very bad governance can have direct implications to security.

A case in point is the Khwaja Ghar police official who sold weapons to insurgents. In Wardooj (Badakhshan) a police chief and former Jihadi commander allegedly invited a Taliban cell to destabilise the area under a rival commander. Not surprisingly, after a while the Taliban refused to cooperate and attempted to assassinate the police chief who previously invited them to district. Only then did the government seriously try to eliminate the Taliban cell in the district. In Baharak (Badakhshan) the leader of a Taliban cell was released shortly after his arrest (presumably for a hefty bribe). Villagers came forward and led a team of Afghan police and ISAF special forces to the hideout of the insurgents. The insurgency has little popular support in most areas of northern and north-east Afghanistan. But the population needs to sufficiently trust government structures that they will not be betrayed or abandoned if they come forward and openly support the government. A minimum of good governance thus might be the precondition for cooperation between population and government structures which ultimately can result in heightened security.

The above examples do not mean to say that good (better) governance can usually prevent the destabilisation of an area, if insurgents (or a criminal group for that matter) decide to invest significant resources to do so. As an example, Nizamudin, the well-respected District Manager of Khan Abad District in Kunduz Province, repeatedly tried and failed to reign in renegade anti-Taliban militias who have terrorised the population (cf. e.g. also Mashal 2011).

At the same time, past work by Böhnke et al. 2010 shows that the perceived effectiveness of development (a governance output) predicts more positive attitudes towards the government and the international intervention; the attitudes-effect vanishes, however, for the intervention when perceived security worsens and fear increases. At the same time the correlation between perceived positive development and the output legitimacy of district-level government increases with the visibility of the state as a development actor (from nearly invisible in 2007 to high visibility in 2009). A clear-cut causality thus far cannot, however, be established and requires further research. What is likely is that governance has a long-term security effect but security has a short-term governance effect; i.e. you need improved governance to make security sustainable but you need a degree of reliable security to start establishing governance (cf. Koehler 2010:237).

Component 3 is defined by low rates of corruption (bribes, violence, clientelism in local conflict processing) distorting conflict resolution and perceived fair judgements by the CDC (“faircdc”) and to a lesser extent also by a negative loading of index_state_employees; incidents and fear of ISAF load only very low. This confirms once again the CDC level as an entity distinct from the district level. We have no fully conclusive explanation of the low negative loading (-.26) of incidents. There are a number of possible explanations that need to be investigated further: are specific kinds of incidents causing communities to integrate more closely against an external threat? Are more closely knit communities more likely to be the focus of military operations because they use their “social capital” to mobilise on the side of the insurgents or for acts of

common violence as in attacking neighbouring communities over resources? Or is there a third variable that explains this correlations, possibly ethnic belonging predicting both more violence and stronger cohesion? These questions need to be analysed as the research progresses.

Returning to the interpretation of Component 3, the PCA of joint governance and security indicators confirms our findings from the previous section (see section on [Governance](#)) where we investigated the relationships between our various governance indicators. Both analyses show the village level to be largely independent of the district level.

SUMMARY AND OUTLOOK

In this paper we presented the outline of an ongoing mixed qualitative / quantitative research to assess the impact of the international intervention on stability in Afghanistan's northeast. As a first step we offered a working definition of stability composed of four functional fields: security, governance institutions, economic reproduction / development and adaptation (modernisation). Directly or indirectly, international interventions routinely target these four functional fields, e.g. military measures target the functional field of security, while capacity building measures might aim at improving governance or enhancing capacities in the field of the economy.

Following the introduction of the working definition, we presented three instruments designed to depict certain features of our stability definition: an *actors mapping* depicting the relationships between the main actors in a district including conflicts and patronage ties; a representation of *governance zones* showing the geographic reach and extent of different modes of delivering governance. The six zones identified by us as being relevant for north-east Afghanistan reach from governance provided by the district level Afghan government, to remote areas of self-governance and the still present arbitrary rule of commanders. On the far end of the spectrum we have zones where the Taliban have established their own system of governance ("Taliban governance"). Lastly, we have identified areas where the state and the Taliban both vie for control making a coherent provision of governance services by either one or the other impossible ("contested areas").

Lastly, we have introduced scaled indicators depicted as a spiderweb diagramme to show the "performance" of the individual districts of the survey in the four fields of our working definition of stability (i.e. security, governance, economic reproduction (development) and adaption (modernisation)).

Using the four functional fields of the working definition, the indicators associated with each field and the tools designed to qualitatively and quantitatively describe the individual districts of the survey, we can begin to operationalise the intended and unintended impacts of the international intervention on society in the north-east of the country. We then presented the exemplary description of two survey districts, Khwaja Ghar and Kalafgan, to illustrate how our tools and indicators can provide a comprehensive assessment of stability in a district.

Beyond a mere description of the stability situation in the survey area, our data also allows to explore how the measures of the international intervention interact with each other within and between the different functional fields (security, governance institutions, economy and adaption / modernisation). In other words, we can ask whether and how the different

international measures – military, governance capacity building, and economic reconstruction and development – interact with each other and how the recipient society (in our case the people of north-east Afghanistan) adapts to this forceful modernisation drive.

Some possible interactions between these fields appear to be quite obvious. One would assume for instance, that the deterioration of security beyond a certain level would also lead to a worsening of governance and of the economy. Other possible interactions are less clear: For example, can improvements in governance and development lead to improved security? Addressing these questions in detail will be the task of our future research.

In the final section of this paper we presented preliminary results regarding two fields of our stability definition: security and governance institutions. As the data utilised in the analysis still relate to the baseline phase of the research, we could only present initial correlations between the indicators measuring performance in the different fields. Nevertheless, these initial results offered us interesting insights regarding the nature of the security and governance fields of our stability definition.

With regard to *security*, our analysis seems to confirm a distinct ethnic character of the insurgency in north-east Afghanistan. District and village clusters with a high percentage of Pashtuns experience the insurgency in different ways than districts and village clusters with low or no presence of Pashtuns: *districts* with a high percentage of Pashtuns have registered more security incidents, and districts *and* village clusters with a strong Pashtun presence show higher levels of fear in general and are more afraid of ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) in particular than districts and village clusters with no Pashtun presence. A further interesting result is a strong dissociation of “fear” from objective and subjective security indicators in a district.

With regard to governance we also have two interesting results which will need further investigation: firstly village level governance appears to be largely dissociated from district level governance, i.e. good or bad governance on the district level has only very limited or no impact on the quality of governance on the village and vice versa, the quality of village level governance has no impact on the quality of district level governance.

Another result is a partial confirmation of assumptions that see “good governance” as a package: a responsive district administration, an efficient police (i.e. a police that contributes positively to security) and the perception that the designated district manager is the most powerful person in the district (i.e. informal power-brokers do not overshadow the government) strongly correlate with each other. Interestingly, this cluster of good governance indicators correlates significantly and *negatively* with the perceived fairness of conflict resolution on the district level. In other words, districts that show a number of good governance characteristics are simultaneously also associated with a more unfair management of conflicts. This result clearly runs contrary to general assumptions of good governance as a package and shows how complex interactions between the different governance components can be.

A joint examination of security and governance indicators confirmed previous results and added some additional detail: the arbitrary rule of commanders is associated with better *perceived fairness of conflict management* and less fear, i.e. archetypical bad governance actors nevertheless offer two valuable services to the people: less fear and perceived better conflict management. A cluster of “good governance” also emerged in this analysis that was associated

with better security. Lastly, the separation of the village from the district level was once again confirmed.

Regarding our research agenda for the future, the relationship between objective and subjective security and fear will need to be further investigated as well as the ethnic aspect of these security indicators, e.g. Pashtuns appear to be less fearful regarding most armed actors than non-Pashtun ethnics; only with regard to ISAF do Pashtuns show more fear. This might suggest that Taliban presence might offer a sense of being protected to Pashtuns vis-à-vis most armed (and feared) actors in the north-east. This additional protection, however, comes at a cost: it attracts attacks from ISAF.

In the field of governance we intend to better understand the anomalies related to the assumption of "good governance as a package". Why are well governed districts less able to offer conflict management that is perceived as fair? And concurrently why is conflict management perceived as fairer and why is there also less fear in badly governed areas? Lastly, we also intend to better understand the dissociation of the village and the district level in terms governance. Will this change in our follow-up?

More generally, in our future research we will include the next two functional fields in the analysis (i.e. economy and adaptation / development) and explore how these four fields relate to each other. Lastly, once the data of the first follow-up are available (mid- to end 2013), we will also address the burning questions of causality.

LITERATURE

- AIHRC* 2012: From Arbaki to Local Police. Today's Challenges and Tomorrow's Concerns, Kabul, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, at: <http://www.aihrc.org.af/en/research-reports/1073/>; 25.11.2012.
- Böhnke, Jan/Koehler, Jan/Zürcher, Christoph* 2010: Assessing the Impact of Development Cooperation in North East Afghanistan 2005-2009, Bonn, Bundesministerium für Entwicklung und Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit, BMZ.
- Böhnke, Jan Rasmus/Koehler, Jan/Zürcher, Christoph* 2013: Assessing the Impact of Development Cooperation in North East Afghanistan: Approaches and Methods (SFB Working Papers 43), Berlin, Sonderforschungsbereich 700 "Governance in Räumen begrenzter Staatlichkeit", at: http://www.sfb-governance.de/publikationen/sfbgov_wp/wp43_en/wp43.pdf?1362403520; 08.03.2013.
- Brahimi, Lakhdar* 2000: "Brahimi Report" on Peace Operations (21.08.2000), New York, United Nations, at: http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace_operations/; 27.03.2013.
- Brahimi, Lakhdar* 2001: Briefing to the Security Council. Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan (13.11.2001), New York, United Nations Security Council, at: <http://www.un.org/news/dh/latest/afghan/brahimi-sc-briefing.htm>; 27.03.2013.
- Clark, Kate* 2011: Kill or Capture 2: Another Takhar Night Raid Fans Ethnic Discontent (Afghan Analyst Network Blog), Afghan Analyst Network, at: <http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=1738>; 24.11.2012.
- Collins, Sam* 2011: Afghanistan: Pakistan accused of backing Taliban, in: BBC World, 26 October 2011, at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-15445047>; 13.05.2013.
- Cordesman, Anthony H.* 2013: The Uncertain Role of the ANSF in Transition: Establishing Real World Criteria and Metrics. Testimony to the House Armed Service Committee. Center for Strategic and International Studies (27 February 2013), Washington, D.C., CSIS, at: http://csis.org/files/publication/130226_Afghan_Uncertain_Role_ANSF_Transition_AHC.pdf; 13.05.2013.

- Dahrendorf, Ralf* 1968: Essays in the theory of society, Stanford, Calif., Stanford University Press.
- Doucet, Lyse* 2011: Afghanistan: Suicide blast kills top police commander, in: BBC News, 28 May 2011, at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-13585242>.
- Elias, Norbert* 1983: Über den Rückzug der Soziologen auf die Gegenwart, in: Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie 35: 1, 29-40.
- Elwert, Georg* 2002: Conflict: Anthropological Aspects, in: Smelser, Neil J./Baltes, Paul B. (Eds.): International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Science, Elsevier, 2542-2547.
- Foundation, Asia* 2008: An Assessment of Sub-National Governance in Afghanistan, at: <http://asiafoundation.org/publications/pdf/18>; 24.11.2012.
- Gaarder, Marie/Annan, Jeannie* 2012: Impact Evaluation for Peacebuilding: challenging preconceptions, (Authors' Workshop. Evaluating Peacebuilding Efforts in Conflict Settings, Oslo, 10.-11.10.2012).
- Gardizi, Manija/Glassner, Rainer/Koehler, Jan* 2008: EZ Governance und Rule of Law Kontextanalyse Badakhshan : Second Draft, Faizabad, Berlin, Frankfurt, i.A. der Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), ARC Berlin.
- Giustozzi, Antonio/Reuter, Christoph* 2011: The Insurgents of the Afghan North (AAN Thematic Report 04/2011), Afghan Analyst Network, at: <http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=1679>.
- Gosztonyi, Kristof/Fararoon, Romin* 2004: Analysis of Peace and Conflict Potential in Afghan Badakhshan, Afghanistan, Berlin, ARC, GTZ.
- Gosztonyi, Kristóf/Koehler, Jan* 2010: PCA Analysis North Afghanistan, Kabul, Berlin, Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, ARC-Berlin.
- Government of the USA* 2010: Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan (Report to Congress), at: http://www.defense.gov/pubs/November_1230_Report_FINAL.pdf; 25.11.2012.
- Grävingsholt, Jörn/Leininger, Julia/Haldenwang, Christian von* 2012: Effective statebuilding? A review of evaluations of international statebuilding support in fragile contexts (Evaluation Study, June 2012), German Development Institute; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.
- Grindle, Merilee S.* 2005: Good Enough Governance Revisited, DFID, at: <http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/events-documents/1281.pdf>; 25.11.2012.
- Hulslander, Robert/Spivey, Jake* 2012: Village Stability Operations and Afghan Local Police, in: Prism 3: 3, 125-138, at: <http://www.ndu.edu/press/village-stability-operations.html>; 25.11.2012.
- Human Rights Watch* 2011: "Just Don't Call It a Militia". Impunity, Militias, and the "Afghan Local Police" (September 2011), Human Rights Watch, at: <http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/afghanistan0911webwcover.pdf>, version, online.
- Islamic Republic of Afghanistan* 2010: Sub-national Governance Policy, (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, IDLG), at: <http://jawzjan.gov.af/Content/Media/Documents/SNGP-English-Afghanistan307201192625245553325325.pdf>; 19.02.2013.
- Klingebiel, Stephan/Steurer, Roland F.* 2002: Strukturelle Stabilität, in: GTZ (Ed.): Friedensentwicklung, Krisenprävention und Konfliktbearbeitung, Eschborn, Deutsche Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit, at: <http://www2.gtz.de/dokumente/bib/02-5163.pdf>; 25.11.2012.
- Koehler, Jan* 2004a: Assessing peace and conflict potentials in the target region of the GTZ Central Asia and Northern Afghanistan programme to foster food security, regional cooperation and stability, Berlin, ARC, GTZ.
- Koehler, Jan* 2004b: Institutionalisierte Konfliktaustragung, Kohäsion und Wandel. Theoriegeleiteter Praxischeck auf Gemeindeebene, in: Eckert, Julia (Ed.): Anthropologie der Konflikte; Georg Elwerts konflikttheoretische These in der Diskussion, Bielefeld, Transcript, 273-297.

- Koehler, Jan* 2008: Auf der Suche nach Sicherheit - Die internationale Intervention in Nordost-Afghanistan (SFB 700 Working Papers 17), Berlin, SFB 700 Governance in Areas of Limited Statehood, at: http://www.sfb-governance.de/publikationen/sfbgov_wp/index.html; 24.11.2012.
- Koehler, Jan* 2010: Empirische Interventionsforschung – eine Problemannäherung am Beispiel Afghanistans, in: Bonacker, Thorsten/Daxner, Michael/Free, Jan/Zürcher, Christoph (Eds.): Interventionskultur. Zur Soziologie von Interventionsgesellschaften, Wiesbaden, 219-259.
- Koehler, Jan* 2012: Social Order within and beyond the Shadow of Hierarchy. Governance Patterns in Afghanistan (SFB-Governance Working Papers Series 33), Berlin, Research Centre (SFB) 700, at: http://www.sfb-governance.de/publikationen/sfbgov_wp/index.html; 24.11.2012.
- Koehler, Jan/Gosztanyi, Kristof* 2011: Sub-district governance. Social engineering and local governance in north-east Afghanistan, in: Schaper, Marcus (Ed.): Good Enough Governance. Wie kommt der Südsudan zu tragfähiger Staatlichkeit und funktionierender Verwaltung?, Locom, Format Publishing, 39-64.
- Koehler, Jan/Zürcher, Christoph* 2004: Conflict and the state of the state in the Caucasus and Central Asia: an empirical research challenge, in: Berliner Osteuropa Info 21, 57-67.
- Koehler, Jan/Zürcher, Christoph* 2007: Assessing the Contribution of International Actors in Afghanistan: Results from a Representative Survey, Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin, SFB 700, at: http://www.sfb-governance.de/en/publikationen/sfbgov_wp/wp7_en/index.html; 14.03.2013.
- Koenigs, Tom* 2010: State-building light won't work. The path of re-constructing Afghanistan, Berlin, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, at: http://www.af.boell.org/downloads/koenigs_afghanistan.pdf; 27.03.2013.
- Lachmann, G./Flade, F.* 2009: Taliban ziehen Bundeswehr in ihren Terror-Krieg in: Die Welt, at: <http://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article4461819/Taliban-ziehen-Bundeswehr-in-ihren-Terror-Krieg.html>; 24.11.2012.
- Lamb, Robert D.* 2012: Formal and Informal Governance in Afghanistan. Reflections on a Survey of the Afghan People, Part 1 of 4 (Occasional Paper No.11, April 2012), Asia Foundation.
- Larsen, Iselin Hebbert* 2010: UNAMA in Afghanistan. Challenges and Opportunities in Peacemaking, State-building and Coordination (Security in Practice 3), Oslo, The Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, at: <http://www.nupi.no/content/download/12005/118516/version/5/file/SIP-03-10-NUPI+Report-Hebbert+Larsen.pdf>.
- Lefèvre, Mathieu* 2010: Local Defence in Afghanistan: A Review of Government-backed Initiatives (AAN Thematic Report, 03/2010), Kabul, Afghanistan Analysts Network, at: <http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=763>.
- Mielke, Katja/Schetter, Conrad* 2007: "Where Is the Village?" Local Perceptions and Development Approaches in Kunduz Province, in: Asien 104, 71-87, at: http://asienkunde.de/articles/A104_071_087.pdf; 19.02.2013.
- MRRD* 2006: NSP Operational Manual - 3rd Version : Annex G: Community Development Council By-laws, (Kabul).
- MRRD* 2009: National Solidarity Programme (NSP). Operational Manual, Kabul, Ministry for Rural Rehabilitation and Development.
- MRRD* 2010: NSP Operational Manual - Version 5, Government of Afghanistan, MRRD, at: <http://www.nspafghanistan.org/default.aspx?Sel=16>.
- Nixon, Hamish* 2008a: The Changing Face of Local Governance. Community Development Councils in Afghanistan, Kabul, Afghan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), at: <http://www.areu.org.af/Uploads/EditionPdfs/802E-Changing%20Face%20of%20local%20Governance-WP-print.pdf.pdf>; 09.02.2013.
- Nixon, Hamish* 2008b: Subnational State-Building in Afghanistan (AREU Synthesis Paper Series), Kabul, Afghan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), at: <http://www.areu.org.af/Uploads/EditionPdfs/806E-Subnational%20State-Building-SP-print.pdf.pdf>; 09.02.2013.

- Rashid, Ahmed* 2001: Taliban: militant Islam, oil and fundamentalism in Central Asia, New Haven, Yale Nota Bene.
- Rashid, Ahmed* 2008: Descent into chaos : How the war against Islamic extremism is being lost in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia, London, Allen Lane.
- Rubin, Barnett R.* 2002: The Fragmentation of Afghanistan : State formation and collapse in the international system, New Haven, Yale Univ. Press.
- Sedra, Mark* 2011: How the Afghan Mission Failed, in: The Mark, 07.10.2011, at: http://www.themarknews.com/articles/6960-how-the-afghan-mission-failed/#.UVMB8CqF_Ss; 27.03.2013.
- Shah, Sayed Mohammed* 2009: Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) Formulation Process: Influencing Factors and Challenges (AREU Discussion Paper), Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, at: <http://www.areu.org.af/Uploads/EditionPdfs/904E-ANDS%20Formulation-web.pdf>; 24.11.2012.
- Stabilisation Unit* 2012: What is Stabilisation, in: <http://www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk/about-us/what-is-stabilisation.html>; 25.11.2012.
- Teilprojekt A1* 2009: Grundbegriffe der Governanceforschung (SFB 700 Working Paper Nr. 8), Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin, SFB 700 Governance in Räumen begrenzter Staatlichkeit, at: http://www.sfb-governance.de/publikationen/sfbgov_wp/wp8/wp8.pdf?1325770917; 16.03.2013.
- Verstegen, S./van der Goor, L./de Zeeuv, J.* 2005: The Stability Assessment Framework – Designing Integrated Responses for Security, Governance and Development, Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at: http://www.nbiz.nl/publications/2005/20050200_cru_paper_stability.pdf; 25.11.2012.
- Wardak, Ali* 2004: Jirga - A Traditional Mechanism of Conflict Resolution in Afghanistan, University of Glamorgan, UK, at: <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/apcity/unpan017434.pdf>; 25.11.2012.
- Zaeef, Abdul Salam* 2010: My life with the Taliban, London, Hurst.
- Zürcher, Christoph* 2004: Einbettung und Entbettung: Empirische institutionenzentrierte Konfliktanalyse, in: Eckert, Julia (Ed.): Anthropologie der Konflikte; Georg Elwerts konflikttheoretische These in der Diskussion, Bielefeld, Transcript, 102-120.

ANNEX – INDICATOR TABLE

Aggregated Stability Indicator	Definition
Security	
Incidents I Security Index Incidents / Population	<p>Number of all security incidents in 2011 we divided by the MRRD 2007 figure of inhabitants in the district. The result was then scaled between 1 (maximum incidents per capita as observed in the sample) and 10 (no incidents)</p> <p>Incident data source is IMMAP, provided via the client. This data-set is not identical with other incident data bases (ISAF/NATO has a strong military bias, UNDSS and ANSO need to be manually georeferenced and tend to focus more on non-military security incidents) and is sometimes not very exact in classification and exact location but it was a ready-to-use dataset and fits the purposes of the baseline. Continuing access of the client to this database also guarantees comparability for follow-up analysis.</p> <p>This index is used for the district baseline web charts.</p>
Fear ISAF/NATO Q7. Please indicate, if you are afraid of the following groups: (a) Foreign Forces	<p>The usable options are very afraid (1), somewhat afraid (2) and not afraid (3). The score was reversed and recoded on the range between 1 ("very afraid") and 10 ("not afraid"):</p> $\text{generate float } q7a_normed = 10 - ((q7a_rec - 1) * (9/2))$ <p>The results are aggregated on CDC-level and the average of the two CDCs covered per cluster were used as aggregate CLDC index. The average of the five CLDCs per district is used to arrive at the district index.</p> <p>The questions that are best fitted to assess the (subjective) dimension of fear in the data set, are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q5 -- assessments of district and household security Q7 -- assessment of threats from different actors
Fearclass "not afraid" Q7. Please indicate, if you are afraid of the following groups. (d-g)	<p>Q7 has questions regarding informal armed groups. The following questions of Q7 were used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) Taleban f) Arbakee / Community Militias g) Mudschahedin / Jihadi h) External Armed Men i) Criminal Groups <p>From this group Fear Classes are formed using <i>latent class analysis</i>. This results in 7 distinct classes. Classes 3 & 5 are marked by a high incidence of being very afraid of most of the informal armed groups. They are used to form the combined fear class "very afraid". The share of this combined class per CDC is transformed into the Fearclass "very afraid" indicator: a 100% share of people belonging to this combined class on CDC level within the sample is defined as 1 (most afraid) and a share of 0% within the sample as 10 (least afraid). See above</p>
Fearclass "very afraid of all" Q7. Please indicate, if you are afraid of the following groups. (d-g)	<p>Classes 3 & 5 present answer patterns that might be interpreted as being indicative of strong perceived threats from most of these groups.</p>
Security (hh & dist.) Q5. How would you rate the security of your district currently? Q5.1. How would you rate the security of your household currently?	<p>The variables q5 and q5.1 (security with regard to district and individual household) are added up and transformed so that "1" represents "low security" and "10" high perceived security for household and district.</p> $q5score = q5_rec + q5_1_rec$ $q5score_normed = 10 - ((q5score - 2) * 9/6)$ <p>The results are aggregated on CDC-level and the average of the two CDCs covered per cluster was used as aggregate CLDC index. The average of the five CLDCs per district is used to arrive at the district index.</p>
Girls school enrolment	<p>This index is developed from the district profile. All but three wolis were able to provide numbers for girls and boys school enrolment.</p> <p>We calculated the percentage of girls school enrolment and defined 50% and above as maximum result (10 on the security scale) and 0 as minimum (1).</p>

The ability of girls to attend school is often a security indicator; it can, however, also be a value indicator, pointing to conservative attitudes with regard to girls' education. We use this index with some caution as a security indicator. We also use it as a modernization indicator (see below).

Governance	
Villages/Zones	Zones are coded as qualitative expert analysis on the basis of the debriefing and external documents but WITHOUT looking at or taking into consideration the georeferenced incident tables as well as coded survey or profile results in order to avoid contamination between separate indicators.
Governance_Index	The index is then hand-coded with Zone 1 => 10 (best score); 2 => 8; 3 and 6 => 2 (worst score); 4 => 6; 5 => 4
Villages/Zones	This index is then related to the number of villages per zone (data taken from the AGCHO, which contains main villages and coincides with the AIMS 2007 dataset on village communities). $\text{Villages/Zones} = 10 - \left(\frac{(K2*1) + (L2*2) + (M2*5) + (N2*3) + (O2*4) + (P2*5)}{\text{SUMME}(K2:P2)} - 1 \right) * (9/4)$ where K to P are the villages per one of the six governance zones.
	<p>1=governance by government. The official institutions (state as well as society) provide key governance functions. This is not equivalent to the normative concept of good governance but can be seen as prerequisite for good governance. This type of governance is still a rare occurrence in Afghanistan and we find it only in parts of some of the target districts covered.</p> <p>2=hybrid governance denominates governance functions delivered via official institutions but only owing to the informal power of the people running or controlling those institutions. Hybrid governance may look at first sight as governance by government but often involves a degree of state capture by informal strongmen or powerful local elites. This is widespread.</p> <p>3=arbitrary rule refers to the absence of reliable governance functions and to a situation dominated by power rather than rules. In the Northern Provinces, this type of rule is mostly exercised by former commanders either in political offices or protected by political patronage (completely autonomous entrepreneurs of violence have become the exception rather than the rule in virtually all districts covered). In difference to type 2, no governance functions are provided and the threat or use of arbitrary violence is widespread.</p> <p>4=(remote) self-governance comprises various forms of local self-organisation in the absence of external power-interventions by the state or other hierarchal organisations. It usually coincides with areas difficult to access or of no strategical importance for either state or its competitors (like Taliban).</p> <p>5=contested governance we call an environment when governance delivery itself is the issue at conflict. Here, not only power is contested, but the right and ability to deliver certain governance functions to the people. Currently contested governance relates to more or less violent competition between the state on the one hand and the Taliban as alternative governance providers on the other hand. If other alternative governance providers emerge, this theatre of contest might become more complex.</p> <p>6=Taliban governance refers to a situation where the Taliban did not only manage to drive the official state institutions out of an area and subdue local societal institutions of self-government, but where they also deliver governance functions and enforce their own rules (e.g. in the fields of security, justice and education).</p>
Admin. Education	This index we develop from the district profile. The qualitative information on the education of 6 functionaries (wolliswol, head of police, judge, head of education department, head of health department, head of agriculture department) we re-coded 0-3 (illiterate to higher education) and calculated a scale from 1 (minimum education of all six functionaries) to 10 (maximum education of all six).
Admin. Education Index scaled	$\text{Admin. Education} = (X2*(9/3))+1$ where X is the average education index of all six functionaries.

We used the following categories for re-coding:

0=uneducated; no education at all;

1=basic school; this is lower education

2=higher school; high school education including 12th grade

3=higher education; this includes university, 14th grade, Balkh

Police → Sec

Q26. A police force is being built up in Afghanistan. What is, in your opinion, the impact of the police for the security in your community? Please indicate which of the following three statements resembles your impression best!

The question q26 asks whether the police force that is being built up has a positive impact on the security situation. This question is recoded on the individual level as 1 = "has a negative impact" to 10 "has a positive impact".

$$q26_normed = (((q26_rec-1)*(9/2))+1)$$

The results are aggregated on CDC-level and the average of the two CDCs covered per cluster were used as aggregate CLDC index. The average of the five CLDCs per district is used to arrive at the district index.

The valid replies to this question were (abbreviated): negative impact (1), no impact (2), positive impact (3).

DM Care

Q28. Do you think the woliswoli takes care of the needs of your villages population?

The variable "wolliswoli" is recoded so that 1= wolliswoli cares never and 10 = wolliswoli cares always.

$$wolliswoli=((q28douthinkwoliswali-1)*(9/4))+1$$

The results are aggregated on CDC-level and the average of the two CDCs covered per cluster were used as aggregate CLDC index. The average of the five CLDCs per district is used to arrive at the district index.

The valid replies range from never (1) via rarely (2), sometimes (3), frequently (4) to always (5).

Q15: "shura care" index

This index is aggregated over the valid responses to question Q15 that asks the respondents whether the decisions taken by the shura usually can be considered to be in the best interest of the community (1) or only of a few influential households (2). The question is recoded in the way that 10 represents "best interest of community" and 1 represents "best interest of a few influential households".

Valid replies ranged from never via rarely, sometimes to always. Only positive replies were used.

GovFair_State-District

Q9. In your opinion, do you think that the following institutions usually resolve conflicts in a just way? (d, h, n)

The index is built by adding up positive responses with regard to district level state institutions that play officially a role in conflict processing (Qazi, Police, Wolliswol). The index is normed between 1 (no positive reply for any of the three institutions) and 10 (positive reply for all three institutions).

$$q9_district_normed = ((q9_district+.5310205)*(9/((.5310205+5.743891))))+1$$

$$\text{replace } q9_district_normed = 1 \text{ if } q9_district_normed < 1$$

The results are aggregated on CDC-level and the average of the two CDCs covered per cluster were used as aggregate CLDC index. The average of the five CLDCs per district is used to arrive at the district index.

Based on the fact that negative replies to Q9 could simply indicate that the institution in question is not (but not necessarily unfairly) dealing with conflicts, we recoded the variables in a way that only the truly positive categories are used vs. those that are negative/ambiguous (Never/rarely = 0; Sometimes/Always=1).

GovFair_DDA

Q9. In your opinion, do you think that the following institutions usually resolve conflicts in a just way? (g)

This index is build in accordance with the GovFair_State-District index with only one difference: only one set of answers is used (g, i.e. the DDA), so there was no need to add up replies. The result is a dichotomous indicator: either the respondent thinks the DDA solves conflicts in a just way or he does not think so.

$$q9_DDA = (dich_q9g_rec*9)+1$$

Since the dichotomous indicator is aggregated on CDC, CLDC and District level a scale from 1-10 is still achieved.

... the second group is the DDA. Since there is variation between the CLDCs and districts and since the DDA is a principle address for capacity building measures, we included this index despite the somewhat unclear take of the respondents regarding this question (it is possible

GovFair_CDC

Q9. In your opinion, do you think that the following institutions usually resolve conflicts in a just way? (a)

that respondents simply did not regard the DDA as an institution that SHOULD get involved in conflict processing).

This index is build in accordance with the GovFair_State-District index with only one difference: only one set of answers is used (g, i.e. the CDC), so there was no need to add up replies. The result is a dichotomous indicator: either the respondent thinks the CDC solves conflicts in a just way or he does not think so.

$$q9_CDC = (dich_q9a*9)+1$$

Since the dichotomous indicator is aggregated on CDC, CLDC and District level a scale from 1-10 is still achieved.

... the third group is formed by CDC and traditional Shura/Jirga. Since we are interested in the stability effect of the formalized, official shura complex we decided to build the index from the CDC only.

Corruption

Q10. Parties to a conflict may use various means to influence the outcome of the conflict in their favour. How often do you think that the following means are applied in your district?

The valid replies for the means (a) connections / kin ties / quam; (b) money and (c) force were never (1), rarely (2), sometimes (3) and always (4).

All three means are used, turned around (so that 10 means minimum, i.e. none of the means are used and 1 means maximum, i.e. all of the means are used), and normed.

$$q10score_normed = 10 - ((q10_allmeans + 1.513205) * (1 / (1.513205 + 3.063909))) * 9$$

$$\text{replace } q10score_normed = 1 \text{ if } (q10score_normed < 1)$$

The results are aggregated on CDC-level and the average of the two CDCs covered per cluster were used as aggregate CLDC index. The average of the five CLDCs per district is used to arrive at the district index.

All three means of influencing conflict outcomes are highly correlated with each and these are aggregated to one indicator of perceived efficiency and prevalence of diverse corruption methods.

The scale was built with a strong Western take on corruption: (a), (b) and (c) were considered equally corrupt from the perspective of fair conflict-processing and the rule of law.

Poweractor district

Q14. Whom do you consider the most powerful person in your district?

Actors are grouped into four categories (see comment) and coded 1 (worst) to 4 (best).

$$\text{District_Actor_Normed} = ((\text{District_Actor} - 1) * (9/3)) + 1$$

The results are aggregated for CDC with 10 representing communities with 100% positive governance results and 1 representing 100% negative governance results. The average of these results are taken to aggregate further to CLDC and then to district level.

District categories used for re-coding:

- Very good: Wolliswol, Head of Police
- Good: Teacher, Doctor, Head of shura
- Bad: Elders, Mullah/Imam, Trader, Landlord, Malik/Arbob
- Very bad: Kommandon, Taliban

Development & Economy**Project count**

Development_Index normed project count (CLDC!)

From the CDC profile we counted the number of projects implemented over the past two years (ranging from 0 to 9).

We calculated the means of projects implemented for all target CDCs within one CLDC. The result was rescaled so that the maximum number of projects found for one CLDC equalled 10 and zero projects equalled 1.

The district index is calculated as means from CLDCs surveyed per district.

We used a simple project count because reliable and comparable figures on financial volume or beneficiaries was not possible to obtain. We assume that the projects remembered are the only relevant projects and that project volume is already adapted to the size of the community. Hence, we did not relate the project count to the size of the community.

Since data on for CLDCs and districts appeared to be unreliable and unfit for comparison we aggregated from the most reliable source of information we had, namely the village/CDC profile.

Dev. pos. change allsec

Q24. I will read four statements to you.

Q24 was re-coded so that the maximum of the satisfaction for every respondents was extracted for every sector disregarding the actors: this answers how satisfied they were at all with any projects in the sectors; to represent this, we calculated the mean of these seven variables for every respondent (normalized on 1 = fully disagree any one did anything

Please indicate how much you disagree or agree to each of them. All of the following statements relate to the community.

Devel. actors contrib.

Q24. I will read four statements to you. Please indicate how much you disagree or agree to each of them. All of the following statements relate to the community.

Governm. contrib.

Q24. I will read four statements to you. Please indicate how much you disagree or agree to each of them. All of the following statements relate to the community.

Bazaar Index

Bazaar Index Scaled

Mat. Well-Being_selfass.

Q4. Please indicate, which of the following statements indicates best the

in this sector; 10 = fully agree some actor helped to increase the quality on this sector) which is then aggregated on CLDC and district level.

$$q24_drinking = ((q24_dri-1)*(9/3))+1$$

$$q24_agrprod = ((q24_agr-1)*(9/3))+1$$

Q24 combines information about development per sector and development per actor. Respondents explain how much they agree or disagree that a variety of potential development actors (development agencies, government, influential person, village community itself) helped improve the situation in seven most relevant development sectors (drinking water, agriculture, roads, jobs, electricity, access to medical services, schooling) In order to create scalable indicators from Q 24 the question was split into its parts. First, we wanted to capture the degree of satisfaction with developments in any of the sectors irrespective of who developed this sector.

Using only maximum satisfaction per respondent, the variation in the sectors is much broader than in case of an index based on mean values. But this does also suggest that there are persons that are satisfied with progress and development initiated by at least one actor in the given sector -- but the other actors did not contribute much in the given sector. This index is better suited as an indicator for the question of whether there was any development and how satisfied the persons were.

For development actors we extracted what the maximal satisfaction with either of these actors was for every respondent -- disregarding the sector it took place in; this represents how satisfied the respondents were at best with the given actor.

$$q24_devactors = ((q24_devactors2-1)*(9/3))+1$$

The results are aggregated on CDC-level and the average of the two CDCs covered per cluster were used as aggregate CLDC index. The average of the five CLDCs per district is used to arrive at the district index.

We applied the same procedure for the question of how satisfied the respondent was with any contribution by the four actors in question (again normed to 1 "totally agree that the actor did not contribute to any of the sectors" and 10 "fully agree that this actor contributed at least to one sector very much").

Only development agencies and government were used to calculate the final two Devel. Actors contrib. scales.

See above.

$$q24_governm = ((q24_governm2-1)*(9/3))+1$$

We applied the same procedure for the question of how satisfied the respondent was with any contribution by the four actors in question (again normed to 1 "totally agree that the actor did not contribute to any of the sectors" and 10 "fully agree that this actor contributed at least to one sector very much").

Only development agencies and government were used to calculate the final two scales for development actors contribution.

This index is developed from the district profile. The number of shops in the main bazaars (if there is more than one) are added up and divided by the MRRD 2007 figures for district population.

This index is then scaled from 1 (no shops) to 10 (highest occurrence in the sample. Bazaars (as well as cars) are a complex indicator of economic activity taking place outside the realm of immediate development programs. While some development initiatives directly target trade and markets, bazaars are good indicators of local economic self-organization. Since we do find thriving bazaars in very unstable and even insecure areas we refrain from using this as a security indicator (as recently suggested by a number of publications on how to measure success in terms of stabilization).²⁹

For this index the average of q4 is used within the CDC after re-scaling the answers between 1 (poor) and 10 (rich).

The results are aggregated on CDC-level and the average of the two CDCs covered per cluster were used as aggregate CLDC index. The average of the five CLDCs per district is used to arrive at the district index.

²⁹ Cf. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8524137.stm

material well-being of your household.

Car Index

Average Calculated Car Index

Q4 asks respondents to assess what categories of products they can afford to satisfy their needs, ranging from essential food-stuffs (1) via clothes and social obligations (2) to luxury items like refrigerator and TV (3) to no constraints on buying things required.

From the village/CDC profile the number of cars and pick-ups is added up for all units covered within the CLDC. The resulting number is divided by the number of households of all target CDCs covered in the cluster and then normed 1-10 where 10 is the maximum value found in the overall sample and 1 equals zero cars.

The district index is built as average of the CLDC index.

The car index serves as a strong indicator for economic development outside classical development programmes. Significant surplus is typically invested in land, in livestock but also in cars. As an example, communities, mantaqas and even districts benefiting from the lucrative drug trade saw sharp increases of car ownership while those markets were flourishing.

Modernisation

Girls school enrolment

"WestValues"

Q29. I will read six statements to you. Please indicate the degree to which you disagree or agree to each of them. (a-d)

See above *security indicators*.

The degree of agreement with four value statements (see comment) is used to form this index. The maximum score is full agreement with all four statements (4*4=16) and the minimum score is full disagreement with all four statements (4*1=4).

This is re-scaled to fit between 1 (fully disagree) to 10 (fully agree).

The results are aggregated on CDC-level and the average of the two CDCs covered per cluster were used as aggregate CLDC index. The average of the five CLDCs per district is used to arrive at the district index.

Q29 a-d asks respondents to declare how far they agree with value-statements on (a) boys' enrolment in state schools, (b) girls' enrolment in state schools, (c) off-farm work opportunities for men and women and (d) the impact of state-schooling on community norms.

The four questions are highly correlated and can easily be aggregated to an index of "what development agencies want to achieve and the Taliban are opposed to".

We use this question as a single indicator and aggregate on the CLDC-level the share of persons stating "Fully agree/rather agree that development aid is threatening our local way of life and Islamic values in our community, although it may bring material benefits". This was normed so that 1 = (strongly) agree; 0 = all else

The results are aggregated on CDC-level and the average of the two CDCs covered per cluster were used as aggregate CLDC index. The average of the five CLDCs per district is used to arrive at the district index.

Local Value Threat

Q29. I will read six statements to you. Please indicate the degree to which you disagree or agree to each of them. (e)

We used those responses giving as most important source of information radio, television or newspapers. We added those scores and aggregated to CDC, then to CLDC and district level.

The answers to the questions are recoded so that "1" represents the most important source of information and all other ranks are recoded as "0"

Modern_Media

Q23. Where do you get news about important events that interest you (e.g. the election, new laws, politics, and military developments)?

State Employees

Average State Employee Normed

This index we derived from the village/CDC profile. The number of state employees (security services, teachers, civil servants etc.) is added up and divided by the number of households. The mean of the target CDCs within one cluster is used and then normed to arrive at the scale. 10 equals the maximum value found in the overall sample.

$$\text{State Employees} = (V2 * (9 / \text{MAX}(V\$2:V\$76))) + 1$$

where V is the average calculated Index of State Employees per CLDC

The average of the five CLDCs per district is used to arrive at the district index.

We use state employees not as an economic indicator, but as an indicator pointing to a

level of engagement and agreement with the emerging state structures and hence a part of the modernization scale.