HOW MIGHT A HUMAN SECURITY FRAMEWORK INCREASE THE PROBABILITY OF RESOLVING THE CONFLICT IN AFGHANISTAN?

by

Homayun Yaqub
A Thesis
Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty
of
George Mason University
in Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Science
Conflict Analysis and Resolution

Committee:

[Signatures]

Chair of Committee

[Signature]

Graduate Program Director

[Signature]

Dean, School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution

[Signature]

Fall Semester 2014
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA

Date: 4 December 2014
How Might a Human Security Framework Increase the Probability of Resolving the Conflict in Afghanistan?

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science at George Mason University

By

Homayun Yaqub
Bachelor’s of Business Administration
James Madison University, 1995

Director: Daniel Rothbart, Professor of Conflict Analysis and Resolution
Director of Masters Program in Conflict Analysis and Resolution

Fall Semester 2014
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA
Dedication

I dedicate this to my wife and two beautiful children who have patiently encouraged my academic interests.
Acknowledgements

I’d like to thank the GMU School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (SCAR) faculty for their valuable insights and professionalism. The field of conflict resolution is a complex undertaking and the experiences of the dynamic staff were critical to my understanding of this important subject.
# Table Of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1 – Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Methodology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions and Limitations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framing the Afghan Conflict</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2 – What is Human Security</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evolution of Human Security</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Debates on Human Security</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Potential Human Security Framework - Establishing a Unified Theme</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Human Security Definition for Consideration</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3 – Afghanistan, a Very Brief Historical Overview</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Afghan State</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building a Government with Assistance</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation Building and the International Presence</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The United States in Afghanistan – Led by the Department of Defense</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4 – Competing, and Conflicting Objectives and Outcomes</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Aid</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing Aid Resources</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counterinsurgency</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5 – Building a Human Security Framework in Afghanistan</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6 – Conclusion</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of References</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biography</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abstract

HOW MIGHT A HUMAN SECURITY FRAMEWORK INCREASE THE PROBABILITY OF RESOLVING THE CONFLICT IN AFGHANISTAN?

Homayun Yaqub, M.S. candidate

George Mason University, 2014

Thesis Director: Dr. Patricia Maulden

Since the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Afghanistan has seen an unprecedented level of intervention and assistance from the international community. This diverse set of actors that included foreign states, international organizations, and thousands of nongovernmental organizations brought with them often competing and conflicting agendas that sought to concurrently address nation building, counterterrorism, development and reconstruction issues. At the center of such activities were the Afghan people, who had already endured over 30 years of protracted conflict that began first with the invasion of the Soviet Union, a subsequent civil war, and control by the Taliban regime. An already war and conflict weary Afghanistan was now the site of an array of external objectives and initiatives that did not necessarily achieve their desired outcomes. Despite these significant resource investments, Afghanistan remains in conflict and its people still face acts of violence from an active insurgency. As individuals, and in this
case the people of Afghanistan are at the center of concern, this thesis examines human security theory as a potential framework for resolving the conflict in Afghanistan. It is an analysis of this concept first popularized by the United Nations in 1994, and using Afghanistan as a case study, will seek to develop a conceptual framework that assesses actions in the country since 9/11 and determine their effectiveness if they could be modified under a more holistic human security strategy.
Chapter 1 – Introduction

In recent history that extends over 30 years, Afghanistan has experienced an enduring and protracted conflict that has caused hundreds of thousands of casualties, millions of refugees, and equal numbers of internally displaced people. At the center of the conflict are its victims, the Afghan people. In the community of nations, Afghanistan had never quite advanced to a point where it progressed beyond the bottom tier of countries on various indices and measurement reports. It was and remains in the parlance of international discourse a fragile, underdeveloped nation-state that never quite developed the ability to sustain itself and positively contribute in the international arena.

International engagement, as it will be examined later, has varied from gestures of sympathy to robust intervention with vast amounts of associated aid flowing into the country. Despite such efforts, even when the intervention was for ostensibly well-intentioned purposes that included improving security, development projects, and capacity/nation building, the Afghan people have only seen marginal improvements in their quality of life and remain vulnerable to an active insurgency and acts of violence by perpetrators who seem to rise above the rule of law in impunity. This is the latest environment the Afghan people are enduring, the product of a large-scale international
intervention effort led by the United States since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

This thesis is an examination of the Afghan conflict in the post 9/11 environment through a human security lens. It will specifically examine the concept of human security, as first envisioned in the 1994 United Nations Human Development Report, review recent efforts by the international community and the nascent Afghan government, and assess whether a deliberate and acknowledged human security framework led by the Afghan Government could increase the probability for resolving the conflict in Afghanistan. The foundational elements of a potential framework, as it will be provided in chapter five, will not serve as a series of policy prescriptions, but rather as an analysis of recommendations made by scholars and practitioners that could prove useful in framing a human security strategy for the country.

Research Methodology

The first of two research areas is the subject of human security. The author will focus on examining the antecedent principles found in the language of international discourse that were influential in developing the human security concept. Subsequent analysis is devoted to how scholars and practitioners evolved this concept into a framework for potential operationalization. The author’s analysis of this research will support the development of unifying themes in human security that one could use for building a related framework. The research and associated analysis will lend itself to
constructing a definition for human security that the author contends would be a logical first step in not only the framework development, but also in its potential operationalization.

The second research area is Afghanistan. As the thesis’ case study, the author will provide a historical overview, focusing the research on those contextual points that may serve as contributors or inhibitors to resolving conflict in a human security framework. As the emphasis is on the post 9/11 Afghan environment, the author will concentrate his research and analysis of efforts by the international community and the Afghan government to address the security, social, economic, and political development efforts in the country. The analysis, where appropriate, will link back to the discoveries made in the research of human security to determine where there are opportunities for further consideration, or where such efforts fell short of either achieving their stated objectives or are perhaps inconsistent with a future strategy if a human security framework were actually implemented.

The analysis of both human security and Afghanistan will bridge together in the last sections of this effort, where the author will develop a conceptual human security framework, leveraging the proposed definition, and assessing whether such related recommendations are consistent with the research conducted. It is hoped the research, subsequent analysis, and assessments made will provide readers detailed insight into both human security theory and the potential operationalization of its core principles in an environment like Afghanistan where significant intervention (aid delivery and military operations) has occurred, but insecurity and conflict still persist.
The research relies on a diverse set of secondary sources that included specific focus on the subjects of human security theory, human security operationalization, Afghanistan in the post 9/11 environment, and the actions in the form of aid and military intervention of global interveners (including both state and non-state actors) in the country. These sources included peer-reviewed academic journal articles; reports by international governmental and non-governmental organizations, survey results produced by non-governmental organizations, published books on the aforementioned subjects; and documents produced by the Afghan government.

Assumptions and Limitations

The most pronounced limitation in this effort is the potential corollary debates that may arise from concepts provided herein. This thesis discusses the issue of state sovereignty and accepts the Afghan State as a legitimate entity. It is not an analysis of the merits of the State construct as manifested by the Peace of Westphalia. While considerable attention is devoted to human security, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to debate the varying human security concepts that are prevalent in the research discourse. Instead the author concentrates on utilizing the framework provided by Dr. Mahbub Ul Haq through his efforts in developing the 1994 U.N. Human Development Report. Ul Haq is credited with not only coining the term, but popularizing its use which was formally acknowledged in this official U.N. publication. The author has specifically focused his analysis on Ul Haq’s human security theory because it serves a foundation
from which all subsequent theories were arguably developed and critiqued. As the seminal theory in the field of human security, the author, based on a review of the literature, has identified it as a comprehensive framework that is ideally suited for the analyzing the Afghan case study during a period of intense aid delivery and intervention that addressed one or more of the seven human security categories Ul Haq envisioned in the report. Lastly, this thesis is one part a retrospective and another part an opportunity for providing recommendations as the international intervention and the conflict persists. As the author was developing his framework, events on the ground, like the recent election of Ashraf Ghani to the office of the Afghan president were unfolding that may or may not have an impact on the proposed human security framework provided in Chapter five. Mr. Ghani, for example, is an economist by background who has devoted considerable attention to the subject of Afghanistan’s development. As it will be explored further, his actions and literature suggest some acknowledgement to the principles of human security, and perhaps may serve as points for consideration as he develops his agenda for the country.

**Framing the Afghan Conflict**

Since 1978, violence took the form of an internal political power struggle that saw rise to a rebellion which the Afghan government sought to quell. It sought assistance from the Soviet Union who would maintain over one hundred thousand troops engaged in military operations from 1979-1989. With the Soviet departure, a power vacuum and
significant external influence exasperated a civil war that caused even more devastation. The Taliban, a religious movement that rapidly turned into a credible political and military apparatus, quickly seized control of the country and continued to perpetuate the components of conflict that the Afghan people had endured since 1978.

September 11, 2001, however, marked not only a tragic day in history where thousands had lost their lives, but it also placed Afghanistan at the center of international attention. This relatively isolated country was ruled by the Taliban, a radical religious group, military force, and political movement that just a few years ago had captured headlines for their abusive behavior that denigrated women and caused the destruction of the famed Buddha Statues in the country - a UNESCO world heritage site that was built between 507-554 CE. The actions of the Taliban, while significant in their impact on the Afghan people, did little more than create some gestures of sympathy in the international community. Within days after 9/11, Afghanistan became much more than a home for the abusive Taliban Regime. It was also home to Al Qaeda, the organization who claimed responsibility for the attacks in the United States on that day. Afghanistan was now complicit in the acts, not as a direct contributor, but as a ‘landlord’ to Al Qaeda elements who organized, trained, sought refuge within the territorial boundaries of the country. And that was enough for the U.S. to justify action in strong terms that demanded an international response. The words of then president George Bush, echoed sentiments of a good versus evil scenario and that members of the international needed to ask themselves
whether they would stand alongside the U.S. or with the terrorists. The decision as it turned out was relatively easy to make and a coalition of nations, led by the U.S., invaded Afghanistan to destroy Al Qaeda and ensure they never returned to Afghanistan. What ensued, of course, was a sizable foreign troop deployment and series of actions that included policies, donor aid, and the presence of numerous international actors who were their secure, stabilize, and develop Afghanistan into a modern state. The research and subsequent analysis will demonstrate however how such efforts have not necessarily resolved the conflict in Afghanistan where the Afghan people remain relatively insecure based on both a nascent infrastructure influenced by corrupt practices that limit its effectiveness in delivering goods and services to those in need, and a persistent insurgent threat, the Taliban, who routinely perpetrate acts of violence against the population. The research, it is believed, will demonstrate how an alternative human-security strategy that leverages the Afghan government and the international community could perhaps improve the probability for resolving the conflict.

The thesis is organized into six chapters, with the first serving as an introduction and the second as an analysis of the human security concept through a comprehensive literature review on the subject. This chapter will review the evolution of human security by assessing consistent themes that emerge from the research and will ultimately lead towards the development of a conceptual human security framework and definition. The next chapter is devoted to Afghanistan where after a brief historical overview, the author

---

will elaborate on the conflict environment since the 1978 Sauer Revolution and provided some considerable insight into the post 9/11 intervention efforts of the international community. The chapter will include analysis of efforts towards nation-building in the country as well as a closer examination of the United State’s involvement since 9/11 as they were and remain the largest contributor of military and development assistance to the country. The fourth chapter includes a more comprehensive analysis of the intervention environment and how competing and conflicting objectives have not necessarily advanced human security for the Afghan people. The author will specifically examine the role of international aid and explore various initiatives like the U.S. led implementation of a counterinsurgency strategy in the country. The fifth chapter brings the analysis together by developing an elements, in the form of recommendations, of an operationalized human security framework for consideration by the community of intervening actors and the Afghan Government as it looks to the future. The sixth and final chapter is the conclusion. While considerable analysis of Afghanistan has occurred over the last thirteen years, the author hopes this thesis will contribute to the dialogue of both scholars and practitioners in developing alternative frameworks examine and potentially address the persistent conflict in the country.
Chapter 2 – What is Human Security?

Twenty years after the seminal United Nations Development Program’s (UNDP) annual Human Development Report was published, an accepted definition for human security remains elusive. Its chief author that year was Dr. Mahbub Ul-Haq, a Pakistani-born economist and strategist who, among other professional endeavors, served as the Human Development Project Director for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). During his tenure, Ul-Haq pioneered the Human Development concept and established methodology for associated Human Development Indicators (HDI).² As some have argued, Ul-Haq was not necessarily trying to seek definitional clarity, but instead establishing a conceptual framework that would challenge and ideally evolve existing conventions on security.³

In this report, Ul-Haq and the United Nations suggest the existing idea of security is both narrowly focused and state-centered. It is the essence of his argument, therefore, to alter the paradigm on traditional security, which shifts the focus from state wellbeing to

---
human life and dignity. The report’s authors first frame human security with four essential characteristics: (1) it is a universal concern; (2) the components (which will be discussed later) are interdependent and transcend borders; (3) it is easier to guarantee through early preventative measures; and (4) it is people-centered, focused on how individuals exist in the world around them. These characteristics are used to present two core aspects of human security. The first is premised around ensuring human beings are safe from chronic threats like hunger, disease, and repression. The second is to ensure all individuals are protected from damaging interferences to daily life. These strategic themes bring Ul-Haq to a more precise set of seven components that when fully integrated and addressed ensure human security is achieved. The components, more precisely, are presented as threats to human security and include: Economic security, Food security, Health security, Environmental security, Personal Security, Community Security, Political Security.

At its core, Ul Haq sought to place the individual and not the state as the referent of security. Stated differently, human security is both evolutionary in that it extends a common understanding of security to include Ul-Haq’s seven components, and is revolutionary in that the primary unit of concern is the individual, forcing a fundamental

---

5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
departure from state-centric security definitions. In this early form, it also reinvigorated an earlier and arguably broader scoping of freedom to cover an individual’s right to be free of fear and free of want. He urged the world to recognize and come to terms with a dynamic environment where security were not just of territory, but of people; where personal security and national security were equally acknowledged; where security is achieved through development and not acts of war; and where security was universal, applying to every aspect of an individual’s existence.

The Evolution of Human Security

While many trace its origins to the 1994 United Nations Development Report, its foundational underpinnings draw from the now famous 1941 State of the Union speech delivered by U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In providing his assessment of the United States, Roosevelt identified four essential human freedoms he hoped would shape the world:

The first is freedom of speech and expression — everywhere in the world; the second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way — everywhere in the world; the third is freedom from want — which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants-everywhere in the world; the fourth is freedom from fear — which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such

---

a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor — anywhere in the world.\textsuperscript{11}

Roosevelt may have arguably derived the freedoms of speech/expression and religious worship from other well-established doctrines like the U.S. Bill of Rights, however, it was the latter two freedoms that identified a broader, universal set of principles.

These thematic concepts, while perhaps not limited to Roosevelt’s exclusive thinking, had a natural sense of universality that only a few years later in 1945, permeated into the United Nations Charter. Although not verbatim, Roosevelt’s principles coincide with the Charter’s Preamble that place on emphasis on human dignity, individual worth, equality, freedom, and peace.\textsuperscript{12} In 1947, the 18-member United Nations Commission on Human Rights chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, began the draft of what would become the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR). Like the UN Charter, the UDHR embraced Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms but with a more direct and near verbatim adoption. Codified in the Preamble, the principles bring to the forefront the inalienable right of all members of the human family to enjoy the freedoms of speech, of belief, from fear, and from want.\textsuperscript{13}

In the discussion thus far, an emphasis is naturally placed on the individual, and the not the state exclusively, as the referent of security. For nearly four hundred years, Westphalian Sovereignty has served as the architecture for international order and even


affirmed by the United Nations Charter. With the advent of the Cold War, the intensity of sovereignty only magnified pinning and largely focusing global attention such concepts as Mutually Assured Destruction, but also categorizing global dynamics through two pillars – one belonging to the United States and the other to the Soviet Union. The nascent principles of human security first developed by Roosevelt and codified in the language of the United Nations were subordinated to an even more primal notion of good versus evil.14

After the end of the Cold War, the 1994 UN Human Development arguably sought to address an increasingly globalized environment where the issues effecting humanity transcended sovereign boundaries. Over the next decade, UN member nations increasingly engaged in human security discourse. In 1999, Canada and Norway led a 13-country group to form the Human Security Network. Its focus was to not only advance the related discourse, but also incorporate their findings into the national and foreign policy objectives of each participating country. The network suggested the 1994 report was too broad in scope and instead sought to narrow international focus on human security to those issues that stem from violent conflict.15 In doing so, the Human Security Network placed an emphasis on the freedom from fear tenant and championed such issues as the international ban on anti-personnel mines, the international criminal court, the control of


In 2003, the Commission on Human Security produced its final report entitled, “Human Security Now” which sought to broaden – and arguably return – the aperture of human security thinking back to emphasizing both the freedom from fear and want. Its authors used this forum to expand and perhaps add further clarity to Ul Haq’s earlier vision by articulating several key points. The first was an effort to bridge the gap between human and state security by contending their complementary nature. Human security’s primary concern is with the individual and community, rather than the state and therefore menaces to individual security are not always classified as threats to state security. Further, this approach recognizes a more diverse set of actors than the state alone in impacting human security and concurrently emphasizes both the protection and empowerment of people. The Commission sought a holistic approach that assigned responsibilities to the state, intervening actors like the international community in Afghanistan (as will be explored later), and the individual who once empowered, must

take deliberate and active measures to promote their own human security.\textsuperscript{17} In this evolving ecosystem, the individual is therefore both a beneficiary and contributor to achieving human security. And on the subject of policy prescription, Ogata and Sen identify five components to driving an effective human security approach:

- Placing human security on the security agenda.
- Strengthening humanitarian action.
- Respecting human rights and humanitarian law.
- Disarming people and fighting crime.
- Preventing conflict and respecting citizenship.\textsuperscript{18}

The Commission’s report like its 1994 predecessor did not specifically concern itself with definitional precision, but instead relied on evolving and conceptually advancing a human security approach. In the next few years, the United Nations, practitioners and the academic community (as will be discussed later) continued to debate the substance of human security. By 2010, the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon, presented to the General Assembly the first report exclusively dedicated to human security. Drawing from the 2005 World Summit, the General Assembly “ recognized that all individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop


\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
their human potential.”\textsuperscript{19} The Secretary General also “broadly” defined human security as an approach that “encompasses freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom to live in dignity. Together, these fundamental freedoms are rooted in the core principles of the Charter of the United Nations.”\textsuperscript{20} Thematically, therefore, the United Nations had remained consistent with language used by Roosevelt, Ul-Haq, Ogata and Sen, and the Secretary General hoped the report would enable the General Assembly and member states to continue the discourse on the subject. It did just that and by 2012, the General Assembly issued resolution 66/290, its first formal recognition of a consensus based stance on human security. It agrees with earlier language that human security is an approach to be utilized by Member States in recognizing and addressing the challenges to the survival, livelihood, and dignity of their people.\textsuperscript{21} It specifically highlights eight core elements that are summarized herein:

- The right of people to live in freedom and dignity entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with equal opportunity.

- The need to develop people-centered and context-specific prevention-oriented responses with full recognition of the links between peace, development civil, political, economic, social and cultural and human rights.


\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.

• An acknowledgement of the role of the state emphasizing the need for sovereign ownership, which the UN believes is best positioned for developing context-specific solutions.

• The need to develop greater collaboration between not only states but also international/regional organizations and other civil society elements.22

With the General Assembly, human security had evolved through the official language of the United Nations. It still placed the emphasis on the individual, but underscored the principles of state sovereignty upon which the UN Charter was developed. In fact, four of the eight elements defined herein recognized not only legitimacy of the state but also enjoined states to shoulder the primary role in human security attainment.23 As a matter of further distinction, the United Nations also separated the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect (R2P), a concept that first matured through the Canadian Government’s International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). In response to numerous tragedies like Rwanda, ethnic cleansing in the Former Yugoslavia, large-scale internal displacement, and other humanitarian crises where states were either negligent or incapable of addressing such concerns, ICISS explored and sought to mature the appropriateness of intervention first articulated in Chapter seven of the UN Charter. By February 2001, ICISS had published its seminal Responsibility to Protect report. In a subtle but no less significant sign of deference to human security, Evans and Sand focused their attention on the human needs of those seeking protection or assistance; or more succinctly those circumstances that necessitate R2P intervention. The report’s core elements, like various human security principles already discussed, renewed

22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
focus on the individual and justifies external intervention in those situations where individual states are unable or unwilling to protect their own citizens from avoidable catastrophe and strife.\textsuperscript{24} R2P was developed around three main principles: the obligation of states to prevent humanitarian crisis and violations of human rights; the need to react in a timely and effective manner; and the obligation of interveners to rebuild states after their intervention.\textsuperscript{25} R2P therefore was less about the need to define a new approach, but instead viewed by some as a concept complimenting human security placing burden on both the affected state and the international community to intervene when necessary to address a calamitous situation.\textsuperscript{26}

Unfortunately, the timing of ICISS’ report was immediately and enduringly overshadowed by events of September 11, 2001. The net effects of transnational terrorism and the subsequent U.S. response shifted attention away from intervention justified to address humanitarian crisis to preemptive action focused on preventing terrorist attacks. The 2003 invasion of Iraq also hampered R2P’s advancement by altering the scope of intervention again to a focus on weapons of mass destruction. Arguably, the established record of the Iraqi government in its use of chemical and biological warfare against not only its own citizens, but those of Iran, may have served as a legitimate R2P reason for military intervention. For ICISS, however, the absence of such weapons in Iraq


\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.
overshadowed the larger philosophical drive towards collective action when faced with avoidable calamities. 27

By 2009, R2P theory gained new traction, with the Secretary General’s Report to the General Assembly on implementing the Responsibility to Protect. First at the 2005 World Summit, and again in this report, the United Nations acknowledged its inaction as it bore witness to genocide in Rwanda and mass killings in Srebrenica. The time to embrace R2P, the Secretary General argued, was now and built upon the work of ICISS to establish three fundamental pillars: the first holds the affected State accountable for preventing avoidable tragedy (like genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes); the second enjoins the international community to encourage and assist States in upholding this responsibility; and the final pillar is the responsibility of states to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian, and other means consistent with the UN Charter to protect the populations of States who are unwilling or incapable of providing such safeguards. 28 And while the UN sought distinctions between the respective 2009 R2P and the 2012 human security resolutions, this notion of protecting people is inherent to both concepts, consistent with the UN Charter, and provide member-states with authorities to act when the security of individuals is in jeopardy. As human security principles evolved from its beginnings in 1994, the international community witnessed numerous conflicts, arguably

triggering the need for R2P as a singularly focused approach to justifying intervention in the crises of other sovereign states.

**Conceptual Debates on Human Security**

Woven into the very fabric of human security theory is the opportunity for critique and evaluation. The aforementioned evolution is by no means complete, and a precise definition remains elusive. The world environment, however, continues to advance the principles of human security, challenging along the way notions of sovereignty while concurrently refining the theoretical and operational framework to ideally guide actions that prevent the insecurity of all human beings. On the former issue, the UN is left with the daunting task of reshaping the essence of its foundation. State sovereignty remains paramount and is now in the formal language of this body in arguing for human security, but it also challenges a fundamental Westphalian principle that upholds the protection of the state from foreign interference. Instead, human security and its sibling R2P restructure this tenet by holding the state accountable for the welfare of its own people.²⁹

Some proponents of sovereign identity believe there is no challenge to Westphalian constructs and instead suggest human security is nothing more than an affirmation of what brought about people together to form civil society and civil states – that is a proactive willingness to leave the state of nature, as Hobbes and Locke discuss in

²⁹ Ibid.
detail, towards this civil-collective to seek protection.\textsuperscript{30} Pitsuwan, however, does not suggest human security is a contradiction, in opposition to the State. Instead, this former director of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) highlights a necessary evolution in how one views the State – a re-imagined civil-collective that acknowledges a global landscape less affected by wars between States but increasingly shaped by internal conflict and violence. For this reality, the principles of Westphalia, if upheld in absolute terms, become antiquated. Instead, hybrid civil-state organizations like ASEAN, the organization of African Unity, the Arab League, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, and even the United Nations, are evolutionary in not only mandate, but in how they come to define and/or justify action when human security is negatively impacted.

The emphasis on the sovereignty as some contend is over-emphasized in human security discourse.

Putting human security at the forefront is a strategy that is very difficult to oppose. Try objecting to the cry of ‘freedom from fear and freedom from want’, which is the clarion call of human security proponents. It has a tsunami-like force that demolishes everything in its way. Is anything wrong with the spirit of desired freedom?\textsuperscript{31}

Bahadur (2014) accepts this broad appeal of human security and believes operationalization is useful for justifying action against Non Traditional Security (NTS) threats whose impact on humanity is not confined to state boundaries. The risk, however,


as he contends is how such acts of intervention are subject to selective decisions on the part of more powerful States – what then of other concerns that have equally calamitous consequences.\(^{32}\)

In the review of human security literature, the state, its relationship to security, and to the people it represents becomes the focus of at least some of the analysis. Understanding the role of those who govern (the State apparatus), those who are governed (individuals), and how security is defined leads to the ultimate objective of the international community’s ability to operationalize human security. For some, the distinctions are clear, arguing the primacy of concern should remain with the territorial integrity of the state, with human security concerns only integrated if the crisis of human suffering extends beyond the State’s borders.\(^{33}\) For others, that include the United Nations, sovereign borders should not limit the utility of a human security based approach. While in Thomas and Tow’s (2002) argument, the authors seemingly embrace human security as a conceptual model, but put the burden of ownership and action exclusively on the state. They do not envision the individual as the referent of security, believing one can only afford such status to the state. The challenge however, is when the state apparatus must be interrogated that may very well be the cause of suffering.\(^{34}\) In this scenario is the state is the security referent, the protector of human security principles, and perhaps even the purveyor of strife.

\(^{32}\) Ibid.
Along a slightly different path, Ambrosetti (2008) contends that human security has not received widespread condemnation or inattention and instead has been accepted by many of the State structures and associated actors who define them. He contends, like Pitsuwan, that these actors often derive legitimacy from the individuals within the State. The individual therefore is accepted as both the security referent and resource by which the actor draws legitimacy. This strand of the discourse is advanced further by Fouinat (2004), who contends that human security is by definition complementary to State security because of its people-centered focus and its ability to identify threats to security not previously considered to be of concern to the State. Individuals, as the security referent, become the critical bond that preserves the integrity of the State if it appreciates and advances this common community of interest. In turn, individuals who identify the positive realization of their security through the state come to better identify and promote its existence.

The state can be seen as collectively human, intersubjectively constituted. It is the objectified, social material product of social interaction and consciousness evolving out of the interplay of the material and the ideational within the historical process. Alternatively, the state by its very nature originates in the existence and evolution of real living human beings, and as such it is the human construction of the social action of social forces coexisting as social relations in society within a territorially delimited society.

---


The State therefore is cognizant of two defining realities; the first is how it interacts within the international community of States; and the second in how it interacts with the individuals, or collective society it is premised upon. Fakiolas builds upon this two-way model to suggest an overlapping environment where National Security and human security are inherently the same. If the humans are the referent of security, so too must they be the referent of the State and it is in this subtle but significant statement that he directs the field of human security experts to no longer make such distinctions.

Theoretical arguments on the role of the State and the individual in the human security will inevitably endure. It is an important discussion to examine because it complements, and perhaps even sets the tone for how human beings as the primary agent of how humanity’s history is shaped, can attempt to operationalize human security principles. The challenge here however, is no less daunting. Within the discourse realm, whose output includes formal language that guide policy and potential action, there is still a lack of definitional precision. Instead, words like ‘approach,’ are used to build a practical framework for achieving human security. In attempting to build a model, Neag (2010) cites the lack of consensus on a definition as a cause for challenge in operationalization. He elaborates further by specifying other challenges that include an unclear sense of who would be responsible for actions in support of human security and
the confusion that arises from prioritization of actions because the components of human security are interdependent.\textsuperscript{38}

On the other end of this argument is Khong (2001), who takes a forceful stance on the universality of human security. His concern is driven from recognizing the reality of a world environment, where choices must be made, even if there is an opportunity cost. By securitizing the individual, he argues, the security of all individuals on Earth becomes the object of concern and equal relevance.

The teenager in California who trembles at the slightest crackling sound, women in Africa subjected to genital mutilation, flood victims in China, earthquake victims in India, and Kosovo Albanians are but a few examples of human being whose physical survival or integrity are being threatened by natural as well as unnatural forces……The result of such an approach is (total) paralysis of our ability to prioritize. In other words, which of the above deserve priority attention and on what grounds?\textsuperscript{39}

If everything is prioritized, then effectively, nothing is prioritized according to Khong.

While the issue of prioritization poses a series of dilemmas that extend beyond the scope of this effort, the author felt such analysis was significant because it presents an alternative viewpoint and arguably a challenge in how human security is operationalized. The challenge of prioritization is something the community of intervening actors clearly faced in Afghanistan and will likely be a continuing challenge for the Afghan government in the future. Subsequent analysis in chapters three and four will provide some additional


insight into two significant Afghan-led programs that attempt initial and aggressive attempts address the issue of ensuring at least some foundational priorities are established.

For human security advocates however, this line of literal reasoning detracts from the broader argument on the need for challenging historical models of state sovereignty and the role of individuals in the more broadly defined security arena. It is an opportunity, as Kaldor (2007) suggests, to bridge the principles nested in conflict prevention, crisis management, human rights and human development together. It is a practical recognition and legitimization of the state’s significant role in advancing human security. Human security must recognize and work within legitimate political authorities that have the institutional capacity and resources to advance and enforce the security of those it serves.\textsuperscript{40} One such institution at both the state and international level is governance. A governing body’s ability to enact policy or law and then have the mechanisms to enforce them is essential to operationalizing human security. Developing public policy to enhance personal security, welfare, and dignity of all individuals and communities should therefore drive the fundamentals of state action as the individuals it assumes to govern only strengthen its legitimacy.\textsuperscript{41}

Like governance, another institution is the military, which under traditional security models is designed for protecting the State from external aggression. For Kaldor (2007) it means fundamentally reshaping the primary objective of military capability so


that defeating an adversary is subordinated to protecting civilians.\textsuperscript{42} Bell and Blacksome (2013) advance broader civil-military integration as an operational tool that advances human security. The force multiplying, as borrowed from U.S. military doctrine, effect of using the military infrastructure to organize, support, advance communication networks, and ensure delivery of humanitarian aid is essential in those intervention circumstances where such organic capacity does not exist.\textsuperscript{43} In the post-Apartheid South Africa, for example, the “new” government was faced with the challenge of not only addressing decades human rights violations and inequality, but also establishing an evolved utility for its military. It not only acknowledged the military aspect of security but also emphasized the non-military dimensions that aligned with core human security principles.\textsuperscript{44}

In so doing, Ferreira and Henk (2009) highlight two pivotal moments in the country’s history that are worthy case studies for operationalizing human security. The first was the development of a Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy in 1996 that linked the term security to the basic needs of South Africans, their property, and their livelihoods. The second was redefining the role of the military through a White Paper entitled, “South African Participation in International Peace Missions.” It recognized the military apparatus as a capable entity of preserving regional peace and stability. Their emphasis, however, was not limited to the issue of cross-over/spillage of conflict into the South African State. Instead, it put an emphasis on keeping the region

\textsuperscript{42} Kaldor, Martin, and Selchow, 2007.
stable, because in an increasingly globalized and interdependent environment, this would create opportunities for trade and development with a natural positive economic and social benefit to its own citizens.\textsuperscript{45}

**A Potential Human Security Framework - Establishing a Unified Theme**

After reviewing the selected literature, there are some consistent themes that emerge that one could build upon to extend beyond a conceptual understanding and more specifically develop an operationalized framework for utilization in countries like Afghanistan. A starting point for such a framework could begin, with human beings (i.e. individuals) themselves. Borrowing from the language of the United Nations, the individual however is not limited to one precise characterization and is instead multidimensional who is defined by their relationship to self, the community/society they belong to, and the state they identify with.\textsuperscript{46} The individual assumes a unique and complicated role in human security because they are the agents seeking security, victims of insecurity, purveyors of action aimed at addressing the threats to individual security, and even the instigators of human insecurity. For the purposes of this framework, the individual as a referent of security is the primary focus, which defined further is their capacity to be secure, and/or insecure.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.

The individual, while able to serve in distinct agential roles, is actually bound by the word security. King and Murray, suggest that in common discourse, security denotes freedom from various risks. This idea of security contains, as they articulate, two key elements: an orientation to future risks and a focus on risks of falling below a threshold of deprivation. Human security is not only a function of current well being but also the prospect of avoiding deprivation in the future. In this capacity, individuals remain unique agents unto themselves, but also a member of a collective (i.e. state) they are a part of. These roles demonstrate the value of individual recognition as well as the capacity and more importantly the requirement of the state to address the human security of those that define this collective.

On the international stage, the concern for and the ability to understand humanity is generally viewed through the theoretical lenses of human rights, human development, human needs and human security. As Gasper (2007) writes, all of these add a distinctive stream of interpretation and thought, but exist under the common larger human genus. Sen and Okata (2003) and others advance the complimentary nature and human development, rights, and security as these concepts are well-established seminal UN documents like the UN Human Development Report. Peace and conflict scholar Johann Galtung (2004) and others advance human needs theory, with some of the analysis

drawing a direct link to the other three families.\textsuperscript{50} A more detailed examination of these concepts is warranted to demonstrate their complementary alignment within the broader human security framework.

A fundamental feature in most human rights discussions is their inalienability. There is a natural existence to them without the need to legitimize entitlement. While this entitlement is absolute, developing an understanding behind what constitutes a right that humanity should acknowledge, safeguard, and promote becomes more problematic.\textsuperscript{51} Drawing from a similar universality lineage, human security makes no distinction between civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, but develops a practical framework for identifying and addressing the rights at stake during insecurity.\textsuperscript{52}

Before advancing human security theory, Ul Haq devoted his energy at the United Nations to the issue of human development. He collaborated closely with fellow economist Amartya Sen to develop the Human Development Index (HDI), a foundational people-centered approach to how states are assessed. Rather than concentrating on national income as a benchmark for success, HDI, like human security is premised upon the center role of an individual, and in this case, their relation to how a State’s overall development is assessed. The focus, like the aforementioned discourses put the human


\textsuperscript{51} Ogata, Sen, 2003.

being at the center of attention and concern. Economic growth would serve as but one indicator along with other dimensions that measured a State’s capacity to advance the health (and therefore longevity), knowledge, and living standards for its citizens.\textsuperscript{53} As Sen states, “Human development, as an approach, is concerned with what I take to be the basic development idea: namely, advancing the richness of human life, rather than the richness of the economy in which human beings live, which is only a part of it.”\textsuperscript{54} Human security embraces this notion of forward progress entrenched in human development by focusing on what Sen identifies as downside risks; insecurities like conflict, ill health, and financial crisis that directly impact development’s progress\textsuperscript{55}

The third and interrelated member of the human genus is the discourse on basic needs theory. In 2004, Dr. Johan Galtung presented a keynote speech on human needs and humanitarian intervention that he framed within the context of the then current Iraq war. Galtung referenced his efforts in the 1970’s where we consulted with several UN member Nations on the issue of basic human needs. He was charged with developing not only a theory of human needs but also a method on how to identify them. Galtung drew upon the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the lesser-known International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights that were first adopted by the United Nations in 1966, and subsequently made viable in 1976. His third tactic was to interview people around the world with only one question in mind: what could they not live

without? Galtung summarized the responses of individuals from over 50 countries into four categories: survival, wellness, freedom, and identity.\textsuperscript{56}

\textbf{A Human Security Definition for Consideration}

In the previous section, the analysis revealed a necessary and complimentary link between the human agent, the issue of security, and the theoretical frameworks that define rights, development, and basic needs. It did not, however, mitigate the challenge of adding precision to a human security definition. The Commission on Human Security provides the following definition of human security: “To protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment.”\textsuperscript{57} This proposed definition is broadly consistent with Ul Haq’s vision in 1994. While he arguably avoided precision, he contended that human security has two main aspects. The first is the need for safety from chronic threats and the second is protection from sudden and damaging disruptions to positive patterns of daily life.\textsuperscript{58} In 2009, the Human Security Unit of the UN office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs had developed a ‘handbook,’ for practitioners to operationalize human security. It, like the analysis provided herein, brought the human elements of security, rights, and development and action. The handbook’s authors codified the principles of people-centered, multi-sectoral,

\textsuperscript{57} Okada, Sen, 2003.
\textsuperscript{58} Ul Haq, 1994.
comprehensive, context-specific, and prevention-oriented responses to human security threats. Most notably, it reaffirmed the original seven categories of human security threats that Ul Haq first articulated in 1994.\textsuperscript{59} By 2012, the UN General Assembly formalized into the official vernacular of international discourse additional language on the subject of human security. It affirmed Ul Haq’s concept and by adding two significant additional contributions. It (1) codified the right of all people to live in freedom and dignity, entitled to freedom from fear and want with equal opportunity to develop their potential; and (2) upheld the sovereignty and legitimacy in the state as a responsible party for addressing the human security concerns of its citizens. The state as the UN contends cannot be separated from the issue of human security, and instead obligates it with the burden of action to ensure human security. Individuals, as previously discussed are at the center of collective entities whether at the local, state, regional, or international level. The individual remains the referent of human security, but the collective of individuals we more commonly associate with nation-states and organizations, have the obligation to its members.

By examining the literature, this author provides the following human security definition for critique and analysis: “The equal right of all people to live in dignity and develop free of fear and free of want in a local, national, and international environment that proactively and preventatively addresses threats to their personal well being, while simultaneously safeguarding their needs.” The definition, the author hopes, pays deference to not only the origins of the concept but also to the evolving discourse. A

deconstructed version at this point is perhaps useful and essential to building an operationalized framework:

- “The equal right,” element places the UN Declaration of Human Rights and its universality at the forefront of human security.

- The use of “all people,” re-emphasizes universal applicability, and places human beings at the core of this people-centered idea.

- A person’s right to, “live in dignity and develop free of fear and free of want,” stresses the need for respecting their worth as human beings, commits to their opportunity to positively progress and grow (develop), and maintain this existence in freedom.

- Practically, individuals live in a “local, national, and international environment.” This element is cognizant of State structures, their sovereignty, and their relation to other States. It is also mindful of individuals and their direct/indirect relations and interactions with one another.

- These principles are bound together in an environment that entitles rights, but also obligates the structures within them to “proactively and preventatively addresses threats to their personal well being, while simultaneously safeguarding their needs.” The author believes this last phrase provides the initial language necessary for operationalizing human security. The obligation of individuals to each other through collective constructs like the United Nations, Non-governmental Organizations (NGO), States demands nothing less than an enduring approach towards ensuring human security. Where one element either neglects or is incapable of proactive and preventive measures, other elements are obligated to intervene, as was previously highlighted in the Responsibility to Protect doctrine and chapter seven of the UN Charter.

- The specific use of the term “needs,” provides ecosystem members a multi-sectoral framework that reinforces the original seven categories of human security Ul Haq articulated: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security. By examining human security, and the threats that create insecurity through these seven lenses, individuals and structures can operationalize their actions. It allows for defining security thresholds, the ability to develop methodologies that measure security, and the ability to build utilitarian constructs to achieve security.
To be sure, this human security definition is not fixed but rather subject to constant reassessment on its usefulness and practicality. While its critique is not the subject of further analysis herein, the author intends on applying it to the question first posed in this thesis – How might a human security agenda increase the probability of resolving the conflict in Afghanistan?
Chapter 3 – Afghanistan, A Very Brief Historical Overview

In 1965, The People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) held its first organized congress in Afghanistan. The party, a promoter of Marxist ideology, had aligned itself with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and received both technical and financial assistance from them. In April 1978, members of the PDPA assassinated Afghanistan President Mohammad Daoud Khan and his family in a bloody coup d’état. Daoud Khan, with significant assistance from the PDPA, was himself installed into power through a bloodless coup in 1973 when he overthrew Afghanistan’s King Mohammed Zahir Shah (who also happened to be his first cousin). Known as the Saur Revolution, the event would serve as notable point in the country’s modern history that would evolve into varying degrees of international interest, involvement, and intervention through the present day.

The events of 1978 are certainly not the beginning of Afghanistan’s dynamic history. It is merely to reference a starting point for the author’s central theme of exploring a human security framework for Afghanistan. Since September 11, 2001, Afghanistan has remained the subject of significant discourse across multiple disciplines of interest, and the body of knowledge created on its social, political, and cultural history is comprehensive. While a detailed exploration of these facets is beyond the scope of this
thesis, it is helpful to place the current situation within some level of context so as to better appreciate the nuances and challenges of the country.

The territory now defined as Afghanistan – the land of Afghans – first saw signs of an existence in 3000 BCE, which as archeologists have uncovered included signs of urban civilization in the Southern city of Kandahar. Over the next millennia, groupings of nomads that traversed throughout Central Asia had begun to establish more permanent roots in what is now Iran and Afghanistan. Various Persian empires ruled this region known as Ariana, until 330 BCE when Alexander the Great defeated Darius the Third of Persia. His tenure over the region remained brief and the Indian Maurya Empire would become victor, but again only briefly. What ensued were various conquests between both the Greeks and Indian Empires, and successor Mongol invasions. Intermixed throughout this period were the growing influences of the Arab Muslim world that began its influence in the Western city of Herat but steadily continued throughout the region now more commonly referred to as Khorasan. By the 18th century, the self-realization of an Afghan identity were beginning to mature as a local Kandahar-based and Pashtun tribal chief, Mir Wais Hotak had successfully expelled Persian Rule in 1709.

History books and Afghans, who are naturally steeped in their own history to robust oral tradition, bestow upon him the title of Grandfather of the Nation. What would ensue was a period of Afghan-based monarhic rule through the region until the 1978 coup. It wasn’t however without conflict or challenge. Ansary successfully conveys

---

61 Ibid.
this concept in his appropriately entitled book, *Games without Rules: The Often-Interrupted History of Afghanistan*. Afghanistan’s history remained interrupted which included inter-regional fighting causing power dynamics to shift between tribes until 1747 when Ahmad Shah Durrani, another Pashtun, declared an independent Afghanistan. Unfortunately this too was interrupted, as the Durrani Empire had established an alliance with the British Empire. With the British already entrenched in India, they had extended their reach into Afghanistan that included three Anglo-Afghan wars between 1839 and 1919. On August 19, 1919, King Amanullah Khan oversaw the signing of the Anglo-Afghan treaty – more commonly referred to as the Treaty of Rwalpindi, and it is this date that is used to annually celebrate Afghanistan’s independence.

The term Afghan actually draws its origins from the Sassanid Empire who referred to the people of the region, as *Abgans*, which when translated in Arabic, was pronounced as *Afghan*. The people the Sassanids were specifically referring to however were the Pashtuns who are arguably the closest semblance to the original inhabitants of the region. This area, however, was and continues to remain a diverse collection of ethnicities shaped by over two millennia of conquests and conflicts. The largest group by percentage is the Pashtuns who comprise approximately 42% of the 31.8 million people that inhabit Afghanistan. As the brief overview provided would suggest, the Pashtuns have had a dominant role in the shaping of the Afghan State. They are joined by Tajiks at 29%, the

---

63 Dupree, 2002
64 Dupree, 2002.
Hazaras at 9%, Uzbeks at 9% and Aimaks, Turkomens, Balochi, and other smaller ethnicities each holding about 4% or less of the population. The lingua franca of the country is Dari, although both Dari and Pashto are considered the country’s official languages. These ethnic identities were and continue to be shaped by their experience.

All of Afghanistan’s groups share a few commonalities. Generations of Afghans contending with the mountainous, arid, and rugged geography had fostered a need for self-sufficiency. The area, roughly the size of Texas, is difficult to traverse when no historic or formalized infrastructure was in place to improve lines of communication. The autonomy, based partially on both geographic isolation and kinship, had also created power dynamics that were capitalized by domestic and international actors. In fact, Afghanistan’s region’s retained distinctive identifies that closely align to their ethnicity. In the South, the Pashtuns identify their center of gravity in Kandahar; in the West, the Hazara’s in Herat (the Hazara’s are also Shia Muslims, whereas the majority of the country’s Muslim population is Sunni); in the North, the Uzbeks in Mazar-e-Sharif; and in the Center/East, the Tajiks in Kabul. These geographic centers are significant, because of another point of commonality: no matter who reigned over the broader Afghan population, the regions played powerful political roles forcing most of the Monarchies to grant considerable

---

autonomy to the governors of these regions. Attempts in the past to exert significant control over the ethnic groups has created a unique phenomenon of national unity in the form of opposition against whatever central regime was in place at the time. As it will be discussed later, this juxtaposition between autonomy and a sense of national identity will serve as a point for consideration in developing a human security strategy.

After assuming power in 1978, the PDPA for example had declared broad and controversial initiatives to instill secularism, land reform, and other policies borrowed from Communist Party counterparts in the Soviet Union, as consistent with their Marxist belief system. When policy declarations turned into implementation plans, the PDPA government experienced significant resistance throughout the Afghan regions creating rebellions across the country. Of particular concern with most Afghans was the planned outlawing of religious and cultural practices that directly challenged core elements of the Afghan identity. The PDPA’s attempts to quell the discontent through military action only incited further resentment from the Afghan populace, and by 1979 the Soviet Union fearing a collapse of the Communist PDPA regime, deployed military forces into the country to address the rebellion. By 1985, the Soviets had amassed over 100,000 soldiers in the country.

In 1989 the Soviet Union recalled its military forces from Afghanistan. The power vacuum it created however, was one that served as the foundation for a Civil War that

---

ensued until 1996, when the Taliban had swept through most of the country, gained control of Kabul, the country’s capital, and established the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan on September 27. For the purposes of this effort, the Civil War has several significant aspects.

The Soviet-Afghan War was fought through direct and indirect interveners. This conflict was interlaced into the fabric of the larger conquest for global supremacy, the Cold War. While the Soviets had overtly deployed military forces, the United States, with assistance from other countries to include the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia began a covert war that included training Afghan freedom fighters (Mujahedeen), training and deploying foreign fighters who believed this was a just holy war (Jihad) against those attacking Islam, and funneling military hardware through Pakistan and into the hands of the Mujahedeen. The debate on the effectiveness of the U.S. strategy continues, but it is clear that their support had a force multiplying effect to a largely unorganized and poorly equipped Mujahedeen force. Afghanistan was now left in what could arguably be described as a chaotic situation with a diverse set of competing interests and influences. Most Afghans have historically contended that to the victor goes the spoil of controlling the central government. In this case, the victor remained unclear. The Mujahedeen had

---

71 Rubin, Barnett R. “Afghanistan from the Cold War through the War on Terror.” Oxford University Press, USA, 2013.
developed multiple alliances that transcended ethnic/regional affiliation, but reverted back to these more familiar understandings when it was evident no clear victor was identified.

There are two relevant points to stress on the Afghan Civil War. The first is the role of interveners. It was already mentioned that the United States contributed significant financial and military resources to the Mujahedeen, and this continued even after the Soviet withdrawal. The U.S. was not alone however, and intervention aligned in part to shared regional and philosophical ties. The Hazaras had received assistance from Iran but proved ineffective to mount a significant offensive for control based on their relatively smaller size. The Uzbekis continued to receive assistance from the Soviet Union and ultimately the Russian Federation but were more concerned with building wealth and a regional power infrastructure than vying for central government control. The Tajiks, who formed the centerpiece of the Northern Alliance, were led by Ahmad Shah Massoud, a charismatic Mujahedeen leader who was favored by Western Europeans and the United States. Among his other attributes, as Pontfilly (2002) describes, Massoud was a decisive figure in the Soviet Afghan War because he (1) was a brilliant military tactician who understood the principles of guerilla warfare and how best to apply them against a conventional forces of the Soviet Union and (2) was able to unify large groups of Mujahedeen that transcended ethnic or communal identities. In 1992, the Wall Street Journal even named Massoud, The Afghan who won the Cold War, and Afghans today celebrate a Massoud Day on September 9th to commemorate his assassination just two

---

73 Rubin, 2013.
days before September 11, 2001.\textsuperscript{75} Massoud’s story is more than a folkloric tale of the Lion of Panshir; as he was commonly referred to. His ability to coalesce disparate groups was, as Barfield suggests not incredibly unique in Afghan tradition, if it were to be applied in a manner consistent with historical precedence. Afghanistan, since the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, has come to terms with the idea of a central government, so long as it appreciated the significance, authority, and value of informal governance and kinship structures of the local environment.\textsuperscript{76}

Of the remaining groups, the Pashtuns retained their dominance in the South and enjoyed the support of Pakistan as their benefactor. The Pakistani government during the Soviet Afghan War had feared a larger encroachment into their territory by the Soviets and had significantly supported the Pashtun Mujahedeen fighters by providing them resources and training. It is important to note that Pakistan also has a very large Pashtun population, the majority of which are geographically located along the border with Afghanistan. The Pakistani government had, in Rashid’s (2010) analysis, entrenched concerns on the issue of Pashtun identity and the fear that it would impact Pakistani state integrity. This concern, in part, fueled their desire to shift Pashtun focus on Afghanistan and what resulted was what is now the well documented development, growth and advance of the Pakistani-funded and influenced Taliban movement through the country.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{76} Barfield, 2010.
Aside from providing some level of historical context, the analysis of the ethnic groups provides twofold significance. The first is the idea that Afghan history was shaped by the relative isolation and relative autonomy of several ethnic groups who learned out of necessity to become self-reliant. The second, is a gradual appreciation for the role of a measured central government, as exemplified by the periods of relative stability in the late 19th, early-mid 20th century and the reverence to Ahmad Shah Massoud. As Barfield discusses, the people of Afghanistan have recognized the need for a central government to address issues that are ideally suited for their aegis – again, with the caveat that it only promotes and advances sub-national structures.78 Some of these include, critical infrastructure development, education, public works and security from external aggression and insurgency.

Afghanistan was for over 2000 years a frontier-zone of conflict between neighboring Persian, Central Asian, Greek, and Mongol elements.79 It has helped shape the country into a diverse mosaic of structures and people who have endured despite so many recurrences of conflict. It has also, out of necessity, created a unique national identity that historically created unity among the regions and groups when their individual autonomy was challenged. The author, as an Afghan immigrant who came to the United States with his family in 1978, recalls an identity narrative that was repeated throughout the diaspora: *We are Afghans first, Muslims second, and Pashtuns, Tajiks, Kabulis third.* The author experienced a similar sentiment from various ethnic groups as he travelled

---

78 Barfield, 2010.
throughout the country between 2003 and 2009, and believes it is useful narrative to help shape and ideally achieve human security in the country.

The Afghan State

On September 11, 2001 the United States experienced an unprecedented act of terrorism on its own soil. In a now famous speech to a joint session of the U.S. Congress just 9 days after the attack, U.S. President George W. Bush (2001) made a few key declarations that would ultimately serve as the justifying call for not only American but also International action. In this message, President Bush famously stated, “Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.” At the center of his and the U.S. government’s focus were Afghanistan and the Taliban government that controlled it. The Taliban had created a safe haven and his demand was for the immediate delivery of all Al Qaeda leaders who were, “hiding,” in Afghanistan.80

On October 7, 2001, President Bush fulfilled the commitment he made and ordered the first military strikes into Afghanistan. The militant Islamist group had not only claimed responsibility for the attacks but also had an established history of committing terrorist acts globally. Well before these tragic events, the United States, other member nations and the UN Security Council had designated Al Qaeda as a terrorist organization. The U.S. response would trigger Operation Enduring Freedom, its longest war and what

---

would become a complex, multi-tier, and evolving engagement that continues to the present day.

Within weeks, the U.S. had brokered arrangements with members of the four Mujahedeen, now anti-Taliban, alliances across the country. The alliances were in many instances arrangements of convenience, as power was typically centered in select individuals across the country that had amassed financial wealth and the ability to maintain sizeable militias that would extend their authority. More commonly referred to as warlords, these individuals had strayed from Afghan customs and traditions and were quite dissimilar from the typical Maliks, or a first among equals, whom communities would select as representative leaders to represent their interests in larger councils (Shura/Jirga).\(^81\) These Warlords instead capitalized on the inherent uncertainty of the Afghan Civil War and placed self-preservation and advancement at the forefront of all their actions. The result was a level of violence and brutality through internecine battles that created a perception among the vast majority of the Afghan populace that these warlords had enabled as much destruction and loss of life as their former Soviet occupiers.\(^82\)

By collaborating with the Warlords, the US had quickly removed the Taliban from power and by December 2001 they had requested these alliances to send their delegates to Bonn, Germany with the expressed purpose of developing a roadmap for Afghanistan’s

---


future. The result was twofold: first, the Agreement on Provisional Arrangement in Afghanistan pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions (commonly referred to as the Bonn agreement) was signed by delegates, choosing Hamid Karzai to be their Interim President until formal elections under a new constitution were held; and second, it enabled a division of war spoils rather than setting the necessary foundation for a institutionalized division of powers.\textsuperscript{83} For the years to follow, the Interim Afghan Government had continued the legitimization of these non-traditional sub-national power structures, the Warlords, by appointing them to key Ministry positions and Governorships across the country’s 34 provinces. As Braithwaite and Wardak explain, for many Afghans this created further distrust of the nascent central government, often referring to Karzai’s administration as an \textit{hokomat-e-maslahati}, a government formed on the basis of a marriage of convenience among rival individuals with each serving their own personal or factional interest.\textsuperscript{84}

The Interim Afghan administration re-instituted the 1964 Constitution pending an opportunity to develop a new charter that would be presented to a national Loya Jirga in December 2003. The Jirga, an Assembly, or Loya Jirga, Grand Assembly, is a well-established informal justice, conflict and dispute resolution mechanism in Afghan tradition.\textsuperscript{85} It draws from the inherent relationships in Afghan society that begin at the Qawm or extended family level and extend through the village, district, and provincial

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid.
hierarchy. The Jirga draws from Pashtun tradition and its credibility is reinforced by the analogous Islamic concept of a Shura, or consultation. Jirga representatives are not self-selected but are instead chosen by the communities or parties to represent their interests. Historically, the Jirga was mobilized to address disputes as they occurred and was not designed or equipped to handle day-to-day governance. Over time the institution has evolved, albeit inconsistently, to include the establishment of semi-permanent constructs to contend with frequent disputes. In the case of the 2003 Constitutional Loya Jirga, the Interim administration had decreed rules to ensure adequate representation from across the country, the inclusion of women, and representatives form the refugee and diaspora communities. While there was some learning curve with the structure and parliamentary-style rules that were imposed, the achievement of the Loya Jirga was by all accounts, astonishing for Afghanistan. The approval of the constitution was, as Kraemer (2010) suggests, even more remarkable because the Loya Jirga took the concrete steps of recognizing not only Afghanistan’s sovereignty, but also deference to the rule of law and a democratic process that ensured the Afghan people’s will was acknowledged.

The acceptance of the Loya Jirga’s ruling continues to resonate throughout Afghanistan with positive results. In their 2013 public opinion survey that polls nearly 10,000 people across the country annually, the Asia Foundation found that 75% of the

population believed the national government was moving in a positive direction forward, but with significant caveats on the negative issues of parliamentary attentiveness to their needs, rampant corruption, and the government’s ability to deliver services. Further explorations of these concerns are warranted through an analysis of the Afghan political structure and governance model.

**Building a Government, With Assistance**

The 2004 Afghan Constitution established an executive branch, a bicameral legislature and an independent supreme court. The system, at least for now, is not federal but unitary in that the appointment of 34 provincial governors and 399 district governors are made by the executive branch and not otherwise elected into office. Ginsburg/Huq (2014) and Kraemer (2010) separately suggest this action was likely based on the need to strengthen the nascent central government and formal recognition of a decentralized approach would weaken the Afghanistan’s sovereignty. Each province, district, and village would also have an elected Council who serve as both an advisory group to the governors and are responsible for electing officials to the legislature. In reality, however, the councils have no legal authority in provincial or district matters as that power is

---

91 Kraemer, 2010.
conferred to and retained with the office of the respective governor. The village councils, however, would be empowered with more established authorities.

With the foundational charter in place, the administration set to the overwhelming task of building a roadmap for stabilization, through security, infrastructure and economic development, rule of law, and accountability. The Afghan Government however, was not alone as was demonstrated by the genesis of the Bonn Agreement that was ushered in through significant UN Security Council and other member nation participation. It was affirmed in two subsequent Security Council resolutions in the days following the Conference that affirmed the Bonn Agreement (Resolution 1383) and the establishment of the International Security and Assistance force (ISAF in Resolution 1386). Additionally, it would serve as the basis for an unprecedented intervention that included foreign military forces, international NGO’s, technical advisors, and an influx of donor aid.

The challenge from the onset of international engagement, however, was a series of broadly uncoordinated and conflicting objectives and priorities from those who participated in the intervention. Goodhand and Sedra (2007) state, “International engagement in Afghanistan has been Janus-headed and involved simultaneously waging war whist attempting to build peace.” Daxner (2009) further states, “In recent history, there has rarely been another intervention with so much institutional legitimacy and so little questioning of strategy and perspective as there has been with Operation Enduring

---

92 Ibid.
Freedom and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The immediate numbness and anger after 9/11 created its own logic. The “war on terror” overshadowed all rhetoric and good intentions. Daxner’s statement reflects similar wording in the aforementioned language of the UN Security Resolutions 1383 and 1386 which state the commitment to Afghanistan’s sovereignty, the determination of member nations to support lasting peace and stability, to enjoin the Interim Afghan Administration to assist the International community in rooting out terrorism and to specifically end the use of their country as a base for terrorism.

In a 2011 Country Report, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) observed that Afghanistan had seen a wide range of experimental approaches in support of their reconstruction efforts. It is therefore helpful at this point to review a few internally developed and externally assisted efforts that demonstrate the complexity of the task before the Afghan Government, the challenge of synchronizing the Janus Head of activities, the dependency on external assistance, and the ongoing impact it has on the Afghan people and the Afghan State as it attempts to build a nation.

One Afghan developed concept was the National Solidarity Program (NSP), implemented by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD). The MRRD is by virtue of existence, a unique governmental structure that recognizes the

traditional agrarian roots of the country and the relative isolation of people in large rural land areas. The NSP was created in 2003 to:

- Develop the ability of Afghan communities to identify, plan, manage and monitor their own development projects.
- Increase human security through the promotion of local governance.
- Empower rural communities to make decision affecting their own lives by promoting a unique development paradigm, where communities participate in all stages of their development. This is accomplished through the election leaders who represent their interests in voluntary Community Development Councils (CDCs).  

Capitalizing on Afghan traditions that recognize local empowerment, while simultaneously establishing a relationship with the central government, the NSP has been tremendously successful. By 2013, the NSP oversaw the election of 32,000 CDC’s and the implementation of over 55,000 projects through a process of block grants that were managed by Facilitating NGO Partners like the Asia Foundation and the Agha Khan Network. Despite the significant progress in CDC development and creating inclusionary forums for local communities to participate in their own development, there were also challenges. The most significant include a lack of coordination between government ministries who were still developing their own standards and objectives and complained about the vast reach of the MRRD that extended, as they perceived, beyond rural

---

development issues. In another example was a debate and subsequent action on how best to improve subnational governance. One such office, the Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG) – established by President Karzai to improve governance at the provincial level and below – created its own outreach programs to encourage the participation of local leaders. This top-down approach stood in direct contrast to the bottom-up approach the CDCs had developed and the IDLG felt these councils were extending authority beyond their mandate.100 After recognizing their broader effectiveness, however, the Afghan Government designated the CDCs as the interim village councils (per constitutional mandate) until more permanent solutions were achieved. These councils, as the author will examine further, represent a ways of leveraging the individual referent, as an agent of human security, within the framework of broader formalized collectives. The CDC, in close collaboration with the community they represent, determines how to prioritize and approve development projects. The state delegates this authority to them, recognizing the value of their input and perspective as beneficiaries of such development efforts.

**Nation Building and International Presence**

Since 2002, Afghanistan has remained one of the largest beneficiaries of Official Development Assistance (ODA). Several international conferences have occurred since

---

100 Ibid.
the 2001 Bonn Conference, and each had a specified set of objectives and desired outcomes that ostensibly supported human rights, security, and development initiatives in Afghanistan. In January 2002, the International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan (the Tokyo Conference) was convened in Tokyo, Japan. Over 61 countries and 21 international organizations attended pledging $1.8 billion in ODA for 2002, and agreeing to assist the Interim Administration in developing an economic and monetary framework.  

In 2004, the International Afghanistan Conference in Berlin, Germany convened to confirm $4.4 billion in aid, expand the ISAF mission, and to establish the World Bank administered Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) as the vehicle for aid management and distribution for the country. The World Bank, the United Nations and the Afghan Government also used the forum to present the Securing Afghanistan’s Future (SAF) report. The comprehensive report was critical to nation and capacity building efforts because it specified a detailed framework on investments and recurring costs needed to build a foundation for sustained economic growth, financial, sustainability, and empowerment of the Afghan State to significantly improve social development and poverty reduction.  

The report was aligned to Afghanistan’s Millennium Development Goals (MDG), which had established benchmarks in key human development areas to


achieve by 2015. The report’s authors stated Afghanistan would require over $27.6 billion of external assistance through 2015 to achieve their objectives. The MDG was a UN developed program that set benchmarks in 1990, but actual efforts by member nations did not start until 2000 when the MDG was officially launched. It addressed eight key areas for member nations to progress and improve: eradicate hunger, achieve universal education, promote gender equality, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS malaria and other diseases, sustain the environment, and develop a global partnership for development. Afghanistan added a ninth goal of security as recognition to the development of the capability to address rule of law and persistent threats from the Taliban insurgency.

In 2006, the International Community of interested parties on Afghanistan convened in London with a specific focus of establishing an Afghan driven strategy, known as the Afghan Compact. The Compact stressed three interdependent pillars of government activity for the next five years: security; governance, rule of law and human rights; and Economic and Social Development. Then in 2008, at the International Conference in Paris, the Afghan Government used the opportunity to present a 5-year plan entitled the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS). The document, two years in the making, begins with acknowledging the significant challenge they, and the international community had undertaken since Bonn Agreement was signed. The ANDS

served as a “blueprint,” for the Afghan government to lead and the international donor community assist in developing an actionable strategy for addressing, “critical national capacities, such as education, energy, irrigation, and agriculture, as well as to promote reconciliation, justice and alternative livelihoods.”

In 2010, the London Conference on Afghanistan convened for the primary purpose of drafting the roadmap of transitioning security responsibilities to the Afghan Government. A secondary purpose was codifying a strategy for reintegrating Taliban fighters back into mainstream society that would lure members out of hiding and incentivize employment opportunities for them as private citizens. And then later in 2010, the first International Conference on Afghanistan was held in its capital city of Kabul. The Afghan Government presented 22 National Priority Programs (NPP) that were sub-organized under six categories that include security, human resource development, infrastructure development, private sector development, agriculture and rural development, governance.

These conferences typically served three objectives. The first was for the Afghan Government to articulate its progress on key milestones and objectives it had agreed to in the previous international engagements. The second was to present any new strategy aimed at fulfilling the primary tenets agreed to at the 2002 Bonn conference; over

---

subsequent conferences this was amended to also include frameworks for the transition of key responsibilities like security to the Afghan Government. The third objective was to secure the aid of the government needed to realize all of their specified plans that would hopefully lead to sustainable capacity building. These elements, like the 22 NPP programs the related MDGs illustrate common themes found in the seven human security categories. While using a slightly different set of words, the Afghan developed frameworks for operationalizing a development strategy have nested within them core human security principles that the author will discuss further as complimentary components of a Afghan human security framework.

The United States in Afghanistan – Led by the Department of Defense

President Bush’s speech in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 served as the foundation for a broader and enduring strategy that had one specified goal for the United States: “to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan and prevent their return.”109 The policy defined not only U.S. presence and related actions in the country but also served a general framework for the multitude of other intervening actors. The preponderance of spending, labeled as aid, which by technical definition was not incorrect, was focused on building capacity in the virtually non-existent security apparatus. The debates on the merits of starting an intervention on this premise continue,

but it is significant to understand the context that helped shape how a broader intervention strategy was challenged from the start of the military campaign. Even the United States recognized the need for modifying its initial stance. By 2009, the language of the U.S. government had evolved, and the foundational Strategic Framework for U.S. Efforts in Afghanistan cited earlier revised to include the word Civilian; now adjusted to read the Integrated Civilian-Military Campaign Plan. By 2012, it evolved again to the U.S. Civil-Military Strategic Framework for Afghanistan. The specified goal of defeating Al Qaeda had not changed, but now additional language was included to support the transition of security responsibilities to the Afghan Government, and the specific need, as U.S. national goals, to support governance, rule of law, and socioeconomic efforts in the country.\footnote{Changes to Updated U.S. Civil Military Strategic Framework Reflect Evolving U.S. Role.} It was a significant step in policy adjustment because the Afghanistan’s largest aid benefactor considered that freedom from want was perhaps as critical to addressing the threat of Al Qaeda as the freedom of fear. In his article, Robichaud (2007) quotes former U.S. Ambassador Ronald E. Neumann (2005-2007) who states, “The idea that we could just hunt terrorists and we didn’t have to do nation-building, and we could leave it alone, was a big mistake.”\footnote{Robichaud, Carl. “Buying Time in Afghanistan.” World Policy Journal 24, no. 2 (June 1, 2007): 1–10. doi:10.1162/wopj.2007.24.2.1.} Such recognition was slow in gaining wide acceptance and momentum, and when such policy changes were implemented, it coincided with a broader transition strategy of reducing U.S. involvement in the country. After the Afghan Civil War, any minimal semblance of a government had all but disappeared, and the Taliban-
controlled period did little to build a governance capacity. The Bonn Agreement, woven with the proper language of international charters and diplomacy understated the reality the country faced. That is, there was no Afghan State as one would consider under international norms. Many of the local institutions, infrastructure, and capacity had been destroyed, and there was virtually non-existent institutional knowledge to revive such capability. The vast amounts of aid committed to Afghanistan required a government apparatus capable of providing it sufficient oversight, accountability, and sound management principles. This challenge would not only affect how aid was delivered and projects were implemented, but it also directly and negatively challenged the obligation the UN has entrusted its member states with, as they must ensure the human security of their citizens. As these were nascent and/or undeveloped, the many donors managed the distribution of their aid outside of Afghan Government systems. In 2011, for example, 82% of the $12.9 billion in aid were dispersed through domestic donor or international mechanisms that bypassed the Afghan Government. The U.S., as the largest aid provider, heavily influenced this percentage by committing only 11% of their aid through Afghan Government channels. Even with the maturing capability of the Afghan ministries, their lack of direct oversight into how the aid was dispersed and therefore could not confirm such efforts were synchronized with programs specified in the NPP that were geared to building capacity and an envisioned end-state of self-reliance. The unpredictability of aid commitments, as the Development Cooperation Report highlights,

has also made the government’s ability to forecast problematic. The fact remains that in the absence of robust State revenue generation mechanisms, it has become reliant on external assistance. In 2011 alone, 52% of the government operating budget alone was financed through external assistance.

Another illustrative example that further adds to the nation building and human security challenge is the types of aid flowing into Afghanistan since 2002. By 2012, the International Community had pledged $119 billion in aid, of which $85 billion was actually committed, and $70 billion dispersed respectively.\(^{114}\) Over $89 billion of this amount was from the United States, accounting for over 75% of the total external aid committed to Afghanistan.\(^{115}\) When dissecting the U.S. contribution even further, there are several items of consideration that demonstrate unevenness and inconsistency with the specified goals of the conferences to help build Afghan capacity in all three pillars of the Afghanistan Compact. Between 2002-2012, the U.S. had appropriated $57 billion of the total $89 billion to its Department of Defense (DoD). The DoD spent $50 billion through the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF), a U.S. Congress developed fund to support the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

The next largest tier of aid appropriation was to the Commander’s Emergency Response Program (CERP), with $3.44 billion. CERP was an instrument developed by DoD to enable local military commanders in Afghanistan and Iraq to respond to crises

\(^{114}\) Ibid.

with that they termed a non-lethal weapon. The program allowed these military officers/commands discretionary spending authority on projects to address urgent small-scale, humanitarian, and reconstruction project to provide immediate assistance to the local populace. Commanders had the ability to authorize up to $500,000 for various projects, and could request higher levels up to $20 million through a more formalized and hierarchal approval process. The purpose, as specified in a DoD handbook entitled, Commander’s Guide to Money as a Weapons System Handbook provides these officers to utilize a four-pronged methodology for project selection: they must be able to execute the project quickly, it must employ as many people from the local population as possible, it must directly benefit the local population, and it must be highly visible.\textsuperscript{116} In assessing need, these Commanders were further directed to collaborate closely with other elements on the ground to ensure they were complementary to existing or planned efforts. Since the military controlled the preponderance of aid distribution in the country and had the largest presence, fulfilling the objective of being visible was never a primary concern. The expertise and diligence needed to ensure the direct benefit to the local population however, was more problematic in an unstructured and uncoordinated environment where, as the author witnessed firsthand, military commanders had tremendous authority for action within their areas of responsibility. As Shannon writes by quoting an interaction with an unnamed high ranking military officer:

\begin{flushright}
\footnotesize
\end{flushright}
But that’s where the line gets blurred because we’re not building roads for humanitarian purposes, we’re building roads so we have access to the area for security, it happens to have a humanitarian effect because it allows people to get around easier. So, our focus is not humanitarian, our focus is primarily security so where what we do positively affects the humanitarian sector that’s good, but it’s not what we’re here to do.117

The officer in Shannon’s interview was a member of a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). As Afghanistan became an experimental arena for testing and on occasion evaluating development theory, humanitarian policy, aid modalities, global governances, and response to the war on terror, the PRTs were an instantiation of this complex environment.118 They were created in 2002 by the United States to better assess the humanitarian needs of the Afghan population, to collaborate more effectively with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and NGOs already working in the country. By 2003, the US embassy had provided three objectives for the PRTs, endorsed by the Afghan Ministry of Interior, and ultimately replicated across the ISAF contingent. These objectives included extending the authority of the central government, improving security, and promoting reconstruction.119 Despite the implementation of an Executive Steering Committee, the actual construct and mission execution of the PRTs were widely inconsistent across the ISAF coalition. Even with those teams the US controlled, their staffing was uneven. Under the aegis of a military commander and a

118 Ibid.
contingent of soldiers to provide security and logistical support, the PRTs were designed to include active participation by the civilian organizations that in the U.S. case meant the State Department personnel, USAID representation, and U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Afghan Ministry of Interior would also provide representation. Other countries included the participation of NGO’s from their native countries, but again the participation was inconsistent and uneven. PRTs had access to CERP funds that once approved were implemented at the PRT commander’s discretion. The inclusion of USAID and its Quick Impact program – similar to CERP but funded through civilian channels and more closely aligned to the Afghan National Priority Programs. The majority of the work was ultimately implemented through a combination of NGO’s, domestic and foreign commercial firms after they had coordinated with Provincial leaders and the Provincial Development Councils.

The results of the PRT’s are arguably mixed. As there were wide inconsistencies variations in their organization and implementation, the Afghan community had equal diverse reactions to them. In some cases they complemented the efforts of the CDCs by authorizing expenditures in direct support of CDC approved projects. By contrast, their efforts were resisted in other locations because they were perceived as a heavy-handed military intervention effort rather than viewed as a humanitarian or development effort. PRT access to CERP and QIP funds were not subject to the same oversight mechanisms as those for the block grants provided to the CDCs. This created two issues. First, the PRT’s would typically pay more and fast track funds in their local area attracting the interest of

120 Ibid.
district leaders and as a consequence, forcing some village-based CDC members to redirect their interest to the district level creating natural deficits at the villages. Second, the PRT contracts, unlike the CDC projects, were paid on the basis of output and not typically on performance, leading to poor workmanship on numerous projects.\footnote{Majeed, 2014.}

The presence of PRTs also created an environment that that either aggravated NGOs because of the encroachment they experienced/perceived or in some cases created security risks. In the more volatile areas, the NGOs were frequently targeted by insurgent elements because they were believed to be part of the PRT’s, and by association a military target. Perito’s 2005 assessment of PRTs for the United States Institute for Peace provides some of the most candid comments on the program some of which persist in the present day and were substantiated by others analysts like Majeed and Christie who had interest in the concept:

- “Improvisation is not concept of operations,” There were no clear guidelines that affected the structure or mandated execution, which was exasperated by competing civilian and military ‘corporate’ cultures who routinely debated on strategy.
- “Stability operations are not a game for amateurs.” The military’s civilian counterparts never had the appropriate infrastructure or expertise to integrate with the military.
- “Spend and build is not a strategy for development.” A high turnover of military officers, and lack of oversight hampered the PRTs to assess their effectiveness.
- “Silence is not a public information program.” No concerted efforts were made to market the more positive work the PRT’s had accomplished.\footnote{Perito, 2005.}
Christie (2012) adds that the fundamental challenge is, while perhaps not insurmountable, is the issue of mandate and objective. The PRTs do not execute projects based on need, which is a core principle of humanitarianism, but are instead actualized if they directly support the counterinsurgency/military effort.\textsuperscript{123} Despite their arguably legitimate concerns, the PRTs and the situation in Afghanistan challenged conventional thinking on military and humanitarian operations in the intervention space.\textsuperscript{124} With concurrent military combat operations, military-led PRT initiatives, development activities, and reconstruction efforts transpiring in the Afghan environment, traditional distinctions between civilian and military actors became more complex to define and arguably caused the community of interveners to address and confront a far more intertwined future of civil-military operations. It is significant to understand this reality because of the direct impact it has on human security operationalization. While Perito and others did not necessarily make a direct link to human security, the PRTs were directly engaged in development and related aid delivery projects that addressed one or more the Ul Haq’s original seven categories. Perito rightfully suggests however, that such institutions were not sufficiently resourced to address the complexities of human security through development/aid delivery and were not necessarily aligned to a broader framework that worked towards a common purpose of all alleviating fear and want.


\textsuperscript{124} Ibid.
The U.S. drew a powerful line in the sand in 2001 when it created an ‘us versus them’ scenario. Freedom from fear was operationalized in an unprecedented manner, personalized by the images of devastation with the World Trade Center towers collapsing, and a hole in the façade of the U.S. symbol of military dominance, the Pentagon. Exasperated even further by the idea that it could happen on American soil, which had not only enjoyed a careful distance from such impactful attacks but also was seen by much of the world through a mostly impenetrable superpower lens. The desire to be free of the fear created by terrorism now had a very universal undertone, and it manifested itself into a strategy that involved (1) the destruction of the transnational terrorist organization responsible for the 9/11 attacks and (2) action against those who harbored the organization. It very quickly gained rapid support across the globe by a variety of state and non-state actors. For the Taliban-controlled Afghan State and the Afghan population, the intervention was going to occur regardless of their opinion on the matter. Ironically this strategy whether consciously realized at the time or not, was principled on this core tenet of human security – the freedom from fear – which created a common sentiment extending well beyond the boundaries of the United States. These terrorist attacks created a sense of vulnerability, where virtually anyone in any situation could become either a direct or indirect target of such. Its perpetrators were Al Qaeda and the need to address this fear required action in Afghanistan. More recently the efforts of the international community evolved into also addressing the secondary principal of a freedom from want, which the author will discuss further in the examination of U.S. strategy in the country.
Afghanistan have provided some useful lessons for how to consider an operationalized human security strategy. It was therefore in this first set of actions, led by the U.S. and what would eventually become a much larger semblance of international actors who placed Afghanistan and the Afghan people as a focus of concern. The idea of human security, while perhaps not overtly specified, was at least thematically interwoven in the language and subsequent action of the international community, which included aid to develop Afghan security, economic and political capacity.
Chapter 4 – Competing and Conflicting Objectives and Outcomes

In the examination of R2P doctrine, state actors could justify their external intervention in those circumstances where the individual state was incapable or unwilling to address the plight of its populace.\textsuperscript{125} The prerequisite for doing so however, was an obligation by the interveners to rebuild states after such intervention occurred.\textsuperscript{126} The doctrine of human security suggests an analogous construct where U.N. members have an obligation to both protect their own citizens and also those of other member states.\textsuperscript{127} Since October 2001, Afghanistan has served as host to a diverse group of actors who have to some degree upheld some of the doctrinal components of both R2P and human security. Formally presented through state policy/strategy declarations, U.N. Security Council resolutions, and the output of international conferences, the community of intervening actors however did not specifically articulate or frame their activities within a human security-principled framework. As it was examined in the latter sections of chapter three, the United States had formally committed to destroying Al Qaeda, preventing their return to Afghanistan, and to a lesser extent support to the Afghan people. Other states and international organizations pledged resources to Afghanistan, but the objectives and

\textsuperscript{125} Evans and Sahnoun, 2001.
\textsuperscript{126} Ayub and Kouvo, 2008.
\textsuperscript{127} Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly - 66/290 - Follow-up to Paragraph 143 on Human Security of the 2005 World Summit Outcome, 2012.
resultant outcomes were not always clear and as it concerns this effort, not grounded within an operationalized human security framework that could potentially bring individual objectives into a more effective, context-driven, and comprehensive approach to addressing the seven categories as articulated in the 1994 U.N. Human Development Report. This chapter expands on this analysis focusing specifically on how international aid was implemented, the effect it had on exacerbating corruption, and the evolution of U.S. strategy to include the implementation of Counterinsurgency (COIN) by their military forces. The author will review these elements with an emphasis on assessing their impact on the human security of the Afghan populace. While such intervention, as it was discussed earlier, was not specifically expressed in human security terms, there was an explicit emphasis on the political, economic, and security development of the country. The analysis in chapter three and the forthcoming review in this chapter will serve as the basis for developing recommendations the author seeks to nest within a potential human security framework in chapter five.

**International Aid**

The Bonn Agreement, subsequent pledges of assistance by the international community, and ultimate commitments and actions of a myriad of actors have created a unique space with Afghanistan and the human security of its populace at its center. The

---

vast amount of aid, led by the U.S., was bound by often-conflicting objectives and desired outcomes, complicated even further by the nascent Afghan government’s inability to maintain a level of oversight and accountability on the process consistent with the human security themes advanced by NPP and MDG. While often expressed in terms of development or assistance, this aid was also closely aligned to human security principles even if overt comparisons were not readily made. The convening actors, however, brought with them their conditions for aid use, arguably a lack of understanding of the Afghan environment, and because their efforts were not often coordinated against other related initiatives, they were questionably limited in effectiveness. These concerns were consistent with the issues identified by the UN in their human security handbook, and serve as the foundation from which their operational framework was developed.\(^{129}\) It also serves as a foundational element the author leverages in chapter five as a basis for developing his human security recommendations.

The first of these actors were the states, and the foreign policy objectives they brought with them – actualized in the form of military intervention, aid to support building Afghan Government capacity, and development assistance – that contend with advancing a counterterrorism strategy to eliminate a threat, while wrestling with a more complicated (and arguably more resource intensive) longer term strategy of nation-building to ensure the threat never returns.\(^{130}\) This recognition of the complimentary need to build the Afghan nation while concurrently addressing the insurgent threat was most overtly


\(^{130}\) Shannon, 2009.
demonstrated by the shift in U.S. strategic policy discussed earlier; in so doing the U.S. government formally acknowledged that investment in traditional security measures was not enough and additional resources were needed towards sustainable economic and political development efforts as well.\(^{131}\) Part of the realization for a shift in tactics by the U.S. was premised on the persistent presence of the Taliban. Despite the relatively little resistance the U.S. Special Operations elements and their Afghan Warlord owned militia allies experienced in what they perceived was severely degrading the Taliban’s capability, this now-termed insurgent group managed to resurrect itself. In fact by 2006, there was a significant resurgence of the Taliban creating the highest casualty rates up to that point since the war began in late 2001.

There were also the NGOs that varied in purpose and origin. According to the International Center for Not-For-Profit Law, there were 1,911 Afghan-based NGOs and 287 foreign NGOs registered with the government.\(^{132}\) Such organizations, however, significantly varied in purpose. While the numbers are difficult to assess, it is believed that many of the Afghan-based NGOs were created in direct response to the new ‘rescue industry,’ that was formed in the country. From the onset, donors had pledged to maximize when possible, the use of Afghan resources to actualize their aid projects. This \textit{Afghan First} policy, as coined by the U.S. Department of Defense, permeated beyond just those projects for which the U.S. military exercised control. The idea seemed perfectly


well intentioned as it ensured the aid would stay within the Afghan economy. Newly established NGOs represented more than a variety of interests. They included construction companies, technical experts, and other resources that would become both the receiver of donor aid but also the purveyor of execution. In case of the construction company NGO for example, its managers relied on for-profit corporate models for managing the organization rather than traditional models for non-profit entities that normally seek to minimize overhead costs and instead ensure the majority of their revenues are invested into the projects/activities that are consistent with their charter. In so doing donors who as previously discussed managed the disbursement of their own aid rather than channeling it through the Afghan Government, had fostered a new market opportunity for entrepreneurs who would guise their for-profit motive behind an ostensible purpose of benevolence.\footnote{Nawa, Fariba. “A Corpwatch Investigative Report - Afghanistan, INC.” Corpwatch. San Francisco, CA: CorpWatch, October 6, 2006.}

Donors, governmental and nongovernmental entities that were providing aid to Afghanistan had their own standards for how work solicitations were structured, how contracts were awarded, how progress was monitored, and how accountability was ensured. Even in those instances where the latter mechanisms were established and comprehensive, they still struggled with ensuring the desired outcome of every aid project was achieved. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), an organization that arguably has one of the more structured and methodological approaches towards aid delivery and related development projects, was highly criticized by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR)– a special office created by the United
States Congress in 2008 to conduct audits and investigations of all the aid the U.S. provided to the Afghanistan relief and reconstruction effort – for numerous issues of accountability and oversight. In one revealing example, USAID had awarded $157 million to two contractors, the Development Alternatives, Inc. and AECOM International Development to support a key program that bolster local support for the work of the Community Development Councils under NSP; specifically these entities were charged with disbursing grants to the Councils for varying approved projects. After 16 months, it was determined that only .6 percent of the $46.5 million that had been dispersed to the companies, at that point, was actually utilized for grant delivery.\footnote{Sopko, John F. “SIGAR | Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction - October 30, 2012 Quarterly Report to Congress.” U.S. Government. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction. \url{http://www.sigar.mil/}.} The author should note however, that the Afghan Government has taken deliberate steps to address this pervasive problem, which includes adjusting national laws that restrict what NGOs may involve themselves in.\footnote{NGO Law Monitor: Afghanistan, 2014.}

Certainly not all NGO’s were the same, but all were equally susceptible to the impacts of the Afghan environment. Rather than profiting from the war, NGOs had to contend with the high operating costs of working in Afghanistan. The lack of suitable housing in Kabul for example, created a renter’s market where landlords could charge exorbitant prices to foreign entities seeking to shelter their employees and/or provide office space for them. The tenuous security environment, which made NGOs especially vulnerable as they were a primary target for insurgent elements, placed the protection of

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\end{thebibliography}
their workforce at the top of their prioritized cost spread sheets as well. Where NGOs did not have the internal capacity for the projects they wished to develop, like those requiring the physical construction of hospitals and schools, they would outsource to for profit entities – both local and foreign – for the completion of such work. NGOs also faced a practical reality of incentivizing their foreign employees to endure living in an environment like Afghanistan, where access to basic goods and services was limited if non-existent. These expatriate employees or contracted consultants incurred total costs between $250,000 – $500,000 a year. With a complex web of interaction between the NGO, their operating costs, and the prolific use of subcontractors, it was estimated that between 40-50% of all aid going into Afghanistan is actually returned to donor countries through company profits and salaries.\(^{136}\) If such statistics were considered in a broader human security framework, the individual Afghan referent would therefore only see one-half of what was designated as aid for development, nation-building, or human security efforts.

The development arms of foreign governments, like USAID and the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) are perhaps even more challenged because first, their complex and arguably bureaucratic systems of oversight and accountability allow for reasonable assurances that aid is delivered and ultimately used for its intended purpose. These systems, however, require resources that typically

exist in their domestic offices that are not easily replicated in a foreign environment like Afghanistan where the administrative infrastructure and institutional knowledge of the government is still developing itself. The second issue is that unlike NGOs who have some of the internal expertise to carry out their intended projects – like Medecin Sans Frontiers or Doctors without Borders who rely heavily on medical volunteers to donate their time and expertise to deliver health services in a development environment – these entities almost exclusively rely on outsourced solutions. A 2010 report prepared by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), highlighted the USAID use of contractors for providing accountability and oversight to the 2009 disbursement of $1 billion, to 223 other contracts and task orders. By delegating this primary responsibility and not incorporating the appropriate level of integrated USAID government personnel into the accountability process, the organization had unintentionally created opportunities for profiteering, conflicts of interest, and waste.137

Implementing Aid Resources

Building on Ul Haq’s 1994 principles, the UN has continued to refine not only a definition, but also a set of practical tools for operationalization. Building a human security framework, as demonstrated in the review of UN and scholarly literature, requires a protection-based, comprehensive, context-driven, and prevention-oriented strategy to

ensure the minimum opportunity for success. It requires the participation of the individual referent, but also in a coordinated and synchronized fashion, the maximum engagement of the collective that defines these individuals. In Afghanistan, and put more plainly, both the Afghan state and the community of intervening actors are actually direct and indirect participants in the same environment. Under a human security framework, these environmental elements would ideally acknowledge their respective roles and work cohesively to protect and empower the Afghan populace by taking deliberate steps to achieve and secure their fundamental freedoms from fear and want.

On the specific issue of the international community, the delivery of aid into Afghanistan created a significant dynamic with likely unintended consequences impacting the effectiveness of the overall strategy to supporting the three thematic pillars stressed not only in the U.S. strategy but also in various aid-focused international conferences on Afghanistan: governance, rule of law, and socioeconomic development. This was most apparent in the rise of hybrid institutional networks that created duality in both public sector positions and the related administration of government services. In the absence of an effective governance structure and even the most basic components of a civil service corps, Afghanistan’s government was immediately dependent on external resources to help construct new functionality, reconstruct existing ministries, and develop business processes and standard operating procedures where none existed. It immediately made the

---

country vulnerable to becoming a Rentier State. The concept in international relations discourse has multiple strands and variations, but in general one of the complementary components is when a State relies extensively on resources provided by foreign sources that creates an opportunity for significant foreign influence. In Afghanistan, the aforementioned statistics on external financing far outweighed the Afghan Government’s ability to generate the same requisite funds for operations and activities. Foreign experts, including foreign civil servants were brought on and assigned to virtually every branch of the government. They developed processes, strategies, and frameworks for governance that heavily relied on foreign benchmarks for success, without appropriately adapting them into a relevant Afghan socio, political, and economic context. These foreign experts were often dubbed ‘second civil servants,’ as they exercised tremendous authority in shaping the Afghan Government, but were not actually Afghan citizens. By 2010 however, the dual-public servants had trained up to 6600 Afghan officials to assume their primary responsibilities, but these latter officers’ positions were exclusively funded by foreign aid with the Afghan Government having little to no capacity for assuming the burden of their salaries. The international community therefore, had created an environment only further complicated by a nascent Afghan state that could not uphold a fundamental human security responsibility entrusted to it by the UN. As a result, most of


the aid distributed was limited in its long-term effectiveness because it was not context-specific and not part of a broader and comprehensive framework that was tailored to the particular human security concerns of the Afghan populace.

A second significant issue is centered on pervasive corruption, exacerbated by the tremendous influx of money, in the form aid, into the country. In 2013, insecurity (30% of the respondents) and corruption (26%) were cited by Afghans as the biggest problems facing the country. The statistics and related questions used by the Asia Foundation suggest that despite foreign perceptions on the Afghan population’s acceptance of corruption as inherent to the culture, the issue is unsettling and a significant topic of concern. In a separate survey by Integrity Watch – Afghanistan, 45% of the respondents cited insecurity, and 36% of the respondents cited corruption as the two biggest problems in the country. Corruption can of course take many forms, but in general it is accepted as the “improper use of a public or official position for private gain.” It can include acts of bribery, embezzlement, abuse of power, and nepotism. For the Afghan population, corruption is most acutely experienced through the practices of administration officials who although are charged with rendering public services are instead limiting access without an appropriate bribe, or bakhsheesh offered. Widespread corruption itself was

145 Ibid.
not necessarily the exclusive consequence the significant inflow of aid that overwhelmed the capacity of embryonic Afghan institutions. It was also fueled by the system of actors who control the illegal drug economy – and therefore needed adequate ‘protection’ from public institutions to ensure progress – that continues to be a significant source of revenue in the country. Afghanistan, it should be noted, is the world’s largest producer of opium, and the industry accounts for near 30% of the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Drawing from Suhrke’s book on Afghanistan, she identifies several components of the corruption environment that are underwritten by the intervention efforts in Afghanistan:

- The Afghan “rescue industry” was born out of what had become an aid-and-war economy creating an artificial environment where individuals in positions of power and influence took extraordinary measures to profit from the influx of cash in the country because they knew it would not last.
- Oversight institutions that were established to vet companies and organizations tasked with development contracts exasperated the corruption problem by often granting approvals to only those entities that were willing to pay a bribe.
- In many cases the continued monitoring of development contractors throughout the lifecycle of their projects because the NGO’s who hired them were inadequately resourced or had cited security concerns. As a result, aid providers who assumed reliance on one primary contractor had already turned to a series of sub-contractors that were often privileged based their willingness to pay bribes.147

---


Corruption has created an unintended set of second order effects for what is normally the very overtly identifiable purpose of aid – to assist those in need. First it has created elaborate structures of patronage relationships that reduce the overall amount of aid actually utilized for its intended purpose. Second, without a comprehensive and consistent approach towards accountability and oversight, the quality of the work actually performed may be questionable. A notable example of this effect was documented in a July 2013 SIGAR report. SIGAR investigators conducted an inspection of the Jawsjan Faculty of Higher Education, a U.S. funded teacher education training facility in Sheberghan, Afghanistan. After nearly fours years of work and over $4 million spent, the facility remained incomplete despite assurances by the contractors that the facility was ready for use. SIGAR inspectors found numerous water, sewage, electrical issues that create health, fire, and building integrity hazards.\textsuperscript{148} And finally third, there is the effect on public perception of and confidence in the Afghan Government, at all levels. The Afghan State’s inability to control the corruption, being part of the problem, or not having the oversight on external elements independent actors, have done little to bolster one of the key pillars in the Bonn Agreement and every subsequent international discussion on Afghanistan – the desire to build capacity in the country with a capable central government. Like the issue of international involvement, corruption directly and negatively affects Afghan human security, as the populace could not rely upon the institution of the state and lower governance institutions to offer minimum assurances and

guarantees. Acknowledging the principle of personal security, corruption directly challenges of rule of law and the explicit and enforced protection of humans rights and civil liberties – the individual Afghan could not therefore achieve a freedom from fear.  

Counterinsurgency

As discussed earlier, Afghanistan became, and arguably still is an experimental environment for development, security, and reconstruction efforts.150 Counterinsurgency, while not necessarily a new concept, was reinvigorated in Afghanistan through its implementation by the U.S. as an action-driving strategy to address not only the persistent security threats that existed, but to also build lasting capacity in the country that enjoined the support of the Afghan people. One such threat were the Taliban, who are referred to by many different descriptive monikers that include the enemy, a rebel force, and an insurgency. The latter term is most commonly used by the Afghan and the U.S. governments because it is consistent with the express actions of the Taliban insurgents who are an organized element using violence to seize, nullify, or challenge political control of a region.151 This insurgent definition draws from a 2009 U.S. government guidebook on counterinsurgency that elaborates further on the insurgent use of armed violence through guerilla tactics, persuasion, subversion, and coercion to gain control of

150 Francoise, 2011.  
population centers. Their ultimate objectives, not unlike the Taliban’s primary motives, are to create political, economic, and influencing dominance in an effort to seize control of the country. Countering such efforts, either domestically or through an external intervening source would require a new approach that blended both civilian and military efforts to concurrently address not only acts of violence and security issues but also the root causes for the insurgency’s existence. As the title suggests, this guidebook would serve as a model for future U.S. engagements around the world that required counterinsurgency (COIN) tactics, and the first of such opportunities arose in Afghanistan. The principles of this U.S. COIN strategy draw inspiration from numerous historical examples, but its modern interpretation is primarily based on the theories of Dr. David Kilcullen, the guide’s primary author. Kilcullen, a former Australian Army Officer, was seconded to the U.S. Department of Defense in 2004, where he assisted in drafting multiple strategic policy documents like the Quadrennial Defense Review. In 2006, he assisted with the development of the Army’s Field Manual on Counterinsurgency and later served as an advisor to General Petraeus in Iraq where COIN was implemented. As a subsequent advisor to the U.S. Secretary of State, he also helped redefine the strategy in Afghanistan that included COIN implementation. Leading COIN proponents General Petraeus and his predecessor General McChrystal who both commanded U.S. efforts in Afghanistan were disciples of Kilcullen’s theories and used the framework he developed

152 Ibid.
in not just the guidebook, but in a 2006 presentation he provided that would ultimately
serve as the basis for is 2009 book on Counterinsurgency.153

Kilcullen defines conflict through an ecosystem of actors, sentiments, information
channels, and resources that have both direct and indirect relationships with one another.
Any foreign intervening element is natural actor within the ecosystem. Any attempts to
counter insurgents, whether through external influence, in the case of foreign intervention
in Afghanistan, or through the exclusive actions of the affected State, create immediate
consequences to the relationships and dynamics between ecosystem members. In other
words, the ecosystem, borrowing from its biological heritage, is alive and therefore every
action has an effect, intentional or otherwise unintended.154 In chapter two, the author
proposed a definition of human security that included, at least thematically this idea of an
ecosystem where a series of actors are directly or indirectly related to one another. While
Kilcullen focused his definition on the civil-military dynamic present in
counterinsurgency, the author expanded the idea of an ecosystem into a more
comprehensive and broadly defined environment where the same actors exist (and their
corresponding relationships). Unlike Kilcullen however, the author did not limit the
human security definition to a space created in addressing an insurgent threat and hoped to
broaden the aperture by also emphasizing the universal and persistent right of individuals
and the obligations of actors in the local, national, and international environment to

address and safeguard them through a human security-centric framework. Like other strategies and actions implemented in Afghanistan, the U.S. led COIN effort had elements consistent with human security principles that include an emphasis on the Afghan populace, but its implementation and effectiveness were questionable.

In the complex Afghan conflict ecosystem external intervention and its related objectives coexist and react to the absence of a fully functioning Afghan State. As Kilcullen and the U.S. Countintersugency guidebook discuss – which incidentally is written from the perspective of the U.S. role in foreign interventions and not to address a domestic insurgency should one materialize – COIN strategies must in parallel contain the insurgency and remedy the causes for their existence.\textsuperscript{155} It therefore must be a comprehensive civil-military strategy that ascribes to a unity of effort approach that Kilcullen defines as the COIN framework. Such a framework is built upon the use of accurate information to drive action and build public confidence, while concurrently using the power of information to address persistent negative issues like the insurgent ideology. The three pillars resting on this information base consist of Security, Political, and Economic concerns that should drive all counterinsurgency actions. These pillars are not unlike the Afghan-based strategies of security, rule of law/governance, and socioeconomic development that were espoused in the National Priority Programs and the Afghan National Development Strategy. The remaining component of the strategy centers on the issue of controlling not only the actions of conflict instigators, but also the structures and actors that can advance the three pillars. In this COIN model, Kilcullen suggests for those

\textsuperscript{155} Kilcullen, 2010.
adopt it, to employ it within a broad comprehensive framework, but to not use it as a template.\footnote{Kilcullen, 2006.}

A recurring theme through both the guidebook and Killcullen’s published efforts is the need for a unified effort. As he stresses, this is based on a shared diagnosis of the problem, appropriate platforms for collaboration, and informational sharing and collaboration. Each COIN contributor must be part of a synchronized and collaborative effort for it to be successful. In fact the very logo on the U.S. guidebook emphasizes the need for a “Whole of Government/Whole of Society” approach to COIN. As the preceding analysis on intervention suggests, there was limited unity of effort between the myriad of actors involved in Afghanistan since September 11, 2001.

In each of the pillars, Killcullen’s framework, despite adoption by the most powerful intervener in Afghanistan, the U.S. Military, has not worked. ANDS, for example, was a comprehensive approach – but still almost wholly dependent on external aid – to addressing the economic pillar Kilcullen espouses. If the COIN is taken as a model for viable consideration then ANDS from the onset was destined for failure because it was not even marketed to the Afghan population. Instead it was viewed as a product written by foreigners and supported by a government who had no capacity to enforce its provisions, and not how it was actually envisioned as a comprehensive strategy that enjoined the efforts of the Afghan people, the state, and the international community towards a common objective of building capacity in the country.\footnote{Banerjee, 2010.} In the security arena,
appropriate resources were never designed to hold and secure areas long enough for the Afghan Government to build its own capacity for security. In 2008, the ratio of foreign troops to the Afghan population was roughly 1:653, which is roughly 10% of the total military force required to permanently contain and address insurgent effectiveness.\textsuperscript{158} This when coupled with other tenuous non-state centers of gravity, like the warlords and their informal, but organized, militias only exasperated the situation. A further complication arose from the duality in military operations, competing/conflicting objectives, and separate leadership structures between ISAF and U.S. Forces Afghanistan (USFA). Although it should be noted that by 2009, the U.S. had initiated steps to transition their military forces under a unified ISAF command structure that would be led by an American. Actualizing the security pillar was also hampered by the disorganization and lack of consistency among the multiple PRTs operating in country. Not only were they insufficiently resourced, as previously discussed, to handle the stated objectives of supporting development within their areas of responsibilities, they also violated another COIN principle by not unifying their efforts with other non-military interveners conducting relief, reconstruction, and development projects in the same area.

In the political pillar, the challenges were no less significant. First, was the issue of entrenched warlords who had accumulated power outside of traditional Afghan structures. The second issue was the legitimization of their power and authority by both foreign interveners and the Afghan Government who have not only relied on them to

address sub-national security concerns, but were then also rewarded with key government positions to include Governorships across the country. A final issue was the lack of institutional capacity at all levels of government that had (1) the ability to sustain itself through government revenue generation and not through a perpetuating cycle of dependency created by external aid acceptance, and (2) a lack of faith in the legitimacy in the Afghan Government because they either could not provide the services the populace needed (and therefore creating a need to rely on external resources) or were discouraged by the pervasive corruption throughout the whole governance system.159

On the issue of addressing economic concerns, Kilcullen recognizes that a COIN strategy requiring external intervention is likely precipitated by unique conditions requiring immediate assistance. This would include developing near term objectives for humanitarian assistance, while concurrently evolving frameworks for long term development aid to build self-sustainable infrastructures.160 As the author observed in his travels throughout Afghanistan since 2002, several ostensibly well-intentioned initiatives and projects that were poorly coordinated and not placed with an ecosystem of relationships and causality created the conditions for failure almost from the onset. In the northern city of Kunduz, for example, the author witnessed an effort to eradicate a series of opium poppy fields. The landowners were provided saffron as an alternative crop to grow that could actually yield higher rates of returns for the farmers. What the aid providers didn’t fully realize was the totality of supply chain components that could

ensure the handling and delivery of this valued spice for sale and distribution in the export environment. The farmer, within the drug-trade ecosystem, was but one actor that included: transporters, distributors, processors, and elaborate illicit networks that could ensure the Afghan grown poppy in raw form was ultimately transformed into the heroin used by a consumer on the other side of the globe. The farmer in this vignette had a precise role and was paid for the service he/she provided within the larger ecosystem. By eradicating the poppy fields, the aid providers had not considered the other components of the ecosystem that required equal development and maturing to ensure licit consumers would benefit from this valuable commodity.

Kilcullen’s COIN principles provide some useful components that one could integrate into a broader human security framework. These elements have particular relevance in Afghanistan as it could allow the community of actors to not only understand the conflict environment better but also for how the international community could develop and implement its intervention strategies when faced with an insurgent threat like the Taliban. Kilcullen, while not explicitly referencing human security, arguably draws upon Ul Haq and others by making direct comparisons in his economic, political, and security pillars. When coupled with the need, as he argues, for ensuring direct populace participation in decision-making and pillar advancement, a properly implemented COIN strategy can potentially compliment a human security framework. Such consideration is perhaps even more relevant in this Afghan-focused effort because the U.S., as the largest contributor of aid to Afghanistan, had publically adopted the COIN strategy as the model for its activities in the country. It was poorly implemented as evidenced by the disparities
between security and political/economic assistance to the Afghan State which was wholly dependent on such resources. While COIN strategy recognizes the need to prioritize by identifying both enemy-centric and population-centric approaches as viable methods, theorists in the field typically believe the latter approach has a higher rate of success.\textsuperscript{161} As the recently elected Afghan President, Dr. Ashraf Ghani, suggested in a 2009 report, COIN provides a useful and valuable way of ensuring long-term success. He offered four innovations for tailoring COIN to the Afghan paradigm: first is the need to ensure that security, development, and governance are all integrated based on a careful assessment of current Afghan capacities in each area; second is being mindful of sub-national formal and informal structures that have long filled the void of a strong central state; third is the aggressive ability to integrate those willing to reconcile back into the mainstream environment; and fourth is the need to ensure COIN is nested within a larger state-building framework.\textsuperscript{162}

The author’s research and the current situation in Afghanistan, even after twelve years of international engagement with significant influxes of aid and associate resources, suggest Afghanistan has not significantly improved in the benchmarks of human development and economic indicators used by international organizations to compare the relative status of states and their populaces. The challenge, as the examples suggest, was not simply a failure of coordination between the diverse community of intervening actors.

\textsuperscript{161} Kilcullen, 2010.

89
One could argue that issues with a lack of coordination were a symptom of not actually having a unified strategy.\textsuperscript{163} Aid as it was seen, was funneled through a variety of mechanisms that lacked sufficient oversight, conflicted with other programs, or were not necessarily catered to the actual needs those it was intended for. The challenge was even further complicated as there was an unwillingness by aid providers to channel their resources through the Afghan government whom they (perhaps correctly) was either too underdeveloped or too corrupt to provide the rigor needed for handing such large sums of fiscal aid. Aid spending was also arguably disproportionate with the preponderance of resources spent on building the conventional security capacity in the country. In chapter two, an analysis of human security research suggested the potential for challenges in prioritizing among human security categories. To be sure, this is not a simple issue to address. Implementing a deliberate human security framework however, could establish the necessary foundational elements where prioritization is matured through a more comprehensive approach where actors acknowledge a multi-sectoral understanding of insecurities.\textsuperscript{164} By broadening the aperture of security beyond its conventional definition, aid providers are afforded a more holistic opportunity to engage and collaborate with aid recipients – in this case the individual Afghan referent, and the collective Afghan state they belong to – who could offer the appropriate context for actions that protect and empower for sustained human security.

\textsuperscript{163} D’Souza, 2008.
Chapter 5 - Building a Human Security Framework for Afghanistan

At the beginning of this thesis, an examination of human security was offered. While multiple definitions exist, the author proposed the equal right of all people to live in dignity and develop free of fear and free of want in a local, national, and international ecosystem that proactively and preventatively addresses threats to their personal well being, while simultaneously safeguarding their needs. At the core of human security, what Ul Haq and those whose ideologies he drew from envisioned was a universally applied approach to proactively free people from fear and want and ensure they have the opportunity to live in dignity. These principles require deliberate action that includes a mutually reinforcing approach of both protection and empowerment.\textsuperscript{165} The latter concentrates on actions that develop the capabilities of individual and communities to act on their own behalf. It is a \textit{bottom up} approach that serves an enabling function of making the affected individual, a proactive actor contributing to the solution. The former relies on \textit{top down} actions that realistically recognizes that people are vulnerable to threats beyond their control or influence.\textsuperscript{166} An important point that weaves through the all core human security doctrine is how protection and empowerment are mutually reinforcing and

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Sadako and Sen, 2003.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
supporting actions cannot occur in isolation. From this perspective, it is not unlike the
COIN strategy espoused by Kilcullen and ultimately adopted by the United States.

Despite the rhetoric and commitments from international actors to protect and
empower the Afghan people, the basic elements of human security are far from achieved
in the country. There are however, no shortage of recommendations in the analysis of
scholars, practitioners, and convening actors. Chapter four and portions of chapter three
examined some of the efforts of intervening actors in Afghanistan since 9/11. These
actions, while often framed within analogous human security principles such as
development, reconstruction, and capacity building efforts, were insufficiently
implemented or inconsistent with the needs of the Afghan people. The analysis revealed
however, that if such efforts are properly aligned to a unified, Afghan-driven human
security framework, they could potentially afford a greater opportunity for success. At a
minimum, such actions, because of the precedence already established in their
implementation, offer the Afghan state and the community of intervening actors a useful
starting point for evolving their efforts. The following chapter therefore will take such an
approach by organizing some relevant recommendations that one could incorporate into a
human security framework. Each of these actions are subjected to an analysis of its
operationalizing potential by assessing value in three distinct areas. The first is
‘definition’ where the author will analyze the example against one or more deconstructed
elements of the proposed human security definition. The second, ‘categories,’ is an
analysis of the example’s relation to the seven human security categories of economic,
food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political securities. Finally the
third area is ‘features,’ where the example is assessed on how it is linked to the five main features of a human security strategy; that it is to say how it is people-centered, multi-sectoral, comprehensive, context-specific, and prevention-oriented.

In the first recommendation, donor states should subordinate their immediate domestic interests to the actual needs of the Afghan people.\textsuperscript{167} In a state-centric global environment, this may prove tremendously difficult, but as it was demonstrated in Afghanistan, building capacity and the steps needed to achieve human security in the country would ultimately do more in advancing domestic national security. In the case of the U.S. intervention in Afghanistan, it was almost exclusively based on disrupting, dismantling, and defeating Al-Qaeda in the country, with a lesser-emphasized point about preventing their return.\textsuperscript{168} American strategy was driven by never hoping to re-experience the events of 9/11, but the flaw with this heavily weighted concentration on traditional security elements came with an opportunity cost – the resurgence of the Taliban as the Afghan State had not developed the necessary infrastructure to contain the insurgency. As such, the opportunity for Afghanistan to once again become a safe haven for terrorists existed as there was no appropriate counterbalance. As Parkinson (2010) suggests, donors should provide aid through an “enlightened self-interest” policy. In this approach to developing intervention strategies, states should resist the urge to execute actions driven by shorter-term domestic considerations and instead consider the longer-term


consequences of undermining the needs for Afghan State capacity building that could perpetuate a cycle of dependency and give unintended support to the Taliban insurgency.\(^{169}\) In this “enlightened” approach, the U.S. could arguably meet their primary objective of defeating Al Qaeda while concurrently concentrating its aid into longer-term development and reconstruction efforts to reduce Afghanistan’s potential for once again becoming a safe-haven for such elements.\(^{170}\)

- **Definition**: Donor states are part of the international ecosystem and are correspondingly charged with taking proactive steps to address and safeguard the needs of those they seek to assist.

- **Categories**: all seven categories are potentially addressed because they are needs driven.

- **Features**: operationalizing this recommendation ensures a needs-based approach that is people-centered and specific to the Afghan context. For this to occur, however, the ecosystem of intervening actors in Afghanistan must acknowledge the linkages and dependencies between states and their citizens in global human security environment. For example, the absence of human security in Afghanistan creates the opportunity for a negative impact to one’s own human security – as it was directly experienced in the United States where those who had once trained and sought refuge in Afghanistan perpetrated the attacks on September 11, 2001.

In the second recommendation, donors should stop circumventing the Afghan Government by managing and implementing their own parallel development efforts. This creates a paradox that directly undermines the legitimacy of the Afghan State the international community concurrently seeks to develop as a self-sustaining structure.\(^{171}\)

---


\(^{171}\) Suhrke, 2012.
By redirecting all aid through the rightful Ministries and programs like the NSP, the Afghan Government establishes itself as the provider of such services to its citizens and is therefore better able to control the environment. Control in this context refers to the confidence the Afghan people have in State structures that can effectively address and contain disruptions to their protection, as for example with the persistent Taliban insurgency.\(^{172}\)

- **Definition**: The International actor in the ecosystem recognizes its contribution must channel through National actor, the Afghan State, who is best positioned to address the needs of its citizens.

- **Categories**: all seven categories are addressed.

- **Features**: the Afghan Government is legitimized and therefore in a more effective position to serve as the focal point for protecting its citizens. In this top-down approach, the State is best positioned to take a multi-sectoral approach that works vertically and horizontally to ensure a coordinated approach. It is naturally driven by the Afghan context because it draws from the needs of the populace.

A third recommendation is for the Afghan government to significantly adjust its current governance model by (1) eliminating the appointment process for district administrators and provincial governors, converting the positions to elected and term-limited offices; (2) after this transition, empower them with the authority to raise revenue and the ability to allocate such funds to local needs-based projects; and (3) concurrently devolve national level development programs so that their implementation actually occurs at the subnational level. The Afghan state should retain its authority for managing the funding, overall oversight, and policy development to ensure consistency in

In this recommendation, the state recognizes the historical precedence and value Afghans place on sub-national governance structures, and creates deliberate opportunities for achieving political security through empowerment.

- **Definition:** the Afghan State as the national actor recognizes the value of the local ecosystem and environment members (i.e. the districts and provinces) and its place in Afghan society. By empowering these structures, symbiotic relationships are established to take proactive and preventative measures to address the nuanced needs of locally based Afghans.

- **Categories:** all seven categories, to include personal security are addressed through this recommendation. The State should retain its primacy for the Afghan National Security Force to respond to the collective external security and internal insurgency threats that impact the Afghan people. Districts and provinces however should have the authority to maintain their own police structures for preserving and enforcing law and order.

- **Features:** Afghans have not typically had an enduring strong central government to rely upon and therefore have developed informal structures to tend to their very basic needs. It is a highly customized approach that is mindful of the concerns of the local population. Recognizing the value of these traditions by adopting them into a more standardized national framework of elections and accountability standards is attentive to the particular needs of Afghans within the local context and environment that define their existence.

In the fourth recommendation, an arrangement between the Afghan government, the Afghan populace, and the community of intervening actors known as a Triple Compact should be established. As Kfir contends, “a state can claim the prerogatives of sovereignty only so long as it carries out its internationally recognized responsibilities to

---

provide protection and assistance to its citizens.” When the state is incapable of providing the appropriate virtues of responsibility to its citizens, the international community has from a human security perspective the right to intervene. In this recommendation therefore, the normal relationship between citizen and state is now complicated by a third party, the international community, and accordingly a new framework defined as a Triple Compact should be established to uphold the accountability and responsibilities of all concerned actors. It specifically enjoins the international actor(s) into the Afghan political environment by both acknowledging their presence, but also formally establishing a direct relationship between them and the Afghan people.

This accountability framework has three distinct, but complementary components as Rowswell suggests: The first is the Afghan Government vis-à-vis the Afghan population: In this relationship, the government answers to the population for its use of this power, and submits to their will for enforcement. In return, the population entrusts the government with power and accepts its authority. In essence, the population agrees to seek change through the existing political system in return for a commitment that the system can deliver change when required. Second is the International Community vis-à-vis the Afghan Government: Recognizing the limited capacity of the current Afghan Government and the daunting prospect of having the Afghan population holding it accountable, the international community not only provides the government with the capacity to deliver for

---

the population, but also undertakes to assist the government in its efforts to be answerable to it for the use of its power. In turn, the Afghan Government agrees to accept responsibility for its own population, discarding the option of blaming the international community for shared failings. And third is the International Community vis-à-vis the Afghan population: The international community commits to use its power to ensure the will of the Afghan people is heard and upheld. In return for the population’s commitment to seek change within the existing political system rather than seek violent alternatives, the international community applies its influence to ensure the system can deliver change.176

• **Definition**: The Triple Compact Rowswell envisioned would be a normative framework to guide the principal members of the Afghan ecosystem – the local population, the State, and the international community. When operationalized, it ensures the purveyors of action to protect and safeguard are held accountable to the people they serve.

• **Categories**: the Triple Compact co-exists within an operationalized human security strategy by clearly defining relationships and responsibilities among the concerned actors. While actions taken under this framework would naturally address all seven categories, the idea of achieving Political security is most pronounced. It acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of those who govern, the governed, and the intervening community who is there to support both the Afghan State and the people they serve.

• **Features**: Establishing a direct and accountable relationship between the international community and the Afghan people embraces the aforementioned concept of enlightened self-interest by placing the population at the center of any broader context-specific strategy. It becomes comprehensive as accountability sets the conditions for dynamically and continually assessing the needs of the Afghan population.

176 Ibid.
A fifth recommendation recommends the full adoption and implementation of the National Priority Programs already established by the Afghan Government as the primary framework through which all actions are justified. It should also include the operationalization of the the NPPs through the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and a revision ANDS timelines to offer more realism for success. Through independent structures, the Afghan government should establish at all levels measures of accountability and enforcement that reinforce rule of law and governance and should demonstrate accountability by investigating corruption and prosecuting perpetrators to directly address Afghan’s concerns. Incorporate informal conflict resolution institutions like the jirga/shura into the broader Afghan Justice system.

• **Definition**: the NPP’s and ANDS place the development of the Afghan State, the Afghan people, their protection and their empowerment at the center of every action in support of these strategic frameworks. Activities undertaken are proactive because they recognize from the onset where need exists and how it should be addressed. They are also preventative because the NPPs, implemented through the ANDS is built upon achieving not only measurable but also sustainable results.

• **Categories**: The Afghan government has grouped the 22 NPPs into six interrelated clusters for ease of organization: security, human resource development, infrastructure development, private sector development, agricultural and rural development, and governance. ANDS builds an actionable plan that operationalizes the NPP’s through a budgeted roadmap that includes key objectives and focused outcomes.177 There are eight ANDS pillars that include: security, good governance, infrastructure and natural resources, education and culture, health and nutrition, agricultural and rural development, social protection, and economic governance and private sector development. ANDS also recognizes several cross cutting issues that are integrated into all action plans: capacity building, gender equity, counter narcotics, regional corruption, anti-corruption, and the environment. The Afghan NPPs and

---

ANDS not only complement the seven human security categories, but also expand upon them by adding specific areas of concern that require attention.

- **Features:** Nested within the NPPs and ANDS is a tacit acknowledgement of the five human security features, even if they are not explicitly identified. Operationalized components are principled on building Afghan personal and institutional capacity. They are developed by Afghans within the context of the local situation and environment. It is unquestionably a comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach as identified by the 22 programs and eight pillars respectively. The whole-of-Afghanistan is rooted in building capacity, therefore establishing preventative measures to reduce the likelihood for vulnerabilities to reoccur.

In this final recommendation, the Afghan government and the international community should adapt Kilcullen’s COIN strategy and leverage its information and security elements into a broader human security framework that for Afghanistan is operationalized through the NPPs and ANDS. In this adapted model, D’Souza (2008) still places information as the foundation of the COIN strategy, but reorganizes the security pillar by integrating it within the base. In this approach achieving personal security – free of fear from insurgent violence and other criminal elements that exact violence with impunity – is critical to the success of the political and economic security pillars. It also lends to a prioritization of effort when resources and capacity are limited. By invoking the Triple Compact, international actors in the COIN conflict ecosystem must acknowledge their accountability to the Afghan people by integrating into an Afghan-led human security framework.

- **Definition:** Validated by the UN Charter in Chapter VII and reinforced in subsequent UN declarations on human security and the Responsibility to

---

Protect, COIN is born out a need to respond to international crisis when an urgent humanitarian crisis exists that may or may not transcend the boundaries of the affected country. Arguably, addressing the Taliban insurgency is principled upon preventing Afghanistan’s return to a safe haven for transnational terrorist elements like Al Qaeda. It is, on principle, a proactive and preventive response to addressing core human security tenets for both Afghans and the international/intervening community who are also subject to acts of terror.

- **Categories:** COIN is perceived as a predominately military activity; a notion certainly reinforced by its actualization in Afghanistan. If implemented according to the doctrine that defines the concept, it actually requires a comprehensive civilian and military effort that maximizes the effective use of non-military means to achieve its stated objectives. In counterinsurgency, military forces should serve as an enabler for civil service elements with their primary role to afford protection and create a stable environment for the government to work with its population. Through this realization, and when integrated into a broader human security construct, COIN can certainly support all seven categories.

- **Features:** COIN, even if partially implemented, cannot stand in isolation. By design, it emphasizes the need for a unity of effort, and comprehensive civil-military approach that works to establish security by enabling preventative capacity building measures in the other pillars. As the doctrine and Kilcullen suggest, there is no universal model for what COIN should look like, therefore, reinforcing the idea that it must be executed within the context of the Afghan situation.

These examples highlight complementary elements for an operationalized human security framework. It takes the five core features of an operationalized human security strategy and places them at the forefront of actionable activities. The Triple Compact introduces a method of accountability between the international donor community, the Afghan government, and the Afghan population ensuring the latter has a voice in what is normally seen as an interaction between States. COIN as presented even in U.S. Government doctrine extends beyond traditional notions of military-led security by placing

---

an equal and multi-sectoral emphasis political reconciliation and economic development.\textsuperscript{180}

While the remaining examples perhaps suggest an uneven scale tipping in favor of a heavily weighted Afghan State, it is arguably more significant to recognize the critical role the Afghan government would have in any human security strategy implementation. As the embodiment of the collective voice that defines its existence, the Afghan government is uniquely suited to understand the nuances of the country and therefore best positioned to prioritize and appropriate how aid is spent in a comprehensive and prevention-oriented strategy. It can only do so, however if it remains mindful of the context and history that drives Afghan society; one that acknowledges the role of sub-national governance structures as the provincial, district, and village levels were the Afghan population seek human security through not only their own actions but also through the positively enabling mechanisms of these elements.\textsuperscript{181} Parkinson’s suggestion that intervening States should take a enlightened self-interest approach is also inline with a broader human security strategy as it emphasizes the need for a long term, comprehensive, and prevention-oriented strategy rather than a shorter-termed focus that seeks immediate, but arguably, not lasting results.\textsuperscript{182}

In Afghanistan components of human security, while not explicitly gestured by the United States and others, were used to not only raise awareness of a transnational threat whose terrorist tactics were focused on any individual and any group who did not agree with their ideology, but to also justify a response that would ultimately become the Unites

\textsuperscript{181} Barfield and Neamatollah, 2010.
\textsuperscript{182} Parkinson, 2010.
States’ longest war. The events of September 11, 2001 were more than planned acts of horrific violence. It created a new global awareness predicated on one’s personal vulnerability and susceptibility. It challenged identity and one’s relation to local, regional, national and international concepts that unify people into various collectives. The effects of Al Qaeda’s actions on that day in the United States put ‘us versus them, good versus evil, and being on the side of right’ at the forefront of multiple discourses and personal sentiments. Regardless of the variations on theme and narrative people around the world – in particular those who had perhaps assumed some level of distance and perceived immunity from such threats – now had a very visible and very tangible reason for being fearful; and as the U.S. advocated within its immediate aftermath, something needed to be done.

The Taliban was not Al Qaeda, but they had provided refuge to the organization. For the United States and others, this meant Afghanistan became a safe haven where Al Qaeda could train, expand, and continue to refine their tactics in furtherance of their objectives. The Taliban’s complicity in harboring those who perpetrated acts violence and fear had become just as significant as the actions of the terrorist group and the U.S. led coalition of supporters demanded action. While not explicitly stated, the Taliban’s actions also put the people of Afghanistan at the center of the discourse. Since the mid-to-late twentieth century, Afghanistan had received fluctuating levels of intervening attention that included financial aid, military hardware support, foreign military troops, apathy and even
Protracted violence stemming from the Soviet invasion and the ensuing civil war had created a significant human security need that went unanswered, and perhaps even unacknowledged until the events of 9/11. As the freedom from fear mantra grabbed international attention demanding action from State actors, the people of Afghanistan were now also the subject of interest and concern as they were the victims of enduring conflict. The extremist ideologies of the Taliban were just the latest manifestation of structural and physical violence that infected an already weak Human security posture in Afghanistan. President Bush’s speech would become a call to rally support for not only military action against Al Qaeda and the Taliban, but also – even if to a much lesser extent as expressed in the U.S. Strategic Goals for Afghanistan – a recognition to support and assist the Afghan people. What ensued of course was an unparalleled intervention that placed Afghanistan at the top or near top of countries receiving development and security assistance that accelerated in 2002 and endures to the present day.

This assistance as the examination revealed, has occurred in a complex Afghan and international environment where often competing and conflicting objectives challenged the desired outcomes. The recommendations provided in this chapter capitalize on efforts already nested within areas that address key, if not all human security concerns. A human security framework-based approach offers an alternative, and potentially more effective method in examining how intervention, assistance, aid, and development efforts in

\[183\] Barfield, 2012.
Afghanistan should be implemented in the future. It is of course, not a complete list of recommendations, nor a complete framework as identified in the introduction. The effort herein was an exploration of efforts consuming significant resources in a country heavily dependent on the aid and assistance of external actors. It was also an analysis some efforts already underway by the Afghan government, but arguably far from achieving their stated objectives. Lastly, it was a set of recommendations that analyzed and leveraged the relevant context of the Afghan people; most notable in the recommendations regarding structures for state and sub-national governance models. Establishing an operationalized human security framework, the author contends, may prove useful in fostering greater dialogue in how to not only resolve the conflict in Afghanistan but in also advancing the protection and empowerment of its populace.
Chapter 6 – Conclusion

Once part of a Great Game between Empires, Afghanistan is now part of a much larger Game that includes a more diverse set of actors who are principled by their own ideology and will do whatever is necessary to advance their belief systems and preserve their respective identities. Afghanistan is not without its own unique identity, but its perpetually underdeveloped status has not allowed it to stand at equal level with other members of the international community. In modern history, several attempts were made by those in power structures to modernize Afghanistan setting at least some of the necessary conditions for such Westphalian-esque equality, but they matured. The efforts King Zahir Shah were too seen by the Afghan people as increasingly intrusive, which makes sense given the relative autonomy subnational villages, districts, and provinces had enjoyed for so many generations. Observers of the region recognize this history but also opine the King’s modernization efforts were too aggressive and not measured to account for the gradual time and space needed by the people to restructure the entrenched power and authority dynamic.\footnote{Barfield, 2012.} Zahir Shah’s efforts were further complicated based on internal ideological differences in Kabul, exasperated by the prevailing and competing themes of the Cold War that was a significant international overlay during his tenure. Whereas the King had curried favor with the West, the PDPA had manifested as the proxy arm of the
Soviet Union in the country. Two successful coup d’états later, the PDPA had assumed control of the Afghan government, and implemented a new socialist agenda that was deemed an affront to the religious and cultural values defining the Afghan identity. An unorganized rebellion ensued which proved to be uncontainable by the incumbent regime. The Soviet Union committed hundreds of thousands of troops and the forthcoming war would last for 10 years inflicting, by some estimates, over a million casualties, and creating up to 4 million refugees and internally displaced persons. The vie for power during the Civil War exasperated an already difficult environment creating even more casualties and creating atypical power actors, the Warlords, who were accused of numerous crimes and atrocities against the Afghan people they had once defended during the Soviet occupation. By 1995, the Taliban had emerged as the new power broker, successfully managing to seize the capital and maintaining their seat of authority until the start of Operation Enduring Freedom in October 2001.

Afghanistan’s recent history, spectacular in its own right, highlights the complexity of a protracted conflict that has continually and fatally challenged the human security of the Afghan People. The events of September 11, 2001 created a perhaps not new but revised world order that embraced a wide reaching need for action. The Taliban were not directly responsible for these tragic events but serving as their safe harbor made such distinctions irrelevant. The Taliban continue to commit acts of structural and physical violence against the Afghan people, so there was already ample justification,

---

Rubin, 2013.
under UN human security doctrine, for intervention. At that precise time, Al Qaeda’s presence in the country muted all theoretical and political debates on intervention.

The immediate response and over $100 billion of assistance over the next decade were focused on building an effective security apparatus. Sure, the absence of even a basic Afghan Government infrastructure was recognized, but the United States – the largest aid provider – made it a secondary priority. When efforts to support the need for development were actualized, it was often done in an uncoordinated fashion with little appreciation for the context and circumstances for what and to whom the aid was being rendered. It created tremendous inconsistencies and poor accountability resulting in nearly half of all aid returning to donor countries in the form of salaries or company profits. Despite the relative ease the intervening parties had in driving Al Qaeda and their landlords out of the country, the latter returned just a few years later as an insurgent force. The Taliban continue to conduct attacks and increasingly employ terrorist-style tactics, like suicide bombings, achieve their objectives.

The limited aid that channeled through the Afghan government did not occur at a measured pace, and it almost immediately outpaced the capacity of the very nascent ministries and offices to absorb such an influx.\(^{188}\) It contributed to increasing corruption as ‘easy’ and mostly ‘unaccountable’ money was freely flowing. Such aid was also marked with conditions including thousands of technical advisors who heavily influence the creation of unsustainable governance architectures that relied heavily on their expertise.

\(^{188}\) Suhrke, 2012.
By 2008, the U.S. had increasingly recognized the need for revising its principle strategy to defeat Al Qaeda and prevent their return to Afghanistan. It recognized that the long-term realization of this objective required a functioning Afghan State that maintained control of the territory and had the respect and confidence of its citizens to counter insurgents like the Taliban. The adaptation of COIN was seen as a pivotal point in the intervention for it placed security on equal footing with stable Afghan economic and political environment. The challenge however was again in implementation. COIN required commitments from the international community to increasingly fund capacity in the non-security pillars, but they were unwilling to do so. The U.S. military had already proliferated the use of PRT’s for aid delivery believing it coincided with COIN doctrine, but soldiers were not trained with the requisite skills for development activities.

The debate on what to do in Afghanistan continues. On one part of the spectrum, some would suggest Afghanistan is not fixable. It is an artificial state that extols the virtues of ethnic identity above the collective sense of being Afghan. Others contend, and as history has demonstrated the Afghan people have multiple levels of identity that includes deference to both their ethnic lineage, but also sense of belonging to the others in the country. This effort was not an attempt to critique the virtues of traditional State structures. It was an examination of the global intervention in Afghanistan in the post 9/11 environment. By analyzing the different, and arguably unprecedented strategies, it became clear that most had some measure of a positive effect. Despite conflict agendas, tremendous waste, and only incrementally improved conditions as measured by the
Human Development index, the majority of Afghan people remain optimistic about the future.\(^{189}\)

The proposed elements of a human security framework seek to invoke thought that could potentially challenge conventional thinking. Rather than guise human security tenets in acts of policy, projections of fear, and the language of international diplomacy that acknowledges and prioritizes the importance the State, Afghanistan presents a tremendous opportunity to demonstrate new approach to resolving and preventing conflict. The fact remains; Afghanistan still faces a viable insurgency. It is a nascent State that has insufficient revenue capacity to manage its own affairs and therefore is reliant on the benevolence of others. Afghanistan still requires an intervention strategy, but it must transform from the current paradigm to a new model that explicitly acknowledges human security principles, holds parties accountable through a Triple Compact, and concentrates on leveraging and legitimizing the Afghan State and the Afghan people as the focal point for all decisions regarding their country and their future.

In chapter two, the author proposed this definition for human security as a point of consideration for the community: “The equal right of all people to live in dignity and develop free of fear and free of want in a local, national, and international environment that proactively and preventatively addresses threats to their personal well being, while simultaneously safeguarding their needs.” The definition by itself, the author contends is meaningless without a complimentary framework for potential utilization. The principles of human security are not achieved, as the research and analysis have demonstrated,

through isolated actions. The international community continues to engage and intervene in Afghanistan through both military operations and aid delivery. It is clear based on the projections of the nascent Afghan government, they remain reliant on this assistance. The conceptual framework of recommendations provided in chapter five examined a series of actions and events that have either already occurred or is currently in progress in Afghanistan. The framework, therefore, seeks to advance dialogue in leveraging and altering these actions in a more holistic manner, enabling the Afghan government and the international community to adjust their responses through a human security lens. As the UN resolutions on human security suggest, the role of the Afghan state, as the embodiment of the people it serves must ideally serve as the unifying element to bridge the needs of the population with the delivery of goods and services to advance their human security. It is potentially accomplished through careful and explicit acknowledgement of human security to guide their strategy development and associated framework for improving the livelihood and well being of all Afghans. At its core, however, the individual remains the referent of human security. He or she assumes different roles throughout the complexity of the human security framework. They are recipients of efforts that offer protection, and empowered by opportunities created through careful strategies. They are also positive and potentially negative contributors to not only their own personal security but to the human security of others. The individual assumes multiple roles in the environment – individual, familial, ethnic, regional, national and international as but a few examples – that define their existence where they should benefit
from the inalienable right to achieve freedom from fear and want while concurrently serving as a purveyor of actions that do not impede the same rights of others.
References


Rubin, Barnett R. “Afghanistan from the Cold War through the War on Terror.” Oxford University Press, USA, 2013.


Biography

Homayun Yaqub graduated from Lake Braddock High School, Burke, Virginia, in 1991. He received his Bachelor of Business Administration from James Madison University in 1995. In that same year, he also received a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army and served from 1995 to 2004. He is currently employed by the Department of Defense.