

# Report of the Evaluation of DDR and CIP in AFGHANISTAN

*Qatra Qatra darya meshad –*

*One drop at a time makes a river -*

*Collecting one gun at a time makes peace -*



## **PART 3**

### **COMMANDER**

#### **INCENTIVES**

#### **PROGRAMME**

### **Findings, Lessons Learned & Recommendations**

# Table of Contents

1.	Political and Strategic Considerations.....	4
2.	Description: Commanders Incentives Program.....	4
2.1.	Financial benefits .....	5
2.2.	Other CIP benefits and ‘carrots’.....	5
2.3.	MoD officers .....	6
3.	Commanders and Drug Lords .....	8
3.1	Geographical distribution of Commanders .....	9
3.2	Drug lords and the role of drugs in undermining SSR.....	11
4.	Identification and Selection of Commanders .....	12
4.1	The CIP classification using the danger factor.....	12
4.2.	Sociological classifications for commanders in the field.....	13
4.3.	The ulema - local religious hierarchies with weapons .....	14
4.4.	How much use are these classifications? .....	15
4.5.	The Commanders Incentive Review Board (CRIB) .....	15
5.	The Reintegration of Commanders .....	16
5.1.	The AITM business training .....	16
5.2.	The impact of the business training.....	17
6.	Mapping and Profiling of Commanders.....	18
6.1.	Careful planning and research build DDR success .....	18
6.2	Special people need special attention.....	19
7.	A Better Life – Management of Expectations.....	20
8.	Reconciliation and/or Justice .....	22
9.	CIP Lessons Learned.....	23
9.1	The CIP was a reasonable and creative mechanism.....	23
9.2	The project only partially achieved the desired impacts. ....	23
9.3	Breaking the bonds.....	24
9.4	Some of the long-serving <i>jihadis</i> were left out .....	24
9.5.	Security Sector Reform needs to progress in all areas together .....	25
10.	Delivery Mechanisms.....	25
10.1	How efficient were approaches for achievement of outputs? .....	25
10.2	Were arrangements adequate for optimal cost efficiency? .....	26
10.04	Were the objectives of the CIP clear and how were they translated into strategies, actions and activities?.....	26
10.4	How well were the activities documented?.....	26
10.5	Were activities timely implemented, and if not, did delays result in the need for additional resources and/or time?.....	27
10.6	What the strength and weaknesses in management and coordination of the various stakeholders involved? .....	27
10.7	How did procedures and criteria used in the eligibility process, as well as the extent to which these procedures were actually implemented and adhered to, impact on the inclusion/exclusion of ex-commanders as verified CIP beneficiaries?.....	27
11.	Sustainability .....	28
11.1	How sustainable are the interventions?.....	28
11.2	What impact has the training on the commanders’ social lives? .....	29
11.3	Did the packages address the various needs of commanders? .....	29
11.4	Are commanders satisfied with the training provided by ANBP? .....	30
12.	Gender Issues .....	30

12.1	How well were issues of gender integrated into the design of the program? What impact did the program have on women in their communities? .....	30
13.	Coordination with Government.....	33
14.	Three Case Studies .....	34
14.1	Commander Mohammad Halim Malangyar of Jalalabad .....	34
14.2.	Woman former MoD officer, Ms Bibi Gul of Kabul .....	35
14.3.	Commander Ainullah of Khanabad - .....	36
15.	Profile of Three High Level Commanders .....	38
	General Mohammad Ismail Khan .....	39
	Governor Gul Agha Sherzai of Kandahar (and now Nangahar) province .....	40
	Ustad Atta Mohammed of Balkh province .....	41

- 1. Political and Strategic Considerations**
- 2. Description of CIP**
- 3. Commanders and Drug Lords**
- 4. Selection of Commanders**
- 5. Reintegration of Commanders**
- 6. Mapping and Profiling of Commanders**
- 7. A Better Life – Management of Expectations**
- 8. Reconciliation and/or Justice**
- 9. CIP Lessons Learned**
- 10. Delivery Mechanisms**
- 11. Sustainability**
- 12. Gender Issues**
- 13. Coordination with Government**
- 14. Case Studies of Three Delightful Commanders**
- 15. Profile of Three High Level Commanders**

## **1. Political and Strategic Considerations**

DDR is one of the Government of Afghanistan's five pillars for the Security Sector Reform. The success of one depends on the success of the others. As we consider DDR, we are therefore bound to look at the new army, the new police force, justice reform and counter-narcotics policies. Of the five, DDR has been the most successful pillar of SSR so far. Unless all parts work together as a coherent whole (including counter-narcotics strategies) then in the long run, none will be successful.

In some ways the link between them is the role of commanders – men who led the *jihad* and who are now seeking their role in the new Afghan society. Some were beneficiaries of DDR, and others were excluded, or excluded themselves. Some of these commanders are now significant players in politics, in the police, or involved on one side or other (and sometimes on both sides at once) of the narcotics business.

We find that the DDR process was successful at the political level. The DDR process was key to laying the foundation and contributing to the restructuring and reorganization of the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police. DDR also brought many of the commanders into the political process and into the reconstruction of the country.

Disarmament is first and foremost a political activity, and its success should be judged primarily on political factors. An evaluation looks at broader results and impacts (expected or unexpected, positive or negative) from a broader, macro-perspective. The exact number of weapons collected may be important to an auditor; for the evaluator it is rather the political impact of weapon collection that matters. In this regard, we have concerns about the small number of weapons destroyed and the quantities of weapons and ammunition put back into circulation – returned by DDR, DIAG and 'Ammo' to the ANA or ANP – and what will happen to them in this country which has far too many weapons and frighteningly large reserves of ammunition.

Overall we are favorably impressed with the management, results and impacts of ANBP. DDR has been the most successful aspect of Afghanistan's security sector reform. We shall have plenty to say about the design, planning and implementation of the components of ANBP, missed opportunities with demobilization and reintegration, but the key question is, "Has this ANBP disarmament project – and specifically its DDR and CIP components - contributed to producing peace and stability in Afghanistan?"

Our unequivocal answer to the key question is, "Yes."

## **2. Description: Commanders Incentives Program**

The Commanders Incentives Program was devised to offer former AMF commanders an opportunity to secure sustainable employment that equated with their standing and capabilities, and to provide for the needs of their families. The program started end of year 2004 to demobilize and to disarm commanders. Furthermore, it aimed to seek the support of former AMF commanders to assist the GoA in bringing peace and stability to Afghanistan by using their influence on people in their areas of operations.

In terms of administrative classification, 3 main categories of commanders have been identified by ANBP

- **Professional commanding/non commanding**: this category was considered as part of the Afghan Military Forces. They were holding ranks of Brigadier General and above and had a professional career track in the old army. At the time of the project, they might or might not have been commanding AMF forces.
- **Non-professional-commanding**: this category was part of the Afghan Military Forces but did not have formal, professional, military training. These men were involved in Jihad and resistance in the past and were known as Qumandans.
- **Independent Jihadi Commanders**: this category was not formally part of the Afghan Military Forces but still exerted (and continues to exert) considerable influence in their areas. While most of them have abandoned military life, there are a few who are still in possession of weapons and have had the loyalty of their men when and if they wanted to mobilize them in their area of influence. These men were not covered by the DDR program and are currently the targets of DIAG. The fact that they were left out of DDR has been a source of criticism in some quarters. Benefits offered under the DIAG program are mostly in the form of community benefits: development projects offered to their community provided that commanders surrender voluntarily their weapon and ammunition caches.

CIP began back in 2004. After the Commanders Incentives Review Board (CRIB) reviewed the list of profiled officers and commanders, 140 MOD senior Officers and 335 commanders were selected for training and monthly payment by ANBP and MoD.

## **2.1. Financial benefits**

**There were 323 Jihadi commanders and 140 MoD Generals who benefited from the FRP (Financial Redundancy Package):** ANBP paid one year of monthly salary and MoD paid the second year.

Payment from ANBP was easy because cash money was directly sent from Kabul to ANBP regional offices. Commanders just had to go to the regional office once a month. As there was no proper follow up of the commander's reintegration progress, this system provided the opportunity for ANBP staff to do basic monitoring and basic individual follow up. The second year, we heard from commanders that getting their payment from MoD was not easy. They had to come to Kabul every month to collect the money, which forced them to pay for their transport (and sometimes overnight costs in the capital) and they all claim they were forced to pay *sherini bete* ("give me sweet") to many civil servant at too many different stages before they finally got their money.

## **2.2. Other CIP benefits and 'carrots'**

**There was theoretically a range of options open to the CIP** including oversea travels such as pilgrimage Umra Haj or Haj visits; trips to see democratic systems; business management training; scholarship and educational tours; access to advanced medical or clinical treatment; but in fact many of the commanders never even heard about these options, and many of the promise options never materialized.

It is regrettable that today, less than a year after the end of the program, no information is available about the commanders' activities. There is a CIP database that has not been used for monitoring, so we have no follow-up data and none seems to be planned.

- 463 is the total number of commanders who have benefited from the Financial Redundancy Package (140 MoD officers and 323 commanders)
- 335 is the total number of commanders who attended the Business Management Training
- 11 is the number of commanders who went on an overseas trip to Japan.
- The total number of commanders who have benefited from ANBP DDR-CIP program is 809

FRP	Business training	trips	Total beneficiaries
463	335	11	809

**The Business Management Training course was enjoyed by 335 commanders.** According to former ANBP staff members, the popularity of this training was mainly due to the fact that commanders also received a monthly payment during the training. According to commanders it was their only choice of reintegration benefit ...

**Efforts were invested in arranging overseas trips.** ANBP tried to have Embassies involved (Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia...) but only Japan responded positively. 11 commanders went to Japan. The stated aim of that trip was to open the minds of conservative, heavily-armed commanders to a new culture of peace and to allow them to see democracy in action. It was also billed as an effort to encourage import-export businesses. Above all, the visit was a public relation exercise by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs which is very proud of its participation in - and the success of - this DDR operation. The Japanese mission in Kabul had no illusions that this trip would produce a long-term solution, or that a single trip of this type will necessarily change the outlook of participating commanders.

### 2.3. MoD officers

**The ANA was the first choice for almost all professional officers** and some have been given promises (unclear by whom) that they will be able to make the switch from AMF into ANA, the new Afghan army.

Out of 7530 officers registered, only 193 were reintegrated through IPs. The remaining 7337 were called to sit an exam prepared by the Ministry of Defense. As a result of this exam, only 540 were accepted to be reintegrated into ANA. MoD analysis of the officers was divided in categories, and the criteria for recruitment included exam results, age, date of last promotion and the last known position. All in all 898 officers were reintegrated within ANA.

<b>Status of officers referred to ANA (as of June 2006)</b>				
<b>Region</b>	<b>Total referred to MOD</b>	<b>Total reintegrated within ANA</b>	<b>Total who entered Reintegration</b>	<b>Remaining officers to be reintegrated</b>
Kabul	6019	470	421	5128
Mazar	312	6	8	298
Kunduz	109	5	55	49
Bamyan	0	0	0	0
Kandahar	286	0	129	157
Herat	122	9	68	45
Jalalabad	269	36	114	119
Gardez	220	14	103	103
<b>Total</b>	<b>7337</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>5899</b>

**The 5899 professional officers were proposed for reintegration.** Following a request from the MoD and the D&R Commission, ANBP agreed to provide reintegration opportunities for the remaining 5899 officers. The deadline for registration started 1 July 2006 and ended 30 September 2006. The bulk of the officers (87%) were from Kabul region. Therefore, the major reintegration activities were to be conducted in Kabul region.

ANBP/UNDP proposed a supported small business training program for the 5899 officers including reintegration workshops, technical assistance and staggered cash payments to support the start-up costs of a new business. The proposal was developed in cooperation with the MoD, but was rejected by the Officer's Association who insisted on full cash payouts to officers, without any ties to training or skills development. ANBP/UNDP could not agree to such a condition and donors to the DDR program expressed reservations. The proposal was ultimately withdrawn.

The dismissed and disappointed officers find it very difficult to return to civilian life. They are products of the royal court system, of government, which surrounds itself with nobles, officers and courtiers. The old Afghan army was unwieldy and uneconomic, and top-heavy with far too many, unproductive officers. The unemployed officers are reluctant to accept this analysis; many of them are negative about DDR as an idea, openly contemptuous of its conception and results. Their pride and honor have been wounded, as well as their pockets: they have neither income nor social status. This is difficult for the Afghan's idea of himself, and it is especially hard for officers to accept.

Although the 2006 Project Annual Report says that the main reason was attributable to the MoD decision not to absorb the full complement of officers into the reconstituted ANA, no follow-up or monitoring seems to have been carried out by ANBP. No-one seems to be dealing with the officer problem. Like all problems which are ignored, this one became a political embarrassment for the government. These kinds of difficulties were predictable. It would have been possible and preferable for the MoD and ANBP to have prepared realistic options immediately available when officers found they were not eligible for ANA recruitment.

The fact that some officers are intolerant of civilian life is illustrated by the story of a taxi driver who was a former general. The general complained bitterly during the journey to our friend Mahboub about his loss of social status, and the fact that he was no longer respected. Arriving at his journey's end, Mahboub handed over the normal fare of 50Afs. "You cannot pay be 50Afs," cried the taxi driver. "I used to work in the General Staff, so you must pay me 200 Afs."

### 3. Commanders and Drug Lords

Jihad commanders were directly involved in fighting, supervising thousands of troops and sometimes making huge profits from their status. Their influence at the level of the community is undeniable, but from 1978 onwards violence had unprecedented effects. The state stops at the walls of the districts capital, and the consequences of minimal administration and of military constraints meant that the *mujaheddin* became more and more the only source of order and identity. A new social category appeared: The Commanders.

After the Soviets withdrew in 1989, the *mujaheddin* factions started fighting each other. Afghanistan became “seven Pakistans in Afghanistan”. *Mujaheddin* commanders became progressively less identified with the general population. The commanders became more and more predators and less and less popular. To some extent, the problem has become worse on the global level because international policies are not coordinated. In fact – as government ministers strongly hinted to us - international DDR and counter-narcotics policies are possibly in conflict one with the other. While the UNDP is struggling to demobilize AMF commanders through ANBP, the ISAF forces are fighting Taliban commanders on the Pakistani frontier and – increasingly – in the southern and eastern parts of the country.

The evidence strongly suggests that drug lord commanders are getting stronger in the newly dangerous ISAF combat provinces of Helmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan. While local commanders in many places have lost their power to exploit the local population, in certain other areas they are becoming ever-stronger through their control of the opium poppy. The fighting in the south is now undermining DIAG and other DDR efforts. This is largely due to the counter-productive efforts of the American campaign to destroy the poppy fields which alienates farmers while it enriches the drug lords (including Taliban commanders). As Peter Bergen writes in the Los Angeles Times of September 2<sup>nd</sup>,<sup>1</sup>

“Though the U.S. spends about the same amount on counter-narcotics activities in Afghanistan annually as all Afghan poppy farmers combined take home in a year, our policies have not prevented record-setting poppy crops from springing up with every succeeding year, nor have they prevented Afghanistan from becoming a quasi-narcostate where corruption is rampant. Last week's U.N. report said Afghanistan continues to be the center of the world's heroin trade, accounting for 93% of global opium production. It noted a 17% spike in poppy cultivation in the last year, on the heels of a record 59% rise the year before.

“The U.S. government, in short, is deeply committed to an unsuccessful drug policy that helps its enemies. The Taliban derives not only substantial financial benefits from the opium trade, according to U.S. military officials in Afghanistan, but wins political benefits from its supportive stance on poppy growing, masterfully exploiting situations in which U.S.-sponsored eradication forces are pitted against poor farmers.”

---

<sup>1</sup> ‘U.S. efforts to eradicate Afghanistan's crop are empowering the Taliban by sowing seeds of resentment.’  
By Peter Bergen and Sameer Lalwani, *Los Angeles Times*, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2007.





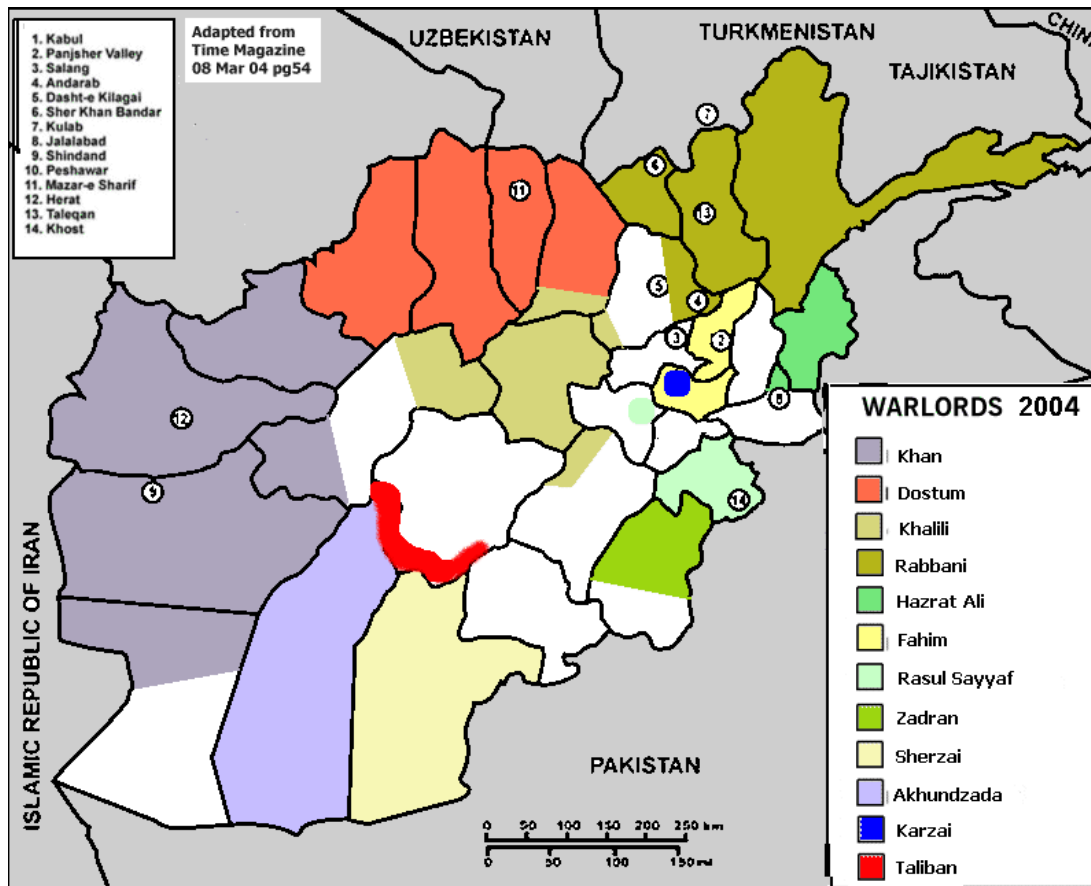
Commanders have to find a new role inside a peace economy. In addition to their military disturbances, in many cases this new social category has destabilized traditional social structures. This is especially true in the South. In addition, the handful of very powerful Big Commanders intends to play a leading role in the political life of their region or nation, and this has added to political instability.

The lack of cohesion between the government and its international sponsors is a further cause of the instability of the country. In 2004, President Karzai signed a decree pledging to crack down warlords and militia commanders who resist the process of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration program. While NATO has given verbal backing to this policy, so far in has been clear in the field that ISAF commanders are unwilling to back up the policy with real force – which leaves the GoA powerless.

Ismail Khan in Herat is one of many regional warlords who have been acting independently of central government control since the fall of the Taliban. Despite a May 2003 pledge to recognize the preeminence of the central government, and promises to adhere to the chain of command – and despite the fact that he is currently Minister for Power in the government - Ismail Khan (and others, including ethnic Uzbek leader Abdul Rashid Dostum) maintains his local influence. The commanders definitely remain a force to be reckoned with in Afghan politics.

### **3.1 Geographical distribution of Commanders**

Map of Warlords in 2004 (*Global Security website*)



- **Herat:** Ismail Khan and Amanullah Khan
- **Helmand:** Sher Mohammed Akhundzada
- **Mazar-i-Sharif:** Ustad Atta Mohammed
- **Shiberghan:** Abdul Rashid Dostum
- **Kandahar:** Gul Agha Sherzai
- **Paktia, Khost and Paghman:** Ustad Abdul Rasul Sayyaf
- **Paktika:** Pacha Khan Zadran
- **Bamiyan and Parts of Kabul:** Karim Khalili
- **Northeast Afghanistan and Kabul :** Burhanuddin Rabbani
- **Nuristan and Jalalabad:** Hazrat Ali
- **Kabul and Pansher Valley:** Mohammed Qasim Fahim
- **Kabul:** Hamid Karzai

Commanders who combine accumulated wealth with commercial acumen have made a good living out of business. They are probably the happiest XCs of all, but they don't necessarily make the rest of Afghanistan happy, for their financial influence may be as pernicious as their military influence was before. The 2005 Charney Omnibus Survey showed 34% of Afghans worried about corruption, and 41% saying that getting rid of the warlords was a top priority (and some of the respondents are presumably XCs who want to be rid of their Commanders). That is a mandate for DIAG, and shows the importance of the work that ANBP has been doing. There is more still to be done.

### 3.2 Drug lords and the role of drugs in undermining SSR

The CIP business training (described below) was designed to change mentalities, rather than to train a mass of future business men. Some former fighters did start their own business after the training. It is difficult to say how many Commanders went into business after the training, but at one focus group meeting in Mazar-i-Sharif, 42-year-old *ex-jihadi* Commander Abdel Samatran reported the following: *“The training was helpful because I was able to start a business with my brothers. It’s still a small business, but I feel I have learned enough to expand it”*. When he said that, everybody else in the room laughed, and we made a note in our book to ask why it was so funny. Later on, ANBP staff explained the laughter.

The business in question is poppy cultivation, opium poppies producing raw opium sap that is turned into heroin probably in Tajikistan. Our interpreter was able to get-off the record- more details from commanders participating in the same meeting. Without the creation of sustainable income earnings and alternative livelihoods for farmers, poppy cultivation remains extremely profitable and is likely to act as a magnet for demobilized commanders. The suggested reluctance of some commanders to give up weapons is also directly related to the protection of poppy cultivation and drug routes.

The international drug trade contributes to the problems of the government’s corruption and serves as a major source of power for warlords and militias, as we discussed at the beginning of this section. There is no doubt that the drug trade has helped to create alternative sources of authority that undermine the central government and its efforts to expand its reach beyond Kabul.

One of the greatest challenges to Afghanistan's future is the illicit trade in opium and heroin. Since the fall of the Taliban, and despite eradication efforts, poppy fields have grown in number and spread into new areas. Afghanistan currently accounts for 90% of the world's illicit poppy cultivation. Opium and heroin processed from Afghanistan-grown poppies are sold in international markets, primarily Europe, Iran and Russia, as well as USA, China and the neighbouring ‘Stans’.

This trade continues to undermine the national government. Illicit opium smuggling fuels the insurgency, funds the Taliban and local warlords, and allegedly enjoys the tacit support of high-ranking government officials. Unless DIAG and other SSR activities are able to link in with the work to repress the illegal drug trade, a stable peace in Afghanistan will not be achieved. Nor do we believe that repression is an adequate strategy to control drugs: new approaches are required. Peter Bergen argues that doing nothing would be more beneficial than pursuing the current, counter-effective strategy of destruction. We destroy our relationship with farmers more than we reduce the opium crop.

The U.S. should adopt a "first do no harm" policy that temporarily suspends eradication while implementing a promising portfolio of new initiatives to build up alternatives for farmers.

To begin with, the U.S. needs to invest in building up the legitimate Afghan economy. Though poppy fetches much higher prices than most other crops, subsidies, price supports and seeds for alternative crops should be offered to offset that price gap. Because other crops often face pitfalls such as the absence of distributors, domestic demand or consistent prices abroad, the international community should help Kabul set up an agency, modeled on the Canadian Wheat Board, that would purchase crops from farmers at consistent prices, and market and distribute them internationally. The U.S. and other NATO countries should open their markets and extend trade preferences to Afghan agricultural products and handicrafts.

Currently, the U.S. funds alternative livelihoods at one-third the rate of eradication efforts -- and the money is still not making its way into the pockets of farmers. Because of bureaucratic inefficiencies, only 1% of the \$100 million in funds for alternative livelihoods had been disbursed as of March, according to the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime. One reason for this is that the Afghan narcotics ministry lacks the staff and skills to quickly and effectively disburse funds. So the task should be outsourced -- in the same manner the U.S. outsources its eradication efforts to private companies like DynCorp -- until the Afghan government develops the capacity to get the job done.<sup>2</sup>

Afghanistan's hopes for long-term security rest on the successful creation of a strong army and police, independent from local militias, drug lords and warlords, but subordinate and loyal to the national government. The DDR CIP process had a clearly beneficial impact on the stability of Afghanistan's political leadership, as tensions diminished and commanders bought into the political process. Both the heavy weapons cantonment and the demobilization diminished the threat of serious violence, and the disbandment of military units lessened tensions across the country, but there is a long way yet to go.

#### **4. Identification and Selection of Commanders**

The CIP component reached out to a selected list of commanders, chosen after considerable effort had been put into an innovative identification survey.<sup>3</sup> The CIP certainly had a favorable impact on those commanders whom we met. Their eyes were opened to new ideas, and they were brought into contact with – and even into friendship with – other commanders against whom they had recently been fighting. Was the CIP simply ‘buying time’ by involving some commanders in non-violent activities? Possibly so, and this seems perfectly acceptable in the circumstances, and was probably a very efficient and effective strategy for the moment at which it was designed.

##### **4.1 The CIP classification using the danger factor**

The question is how do you make a selection of the commanders with who you are going to work on DDR, and what criteria will you take into consideration?

ANBP surveyed all commanders through the regional offices and created profiles using personal interviews with the commanders (form A) and then with their partners and subordinates (form B). From the profiles the ANBP identified 3 types of Commanders, and this is how ANBP started making a selection from more than 800 commanders.

<b>Dangerous</b>	<b>Fairly harmless</b>	<b>Harmless</b>
<b>Commanders</b>	<b>Commanders</b>	<b>Commanders</b>

<sup>2</sup> Peter Bergen and Sameer Lalwani op cit, *LA Times*, September 2, 2007

<sup>3</sup> We have heard about the identification forms A and B but the M&E section of ANBP seems quite unaware of them and has no data on commanders, who were left out of the main database. DIAG is not using the CIP data, and this has not been updated since June 2006.

This is a practical and simple classification of commanders from a security viewpoint. There are other possible categorizations: political as well as religious and economic motivation could have been criteria.

#### 4.2. Sociological classifications for commanders in the field

With the UN-Habitat Program Director (who works in 16 provinces and has a good grasp of security in the communities) we devised a different, alternative classification of potentially dangerous commanders:

- Drug lords (who profit from the international coalition and yet oppose it)
- Government officials with links to illegal arms groups (GOLIAGs)
- Commanders excluded from government and from peace process (the Taliban for example and also frustrated people like commanders we met in Herat).
- Local leaders who hate the US occupation (mainly Pashtun and some others with a nationalist orientation)
- The business sub-contractors who are creaming money off the reconstruction processes and whose activities may not be moral, but cannot be considered as illegal.
- PSCs – many of whom benefit from the American occupation but who may still resent it and who act as private militias in a legal and security vacuum

Private Security Companies are illegal armed groups, whose existence is legitimized by the International Community. The UN itself does employ some of them as security guards, but the UN policy is to strengthen Interior Ministry security capacity rather than hiring separate (and rival) militias or foreign security units. In Kabul, for example, the UNHCR Security Department has 25 policemen from MoI. They are trained and disciplined under UNHCR supervision, and this is building their capacities so they can be part of the increasing MoI effectiveness. For the UNHCR Kandahar guesthouse, however, UNHCR hires 9 Gurkhas (Nepali mercenaries) to enhance the image and reality of security.

Doronso in his book on Afghanistan's eternal war offers a classification of commanders based on the social origin of the commanders, whom he sees as mainly corresponding to four ideal types:

- **the charismatic holy man:** the *pir* = saint, or the *sayyed* = descendent of the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon Him and upon all the prophets)
- **the local mullah**
- **the local khan**
- **the educated ideologue.**

These were not originally political or military fighters, but could become so through a capacity to mobilize men and resources, often when they were threatened physically or socially (ie they could lose the primacy of their local position to another, more aggressive, military leader). These different types of status were related to resources of different kinds: respectively religious charisma, religious knowledge, inherited land-based wealth, and the beneficiaries of modern education sanctioned by the state who were often linked to one of the political movements that provided funds and weapons. In addition the *khan*, the *pir* and the *mullah* were all important figures in their local communities; the influence of the educated class was less definite.

These four ideal types did not exist in the real world, where for the most part the situation was more complex. A single individual could bring to bear a diversity of resources such as his personal religious prestige, his territorial inheritance which might make him a khan, and his membership of a family of *pirs*.

As a result of the jihad, religious personalities found their legitimacy enhanced. In addition, local social structure governed the probability that an individual of a particular social background might become a commander. The value of religious prestige or scholarly achievement and their capacity to be transformed into a political resource varied from region to region.

### **4.3. The ulema - local religious hierarchies with weapons**

In a number of places the *ulema*, or *mullahs*, became commanders. This direct and long term exercise of power by religious leaders is something new in Afghan history. Two factors tend to explain this development: their legitimacy in the eyes of the rural populations and their capacity for organization.

**The ulema.** The retreat of the *ulema* to the countryside in the two or three decades before the war restricted their influence to rural areas. The example of the Mojadidi family is a case in point. In 1978 the Tariki government of the communist Khalk party turned against religious leaders and made a particular example of the Mojadidi family, leaders of the Naqshbandi sufi brotherhood. As many as 140 members of the Mojadidi family were slaughtered. The family then transferred its principal madrasa from Kabul to Ghazni. This typified a long-term sociological change: the tendency for the ulema to become displaced from urban centers especially if they had not come from the government madrasas.<sup>4</sup>

Sometimes financially dependant on their congregation, the *ulema* were only rarely major landowners in the prewar period, and at least in the rural context they remained strongly rooted in their communities, the majority of them exercising their functions in the region of their birth. This close link explains why men of religion have often acted as spokesmen for the population, e.g. in Badakhshan where they occupied the position of an alternative authority.

The *ulema* commanders, who existed throughout Afghanistan, were dominant in the north of Helmand, in Badghis, to the south of the town of Mazar-i-Sharif and in Hazarajat.

**The pirs and the sadat.** In Afghanistan, as in the rest of the Muslim and non-Muslim world, particular individuals or objects may enjoy the reputation of possessing a beneficial spiritual quality, *barakat*, which reflects on to those who come to view them. The *pirs* and the *sadat* are the two categories of individuals who enjoy this spiritual quality, sometimes specializing in pious rituals they serve as intermediaries and as arbiters, for example in the case of a conflict within a tribe. Their status varies: in the east they have little prestige, while in Hazarajat they are influential.

---

<sup>4</sup> This has not stopped Sibghatullah Mojadidi from rising to high positions as former Head of State and current Chairman of the Senate, the upper house of Parliament. Reuters reported that on 12 March 2006, Sibghatullah was being driven in Kabul when a car laden with explosives detonated near his vehicle.

He appeared at a news conference with bandages on his hands, which he said covered burns caused by the blast, and blamed neighboring Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) for the attempt on his life. "We had received intelligence from six channels that some individuals had entered Afghanistan to kill me by any possible means," he said. "Our biggest enemy today is Pakistan's ISI," he said adding that the network "was behind all of the attacks" carried out by Taliban and other militants in Afghanistan. Pakistan's foreign ministry rejected the charge.

The khans: a *khan* is a local notable who exercises an influence related to his status as a landowner or as a tribal leader who runs his *qawm*. He maintains a clientele whose size is measured by those who are obliged to him, from among the relationships in which he is dominant. He feeds others and obtains services from them: he cannot operate without an open table, gifts to the local *mullah* and so on. He therefore invests his capital and his time in a network of relationships while personifying the values of his group, in particular that of generosity. He also plays a role as intermediary between the community and the outside world, whether government officials or passing stranger, and he thereby obtains numerous advantages, particularly through his dealings with the administration.

The power of the *khan* consists primarily in his capacity to exert influence. He has no means to impose his will other than persuasion, debate and gifts. His power has no legal basis, although in certain regions such as Hazarajat and Badakhshan his domination over the peasants can be very forceful.

#### **4.4. How much use are these classifications?**

Academic classification can be useful help us think through and help us understand the context through analysis, but it is not directly always practically useful for practical development or disarmament. Field analysis is more practical than the academic. The academics help us grasp the sociological context. We understand better the political context from the UN official's classification, than we do from academics.

When it come to CIP practical program, even the UN Habitat analysis is rather complex. When confronted to the need for devising a program dealing the commanders, CIP came with a simple 3-part classification that worked. In terms of lessons learned across the world this practical way of classifying in different form seems pretty instructive. DRR managers need to understand the context, but when they design programs they need to reduce the analysis to a very simple structure. We find that CIP was right to take a simple approach, because they needed something that worked for them.

#### **4.5. The Commanders Incentive Review Board (CRIB)**

The Commanders Incentives Review Board, co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of Defence and by the Deputy Chairman of the D&R Commission Minister Stanekzai, was attended by ANBP, UNAMA, and the Embassy of Japan.

Responsibilities of the Board included:

- a) Establish general criteria for selection of packages suited to individual commanders.
- b) Review the full list of commanders at the rank of Brigadier General and above.
- c) Review individual cases (where commanders expressed desire for a particular package) submitted by ANBP following the profiling and initial interviewing of commanders and make recommendations on selection of packages.
- d) Identify government jobs and make recommendations to the Government Appointments Panel (GAP) for commanders requesting government positions.
- e) Make Recommendations for presentations of honorary awards.

The criteria of selection for the 140 MoD officers were their rank (Brigadier General and above) their age (soon to be retired from MoD) or their transfer to ANA. The criteria for the 335 commanders were their involvement in Jihad and resistance in the past. Some of them fought against Russians, against the Taliban regime, or sometimes against each other depending on their affiliation to an armed group, (Abdul Rashid Dostum of Shiberghan and Ustad Atta Mohammad of Mazar were enemies, for example, who later decided to unify their forces under the Northern Alliance flag to fight the Taliban). Identification as well as disarmament and demobilization were successfully achieved.

This is the response we got from most of the commanders we met on the field. The question was: “How did you hear about the DDR program?

*“We received a letter from the MoD informing us that our units had to be disarmed and demobilized. It was an instruction, we had to obey orders and we were ready”.*

In some places like in Mazar-i-Sharif, MoD delegations came to explain the process.

## **5. The Reintegration of Commanders**

### **5.1. The AITM business training**

UNDP and GoA objectives were to provide 140 MoD officers and 335 Jihadi commanders with the means to make a licit living after their disarmament and demobilization. In order to facilitate a smooth transition from military to civilian life ANBP contracted the Afghan Institute of Training & Management (AITM) as implementing partner to establish and conduct 26 days training in business management, democracy, human rights, conflict resolution, peace building, communication, business plan, marketing, gender equality, English, and computer skills.<sup>5</sup>

The following are the main subjects which have been covered by AITM Trainers to the commanders who attended one of the fifteen AITM courses:

S N	Subjects	Hours	S N	Subjects	Hours
1	Government Policy	11	12	Human Rights	22
2	Principles of Management	11	13	Employment opportunity abroad	11
3	Letter writing	33	14	Business	253
4	English Language	244	15	Fields Visits	11
5	Communication Skills	44	16	Investment	11
6	Filling System	11	17	Decision making	11

<sup>5</sup> AITM has a very practical experience over many years, which made it a very valuable partner for CIP. Its roots in Peshawar, in the Afghan diaspora, and in the political evolution of Afghan problems over the past 20 years made it a much better partner than any other organization. AITM began life in 1989 in Peshawar as the Save the Children (UK) training unit for refugees and NGOs. It transferred Kabul in 1995 and has been a self-sustaining management center for the past ten years.



				skills	
7	Organizing yourself	33	18	Problem solving	22
8	Report writing	11	19	Cooperative	22
9	Gender concept	22	20	Peace Building	99
10	Men and Women rights according to Islam	22	21	Effective Negotiation Skills	22
11	Principle of Accounting	33	22	Democracy	22

The most important objective of these courses was the changing of ideas. This is part of a reinsertion and reconciliation process. AITM knew that they could not produce business manager in just one month, although they could give some business ideas and these were valuable for some commanders. In Mazar-i-Sharif, former colonel Mohamed Din told us that it was at the AITM course he suddenly realized he could be a business man: he saw that his army electrical skills would allow him to work as an electrician, he realized he was literate and numerate, and the AITM course showed him he could run a shop and make a living for his family. We visited his shop and met a satisfied happy man.

## 5.2. The impact of the business training

Not every commander is a business man and many of them are not even literate. But most of them told us that the AITM course had changed their ideas. This 26-day study course was not a degree program, but primarily aimed at “changing minds” by mixing commanders together from different regions and backgrounds, teaching some business skills, introducing them to new ideas, and forcing them to accept women as teachers.

For the first time the commanders were living with people from all over Afghanistan, some of whom were former enemies. For the first time they were seeing computers and learning English. Most amazingly, their English and computer teachers were women. At first they felt embarrassed and awkward, but later the class seemed natural and by the end they were all joking together – stiff-backed army colonels and grizzled *mujaheddin* guerrilla commanders, former enemies and *jihadis* laughing with their young female teachers. They understood that women can be teachers, can know more than them, and can participate in the building of a nation.

During our visit to AITM, we discussed in detail the teaching strategy and content of the CIP business training with Habibullah Rishtia Deputy Director and Hamidullah Azamy, Director of Studies of the AITM centre. They told us that between July 2005 & February 2007, 335 officers/commanders spent one month living and learning, in fifteen residential courses. Each student received 90 minutes per day of English and 60 minutes on the computer (both taught by women).

Having commanders with different backgrounds together in a classroom with women as teachers was a good idea. Both the Deputy Director and Director of AITM mentioned that they would have liked to organize a refresher course, but the lack of planning for this – and the lack of any budget - made it impossible.

Commanders were all positive about their AITM experience. From the commanders’ points of view, the main negative observation was that the training did not allow them to find a job.

The other problem is ‘respect’. In the Afghan DDR context, we have identified two special ‘R’ factors which were insufficiently stressed in the DDR: Recognition and Respect. For some commanders and former army officers, receiving respect is almost as important as the lack of a regular income. Once they were powerful, and many are now reduced to the status of ordinary citizens. The problem of ‘respect’ is especially acute for former regular officers of the Afghan army, many of whom repeat - over and over again - that they have chosen a career and they want none other. It seems that once you have been a colonel, any other status is a step lower. In a country as proud as Afghanistan, the status of a redundant, former colonel is really difficult to accept.

Amir Kahn, ex-MoD Officer with the rank of Colonel, Jelalabad 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2007 :  
*“I’m grateful and happy with the assistance that has been provided to me, I did the course and it was interesting but I’m still waiting for a job. Today, my friends and even my children are laughing at me because I have been DDR’d and I have nothing”.*

To support reintegration of ex-combatants (XCs) different measures have been developed and used over the past years in different countries. However, there is no blueprint for efficient and effective reintegration support. The history and culture of the conflict as well as the political and socio economic context at the time of the demobilization vary considerably from one context to another. Much depends on the nature of the initial agreement on DDR and the type of forces to be DDR.

## **6. Mapping and Profiling of Commanders.**

### **6.1. Careful planning and research build DDR success**

One main problem that the DDR process faced was convincing commanders to enter civilian life. The majority of commanders in this country were *jihadi* officers nominally integrated into the MoD. Having fought against national enemies, they felt that they were entitled to compensation from the government in return for their years of service. The social structures of many regions have changed during the war. ‘Commanders’ replaced traditional *beys* or *begs* or *khans* or *arbabs* and usurped their influence, especially in the South.

Experience shows that in DRC the effectiveness of the DDR program was based on the detailed mapping and profiling of each armed group, and the commanders with whom they were affiliated. The commanders’ location, approximate strength, and a deep knowledge of each region’s history, were necessary ingredients in the recipe for success of the operation. Likewise in Darfur, in Western Sudan, no DDR progress will be possible without a detailed understanding of the complex inter-ethnic political and migration histories that intertwine the Fur, Zaghawa, Arab and other groups and that have led to the current alliances and subdivisions that play into the conflict.

In Afghanistan the ANBP mapping was detailed and provided the information necessary for the CIP classification. But was it detailed enough? Each commander’s support to the newly established GoA was a pre-requisite for stabilization and a condition for achieving long

lasting peace. The CIP listening process took into account whether only commanders were dangerous or harmless, but most importantly if they were willing to join the DDR process.

A DDR process is highly sensitive, and can easily be manipulated. In order to prevent political and/or military manipulation by individuals or factions, and to disengage local commanders from their command structure, more should have been invested in the collection of personal information about the commanders. This information could have been used as the first step to their reintegration. If more time and money had been invested, and if the CIP planning had been more meticulous, we believe that more commanders could have been (and should have been) included in the CIP process.

In a way, we accept that paying of the commanders provided the necessary step from the end of the fighting to a sustainable stabilization. This could not have happened without back door talks and negotiations. Informal agreements and promises will eventually lead to peace. Not very idealistic and most probably not very moral, but is there space for morality in times of war? The window of opportunity was there, rapid reaction was needed. On the whole we find that CIP was a flexible, appropriate and reasonably successful effort to bring commanders into DDR and into civilian life.

## **6.2 Special people need special attention**

It is particularly true in the Afghan context that ‘special strokes are for special folks’, where commanders have such a strong influence on communities and on their potential future development. In the Afghan political context, and in the CIP classification, this covers the commanders who are ‘dangerous’. In general terms, the bigger the commander is in terms of political and military clout, the larger the threat he poses potentially to stability. However, regional location is also a major factor: Taliban links in the South and East, and in places like Badghis and Kunduz, suggest that special care needs to be lavished on these areas and extra arrangements are necessary for certain groups of commanders.

In Herat we met with numerous commanders who were complaining about lack of attention. Their salaries have not been paid for months and they say the government stigmatizes them because of their affiliation to former Governor and commander Ismail Khan. According to them this would be the reason they have not been able to obtain government jobs.

Most of the commanders interviewed by the team welcomed the DDR process. Tired of war, fed up with difficult living conditions faraway from their homes, for most of them DDR meant new prospects for their future and better life. But the DDR process still has to offer them something attractive, especially in terms of Recognition and Respect.

The highest profile ‘special cases’ – and the one that attract media speculation – concern the small number of very senior commanders, the ones with big clout. Nomination of high commanders to key government positions bought time and brought commanders into the political peace process. While CIP was dealing with small and medium commanders, the government and the Head of State have to be dealing with high and potentially very dangerous commanders. While outsiders have often criticized the nomination of such people to positions of authority, political realities require the President Karzai to recognize their capacities for good and bad and to make use of their very real skills.

‘How can President Karzai rule Afghanistan?  
He has never killed anybody.’

Comment from an anonymous Pashtun friend

## **7. A Better Life – Management of Expectations**

Many Jihadis believed at the end of 2001, with the help of the American bombings and the coalition troops, that they had won the war, chased out the Taliban and taken control of Kabul and the Government. This, they believed, entitled them to government jobs. As victors, and as the people who spent a decade fighting against the communist, ungodly occupation of their land, these Jihadis believe they are entitled not only to a share of the booty of victory, but also to RECOGNITION and RESPECT.

For those who had accumulated wealth or land from their days of Jihad, and for those who were already substantial landowners before the war, a 'better life' meant simply returning home to family and friends. 'I am tired of running in the mountains,' said Ainullah of Khanabad who is now around 60 years old. He has 30 jeribs of land, well irrigated gardens from which he can live comfortably and feed his family. For people like this, simply ending the fighting was justification enough for the DDR process.

Others have more complex requirements. Some are politically ambitious; others are in need of status: they will keep the honorary title 'Commander Sahib' just as elderly men who have been to Mecca are called 'Haji Sahib' – but this may not be sufficient compensation for the loss of their military authority. These are often the men seeking government appointments.

Others again have financial problems: their tool for accumulating wealth (the gun) having been removed, they need a job or a lucrative business opportunity (assuming they can learn how to run a successful business).

Many commanders are not making a good living. Most of them believe they were promised jobs by the government, which they have not been able to find. In some cases, Afghan government ministries have been quite unhelpful. They have done very little to give employment to commanders, despite the best efforts of the ANBP's staff and the D&R Commission to persuade them. UNDP's reintegration mandate for ANBP was mainly limited to providing training, and this was done (even if training design was questionable, subjects were selected without market research, and the duration was often inadequate).

Several Governors told us privately that the commanders should be given government jobs. One or two even told us that specific commanders in their provinces might very well join the Taliban if they felt excluded by the current system.

Personal and group interviews conducted in Kandahar (by phone), Kunduz, Mazar-i-Sharif, Jelalabad and Herat mostly introduced us to frustrated commanders: they were not satisfied. Not only had they lost authority and prestige over their troops, they feel the process brought government guarantees and the government had not honored promises of future employment. Without jobs, their role and image among their families and among the community has been damaged. Management of expectations regarding the reintegration of commanders is a sensitive and difficult enterprise.

To the question: "*would you take up arms again?*" very few said they were ready to fight again. Nevertheless, they should be given special attention. As mentioned above, the needs and expectations are not the same between soldiers and commanders.

In the absence of any regular monitoring by ANBP, it remains unclear how many commanders have been able to establish themselves with 'sustainable livelihoods' by mid-2007, following their ANBP-supplied vocational training. Nor is it clear that any definitive evaluation is possible so early in the process, barely a year after the last cohort ended ANBP reintegration training.

To provide training to 55,000 people in the space of only 18 months is proof of ANBP's excellence in implementation. In 2007 it is still too early for us to judge whether the reintegration process was a success, but we know that by many unemployed commanders its success is questioned. We find that the fundamental mistake lies in designing a DDR project to last only three years.

Recognizing the danger of middle-level commanders ('middle commanders can be spoilers' said former US Ambassador Newman), USAID has launched a pair of projects aimed at 'dangerous' commanders who have been identified with ANBP's help: ASMED (business planning for 300 commanders) and ARIES (business loans). These are helpful and constructive efforts, designed specifically to take ANBP's reintegration process forward.

USAID's perception is that the commander and his immediate family are regarded as a training and economic unit, rather than focus only on the individual commander.

USAID is offering:

- Appropriate level business training in either Dari or Pashto, scholarships at training sites away from the families for specific vocational training such as heating, ventilation, and air conditioning training, small engine/motorcycle repair, tailoring and construction trades such as tile work, electrical and plumbing. The scholarship would be dependent on upon continuing progress in the training. The final goal is to assure placement with an existing business.
- Small grants to establish a micro enterprise following training
- An Islamic micro enterprise finance product that would have to be repaid
- Some commanders might ask for a monetary package in lieu of the above, families receiving such package would be eligible for the finance program.

As further possibility, since many commanders may not be interested in or capable of running a business, USAID could also look to provide a certain number of merit-based scholarships to the commanders' immediate family members. Furthermore all USAID contractors are required to offer jobs to XCs (there is no monitoring to see what effect this has had on the job market for XCs).

This USAID training program can be seen as a continuation of the support needed by the commanders. Reintegration into civilian life is a slow social, economic and psychological process. The contribution commanders will be able to provide to their communities and to Afghanistan as a whole, will depend on the reintegration support they receive. It is common sense to say that unsatisfied people will unify to show their discontentment, when satisfaction will leave individuals happy, confident about their future and proud to bring their skills to the building of a nation. Frustrated ex-commanders may threaten and jeopardize the stabilization of the Afghan peace and development processes. This is not intended as a criticism of ANBP, because in DDR expectations will be always be too high.

Taliban are distributing money to people- and GoA is not. Taliban pays \$200, and ANA pays \$70. The Taliban have force and they have money. How does the International Coalition allow that? Where does this Kuwait and Saudi and other money come from? I tell this to ISAF, to GoA, to foreigners, that people are fed up with war, but if they have to take up weapons again, they will do it.

Comment from a frustrated Panshiri friend working with PRT

## **8. Reconciliation and/or Justice**

Among packages, two were dealing with immunity for commanders willing to get immunity for their past wrong doings.

The HR Commission undertook promotion and protection initiatives such as child rights, women rights and human educational. They produced films, conveyed the messages through Radio and TV and they investigated 2000 complains they had received from people throughout the country.

The HR Commission circulated a questionnaire through out the country and more than 70% from the sample of 1300 people asked for the trial of commanders through International Tribunals.

A study conducted in the first half of 2003, revealed that property had been illegally confiscated by commanders; the figure in the second half of 2003 went up followed by another increase in the first half of 2004. Most of the incriminated commanders were on the rampage by the end of 2004.<sup>6</sup>

Some commanders are active in other criminal activities, such as drug trafficking, human trafficking (child kidnapping), rape, selling historical artifacts as a business and so forth. As regards the child kidnapping, the HR Commission reports indicate that 49 kidnappers had been arrested by the Ministry of Interior, but they were later released.

As regards Immunity Packages and according to ANBP, the HR Commission did not come up with a solution. People still harbour hatred and thirst for revenge against certain commanders. Several times we were told about commanders who are unable to leave their village or district for fear of retaliation and revenge.

For ANBP, more deliberations on these two specific packages were needed. Keeping in mind the sensitivity as well as the future implications of commanders' reintegration into civilian life was a must. A solution which could be acceptable to both Human Rights/Future government and public was necessary for the UN's impartial image and rule.

In order to get and update accurate information on commanders, periodic meetings have been arranged. ANBP supported the idea of sharing information with the HR Commission but the Evaluation Team was not able to get detailed information about the follow up of the agreements and the proposed signature of a MoU with the HR Commission. The team did not come to any conclusion about issues of reconciliation. We are unenthusiastic about Western thinking in terms of 'justice and retribution' which has often been forced down the throats of

---

<sup>6</sup> Other, more detailed, pillage figures we received on this issue were confusing, and we do not show them here.

African communities whose traditions of reconciliation and community purification through intercession of the ancestors are alien to Western linear thought.

Every country has its own traditions: and in this sense Afghanistan's ethnic complexity may compose 'many different countries'. Each region of Afghanistan may need to find its own route towards reconciliation.

## **9. CIP Lessons Learned**

### **9.1 The CIP was a reasonable and creative mechanism**

The CIP brought commanders into the political process of joining civilian life. It provided some salary for two years, and some training to change their ideas. Was it a 'buy-them-off-program'? Perhaps it was, but in that case it was a good investment which bought time and space for new political and democratic processes to emerge and a possible model for future DDR programs.

### **9.2 The project only partially achieved the desired impacts.**

Commanders were promised different sets of incentives (absorption into the ANA or ANP, government positions, overseas trainings, medical treatments, honorary awards and retirement) and this was intended to make the project attractive to them. Many of them did not happen.

The first D was successful - disarmament was achieved, AMF units and their commanders were disbanded. However, demobilization and reinsertion could have been used more efficiently as a transitional step to reintegration, both for commanders and for their men. Long term peace and stability depend to a large degree on the sustainability of reintegration.

We find that the R of commanders should have been better planned, and earlier: it should have been well on the way to being put in place before the disarmament and demobilization started. Disarmament should have been quickly followed by the delivery of promised reinsertion activities and reintegration incentives

(We discuss the reinsertion activities in our DDR report)

Broken promises have been one of the major problems of both DDR and CIP. Medical treatments were promised but not provided – an exciting incentive for some commanders. Commanders were expecting to be invited to travel overseas, either to Saudi Arabia for the *hajj* or to another country. This was a prestigious idea, a carrot that many of the commanders prized. In the event, just 11 went to Japan. No doubt there are good and sufficient reasons why the promised travel was delayed or cancelled for 300 or 400 men, but the commanders are not interested in excuses. Jobs have been promised and not supplied: we have seen numerous letters signed by Vice-President Karim Khalili, recommending former commanders to ministries and governors, but very few have received appointments. We came across commanders who say they are tempted to rearm, because promises have not been kept.

Disruption in their monthly payments was also major source of anger. When ANBP provided monthly stipends, the commanders simply visited the regional office of the project. Once the MoD became responsible, all commanders had to travel to Kabul to collect their money (sometimes a trip of several days and considerable cost) – and the money was not always there.

This sort of problem does nothing to make friends: it makes dangerous men frustrated and angry.

### 9.3 Breaking the bonds

One of the foremost problems identified by ANBP is the close bond between the commanders and their soldier which is said to be a potential threat to security “*Unless this link is broken, the DDR will not be successful in attainment of its goal*” Is this hypothesis true? A more sophisticated analysis might show that breaking the bonds is unrealistic in many cases. Doronso’s typology offers four categories of commander:

The charismatic *pir* (holy man)

The local *mullah*,

The local *khan*

The educated ideologue

The holy man (who may be a religious fanatic) and the educated enthusiast (linked to one of the Peshawar party factions) may not have direct family links to the locals who follow them, but their educational status has given them primacy in times. Their power as commanders came largely from their access to American, Saudi Arabian and Pakistani support during the Jihad. Without this money, they don’t have power as commanders, although they may have graduated through the political process into positions of national or regional leadership. The commanders with money right now are the Taliban (who still receive Arab money and Pakistani support) and the opium smugglers.

The *khan* and the *mullah* on the other hand, command loyalties because they are local people, notabilities and elders, landowners and spiritual leaders of their communities. They are relatives, they are *qawm*. There is no way you can break the bonds. What you can try and do is to change the bonds from violent Jihad related activities into peaceful community development activities.

Some *khans* are powerful, some are not. The political reality in places like in Bakhdasahn, Jawzjan, Herat, Kandahar is that certain *khans* are commanders with political and military support too powerful for the government or DIAG to tackle head on. So, we have to find a way to bring them into the peace process through political or other methods because breaking the bonds is not realistically possible. Thus Ismail Khan of Herat is now a minister in the government, while Gul Agha Sherzai has been moved from Governor of Kandahar to become Governor of Nangahar. Foreigners complain, but Afghans have to live with real policies and *realpolitik*, and with their influential neighbours Iran and Pakistan (and Russia and China and India).

All the commanders interviewed knew precisely where their men were. Breaking the bonds has not been achieved. We believe it would be fair to say that the common feeling of dissatisfaction had even strengthened the links. Maybe therefore some new approaches are required, finding way to bring the networks under a legal framework. There are moves afoot to work on this, and we support the new ideas – including legislation to control and regulate Private Security Companies. Afghanistan was in a disarmament phase, but that window of opportunity has closed. Right now we need to be designing innovative strategies for managing weapons and those that control them.

### 9.4 Some of the long-serving *jihadis* were left out



Some former *jihadis* are bitter men who feel they fought against communism to win the liberation of their homeland, and they have been forgotten. In the case of Afghanistan the ‘R’ component should necessarily include Recognition of service, and Respect for sacrifice to the benefit of the nation. While these remarks are true for many XCs, they are accentuated in the case of commanders and officers whose sense of self-worth is greatly heightened. DDR contains many cultural aspects, and each country or culture is specific in this regard

In the 2006 UNDP Project Annual Report on DDR, mention is made of 5899 former AMF officers who had completed the disarmament and demobilization phases but did not enter formal reintegration. This is a serious gap, but it is a social gap not a security risk. These men have lost respect and social status and that is rather sad for them, but they have no weapons, no men, no one would classify them as dangerous commanders.

### **9.5. Security Sector Reform needs to progress in all areas together**

There are five pillars to the Afghan SSR, and it is generally accepted that those that have worked the best are DDR and ANA. Counter-narcotics is failing, while police and justice reform are stalled. The GoA bears some responsibility for this, but the international coalition is even more responsible.

It is not clear to us why the US and its allies find it so hard to agree on common policies. Every observer can see the failures. There is a lesson here to be learned about international cooperation, political compromise and military leadership, which are fortunately not included in our mandate. It was pointed out to us repeatedly, however, and by many different people, that the coordination of DDR and counter-narcotics is essential for both, and that US and European partners need to listen more carefully to each other and to their Afghan partners to design new strategies. On 2 September 2007 in London’s Daily Telegraph newspaper, Vice-President Massoud signed an article bitterly critical of British and international actions in counter narcotics. The same day an article by Peter Bergen appeared in the Los Angeles Times, offering new strategies to fight against drugs. Their proposals are different, but both articles insisted on the need for coordination between disarmament and counter-narcotics activities. For otherwise, both will fail.

## **10. Delivery Mechanisms**

The team has been asked a number of specific questions about delivery and implementation, which we answer below.

### **10.1 How efficient were approaches for achievement of outputs?**

A word may be added here to compliment the ANBP staff and management on their logistical and technological prowess. Heavy and light weapons were collected with barely a hitch, despite the tense security conditions and an occasional armed ambush.

MDU planning was meticulous. The ANBP Chief of Staff plotted every day’s work for every Mobile Disarmament Team. MDUs functioned flawlessly thanks to careful Recce visits and the previous fieldwork of the Regional Verification Committees – a local group of retired army officers hired to negotiate with Commanders, check every ID, and approve every name against the MoD lists. The RVC is an innovation that may be copied elsewhere. Each

province had one respected and respectable representative chosen for the regional team. The RVC group moved together from province to province discussing with commanders and preparing the terrain for DDR. Each RVC had one man recruited by ANBP as Secretary, keeping records in all the local languages. The International Observer Group functioned alongside them, and by all accounts very efficiently (although they are outside the scope of our evaluation).

## **10.2 Were arrangements adequate for optimal cost efficiency?**

While some people criticize the ANBP as an ‘expensive’ program this is a view we do not share. Should there have been fewer staff? Could they have managed with fewer vehicles? Although there are undoubtedly areas in which some economies could have been made, but they are more obvious with hindsight than could have been the case in 2002 when donors agreed to fund the demobilization of 100,000 XCs. In the event fewer XCs came forward for demobilization, but managers could not predict that.

We believe that ANBP has given good value for money, and its donors can be well satisfied with their investment. We feel that some aspects of its design were poorly thought through – notably the unrealistic three-year time limit - and this reduced the sustainable impact of DDR in some respects: but this does not change the fact that the political impacts of the program have been positive and important.

Was the CIP simply ‘buying time’ by involving some commanders in non-violent activities? Possibly so, and this seems perfectly acceptable in the circumstances, and it appears to have been a very efficient and cost-effective strategy for the moment at which it was designed.

## **10.04 Were the objectives of the CIP clear and how were they translated into strategies, actions and activities?**

The CIP objectives were clear: *“Transition of ex-combatants from their military life into civilian needs to be addressed through different mechanism, one such mechanism is training of ex-commanders to facilitate their transition from military into civilian life, which is important for changing their mentality and contribute to peaceful coexistence within their communities”*. The ‘package’ solution meant that commanders had to choose very quickly an orientation and a form of training that would determine their future lives. Many of the options never came to anything, and this was a big flaw in the execution. We believe that ANBP management focused all its time and resources on implementing disarmament (for understandable security reasons). They failed to establish recruit a leader and team for the R who were capable of similar delivery excellence for the reinsertion-reintegration parts of ANBP, and for follow-up monitoring. The result was some broken promises. We have met some very happy XC commanders, but we met more commanders who felt that the ‘packages’ did not help them to make a decent living. We address the management of DDR in our overall Lessons Learned section.

## **10.4 How well were the activities documented?**

ANBP in 2007 is smaller and less well-staffed than it used to be. The evaluators found it difficult to extract the information needed. We constantly heard that ‘X is no longer working for ANBP’ or ‘Y is on leave’. This was irksome, especially in terms of finding tables of data and specific data from the M&E section. In fact ANBP management did very little to prepare

the data for the evaluators, and much of the important information only became available in the last two days! Despite the excellent quality of the original database, M&E was always the runt of ANBP's litter, and that is very much the case today. DIAG does not seem to be maintaining any coherent institutional records, and the M&E section still needs today to benefit from the management attention it was denied in the past. We make recommendations in this regard to the UNDP.

### **10.5 Were activities timely implemented, and if not, did delays result in the need for additional resources and/or time?**

It is important to emphasize that DDR is first-and-foremost a political process. Overall we find there is no reason to criticize either the method chosen to reduce the number of armed men, nor the administrative mechanisms by which ANBP put the demobilization into practice. When a program of this complexity is designed and funded for only three years, you have to anticipate a full year of planning, recruitment and purchasing ... and barely 18 months of real active fieldwork before the program winds down again.

Given these constraints, the ANBP achievements in implementation were quite remarkable, a tribute to the management and staff. We are not enthusiastic about the design of the R segment of DDR, which was in effect a rushed job to deliver insufficient vocational training to thousands of men in a short time. Having been given that mistaken mandate, ANBP contrived to push through the training of 55,000 people in less than 18 months: another remarkable achievement. Such high quality implementation deserved a better program design.

A wider public information campaign - and a refusal to be tied exclusively to MoD lists - would have brought more people into the process, and this is a criticism voiced by the D&R Commission. At the same time it is difficult to see how any real form of control could have been imposed: once the lists were opened up, the numbers would quickly have exceeded 100,000, and it would have been virtually impossible to distinguish a 'real' combatant from any young man with a second-hand firearm. On balance the evaluators believe that the least-worst solution was adopted and it was very well implemented

### **10.6 What the strength and weaknesses in management and coordination of the various stakeholders involved?**

UNDP through ANBP provided technical backstopping and operational support for the implementation of the project. UNAMA provided overall policy and political guidance. President Karzai established the D&R Commission under the leadership of Vice President Khalili. The roles between UNDP, ANBP, and UNAMA have been well divided. UNAMA was able to fulfill its role of coordination body among the UN system and its political involvement and implication at the GoA level was key to the success of the operation. The weaknesses of international coordination we have highlighted within the SSR and counter-narcotics strategy are outside ANBP. If anything, ANBP was one of the few areas where Americans and their NATO allies have clearly cooperated and worked together in a positive manner.

### **10.7 How did procedures and criteria used in the eligibility process, as well as the extent to which these procedures were actually implemented and adhered to,**

## **impact on the inclusion/exclusion of ex-commanders as verified CIP beneficiaries?**

Establishment of eligibility criteria for inclusion in the new national army is a complicated issue. The Government was forced to negotiate the size of his new ANA and other armed forces not only in the light of many external factors like internal and external security threats, but with the NATO occupying forces and especially with the Americans. The negotiation is still fierce and ongoing, as the Deputy Minister of Defense explained to us: 70,000 may be the size of the ANA fighting force, and there may be another 10,000 authorized support troops ... or not. Ethnicity as well as political orientation was also a determining factor in recruiting for the ANA.

For the most vocal Afghan opponents of DDR and security sector reform, the most significant aspect is that the new ANA was conceived with a much smaller officer corps than the old Afghan army. Consequently large numbers of officers in their late 40s and 50s were laid off, even dismissed – and many of these men who are now excluded from the armed forces were either not eligible for, or refused to take part in DDR.

The new politics of post-Taliban Afghanistan were critical to the reasons for DDR, at the time when ANBP was created. While the new President Karzai is a Pashtu, a Popolzai from Kandahar supported by outsider forces, military power in Kabul remained largely in the hands of the military force with the most clearly delineated command structure: the *Shura-yi Nazar*, a northeastern military coordination body organized by Ahmad Shah Massoud in 1986 and led by him until his assassination on 9 September 2001. Northern Alliance Tajiks were therefore in command of the MoD, and a new balance had to be struck to bring the ANA into harmony with the rest of the population.

Nevertheless, ANBP relied only on MoD figures and information. We know from experience that government figures and information are often incomplete – and in the present case they were often fictitious, determined by political expediency, and negotiated by the donors with their full understanding of reality and fiction.

In Afghanistan, the GoA and its partners set up rigorous and successful verification mechanisms within this MoD framework, and – to quote the BCPR mission - applied ‘sufficient political pressure to prevent an over-inflation of the caseload.’ This was a clear success. On the other hand, the DDR process was largely controlled by MoD officials and commanders who had the power of decision concerning who would be registered and who would not. Thus certain genuine Jihadi commanders were excluded, while cronies and family members were included. This allowed some commanders to use the DDR process as additional patronage and self-enrichment. Some commanders continue to control or influence their former fighters, especially where the commanders and their men are locally based and have ties of family, village, or community *qawm*. Some still run local protection rackets or tax farmers illegally. The DIAG program continues to address this problem.

## **11. Sustainability**

### **11.1 How sustainable are the interventions?**

The evaluation team believes it is too early to determine whether the achievements of the program will turn out to be sustainable. How long must we wait to determine sustainability?

Commanders completed their vocational training in 2006, and one year is certainly too soon to decide. Western bankers usually allow five years for a small business to determine whether it will be profitable and sustainable (although it may easily fail earlier, its success cannot be judged until the company has had time to develop products and a customer base).

Many of the complaints directed at the ANBP reintegration program concern the lack of job opportunities: and while it is true that many XCs have no paid work, or have jobs that pay very little, this can be blamed more on the small size and slack growth of the Afghan peace economy than on ANBP. We make observations elsewhere (in the DDR report) about the lack of market-based and cooperative planning of the ANBP reintegration component, but the slow pace of Afghanistan's peace economy should be blamed on the war focus of the international coalition, and not on UNAMA, UNDP or ANBP.

### **11.2 What impact has the training on the commanders' social lives?**

As mentioned above, the CIP training was aimed at changing mentalities. Assessing the degree of the impact of this training on commanders' social lives is a difficult task only a year after the program ended. Have they adapted well to a peaceful life as citizens, husbands, fathers, community elders?

The idea of putting together former enemies in a classroom with women as teachers was innovative, but the length of the business training as well as some of the topics that were proposed are questionable. Is a one month long training with only few hours a day on the computer useful? What was the expected output of such a topic?

We do not believe that commanders behavior and respect for women rights for example have changed radically: but this is a broader Afghan social issue and not one that a DDR project can address. We can be emotional and smile when hearing that commanders offered flowers to the female teachers at the closing ceremony of the training, but is it an indicator that helps in saying that they have changed their mentalities and attitudes towards women? We don't think so. We are not convinced that commanders, and especially former army officers, are willing to accept and comply with the MoD hierarchy and authority. Recognition has been neglected: some of the former officers feel humiliated and their image has been damaged and this was handled without much sensitivity by the MoD.

### **11.3 Did the packages address the various needs of commanders?**

Answer from a commander when we asked if he was satisfied with the package was: *"When I was a Commander, I was making \$10.000 a month, now I'm getting only \$200, how can I be happy?"* The answer not only illustrates the privileges a commander could get from his earlier status - salaries were paid to (and therefore in the hands of) unscrupulous commanders - it also gives perspective to the "needs" of commanders. In most of the many cases we have met, commanders feel they have sacrificed several years of their lives to liberate the country from the Russian and the Taliban.

Humanitarian assistance to facilitate and support reintegration is required in most DDR operations. WFP was helpful and efficient in supporting ANBP. The benefits commanders received as reintegration package included: food, money, medals, training, promises of overseas travel, and employment opportunities with ANA or ANP. This package is for many reasons questionable.

Commanders, who have been for years supervising and managing thousands of soldiers, sometimes taking advantage of their status, have developed habits. Often these are bad habits. Some commanders admitted to us that they had committed crimes (including pillage, although they were careful to leave the specifics unsaid). At the time of reintegration, expectations of such men can sometimes be unrealistic. A deeper and more detailed profiling of commanders would have helped the designing of reintegration packages. Reintegration of low commanders, mid commanders and top commanders cannot be addressed the same way. The demobilization-reinsertion phase should and could have been used more efficiently to focus more carefully on the needs and expectations of commanders, rather than in simply being an administrative procedure.

#### **11.4 Are commanders satisfied with the training provided by ANBP?**

Commanders are generally grateful for all the ‘information’ they received. They are now waiting for jobs! They are all conscious that the training was unable to provide them concrete job opportunities, although they believe that jobs were promised. Most of commanders we met said they did not feel the month-long training had given them adequate knowledge to run a business by themselves. The Deputy Director and the Director of Programs in AITM would have liked to organize a “refresher course” but this was not planned in the original design and has not been possible due to lack of funding. Maybe ANBP should have thought about follow-up training for these commanders?

One commander whom we met among those who had been through the AITM course, told us that the one month had been long enough and interesting enough for him to open a business. “During the one month of training,” Ex-Colonel Din told us: *“I realized that I could run a business and make a profit.”* We visited his shop in the market of Mazar-i-Sharif, studied his stock and discussed his turnover and profits. This former colonel is able to support his wife and family of seven from the profits of his shop, and is one of the success stories of DDR: a happy, reintegrated officer. In addition – and not insignificantly – this XC is a skilled artisan, using his skills acquired in the army signals regiment as a civilian electrician. This confirms our finding that educated men do better from DDR than the unskilled or illiterate majority.

## **12. Gender Issues**

### **12.1 How well were issues of gender integrated into the design of the program? What impact did the program have on women in their communities?**



Gender issues did not register in ANBP's planning, despite the emphasis given in UN documents about DDR to gender issues (see for example IDDRS 2.30). This was a masculine, military project in which families, domestic violence and gender-based violence were ignored, despite the fact that they are areas of very major concern throughout Afghan society – even in peacetime.

Conservative religious and social attitudes remain strongly rooted in Afghanistan and this is maybe one of the reasons why there was no gender approach in the design of the CIP. There were no female commanders. Just as important, ANBP was run almost entirely by males, mostly military males whose concept of DDR did not include women.

Management will object that the Program Officer for Reintegration was a woman. True, but insufficient: the CIP was entirely designed by and for men. As a result, we find that not only were women ignored, but the program had a negative effect on the likelihood that - as a result of DDR and CIP - women will be treated worse by their frustrated, largely unemployed husbands and brothers, rather than better.

UN resolution 1325 encourages all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex combatants, and to take into account the needs of their dependants.

The only specifically women-oriented activity of which we are aware concerned the teacher-training courses organized with and sponsored by the Ministry of Education. The teacher-training course offered opportunity to 355 women relatives of commanders to participate in 6-month training. Women were paid \$120 per month.

An Afghan teacher working in school earns about \$30/40 a month. Although these women were glad of the training, it was really the money that made the difference to them and attracted them into the training course, rather than the course itself.

So far as we can judge, this training has very little impact on their communities. For many of them, no job resulted because the certificate issued at the end of course has not been recognized by the MoE (despite the MoU signed between MoE and ANBP). It seems that the combined efforts of UNDP and ANBP, the D&R Commission, and some frustrated regional governors have not been sufficient to galvanise the Ministry of Education into action to give these trained women jobs. Maybe the blockage is in the provinces, and not in the Ministry: but

either way, it is the Education Ministry that can unblock the problem. Afghan schools need teachers, yet today most of these women are jobless.

Regarding the teacher training course, we think that the remaining question is: *How much, if at all, did the reintegration of XCs have an impact (positive or negative) on individuals whose relationship with the XCs is indirect (ie not a direct family member)?*

Women lack skills, there are no or few childcare facilities, and many women are frustrated. In different ways, wives suffered equally as much as men during the war and their post-conflict needs have not been assessed. They were certainly not included in ANBP's planning and implementation.

To the question *"how is your life today now that men are back?"* the women's answer was: *"we have more children!"*

There has been no medical care offered through the DDR process, no counseling or communication. *"All XCs have mental problems and need trauma counseling,"* one former ANBP senior manager told us, recognizing that the DDR and CIP processes had ignored health issues.

The children of XCs would have also benefited of some kind of education. Reintegration for AMBP was entirely about training individual soldiers and commanders; the aspect of family life, crucial for successful reintegration, was forgotten or ignored.

Gender roles in war times usually change, and have to be renegotiated at the post conflict phase. This period of time should be considered as a window of opportunity by international actors, including the CIP and DDR teams of ANBP, to help and support women willing to emancipate and take advantage of what they had learned in exile as refugees or survivors during the decades of war.

The issue of war widows has not been addressed at all. The number of female heads of households remains unknown to ANBP, and this is highly regrettable. A gender monitoring and evaluation tool should have been identified – and in future this approach should be integrated in each and every DDR operation.





**Economic activity is slow and customers are few (and in this picture, discreet)  
As the economy picks up speed, jobs will be more numerous and incomes will rise**  
Photo C.Mandakovic

### **13. Coordination with Government**

**How well was the coordination between ANBP, D&R Commission and line Ministries on interaction with relevant institutions to encourage facilitation of access to livelihood/employment opportunities for ex-commanders?**

Coordination at the formal level is assured through the D&R Commission, and this works well. Such a commission, seated above any individual ministry, has the necessary influence to bring ministries together and to ensure that decisions are implemented.

At the working level, however, coordination is more problematic. Kabul ministries are weak, and their limited capacity is overloaded by a plethora of centralized donor requests. ANBP's strength is that it worked independently in Kabul, and coordinated in the regions through its decentralized, regional offices.

Ministries in Afghanistan have traditionally been run as extensions of the royal court. This is still broadly true today. Coordination is therefore easier with commanders than for ordinary XCs, because many are educated and have access to the court - but that does not mean they use their access, or that all of them have access. A ministry does not deliver services, the court does. The commanders have no problem with that because they don't use the ministries they use the court.



## **14. Three Case Studies**

### **14.1 Commander Mohammad Halim Malangyar of Jalalabad**

Interviewed in Jalalabad, 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2007

#### **“Unassuming anti-communist *jihadi* rises to political prominence.”**

In Jalalabad, Haji Sahib Major General Mohd Halim Malangyar - an ex-Jihadi Commander - was the head of the Division # 11. He and his unit (approx 3000 men) were disarmed and demobilized in 2004.

“I started fighting against the Russians he says, but after we defeated them I did not fight any more. After the Najib regime I became Chief of the Provincial Police Department in Nangahar, Province (Jalalabad). When the Taliban came I decided to join the Northern Alliance and fought along with them. It’s only after we defeated the Taliban that I became Commander. I was aware of the DDR process, my men were ready and I knew it was a downsizing process. 663 of my officers have been dismissed by the MoD, and they were not allowed to enter the DDR process. Today, they don’t receive anything from the Government and I think it’s unfair. They demonstrated in Kabul and the Government promised to give them land and other benefits, but nothing came.

“Last year I did the business training in Kabul. We received lots of information about Human Rights, Democracy, Equality, small business management. I learned a bit of English and also about computers. I can say it was interesting but most of the commanders who attended the course are jobless.

“Giving up arms was difficult: for a combatant, his weapon is like his wife. Would you give your wife back to her family? Now I am home and my wives are happy, I see my children

every day. In a way DDR was good, because before the process there were 7 factions; now there is only one.

“In my unit there were some disabled soldiers. All of them have been dismissed before the DDR process started; it was the decision of the Ministry of Defense to downsize. They were doing the administration side of the unit and were also in charge of communications. The Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor, Martyrs and Disabled is giving them a symbolic pension of only 3 dollars per month. They are not happy. The Government is not giving enough to war widows. My brother was killed during Jihad, and I’m taking care of his two war widows and their children. The government gives me nothing to help with them. There should be a mechanism to identify disabled and families in need. They should be able to receive courses and to get jobs like any other ex-combatant.

“There was no soldier under the age of 18 in my unit - there are rules and laws and I followed them. Today I have served as the Deputy Governor of this Province; a lot needs to be done. I did my time as a combatant; I don’t want to fight anymore”.

#### **14.2. Woman former MoD officer, Ms Bibi Gul<sup>7</sup> of Kabul**

Interviewed in Kabul 19 August 2007

##### **“Feminine military daughter chooses a career in uniform and in security.”**

Ms Bibi Gul is 40 years old, a mother and a housewife. She is also a former Major in the Afghan army. Bibi Gul grew up in the city of Kabul with her parents and three brothers and sisters. Her father was a Colonel in the army, as well as her grandfather who was a corps leader. *“There was a strong military background in our family, I was a tom boy by nature, wearing boy clothes and riding a bicycle”* she says.

She got married at the age of 17. Her new husband was her neighbour, a driver at the Ministry of Interior who would see her coming back every day from the Youth Association wearing her uniform. Although he was already engaged, Bibi got his preference. She thinks it was because of the uniform...

In 1990, at the age of 21 she decided to join the National Security Department and one year later she got appointed by the Ministry of Defense in the Reconnaissance Department. She left the country like many others when Taliban came to power, and fled to Pakistan with her family.

She came back to Afghanistan in 2002, went to the Ministry of Defense and got her job back. *It was easy, she says, there are few women in the army, we have privileges.* She was demobilized in 2004, was unemployed for a year but got re-appointed after she passed the exams.

After the results of the exams, Jehadi commanders have been demonstrating in Kabul. They were unhappy because they did not get appointed with the MoD. Bibi agrees with the MoD policy not to appoint illiterate people. *How would MoD appoint them? They have no education, some of them don’t even know how to shoot and have never killed anyone!*

---

<sup>7</sup> This is a pseudonym to protect her identity

According to Bibi Gul, DDR was good, but only in a way. She did 14 days business training with the NGO AGEF and received \$700 at the end of it; she was able to open a shop. Unfortunately, the municipality claimed the land back and the shop was lost. On the other hand, DDR was only for MoD officers and men. Lots of weapons have been collected only from professional soldiers, but Bibi points out that many weapons are still in the hand of illegal fighters.

She did not receive any particular treatment. Having spent most of her life surrounded by men, Bibi Gul does not see why she should receive special care or attention. She says that the DDR process was just a formality, special care was not needed. *“Women and men should be treated the same in DDR operations - we all eat the same food don't we?”*

She does not know how many women have been demobilized. Under the Najib regime there were 70 women working with the MoD, but when the Taliban came to power most of them escaped to Pakistan and others countries, to seek asylum. She never heard about them again.

Nobody in Ms Bibi's neighborhood knows her real identity. Only her husband and children are aware of her past military background. They are also the only one to know she is currently working for the Reconnaissance and Intelligence Department. In her civilian life, she goes by the name of Gul. *“I feel safer”,* she says, *“too many have lost their life in this country”.*

In Afghanistan, people think women cannot be military; being Gul is easier and safer. She is Ms Bibi Gul inside the MoD, only when she wears her military uniform. When she passes the MoD gate after a busy day in the office, she is wearing civilian clothes. Gul is like any other Afghan lady, discrete, polite and shy.

### **14.3. Commander Ainullah of Khanabad -**

Interviewed in Kunduz 29 July 2007

#### **“Wild, violent youth a violent Jihadi hero becomes kind, gentle Granddad.”**

With his humorous, crinkled eyes and deep grey beard matching his turban, Ainullah looks like the amiable grandfather he has obviously become. He also proves to be the archetypical Pashtun stepping straight out of university classes about Afghan personal honour, family feuding and the laws of *pashtunwali* - the Pashtun Code of Honour.

“When I was a young man, in the time of Zahir Shah, I was sent to prison for twenty years,” he said, shaking his head at the wonder of it. “There was an argument about some small matter, nothing at all, but there was a fight and my maternal uncle was killed in the fight. Naturally I was a young hothead and I couldn't let that pass without a response: so I took my rifle and killed two of the opposing family. For that I was sent to prison for twenty years.”

Ainullah's face is creased with experience and with humour. As Ainullah talks, his eyes twinkle and the corners wrinkle. His chuckle is deep, like the lines on his brown, sun-warmed face.

“After ten years in prison, I was released and the Russian forces were here so I was elected Commander. We found three old rifles, and we used these to attack a depot where we captured hundreds of weapons. We also took a Russian convoy. Then I went to Pakistan, where I met Ustad Sayyaf of Harakat party. We attacked the Russians, and after that we attacked each other and were fighting and doing foolish things. I lost more men to Jihadis than against the Russians. People do not want to remember that bad time.

“When the Taliban came to Kunduz we could do nothing and I gave them 550 weapons. They put me in prison one and a half years. I came out thanks to my friend Mullah Barqi, because I was going to be transferred to Kandahar for execution. Then I went straight to the Jihadis in Taloqan and fought against the Taliban. Generally I had 400 or 500 men under my command. When the Americans came, we attacked Kunduz and Mullah Barqi was killed in the face-to-face fighting. Then I handed over 440 weapons to the DDR programme.

“I do not criticize this government,” he says, “because Jamiat had a chance to rule and it failed. So did Hizb and Harakat, and we all showed we could not lead. This government is doing a good job and bringing peace. I know people say that commanders made a lot of money, and for some that is true. I saw commanders who forced people to give *osher* which is a tithe of 10% of their grain and livestock, but I NEVER DID THAT. I have no business and no building, only my land and my gardens. I still live in the mud home of my father. I commanded my own people, so I could never impose a tithe.

“I commanded a mix of people from Khanabad where we have always been living together in mixed communities. I had Hazaras and Tajiks in my command, and most of them were Pashtuns like me. We have exchanged our daughters in marriage for generations. We also have some Shia Hazaras living in our area, but my Hazara neighbours are Sunnis since my grandfather’s time. I was their commander because the people believed in me. My father was also a leader and very respected. He also spent 20 years in prison for killing a man in an affair of honour, but prison did not affect the respect people had for us.

“After a long life of adventure and fighting, it is time for me to settle down. What we need are some jobs, because we are in a poor condition. We spend money but we don’t have income. Not one person owns 100,000 afghanis (\$5,000) Government has made promises, but nothing happened so far.”

I say that I have seen road building progress, and the bridge over the Amu Darya at Sher Bandar. I have seen the excellent road from the river port to Pul-i-Khumri, and I have driven over the Salang pass. Surely, I ask, things are improving on the economic side of life?

“Yes, we are very happy. Five years ago we had no school, no bridge, no road, so a few more years of peace will make us all feel better. I have 30 *jeribs* of land (30 ha) that I work with my labourers and I hire a tractor. Also I have two milk cows. Now I am farming so that my sons can get an education. I have changed my ideas!

“When they killed my Uzbek neighbour, I went and killed them even if they were Pashtu. It is our culture, unfortunately. Now we find discussion better for resolving the issue. I have become older, and wiser. I committed crimes, but I am still highly respected in the community. I have six sons, and I am telling them that I made mistakes and they should not follow the old ways of killing. One did class 3, another is in form 10, and I tell them education is good and they should not follow my example.”

“The government promised us a good life, and travel abroad to see new places but I was not yet given the chance to travel. The AITM course in Kabul was fine and I learned a lot, but I am illiterate so I could not learn as much as some. Everyone was offered a chance and I chose small business, but there is no business in Khanabad. The Talibs looted our houses and gardens, so I am still hoping from some help from government to start a business. But I am happy to be home, and not running to the mountains for fighting. Peace is better and peace is what we want, so I am happy with this government.”

-----

### **15. Profile of Three High Level Commanders**



Poster of the late Ahmad Shah Massoud in Mazar-i-Sharif

Massoud, military head of the Northern Alliance, was assassinated on 9 September 2001.

## **General Mohammad Ismail Khan**

(With acknowledgement to the Global Security internet website)

A warlord of Tajik origin, Ismail Khan (born in 1946) is known as the "Lion of Herat". He was from time to time the governor of Herat province, and is currently Minister of Power in Kabul. At the time of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on 27 December 1979, Ismail Khan was an officer in the Afghanistan army, reaching the rank of Major. Later he became a Mujaheddin commander.

After becoming governor of Herat under the Mujaheddin government that broke down into civil war, Ismail Khan was forced to flee when the Taliban took power in 1995. While organizing opposition against the Taliban, he was handed over to them by his old adversary General Pahlawan who did a deal with the Taliban in 1997. Two years later in March 2000 he escaped and worked as a low-profile member of the Northern Alliance. This escape has been carefully used to build up the image of a national hero.

Along with Panshiri Tajik General Mohammed Fahim and ethnic Uzbek warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostam, Ismail Khan...was one of three factional leaders that comprised the core of the Northern Alliance. Fighters loyal to Ismail Khan reclaimed Herat for the former governor shortly after the Northern Alliance entered Kabul in 2002.

Ismail Khan has been known for reluctant support for (or obeisance to) Afghanistan's central government. Ismail Khan controlled the border trade with Iran which, according to one estimate, yielded \$1 million a day in revenue which was not shared with the Central government. Thanks to these revenues, the streets of Herat are paved (not with gold, but they are paved) and there is a general feeling of activity and economic recovery in the area.

In early 2002 there were media reports of a relationship in Herat between Ismail Khan and the government of Iran. In Herat, Ismail Khan ruled as a semi-independent baron -- and entertained emissaries from Iran, who were anxious to expand their sphere of influence. Iran supported the Northern Alliance against the Taliban, and has long supported the Hazara militias, linked through their mutual Shia Muslim faith. The reach the central Hazarajat, the Iranians need the support of Herat.

Khan is a member of Jamiat-e-Islami, the largest political party in the alliance, led by Burhanuddin Rabbani. He is seen as the most independent of all regional governors, but is widely believed to be influenced by his neighbour Iran. Ismail Khan's powerbase is drawn mainly from the ethnic Tajik population of Herat and surrounding provinces, as well as from Afghanistan's minority Hazara, Shia Muslim population. Ismail Khan has been canny and successful in obtaining the loyalty and building up personal support from the commanders living around Herat. He wants increased representation for his region in the interim government. He is not considered a credible national figurehead too many of the country's Pashtun majority.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld met with Ismail Khan, in Herat, Afghanistan, on April 27 in 2002. Presidential Special Envoy to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad joined Rumsfeld and Khan in the talks.



A number of regional leaders, particularly Ismail Khan in Herat maintained secret or unofficial prisons that most likely held political detainees. Herat prison held 600 to 700 prisoners. In 2002, Human Rights Watch [HRW] alleged that some local police authorities in Herat routinely employed electric shock on detainees. HRW also reported that some Herat security officials beat prisoners who were hung upside down. In May 2002, Herat Governor Ismail Khan's security forces arrested Mohammad Rafiq Shahir, and police reportedly beat Shahir so severely that cuts and bruises were still visible during the Emergency Loya Jirga in June 2002.

During the Afghan Transitional Administration, Khan was military commander of western Afghanistan (until August 13, 2003 when President Hamid Karzai decreed that officials could no longer hold both military and civil posts). He boasted at the time that he commanded a provincial army of 25,000 men, but this does not stand up to scrutiny.<sup>8</sup>

With the 30 June 2005 ending of the disarmament of former army units, over 60,000 officers and soldiers had been demobilized and over 49,000 entered into agriculture, vocational training and small business programs.

### **Governor Gul Agha Sherzai of Kandahar (and now Nangahar) province**

(With acknowledgement to Zulfiqar Shahzada, "Altered States", Newsline January 2002)

Sherzai was the Pashtun governor of Kandahar province, Afghanistan from December 2001 to August 16, 2003. He is currently Governor of Nangahar province and he received us in his office in Jalalabad, in the elegant palace of his ancestor King Amanullah Khan, which the governor has restored.

Sherzai ruled Kandahar prior to the Taliban rise. The corruption and feuding of his regime strengthened Taliban opposition to his rule. Sherzai's officials were notorious for bribery, extortion and widespread theft, as well as smuggling opium. He was a governor in name only during the anarchic reign in the *mujaheddin* period. After the Taliban took control in 1994, he was forced into exile in Quetta, Pakistan until the end of 2001, when he aligned himself with US forces after September 11. Sherzai is one of the notoriously unpopular drug lords who has returned to power under US patronage.

Sherzai has enjoyed a close relationship with Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) agency since the time of the Soviet occupation according to Newsline magazine. He was contacted by the Americans and asked to raise his forces for the defeat of the Taliban. Within hours of the Northern Alliance's seizure of Kabul, Gul Agha led a force numbering between 200 and 1,000 men across the Pakistani border from Quetta towards Kandahar. Accompanied by his tribesmen and hundreds of Afghan refugees recruited from camps, driving trucks stocked with weapons, Sherzai left Quetta for the Chaman border and entered Afghanistan through Shin Narai, following Hamid Karzai's lead. Capturing Takht-e-Pul in the wake of an air bombardment, Sherzai's forces managed to cut off the road between Kandahar and Spin Boldak.

---

<sup>8</sup> See for example **Genesis Of A 'Prince': The Rise Of Ismail Khan In Western Afghanistan, 1979 – 1992** by Antonio Giustozzi Crisis States Research Centre, LSE London, Working Paper no. 4, Sept 2006



He reclaimed his position as Governor of Kandahar when he surged into the area with his private army and took control of government offices. Taliban leaders agreed to vacate the former Taliban stronghold of Kandahar following negotiations with Hamid Karzai. Under the deal, Gul Agha Sherzai was reappointed governor. He was to be assisted by Mullah Naqibullah, the man to whom the Taliban formally surrendered, who would now oversee the province's administrative affairs. But tensions between the different groups, particularly between Gul Agha's men and Naqibullah's supporters, threatened prospects for peace and security after the departure of the Taliban.

Mullah Naqibullah, who was in his late sixties, eventually declined to accept the post, ostensibly on the grounds of advanced age. It was believed that he was disinclined to work under Sherzai. He declared that he would nevertheless nominate someone else from within his tribe for the slot. Differences between the two remain and behind-the-scenes maneuverings are in full swing with Engineer Yousaf Pashtun and Khalid Pashtun, Sherzai's cousins, taking advantage of their tribe's cosy relationship with the Americans at present, attempting to oust Mullah Naqib from the power game altogether by labelling him Mullah Omar's close associate.

Sherzai has consistently supported the interim administration of Hamid Karzai. Like Rashid Dostum in the north, Ismail Khan in the west and Haji Qadir in the east, Sherzai has re-emerged as one of the most prominent political and military figures in the country.

There is little evidence to support the belief that Governor Sherzai has been effective in poppy eradication efforts in Kandahar, despite what he says about his enthusiasm for the US destruction of poppy fields. While the Karzai regime introduced a token ban on production in January 2002, it lacks the effective means of enforcing its decrees. The government can enforce the ban only selectively and relies for this on the influence of drug-tainted warlords like Sherzai.

## **Ustad Atta Mohammed of Balkh province**

(With acknowledgements to Eckhart Schiewek)

Ustad Atta Muhammad was the Mazar-i-Sharif-based senior commander of the Northern Alliance opposition forces that overthrew the Taliban in 2001. He succeeded some famous local commanders who had begun the *jihad* against communist rule in 1980, immediately after the invasion of December 1979 – notably the Mountain Tajik commanders Mawlawi Zabihullah of Marmol who was killed by a landmine, and his friend Mawlawi Mohammed Alam of Ri Jang who was Governor of Balkh province when the Taliban captured Mazar in 1995 (the Taliban followed him into the mountains and gunned him down in his village).

Atta Mohammed became the Commander of 7th Corps of Northern Afghanistan until he was appointed by Hamid Karzai as the Governor of Balkh province in a calculated (and apparently successful) effort to bring wayward provinces under central government influence in the upcoming presidential elections.

Atta Muhammad was among the Tajik *mujaheddin* Islamists who fought against Abdul Rashid Dostum in the anti-Soviet struggle in the 1980s. He was allied with the Jamiat-i-Islami party of former Afghan president Burhannuddin Rabbani, Ahmed Massoud, and the powerful

Panshiri warlord and former Defence Minister Muhammad Fahim, and shares their vision for Afghanistan's Islamic future. General Rashid Dostum became deputy defence minister in the 2001-2002 interim government, while Fahim appointed his strong military commander, Ustad Atta Muhammad as the Corps Commander of Mazar-i-Sharif to serve as a check on the Uzbek warlord.

Atta Muhammad has been described by Dostum's supporters as 'too fundamentalist' for the moderate secular reform they espouse. This implies an ideological difference that compounds the ethnic differences and the search for power. It also highlights a clash between the tolerant Sufi traditions of Islam in Central Asia and the harsher desert Islam that has been brought into Afghanistan since 1980 with Saudi and American money, and with the migrating Arab mercenaries (known to the local population as 'Osama's Arabs') who infiltrated these regions during the years of *jihad*.

Atta Muhammad is an ethnic Tajik. He and Uzbek Abdul Rashid Dostum – together with Shia Hazara leader Ustad Mohaqiq – fought side-by-side under the Northern Alliance against the Taliban. After the victory, their forces had clashes involving tanks, artillery and suffered heavy casualties. In October 2003, 60 people were reported to have been killed in skirmishes between Atta and Dostum in the Sar-i-Pul west of Mazar-i-Sharif.

The clashes between these two powerful warlords, ostensibly members of the same Karzai government, had tremendous implications for the future stability of Afghanistan and led directly to the successful Heavy Weapon Cantonment process organized by ANBP. Through UNAMA influence, Dostum was the first warlord to agree to hand over his heavy weapons in exchange for being allowed to enter the political process before the elections, and Atta soon followed Dostum's example. Atta Mohammed remains Governor of Balkh province, and we observed that his 'illegal militia' appears to have been transformed into a very effective and efficient provincial security force.

One major haven for these (mid-level) commanders has been the highway police, with responsibility for securing the ring road linking the country's four major cities as well as the main roads connecting Afghanistan with its neighbours. This arrangement is fraught with risks, not least because it facilitates narcotics trafficking by commanders. A private American security company, U.S. Protection and Investigations (USPI), has been paying high wages to highway police commanders for guarding the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) supported Kabul-Kandahar road project without imposing any apparent accountability on them. The result of these relationships has been to strengthen the commanders politically, militarily, and economically, thus undermining DDR.

International Crisis Group report on DDR  
Asia Briefing No 35, 23 February 2005