Perceptions of Afghan Aid Sector Corruption

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Overview of Presentation

Building Blocks

The Project Cycle

The Funding Cycle

Political Ecology

Funding and Legitimacy

Overall Picture

The project cycle section focuses on perceptions of different phases of a normal project and identifies problems within this context.

The funding cycle considers the relationship of donors and beneficiaries in funding, and also the Afghan government, which is in the middle of these groups.

Political ecology is the relationship of different political actors to one another. These relationships create the context in which NGOs operate.

Aid providers face the paradox of being accountable both to their beneficiaries, and their donors, whose interests are not necessarily complimentary.

Orange Boxes and Figures

- Orange indicates result from the general population sample of the survey.
- This sample is representative of Afghan society on the whole.

Blue Boxes and Figures

- Blue indicates results from the decision makers sample of the survey.
- “Decision makers” includes government officials, local elites, and Afghan aid workers. Because such individuals are more intimately connected with aid, we were able to pose a wider array of questions to them on more specific elements of the aid process.
# Definitions of Actors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The state</td>
<td>The official institutions of the government, such as elected officials, local government, ministries, provinces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The international community</td>
<td>Foreign state representatives, foreign organisations, and other institutions associated with the international presence in Afghanistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multilateral organisations</td>
<td>Organisations that function on the authority of at least two states. States often use them to channel certain kinds of assistance. Examples are the World Bank and Asian Development Bank.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-governmental organisations</td>
<td>Organisations not directly beholden to a government and also non-profit in their revenue structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractors</td>
<td>For-profit organisations that bid for projects which they help implement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local elites</td>
<td>Traditional structures or non-governmental power centres, such as warlords, shuras, or notables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warlords</td>
<td>A kind of local elite. Warlords are generally local rulers who base their legitimacy on traditional patronage networks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors</td>
<td>Donors can be direct state actors (governments) or indirect (multilateral organisations). Independent donors also exist, such as Open Society Institute or the Gates Foundation. Donors give money to a range of implementing organisations depending on their own criteria. The same organisation may both a donor in one instance and a beneficiary in the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>Beneficiaries are the intend recipients of funds or the services those funds buy. They can be understand as both organisations which are receiving the funds that they may implement projects (direct beneficiaries) and also as the individuals which are supposed to benefit from the given project (indirect beneficiaries).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDCs</td>
<td>Citizens’ Development councils. These are a network of councils created nationwide by the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) with the aim of increasing local participation in and ownership of the aid process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRTs</td>
<td>Provincial Reconstruction Teams. PRTs are part of the ISAF presence in each province, and along with other aid providers, also undertake development work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local elites</td>
<td>Traditional structures or non-governmental power centres, such as warlords, shuras, or notables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government</td>
<td>State institutions which function at the local level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This figure on the right is a simplified rendition of the economics of political power and relations between different political actors in Afghanistan. The different blocks shown do not exist independently of one another but rather have interactions far too complex for simple graphical representation.

The Afghan state directly oversees its own army and police force and also a hierarchy of other institutions. The Afghan state is extremely highly centralised.

The international community provides military support and aid. Military support is provided directly by the US and through the multilateral ISAF effort under NATO while aid is provided by states’ aid agencies, multilaterals, and the PRTs amongst ISAF.

Non-state actors comprise elements as disparate as independent donors and insurgents. In reality all work within the framework of the state system.
This figure shows, from top to bottom, the different possible flows of aid within a project.

**Governments** may give aid directly to contractors, multilateral organisations, or non-governmental organisations. In the case of Afghanistan, governments can give money directly to the Afghan government in the guise of the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), which is however overseen by the World Bank.

**Multilateral organisations** give funding to either private contractors, recipient governments, or NGOs. In an event, their funding comes through state actors.

**Contractors** receive their funding either from state actors, multilaterals, or the recipient governments. They may in turn make use of NGOs in project implementation.

**NGOs** have the most complex role in the system. Independent donors primarily make use of them rather than contractors. They may act as a bridge between multilaterals and recipient governments, implement projects for recipient governments, independent donors, contracts, or state actors themself.
1. **Needs Assessments** identify the issues to be addressed, such as defining problems and identifying intended beneficiaries.

2. **Fundraising** consists of raising the funds required by the project, either from donors or an organisation's own resources.

3. **Planning**

4. **Access** involves setting up the necessary links, political and logistical, for enabling implementation.

5. **Procurement** is the acquisition of goods and services in implementation.

6. **Capacity building** is the acquisition and training of personnel to staff a project. It is either a direct or indirect goal of most projects, since their aims will involve building indigenous management capacity.

7. **Execution** is the carrying out of the project per se.

8. **Evaluation** is the assessment of the project in terms of its aims.

9. **Impacts** are the results of the project, which range from its inception until possibly long after the project is completed.

While impacts are conceptually at the end of the cycle, they actually begin at soon as the assessment begins.
## Afghan NGO Legislation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Two different laws, one for NGOs, one for social organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The social organisations law is much more limited in scope and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Said difference in not based on a valid conceptual framework;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the difference between social organisations and NGOs is not well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>defined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Administrative dissonance; both kinds of organisation administered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by different ministries which themselves have little ties the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subject material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• NGOs confused with non-profit organisations in some instances</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Law over-concerned with the distinction between foreign and national organisations, rather than the standards they adhere to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Barred from construction activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Incomplete guidelines for relief aid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checks and Balances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Government has discretionary power to intervene; i.e. NGOs may</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not pursue activities “against the national interests” but said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interest is not outlined in the law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Government has too heavy a burden of review of an NGO’s activities, given short- and medium-term capacity constraints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Monitoring vested in the central government rather than local authorities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“The dual accountability paradox” refers to the predicament the aid providers often find themselves in, that they are accountable to two different groups with different interests. One is the beneficiaries and the other is the donors.

Organisations need funding from donors and are thereby held accountable to them, but their legitimacy and capacity (hence their ability to operate) comes from society or at least their intended beneficiaries.

In lieu of coordination between NGOs, the state, and donors, NGOs can find themselves competing with the state for public goods distribution and can find themselves the subjects of suspicion or antagonism on the part of the state, beneficiaries, or both.

Increased alignment of the interests of donors and intended beneficiaries improves the NGO/state relationship and helps different projects to be complementary rather than competitive.

Incentives (funding) should be structured so as to encourage participatory involvement of intended beneficiaries.
Methodology

**Questionnaire Design**
Questionnaires were designed through IWA staff consultation and then refined with input from focus groups composed of community stakeholders and also comment from individuals.

**Fieldwork**
Surveyors were sent out the provinces, following randomisation techniques to choose their subjects. The survey consisted of 3000 persons in two samples in 18 provinces. Provinces were not weighted to the paucity of precise demographic information, rather more populous provinces saw an increased in the number of people interviewed. Fieldwork was carried out over a three-week period in May and June of 2007.

**Data Entry and Extraction**
Results were entered into a database using Microsoft Access and analysed using SPSS.

**Analysis**
Analysis of the SPSS output focused on systematically identifying all tallies and crosstabulations which produced statistically significant results.
1. Needs Assessments
2. Project Selection
3. Beneficiary Selection
4. Procurement and the Economic Effects of NGO Activity
5. Capacity Transfer
6. Project Implementation
7. Monitoring and Evaluation
8. Impacts of NGO Activity
9. Donors and Their Priorities
10. State and NGO as Aid Deliverers
11. Where does the aid go?
12. The Influence of the Afghan State
13. The Influence of NGOs
14. The Impact of Security
15. Corruption
16. Community Involvement and Dual Accountability
17. NGO-State Relations

May 2008
IWA - Integrity Watch Afghanistan
Section 1 - The Project Cycle

The Project Cycle

The Funding Cycle

Political Ecology

Funding and Legitimacy
1 - Needs Assessments

- 52% of respondents thought that NGOs conduct needs assessments based on participatory involvement
- Over 60% agreed in Hirat, Farah, Balkh, Ghazni, Kabul, Nangarhar, and Badakhshan

Needs Assessments are widely perceived to be a participatory process.
When asked which group (the intended beneficiaries, local communities, NGOs, Donors, or the Afghan government) were best suited to conduct needs assessments, most respondents favoured local communities.

There is a gap between who is most influential in needs assessments and who is suited to be. Only 33% of respondents thought that local communities are most influential in needs assessments.

The interests of beneficiaries were perceived less well represented in rural areas.

While local communities are the most influential in needs assessments, they are not as influential as people would like them to be.
1 - Needs Assessments

- There is a gap between who is most influential in needs assessments and who is suited to be. Only 33% of respondents thought that local communities are most influential in needs assessments.
- Respondents with lower incomes thought the government is driving needs assessments, while those with higher incomes perceived local communities to be the most influential.

"Which of the following is the most influential in needs assessments?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Influence in Needs Assessments by Education</th>
<th>The intended beneficiaries</th>
<th>Local communities</th>
<th>NGOs</th>
<th>Donors</th>
<th>The Afghan government</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 5,000 Afghanis</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,001-10,000 Afghanis</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,001-20,000 Afghanis</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,001-30,000 Afghanis</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Less well educated and rural respondents view needs assessments as being driven from the top.
**1 - Needs Assessments**

- Most respondents did not think that needs assessments are regularly monitored and evaluated.
- This was true in all provinces (except Ghazni, where 57% agreed or strongly agree). The provinces where respondent though they were not regularly evaluated were Wardak (80%), Khost (66%), Qandahar (65%), and Bamyan (63%).
- 68% though needs assessments are altered as a result of government pressure. A majority agreed in every province.

"Needs assessments are altered in the event of government pressure."

Needs Assessment are not perceived to receive sufficient attention.
2 - Project Selection & Objectives

- Respondents hold an optimistic view of whether NGO projects achieve their stated aims, with 64% agreeing or strongly agreeing.
- Women are much more confident in this than men, with 73% of women agreeing in contrast to 62% of men.
- 57% thought development assistance is effective in terms of its stated aims.

“NGO projects achieve their stated aims.”

Gender Differences as to Whether NGOs Achieve Their Stated Aims

Afghans think that development assistance achieves what it is supposed to.
2 - Project Selection & Objectives

Afghans agree that NGOs should be specialised in the aid they provide (76%), and 50% agreed that NGOs with multiple objectives are more prone to corruption, but only 42% thought that most NGOs are in fact specialised. There is also a strong positive correlation between belief that NGOs should be specialised and belief that NGOs with multiple specialisations are prone to corruption.

38% thought that donors give funding to the best organisations. Opinions varied dramatically regionally, with Kabul, Parwan, and Baghlan most strongly disagreeing.

Afghans are not exceedingly confident in NGO specialisation or in donors identifying it.
3 - Beneficiary Selection

Politics and ethnicity are beliefs the most important factors in funds distribution. Similarly, these same two factors were also perceived to be important in choice of beneficiaries.

A slight majority (51%) think that NGO projects are undertaken based on the desires of their intended beneficiaries. 87% of those who were confident that needs assessments are conducted with participatory involvement thought this. Perceptions of community accountability are therefore linked to those of the propriety of beneficiary selection.

"Which of the following most influences a donor's choice of beneficiaries?"

- Political considerations, 26%
- Ethnic considerations, 22%
- Religious considerations, 14%
- Financial considerations, 21%
- Personalities, 13%
- Family ties, 4%

"What is the basis of funds distribution?"

- Political, 23%
- Ethnic, 24%
- Geographic, 19%
- Gender, 5%

Donors and Beneficiaries

- Donors and beneficiaries are not particular kinds of organisations in themselves but rather different functions. Hence and NGO can be both a beneficiary and a donor at the same time.

Ethnicity and politics are widely believed to influence beneficiary selection.
3 - Beneficiary Selection

- When given a choice between NGOs and donors, NGOs themselves were thought to most influence beneficiary selection (63% overall). This sentiment was especially strong in the south and east, and also in Sari Pul and Badghis. In Kabul and Sari Pul, over 80% agreed with this.
- Choice of beneficiaries was considered most politicised in Bamiyan and Wardak.

NGOs are thought to be considerably more important than donors in beneficiary selection, although politics are also thought to factor in to a large degree.
4 - Procurement and the Economic Effects of NGO Activity

- Access to information is an essential component of promoting accountability.
- **NGOs do not get high marks for financial transparency** (25% agree) and not many people (33%) think they explain how much money they spend.
- Of respondents who had personally inquired into NGO expenditures, those figures rose to 38% and 50% respectively...although 50% still disagree.

"NGOs are transparent in their finances."

"How much do NGOs seek people's opinions in their expenditures?"

- **Most of the time**, 9%
- **Never**, 33%
- **Sometimes**, 23%
- **Rarely**, 17%
- **Don't know**, 11%

NGOs are not seen as transparent, even by those who would know firsthand.
4 - Procurement and the Economic Effects of NGO Activity

- Procurement policies themselves are seen to be fair and efficient, but almost two-thirds of respondents (65%) think that procurement contributes to price inflation but also economic growth as well (56%).
- Recognition of procurement being a policy increases with education.
- Most respondents disagree that NGOs procure appropriate goods and services (52%).
- Respondents living in rural areas were least likely to agree that NGOs procure appropriate goods and services.

"NGOs' procurement policies are fair and efficient."

- Strongly disagree, 11%
- Disagree, 24%
- Don't know, 11%
- Agree, 40%
- Strongly agree, 12%

"NGO procurement generally inflates prices in the Afghan economy."

- Strongly disagree, 3%
- Disagree, 18%
- Don't know, 13%
- Agree, 40%
- Strongly agree, 25%

Respondents recognise procurement policies and their overall benefits but do not think a lot of procurement is appropriate, with rural residents being most disaffected.
5 - Capacity Transfer & Employment

- Opinions of fairness with regard to NGOs' hiring procedures in mixed.
- Afghan NGOs are thought to be considerably less fair in their hiring procedures than foreign ones.
- These findings reflect a trend towards greater confidence in foreign NGOs seen elsewhere in this study.

Fairness of NGO Hiring Procedures

- "Afghan NGOs follow fair hiring procedures"
- "Foreign NGOs follow fair hiring procedures."

Afghan NGOs need to improve their credibility in terms of hiring procedures.
The national government, local government, and NGOs are perceived to be most influential in the implementation of project, with almost three-quarters of respondents selecting one of these three.

"Which group is most influential in project implementation?"

Ordinary citizens are not perceived to be taken into account during project implementation.
7 - Monitoring and Evaluation

“Do NGOs adequately assess the impacts of their projects?”
- 53% agree
- Women agree more than men (59% to 51%)

“Monitoring and evaluation are necessary for projects’ implementation.”
- Almost universally acknowledged (93% agree)
- The primary exception is Ghor (50%)
- Respondents with more education progressively value monitoring and evaluation more.

“What could most improve the efficacy of NGO projects?”
- Increased transparency and accountability (50%)
- Increased monitoring and evaluation on the part of the government (27%)
- Increased participation by Afghans (15%)
- Improved internal procedures (7%)

“M&E in Afghanistan result in improving projects.”
- 93% agree

Respondents are not currently satisfied with the level of M&E, and think this could be tackled with more transparency and accountability.
Monitoring and evaluation by remote control is not highly esteemed (87% disagreed that it can be effectively done).

"Projects can be effectively monitored and evaluated by remote control."

- Strongly agree, 3%
- Agree, 17%
- Don't know, 10%
- Disagree, 35%
- Strongly disagree, 33%

"Security effects the quality of monitoring and evaluation."

- Strongly agree, 45%
- Agree, 41%
- Don't know, 6%
- Disagree, 5%
- Strongly disagree, 2%

Remote control M&E is not only problematic but also perceived as such, which is significant owing to a more general lack of confidence in the quality of M&E.
There is a fairly even split as to whether NGO projects are properly monitored and evaluated (47% agreeing and 44% disagreeing).

Respondents would prefer to see oversight of NGO project by state institutions such as the national and local governments.

National and local government should be further brought into the M&E process.
8 - Impacts of NGO Activity

- One third of respondents think they have personally benefited from NGO activities.
- Most respondents have seen benefits regionally and nationally.
- Those who saw regional and national gains were much more likely to perceive personal gains.

Perceptions of regional and national gains from aid strongly impact individual perceptions.
8 - Impacts of NGO Activity

- People felt the least personal benefits from NGO activity in the central region (Sari Pul, Bamyan, and Parwan).
- Regional perceptions of benefits are widely distributed across the country.

Aid providers should not forget to focus on areas which are currently stable.
8 - Impacts of NGO Activity

The survey set out the degree to which respondents could identify the indigenousness of aid providers and whether they were aware of the existence of profit motive, since a significant amount of aid work is actually done by for-profit companies.

- 78% could distinguish whether the organisation is Afghan or not, but rather less (64%) understood the distinction between for- and non-profits.
- Focus group discussions showed that many Afghans did not clearly understand the concept of an NGO and their inner workings.

% who could distinguish between for and Afghan NGOs

% who could distinguish between non- and for-profit companies

Non-profits might do more to differentiate themselves and explain their motives.
Potential and Perceived Vulnerabilities within the Project Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs Assessments</th>
<th>Needs assessment should consider their intended beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Selection</td>
<td>The actual project may not be appropriate for the desired ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary Selection</td>
<td>Intended beneficiaries may not be the actual recipients of the aid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement and the Economic Effects of NGO Activity</td>
<td>Procurement effects local communities through the economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity Transfer and Employment</td>
<td>Inadequate capacity detracts from execution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Implementation (execution)</td>
<td>Perceptions of execution are often as important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
<td>Evaluation is susceptible to numerous interests and additionally sets the tone for future projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impacts of NGO Activity</td>
<td>Impacts will invariably extend beyond the intended beneficiaries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Should be made more participatory and driven by local communities, especially in rural areas.

Specialisation and propriety of organisations

Politics, ethnicity, and the preferences of donors factor in too prominently

NGOs are not seen as transparent and as failing to procure appropriate goods and services

Afghan NGOs need to improve credibility in hiring procedures

Ordinary citizens do not have enough influence

M&E should be increased and involve the government to a greater extent.

Aid providers should focus on the perceived collective benefits of aid as this impacts personal perceptions
Section 2 - The Funding Cycle
60% of respondents perceived a correlation between availability of funding and the projects NGOs implement, but at the same time 66% think that NGOs select projects and not donors. 66% believe that NGOs do implement projects based on their specialisation. (66% of women and 57% of men)

"NGOs implement projects based on the availability of funds."

Strongly disagree, 7%
Disagree, 19%
Don’t know, 13%
Agree, 43%
Strongly agree, 19%

“NGOs implement projects based on the availability of funding”

60% of respondents perceived a correlation between availability of funding and the projects NGOs implement, but at the same time 66% think that NGOs select projects and not donors. 66% believe that NGOs do implement projects based on their specialisation. (66% of women and 57% of men)

NGOs are seen to drive project selection but only insofar as funds are available.
9 - Donors and Their Priorities

- Influence is seen as being shared between the national and local governments and warlords.
- Warlords are more significant in the north than the south.
- Official state institutions are thought most influential in areas that have seen more stability, with some important exceptions: Ghor is stable but perceives little government influence, whereas Wardak, Ghazni, and Paktiya consider it important despite these provinces thinking that the rule of law is the weakest, indicating that government influence might not be a good thing.

What’s the most influential group in your area?

- National government: 28%
- Local government: 23%
- Warlords: 23%
- Religious leaders: 13%
- The media: 5%
- Regular people: 5%
- NGOs: 4%

The perceived strength of state institutions suggests donors should funnel more aid through them.
Some of the areas where warlords are thought strongest are places where the state is not (especially Ghor and Badakhshan). No such correlation is apparent with other actors such as the media or religious leaders, probably because warlords’ modus operandi involves setting up what is effectively a mini-state and hence these actors are in a better place to compete with state institutions.

Aid providers need to be careful that their aid reinforces state institutions.
The plurality of Afghans surveyed sees local councils as being the most effective in distributing aid. NGOs are thought less effective than the national, local, or foreign governments, but are still preferred to religious leaders or warlords.

A slight majority (52%) agreed that donors are fair in their distribution of funds.

Donors might increase their credibility by focus on local institutions (such as CDCs) within the framework of local and national government.
Education is seen as the sector which should receive the most aid, while human rights and democratisation and rural rehabilitation and development are seen as the largest current recipients.

No matter what field respondents said was currently receiving the most aid, the plurality of respondents thought it should go to education.

Afghans want more money to be spent on education above all else.
Summary - Vulnerabilities in the Funding Cycle

Donors and their priorities → Donors should funnel their aid through the state and be careful to re-enforce state institutions

State and NGOs as aid deliverers → Donors should focus on locally based governmental institutions

Where does the aid go? → Afghans would like to see more aid focused on education
Section 3 - Political Ecology

The Project Cycle

The Funding Cycle

Political Ecology

Funding and Legitimacy
Afghans look to the national government for strengthening the rule of law.
Religious leaders are not thought either very influential nor very capable of strengthening the rule of law.
Faith in the national government regarding its ability to strengthen the rule of law does not correlate with other opinions about security.

Afghans respect the state and have a clear desire for a stronger state in their lives.
13 - The Influence of NGOs

- Nationally regular citizens and the national government are thought to be the intended targets of aid, followed closely by warlords and the local government.
- The constellation of who is most influential, who benefits are thought to be intended for, and who is thought to actually benefit shows that the political ecology of each province has ramifications for how aid is received.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Paktiya</th>
<th>Badakhshan</th>
<th>Ghor</th>
<th>Sari Pul</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which group do NGOs want to help the most?</td>
<td>Ordinary People (46%)</td>
<td>Warlords (37%)</td>
<td>Warlords (45%)</td>
<td>Local gov’t (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which group benefits the most from NGO activity?</td>
<td>Warlords (61%)</td>
<td>Warlords (34%)</td>
<td>Warlords (55%)</td>
<td>Local gov’t (53%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which is the most influential group in your area?</td>
<td>Local gov’t (71%)</td>
<td>Warlords (47%)</td>
<td>Warlords (52%)</td>
<td>Warlords (49%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Perceived Intended and Actual Beneficiaries of Aid

- Which group benefits the most from NGO activity?
- Which group do NGOs want to help the most?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Regular citizens</th>
<th>The national gov’t</th>
<th>Warlords</th>
<th>Local gov’t</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Religious leaders</th>
<th>The media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aid</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted Aid</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aid targeted towards the Afghan State should be structured so as to benefit the state rather than competing actors.
14 - The Impact of Security

- Afghans do not think the rule of law in Afghanistan is strong.
- The provinces in which 60% were confident in the rule of law are all located in the centre and north: Balkh, Badghis, Sari Pul, and Parwan.
- Respondents in the decision makers sample had a much more optimistic view of security.

Respondents in the decision makers sample had a much more positive view of security than those in the general population.
14 - The Impact of Security

After establishing a basing for security (39% characterise rule of law in their area as being strong or very strong), we next wanted to determine whether NGOs were seen as a contributing factor (for better or worse) and whether they are thought to increase security.

- 41% agree that NGOs are a contributing factor to the security situation (38% disagree and 21% don’t know).
- NGOs were thought to increase security especially in Sari Pul and Bamyan, and also in the southern provinces of Qandahar and Ghazni.

"NGOs contribute to security in my area."

- Strongly disagree, 9%
- Strongly agree, 6%
- Disagree, 29%
- Don’t know, 21%
- Agree, 35%

% of respondents who think that NGOs increase security

On balance, NGOs themselves are thought to have a neutral impact on security.
14 - The Impact of Security

Positive perceptions of NGOs extend beyond security. 86% of people who think NGOs have improved the rule of law think also think NGOs have made improvements in there their area; this is true of only 33% of people who think otherwise.

41% agree that NGOs have an effect on the rule of law

29% think NGOs are capable of strengthening it.

Women are more likely to think NGOs’ security expenditures are appropriate.

Gender Views on NGOs’ Security Expenditures

Respondents in both samples had similar perspectives on NGOs’ relationship to security.
The amount which NGOs spend on security is...

Don’t know, 34%
Too high, 17%
Appropriate, 27%
Too low, 22%

“NGOs’ security expenditures are appropriate.”

% who agree or strongly agree

Legend
Average: 27%
Not Surveyed
Less Than 20%
20 To 40%
40 To 60%
60 To 80%

“NGOs’ security expenditures are too low.”

% who agree or strongly agree

Legend
Average: 23%
Not Surveyed
Less Than 20%
20 To 40%
40 To 60%
60 To 80%

Respondents’ opinions on NGO security spending is split between those who think it is too high, too low, appropriate, or simply don’t know.
The influence of the Afghan state

Afghans want a stronger state and currently find it quite influential

The influence of NGOs

Aid should strengthen the state and not competing actors, but should also be perceived to do so

The impact of security

NGOs are not thought to have much impact on security nor are their reactions considered inappropriate.
When asked about fairness in efficiency foreign NGOs received higher marks than their Afghan counterparts.

Foreign NGOs fared better in both intended and actual fairness and efficiency, with more respondents both agreeing that foreign NGOs are and intend to be more fair and efficient and disagreeing that Afghan ones are.

There was a higher gap between intended and actual fairness for Afghan NGOs, indicating that some respondents don’t think they are living up to their goals but that their intentions are good.

Perceptions of Afghan NGOs’ Efficiency

- Afghan NGOs aim to be fair and efficient.
- Afghan NGOs are fair and efficient.

Perceptions of Foreign NGOs’ Efficiency

- Foreign NGOs aim to be fair and efficient.
- Foreign NGOs are fair and efficient.

Capacity building in Afghan NGOs should focus on helping them fulfil their own mandates.
15 - Integrity

- Afghan and foreign NGOs come out almost evenly in terms of actual corruption, although they do get lower marks for fairness and efficiency.
- The gap between the perceived intended fairness and efficiency of Afghan and foreign NGOs is not as large as what it is perceived to actually be.

Afghan NGOs are thought to have lower capacity but are not lacking in integrity.
“NGO workers have appropriate living standards.”
- 80% of respondents found NGO workers’ living standards appropriate, with 44% strongly agreeing.

“Do the living standards of NGO workers differ from those of ordinary Afghans?”
- 85% percent acknowledged this.

“Are foreigners working for NGOs corrupt?”
- 41% agreed and 26% disagreed.
- The results suggested that respondents took this to mean a sense of overall corruption rather than an actual estimate. There was no correlation between those who said they agreed and those who said a given percentage of workers in corrupt.

“What percentage of foreigners who work in NGOs are corrupt?”
- 58% thought that more than 20% are corrupt.
- There is an especially high rate of perceived corruption in Nangarhar and Badakhshan.

While Afghans perceive an alarmingly high rate of corruption in NGO workers, this does not correlate with their lifestyles.
Many respondents think that a significant percentage of NGOs’ expenditures are lost to corruption. The plurality (23%) that one quarter to one half of expenditures are drained thus.

75% of respondents think that increased financial transparency on the part of NGOs will aid in reducing corruption.

"What amount of NGOs' expenditures are lost to corruption?"

- None: 20%
- Less than 15%: 15%
- 16 - 25%: 21%
- 26% - 50%: 23%
- 51% - 75%: 9%
- More than 75%: 9%

% who say that more than 50% of NGOs' Expenditures are lost to corruption

Respondents see corruption in expenditure as a significant problem along with corruption in personnel.
One third of respondents thought NGOs have to pay bribes at least once a year. Over 20% thought they paid bribes more than five times a year in Ghor, Bamyan, Kabul, and Nangarhar.

How many times in the last year would an average NGO have paid bribes to accomplish its work?

- Never: 67%
- Once: 10%
- Twice: 6%
- Three to five times: 3%
- More than five times: 14%

% who said an average NGO would have paid a bribe more than five times in the last year to accomplish its work

NGOs’ paying bribes is accepted as a relatively common practice.
The amount which said they never had to pay a bribe for any service is much smaller than the number who said they didn’t pay a bribe when asked about frequency. The two largest services for which people said they paid bribes are income taxes and getting visas. In Ghor, 42% of respondents said they were obliged to pay bribes for NGO registration. In other provinces other services came to the fore.

Services for Which Respondents Said They Were Obliged to Pay Bribes

- Income taxes: 17%
- For getting visas: 14%
- For NGO registration: 10%
- For security: 5%
- Other: 5%
- In bidding: 3%
- None: 37%

In Ghor, 42% of respondents said they were obliged to pay bribes for NGO registration. In other provinces other services came to the fore.

Nationally, bribery is widespread and not confined to specific public goods.
NGOs themselves were seen by the plurality of respondents as being the prime source of corruption with regards to NGO activities.

The majority of respondents found at least a moderate degree of corruption in the average donor.

**Where is the prime source of corruption in regards to NGO activities?**

- NGOs: 27%
- Local govts: 20%
- The national govt: 14%
- Religious institutions: 12%
- Local councils: 12%
- Ordinary people: 7%
- Foreign governments: 6%

**"What degree of corruption is present in the average donor?"**

- Very low: 8%
- Low: 29%
- Moderate: 34%
- High: 20%
- Very high: 7%

NGOs and donors are considered major sources of corruption in their own right.
Two thirds of Afghans do not feel empowered as to how aid is distributed.
47% did feel that Afghan influential people have a say in aid distribution.
The two main areas where respondents feel NGO should give information about their projects are at their office and in the area of a project’s implementation.
Only 16% said they had ever asked a NGO how much it spends.

"Ordinary Afghans have control over how aid is distributed."

**How should NGOs actualise transparency?**

- At their offices: 47%
- In the area of a project’s implementation: 23%
- Via the media: 9%
- Via religious organisations: 7%
- Other: 3%

Afghans need to feel more empowered in aid distribution.
16 - Community Involvement and Dual Accountability

Community Development Councils (CDCs) and the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) have major support. CDCs were seen as an effective tool in reducing corruption and the NSP as a very transparent programme.

- 71% thought that CDCs are an effective institutional mechanism, and hence a potential avenue for aid monitoring. People also see CDCs as being representative of the local population.
- Confidence in CDCs is not uniform and people considered corruption prevalent in them in some provinces, especially Wardak, Badakhshan, and Farah.

"What is the role of CDCs in reducing corruption?"
- Very important, 9%
- Important, 4%
- Don’t Know, 6%
- Of little importance, 19%

"In comparison with other programmes, the NSP is?"
- Completely transparent and accountable, 15%
- Transparent and accountable (shafaf), 55%
- Corrupt, 14%
- Don’t know, 13%
- Very corrupt, 3%

% who said corruption in CDCs happens a lot or is prevalent

CDCs represent strong, locally rooted institutions that can aid community involvement.
Most Afghans think that the current regime in Afghanistan is favourable to NGOs and that this represents a change from previous regimes.

The national government is seen to provide the main impetus for NGOs, but many other groups are also thought to play a role. Other groups include NGOs themselves, regular people, local government, and the media.

"Which group most encourages NGO activity?"

- National government: 25%
- NGOs: 18%
- Regular people: 16%
- Religious leaders: 14%
- Local government: 15%
- The media: 14%
- Warlords: 5%

NGOs are somewhat associated with the state but are also acknowledged to be the product of other interests.
Summary: Legitimacy

Both NGOs and the state are thought to play their part in detracting from integrity, but the integrity gap is more associated with transparency than NGO workers’ lifestyle.

Ordinary Afghans need to feel more empowered and donors should make more use of CDCs to actualise accountability.

Both NGOs and the state are ambivalent towards one another.