

Uruzgan: 18 months after the Dutch/Australian Leadership Handover



Goat Herder in Tirin Kot Bazaar / Picture: Casey Johnson

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A TLO Provincial Profile

April 2012



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About The Liaison Office (TLO)

The Liaison Office (TLO) is an independent Afghan non-governmental organization seeking to improve local governance, stability and security through systematic and institutionalized engagement with customary structures, local communities, and civil society groups. TLO's mission is to facilitate the formal integration of communities and their traditional governance structures within Afghanistan's newly emerging peace, governance and reconstruction framework.

TLO main areas of activity are Research/Analysis using the do-no harm approach; Dialogue facilitation and participatory peacebuilding, access to justice and livelihoods.

In addition to the TLO headquarter in Kabul, the organization has a total of three (3) regional (Paktia-Southeast, Kandahar-South, Nangarhar-East) and five (5) provincial (Uruzgan, Khost, Paktika, Helmand, and Kunduz) offices across Afghanistan, with about 160 staff.

TLO was established in 2003 by swisspeace on the request of community leaders in the Southeast. TLO has been funded by various donors from the non-governmental and governmental sectors, international organizations and foundations. Its main donors include the Heinrich Böll Foundation, the United States Institute of Peace and the governments of Australia (AusAID), Netherlands, Norway, Canada, Germany, and Switzerland (SDC).

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Glossary of Acronyms and Terms

Abbreviation	Meaning
ABP	Afghan Border Police
ADA	Afghan Development Association; Afghan NGO
ADAG	Alternative Development and Agriculture; Afghan NGO
AFA	Afghani; official currency of Afghanistan
AHDS	Afghan Health & Development Services; Afghan NGO
AIHRC	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
AOG	Armed Opposition Groups
APTTA	Afghanistan Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement
ARCS	Afghan Red Crescent Society
ARD	Association for Rural Development Inc.; international development contractor
ASOP	Afghanistan Social Outreach Programme
ATCD	Afghanistan Centre for Training and Development
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AWCC	Afghan Wireless Communication Company; Afghan telecommunication provider
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BDC	Business Development Centre, a vocational school ran by ATCD in TK centre
BHC	Basic Health Centre
CADG	Central Asia Development Group; international development contractor
CDAP	Comprehensive Disabled Afghans' Program; UNDP/UNOPS interagency initiative in Afghanistan
CDC	Community Development Council of NSP
CF	Coalition Forces; Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan
CHC	Comprehensive Health Centre

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CoAR	Coordination of Afghan Relief; Afghan NGO
CoP	Chief of Police
CORDAID	Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DAI	Development Alternatives International, a USAID contractor
DAIL	Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation
DCA-VET	Dutch Committee for Afghanistan-Veterinary Programmes
DCU	Dutch Consortium Uruzgan
DDA	District Development Assembly
DG	District Governor
DTC	Drug Treatment Centre
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan
FOB	Forward Operating Base
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH, Formerly GTZ
GPRS	General Packet Radio Service, Mobile Phone Norm
HIG	<i>Hizb-e Islami</i> of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar; Mujahideen Party
HIK	<i>Hizb-e Islami</i> of Younas Khaless; Mujahideen Party
IAHC	Islamic Aid Health Centre; Afghan NGO
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Crescent
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance; part of GIRoA
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence of Pakistan
JACK	Just for Afghan Capacity & Knowledge; Afghan NGO
MRRD	Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development
MTN (Group)	Africa's leading telecommunication provider, bought Areeba in

	Afghanistan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NDS	National Directorate of Security; part of GIROA
NERU	National Engineering and Reconstruction Unit
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NLC	National Logistics Cell
NPO-RRAA	Norwegian Project Office-Rural Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan
NSP	National Solidarity Programme of MRRD
PC	Provincial Council
PCO	Public Call Office
PDPA	People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan
PKR	Pakistani Rupee; official currency of Pakistan
PMAP	Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
RPG	Rocket Propelled Grenade
RRD	Rural Rehabilitation and Development
SADA	Sade- Azadi (Development Company)
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
StC	Save the Children
SVF	Social Volunteers Foundation

Executive Summary

This report provides a comprehensive assessment of the political, social, economic, and security situation in Uruzgan at the end of 2011. It identifies key changes and achievements that occurred over the 18-month period since Australia assumed leadership for the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Uruzgan in August 2010 while the multi-national military effort in the province—the Combined Team Uruzgan (CTU)—is under US command. The report, *The Dutch Engagement in Uruzgan: 2006 to 2010, a TLO Socio-Political Assessment*, was used as the baseline to measure change that occurred between 1 August 2010 and the end of December 2011.¹

TLO conducted about 180 interviews with local residents for this report, with a similar number of interviews from four quarterly provincial updates also incorporated. TLO's survey team included several women to ensure that the perspectives of Uruzgani women were incorporated into the report. The resulting primary data was analysed by the TLO Research Team, comprised of both national and international staff, who conducted further desk research and triangulation interviews with 50 key Uruzgan actors and 29 development organizations. The report also includes local perspectives derived from a December 2011 survey conducted at a provincial stability meeting (*jirga*) with 523 Uruzgani respondents from all districts.

The report is broken down into sections that discuss progress in socio-economic development, gender equality, governance, access to justice, and security. Key recommendations follow the executive summary. It is hoped that the report will be used to encourage informed debate, test assumptions, help identify development gaps, and provide insight into local perceptions of the evolving socio-political situation in Uruzgan.

The Dutch ceded international responsibility for Uruzgan to the Australians in the summer of 2010 at the height of the international military surge. For many within the international community, this was an optimistic moment as the necessary resources to finally turn the tide of the decade-long conflict poured into Afghanistan's south, the Taliban's heartland. The effects of that strategy are now being realized. The presence of the Afghan government has increased and its citizens are slowly able to access key services such as healthcare and education. Yet Uruzgan stands at a crossroads. Improved security and service delivery is set against the announced drawdown of international troops and reductions to development assistance. On-going talks with the Taliban could result in a political settlement involving

¹ The full report can be accessed at: www.tloafghanistan.org

some type of power sharing agreement. Uruzgan's largely voiceless citizens have little or no say in any of these decisions and have no option but to keep their collective head down and hope for an outcome that will at least provide them with stability and the rights they have begun to enjoy.

Key Findings

There was **visible progress in socio-economic development and reconstruction** throughout the province since 1 August 2010, when the Netherlands formally handed over command of the civil-military Provincial Reconstruction Team that oversees governance and development efforts. Since then, seven new development agencies began operations in Uruzgan, bringing the provincial total to 40. Insecurity, however, limited the reach of development activities, which were mostly confined to areas in the immediate vicinity of well-secured provincial or district centres. A lack of qualified Afghan personnel also limited the effectiveness of the Afghan government and development actors. Despite these challenges, improvements were made in most sectors, although the extent of achievements varied across sectors and districts.

While local residents acknowledged that improvements have been made over the last 18 months, many expressed disappointment that the pace of development efforts had slowed since the Dutch departure. Residents, however, seemed to lay most of the blame for the slow down on then Provincial Governor Sherzad who was appointed in late 2010 and served until 2 April 2012 when he was replaced by Amir Mohammad Akhundzada. TLO did observe that there appeared to be fewer reconstruction and development initiatives, which is partly attributable to the normal time lag between project design and initiation as Australia developed new aid projects. Several large-scale projects have recently commenced or will soon commence implementation.

There were **encouraging gains in the education sector**, including an increase of 45 schools and 77 teachers throughout the province. There are now 205 schools and 1,294 teachers for Uruzgan's 71,920 students. The number of Madrassas also more than doubled from eight to 18. Overall, provincial school enrolment jumped from 29 to 39%, a step closer to the national average of about 50%. Despite these positive indicators, local residents expressed concern with the lack of properly qualified teachers and the resulting poor quality of education.

The number of girls in school decreased from 8,585 in 2010 to 7,788 in 2011. The decrease is attributable to a July 2011 audit by the Ministry of Education aimed at accurately determining the number of girls actually attending school. As a result, female enrolment only increased in Tirin Kot, where the new Malalai Girls School—built with Australian funds—

opened. Overall only 7% of school-aged girls are enrolled in school and most are forced to leave school when they reach puberty, often as early as 10 years of age. Only a small number complete high school and none of 2011's female graduates wrote the Kankor University Entrance Exam that was held for the first time in Uruzgan in 2011. Female literacy is a seemingly impossibly low 0.6% of the population; more targeted efforts are required to ensure that women can complete their education.

Access to healthcare improved, with the opening of one and reopening of two health care facilities, the construction or renovation of nine others, and the opening of 32 health posts. There are now 20 healthcare facilities and 234 health posts in Uruzgan. The number of professional healthcare workers increased by 32 to a provincial total of 145 staff. More women are using health services and the number of female health workers has increased.

Uruzgan is an agrarian society and it was therefore discouraging that there was **little progress in strengthening the agriculture sector**. Insufficient seed distribution and a drought in 2010 contributed to a very poor harvest in 2011. Farmers indicated that they felt they had little choice but to turn to opium-poppy cultivation, which was evident in the 45% increase in poppy production between 2010 and 2011. Respondents and development stakeholders both indicated that the lack of progress was due to government inattention and a lack of projects in this key sector. Development agencies did provide limited investment in food security, animal husbandry, and capacity-building programmes; but this was considered to be less than in the last year, especially in Chora and Deh Rawud.

Communities reported contentment with **energy sector** projects, but were less encouraged with those in the **water sector**; even though numerically more water projects had been implemented. This could be explained with higher expectations in the water sector and the necessity for irrigation water to ensure livelihoods. The digging of wells did expand access to potable water in some districts; however, respondents criticized the lack of projects to improve irrigation systems. While most of the province remains underserved by electricity distribution, efforts were made to improve availability and reliability of electricity provision.

There were **several notable improvements to Uruzgan's infrastructure** including a new airstrip and the completion of two major roads. Overall, however, Uruzganis are frustrated at what they perceive to be a lack of timely improvements to infrastructure. A significant number of residents also criticized the widely reported waste and corruption associated with costly infrastructure projects.

Private sector development was mixed. Many new shops opened throughout Uruzgan, including luxury good stores and several stores that cater exclusively to women. The variety

of goods for sale also increased. Otherwise, there were few if any signs of private sector growth or indications that the primarily agrarian-based economy will diversify in the near term. Disappointingly, a micro-lending institution that tried to spur local entrepreneurship ultimately failed.

Little change was reported in the media and communications sector, which was also the target of insurgent attacks. At least two mobile transmission towers were destroyed in 2011. A major insurgent attack destroyed Radio Television Afghanistan and resulted in the death of the local BBC reporter, leaving a gap in international media coverage. Journalists reported that freedom of the press was under threat due to increased pressure from government officials, local powerbrokers, and the insurgency.

There were **limited improvements to gender equality** and in narrowing the gender gap. Uruzganis remain very conservative and both men and women had very low expectations for improvement in this area. The situation of women in Uruzgan remains extremely difficult and women face innumerable challenges to become equal members of society. Few women are educated and women that try and work face persistent societal pressure to relinquish their positions and stay at home. Significantly more development projects, specifically targeted at the needs of women must be advanced if the situation is going to improve. In addition, projects focussing on changing men's perceptions vis-à-vis female education and employment may also prove beneficial.

The **governance sector demonstrated some minor progress**, but local residents continue to lack confidence in their government, which they considered as not having improved much in capacity and service delivery. Provincial Line Departments face many challenges including a lack of continuity due to frequent turnover of senior staff, insufficient district-level staff, and limited capacity. Corruption remains endemic throughout government, and efforts of Governor Sherzad to increase government accountability have been met with resistance by powerbrokers that benefit from the current structure. Women are slowly becoming more visible in government. Three women now head provincial government bodies and there are female Uruzgan representatives in both houses of the National Assembly as well as the Provincial Council.

Muhammad Omar Sherzad was appointed **Provincial Governor** in December 2010. Residents had an overall favourable impression of the new Governor and considered him effective. He was, however, frequently blamed for the lull in development projects. The July 2011 assassination of Jan Muhammad Khan, the province's long-time and predominant powerbroker, created a power vacuum that Matiullah Khan quickly and assertively filled. The

latter's strongman status was legitimized when he was appointed Provincial Chief of Police (PCoP) in August 2011. Allegedly, tensions quickly developed and persist between him and Governor Sherzad.

A positive development in the governance sector was the introduction of **District Community Councils (DCCs)** that are part of the Afghanistan Social Outreach Programme (ASOP). DCCs were well received by local communities and helped fill governance and conflict resolution gaps at the district level. However, the end of US funding for the ASOP brings the future of DCCs into question. Many residents fear that they will disintegrate without continued financial support. Village-level governance continues to expand with the extension of the **National Solidarity Programme** into high-risk areas and new districts. There are now 550 Community Development Councils (CDC) in Uruzgan. A serious and indefensible shortcoming, however, not even one woman serves on any of these sub-national governance bodies.

The continued influence of patronage networks is an obstacle that inhibits progress in the governance sector, with many tribes and minority communities facing discrimination and exclusion. Inter-tribal and inter-ethnic disputes, which often centre on the disputes of prominent strongmen, remain a source of instability that sometimes overlaps into the broader conflict between the government and insurgency.

Despite the addition of some new justice sector officials, there were **no notable improvements in the justice sector**, which is largely distrusted by local residents. Most disputes are settled in the informal justice system, either by shuras or respected individuals. PCoP Matiullah Khan's Eslahi Shura and the new DCCs are reported to be the most effective dispute resolution fora. Women, however, have no standing and face serious violations of their human rights in the informal system and accordingly prefer the formal justice system. The Taliban justice system has weakened, but persists in areas under their control.

The legitimacy of the government continues to suffer in the eyes of Uruzgan's citizens due to the failure to achieve improvements in the justice and governance sectors. These two sectors determine the legitimacy of the state and the provincial government. Strengthening these sectors remains an urgent priority and a prerequisite to garnering the support of local communities in order to weaken the insurgency.

After an initial deterioration of security beginning in 2010, the situation began to recover by the fall of 2011, and ultimately resulted in an overall **improvement of security by the end of 2011**. Insecurity peaked in the first half of 2011, which saw a series of brazen and deadly attacks throughout the province. These attacks struck fear in Uruzganis, and called into

question whether Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) would be able to consolidate previous security gains. The high number of security incidents made the months of July and August 2011 statistically one of the worst periods of insecurity since the collapse of the Taliban regime.

Rising insecurity led to the appointment of strongman **Matiullah Khan as PCOP**. Under his leadership, the **Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP)** quickly cleared Mehrabad valley in Tirin Kot, an area held by the Taliban since 2004, improved road security, and consolidated security gains made by international forces. While international forces played a significant role, respondents uniformly credit PCoP Matiullah Khan for the impressive security gains that were so quickly attained under his leadership. Based on local opinions, TLO estimates that the government now controls 55-65% of Uruzgan's territory, an increase from the estimated 50% it controlled in 2010. Regardless, local respondents continue to have an extremely low opinion of the AUP.

The **Afghan National Army (ANA)** saw an increase of 1,000 troops and it now has about 6,000 troops in Uruzgan. The ANA remains the province's most trusted security force. Residents noted an increase in the professionalization of the Afghan Uniformed Police, which enjoyed improved morale following its successful operations and improvements to their conditions.

The Afghan Local Police (ALP), a community-level defence force that is an ANP sub-pillar, was introduced to Uruzgan in late 2010. ALP forces quickly demonstrated their effectiveness as security providers, especially in Gizab and along major roads. Problems, however, soon emerged and varied by local context. Areas with relatively cohesive tribal and ethnic structures had a more successful experience with the ALP than more heterogeneous ones. Allegations of abusive and predatory behaviour also developed and, by the end of 2011, most residents expressed extremely poor opinions of the ALP as well as their US Special Forces minders.

Uruzgan's residents continue to adjust to the departure of Dutch troops and the different tactics employed by the US Army and Australian Defence Force. Many local residents indicated that the incoming troops had a more assertive approach. To some, this was positive because they believed that the willingness to more directly engage the Taliban had resulted in clear security gains. Others resented the more robust approach that sometimes led to what they felt were unnecessary civilian casualties.

Night raids, which are mostly carried out by Special Forces units, remain universally disliked and a constant source of tension. Locals did note and appreciate efforts to improve the

conduct of these missions, including increased partnering with ANSF. Despite the improvements, however, the activities of Special Forces are frequently complained about due to both their support of the unpopular ALP and night raids. Special Forces are also singled out by residents for their lack of respect for Afghan government officials and tribal elders.

The **Taliban has been weakened and displaced** from areas it has held for many years, but it is by no means defeated. Even as security improved over the second half of 2011, insurgents demonstrated their continued presence and capability to mount attacks. However, the Taliban's tactics have evolved and the number of direct insurgent attacks on security forces has declined. The Taliban instead disrupts security and announces its presence through assassinations, night letters, and the use of improvised explosive devices. It also retains the capability to mount large-scale attacks as was devastatingly demonstrated on 28 July 2011 when it attacked heavily-fortified government buildings in the heart of Tirin Kot, resulting in 24 deaths and 37 wounded. This attack came on the heels of the assassination of powerbroker Jan Muhammad Khan and MP Mohammed Hashim Watanwal in Kabul on 17 July 2011. Such tactics are designed to have a psychological impact on the local population, which is well aware of the Taliban's continued presence and capacity to strike even in the provincial centre.

Recommendations

The following key recommendations are based on the opinions of Uruzgan citizens and TLO's extensive experience conducting research in Uruzgan since 2006.

Security and Reintegration

- Char China, Khas Uruzgan, and the Darafshan area of Tirin Kot and parts of Chora and Chenartu must be secured to deny the insurgency space to retreat and regroup.
- A larger presence of ANSF is necessary to consolidate security gains. Troop increases should be focussed on to the ANA and ANP.
- Develop transition plan of integrating ALP into the Afghan Uniformed Police.
- Improved vetting of recruits and oversight is required for the ALP.
- Work in integrating Kandak-e Amniat-e Uruzgan into the ANP.
- Night raids must be employed judiciously and with increased regard to their potentially negative impact.
- Reintegrated fighters must be given security guarantees and supported, especially through job or vocational training opportunities.

Governance

- Efforts are needed to ensure a more balanced tribal representation among government official, especially at the provincial level.
- Incentives should be considered to help attract qualified government officials.
- Develop strategy on how to improve women's participation in Community Development Councils as stipulated in the National Solidarity Programme;
- Capacity building of district-level officials should be continued and expanded.
- Prioritize anti-corruption measures within the Afghan government.
- Planning processes must ensure equitable distribution of government services.

Justice and Rule of Law

- Improve access to justice through a continued support of the formal court system, training of justice professionals and improving linkages between informal justice providers and the formal court system
- District Community Councils have filled a justice vacuum and should be maintained;
- Efforts are needed to increase the legitimacy of the justice system, including public legal awareness and anti-corruption initiatives.

Development and Reconstruction

- Increase consultation between donors and local communities to ensure that donors understand community priorities and can proactively address grievances;
- Increase project implementation to more remote and underserved areas in the province that have not yet received many development projects
- Develop policies and mandatory benchmarks to increase female employment with NGO partners.
- Ensure short-term quick impact projects complement longer-term development projects.
- Recognize growing frustration of local NGOs toward for-profit international development contractors that repatriate significant portions of development assistance funds.

Healthcare and Education

- Improve the distribution of essential medicines to clinics throughout Uruzgan.
- Provide incentives to ensure that trained midwives return to their communities.
- Significantly increase efforts to assist girls to complete secondary school and attend university.
- Work with the religious community and political elite to break down cultural barriers preventing girls from accessing education.
- Strengthen the two Teacher Training Centres to improve quality of instruction and ensure inclusion of women.
- Improve teacher salary and make payments more transparent
- Support fledgling university in the province
- Provide scholarships for outstanding students and recognize academic achievement.

Agriculture and Economic Development

- Improve market access for Uruzgani goods by improving transportation to rural areas;
- Prioritize improvements to irrigation systems;
- Ensure the Business Development Centre is offering courses that are targeted at the business community.

Civil society development

- Support a coordination group to support fledgling CSOs, especially for youth and women.
- Support local sports clubs for youth;
- Ensure that youth are able to access information through public Internet access.

1 Introduction

Australia is part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)-led multinational military effort called Combined Team-Uruzgan (CT-U) that also includes the United States, Singapore and the Slovak Republic. Australia assumed responsibility for civilian operations at Uruzgan's Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), based at Camp Holland in Tirin Kot, on 1 August 2010. A Senior Civilian Representative leads the Australian team that carries on the governance and development efforts that the Netherlands fulfilled in Uruzgan between 2006 and 2010. Military leadership of the PRT rests with the United States. The work of the PRT is an integral component of the international community's engagement in Uruzgan. Australia's contribution to Uruzgan also includes about 1,000 troops.²

The Netherlands made significant contributions to Uruzgan through its comprehensive 3-D (diplomacy, defence and development) approach³ and the province continues to be a priority of the Dutch government, as evidenced by the € 25 million (AUD 32,170,000; USD 33,287,490.59) dedicated to Uruzgan in 2011 and € 17 million planned for 2012. Dutch officials continue to monitor the province closely, although its last civilian officer departed Uruzgan at the end of 2011.

August 2010 ushered in the third phase of Australia's post-2001 engagement in Afghanistan. The first two phases focused largely on military objectives, while the new phase takes a whole-of-government approach to stabilising Afghanistan.⁴ This includes a 34% increase of development assistance to Afghanistan since 2010, standing currently at approximately AUD 165 million, (€ 128,225,054.40; USD 170,731,611.65) making Afghanistan the fourth largest recipient of Australian aid.⁵

The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) is responsible for the delivery of Australia's aid program. It adopts the same approach that the Dutch had, of prioritising the capacity development and empowerment of local authorities. As such, a significant portion of Australia's funding is provided directly to the Government of Afghanistan in support the Afghan National Development Strategy 2008-2013 and commitments made at the 2010 Kabul Conference. The Australian engagement is also shaped by the November 2010 Lisbon Summit, where the *Transition* framework for the international community handing over security provision to Afghan authorities by 2014, was outlined.

This report provides a snapshot of the prevailing situation in Uruzgan and tracks change – both achievements and setbacks – that occurred during the 18 months that Australia has

² Australia has a total of 1,550 troops in Afghanistan, of which about two-thirds are stationed in Uruzgan; Gary Quinlan (Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations), "The Situation in Afghanistan"; Statement to the United Nations General Assembly, 21 November 2011; http://www.unny.mission.gov.au/unny/111121_afghanistan.html

³ The Liaison Office, *The Dutch Engagement in Uruzgan: 2006-2010*, A TLO socio-political assessment; (Kabul: The Liaison Office, 2010)

⁴ Raspal Khosa, "Playing Three Dimensional Chess: Australia's Civil-Military Commitment in Afghanistan."

⁵ Quinlan 2011, "The Situation in Afghanistan"

been the lead international nation in Uruzgan. A comprehensive provincial assessment of the Dutch Engagement in Uruzgan completed in 2010 serves as the analytical baseline. It is hoped that the report will contribute to an informed debate about the Australian engagement in Uruzgan and help identify opportunities to foster a sustainable peace.

1.1 Methodology/Study Limitations

This report draws on research conducted between July and December 2011, with a first phase of intensive data collection occurring in July and August, and gap filling between September and mid-December 2011. A total of approximately 180 interviews were conducted for the purpose of this study, and a similar amount was drawn-upon from four provincial updates. In addition, TLO incorporated responses from 523 participants to five key questions of a provincial stability *jirga* held on 21 December 2011.

TLO field surveyors conducted about 10 interviews per district with a diverse set of actors (tribal elders, ulema, shopkeepers, teachers, health care workers, police officers, government officials) and used participant observation to triangulate interview findings. Their findings were shared with TLO senior researchers in debriefing sessions of 2-3 hours. TLO's national and international researchers then conducted an additional 50 interviews with key actors from all of Uruzgan's districts, and 29 interviews with national and international non-governmental organization (NGOs) and other development and humanitarian actors working in Uruzgan. During the gap filling periods, TLO researchers drew information from its on-going research in the region, and conducted a final round of about 30 follow-up interviews, in December 2011 and January 2012.

Several issues need to be kept in mind when reading this report. First, while the Dutch military has left, Dutch development assistance continues. Thus, in addition to Australian development assistance, one has to take both Dutch and US efforts into account, all of which contributed to the outcomes discussed in this report. In order to isolate the impact of Australian and Dutch development assistance, it would be necessary to conduct a very thorough monitoring exercise of projects funded by both donors, which is beyond the scope of this report. Furthermore, AusAID has followed-on the Dutch approach of building the capacity and empowering local authorities, funnelling a considerable amount of their assistance through Afghan government programmes. As a result, development impacts may be less visible than the more direct reconstruction approach of Australian troops in the past.

Second, the variety of different actors operating in Uruzgan can make it difficult for provincial residents to distinguish between difference actors, which complicate local perceptions. This applies to both civilian and military efforts. For example, there are coalition forces from several countries operating in Uruzgan. Further complicating the issue are Special Operations Forces from both Australia and the United States, that fall respectively under ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom command, and which engage in some of the most negatively perceived activities, such as night raids and mentoring of ALP.

Secondly, the fact that the multi-national PRT houses a mix of Australian and ISAF forces of other nationalities, Australian Special Forces (under ISAF) and US Special Forces (under Operation Enduring Freedom), as well as a host of non-military development actors, including AusAID can and likely does complicate community perceptions of all involved. Interviews indicated that locals often have difficulty distinguishing between various military groups, their mandates (e.g., statebuilding and development vs. counter-terrorism), and their separate activities. Moreover, military and development stakeholders sharing quarters in the PRT also militarizes development and can add to further confusion, particularly about the Australians. Undoubtedly, local perceptions are influenced by their experience and interactions, which may vary wildly from community to community, depending on whether it was the target of military operations or the beneficiary of development assistance. Finally, the mixture of military and development actors may also colour local perceptions about development actors even outside the PRT, leading communities to question whether all NGOs and development organizations maintain military ties.

Third, an 18-month period is a relatively short period of time to measure development progress or social change. As a result achievements are likely to be less marked than when TLO evaluated the four years of Dutch engagement. For example, even though respondents often noted that nothing had changed at first, when asked specifically about certain sectors, they were able to report on specific improvements or developments. Still, in most cases respondents considered the change minor. Related is the difficulty that local communities had in understanding donor practices, and the fact that the Australian programme took some time to establish itself in Uruzgan rather than immediately matching the scale of Dutch activities prior to departure. This needs to be kept in mind when reading the facts and perceptions presented in this report.

Fourth, as noted in TLO's last report on Uruzgan, it is difficult to obtain 'hard facts' in Afghanistan in general and Uruzgan in particular. Because there has not been a formal census since 1979, much is left to best estimates rather than facts, particularly with regard to population figures. TLO does not have access to the implementation reports of NGOs operating in Uruzgan and often does not have access to government records. Furthermore, statistics are open to manipulation; especially those linked to government resources such as inflated police or teacher numbers in order to pocket the salaries of 'ghost employees'. As such, the information within the report may differ from information found in the reports of implementing partners and other sources. TLO has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of its findings, including through extensive interviews with long-time residents of Uruzgan.

Finally, people's perceptions and evaluations are shaped by their expectations (which at times are quite high given the length of international engagement in Afghanistan in general and Uruzgan in particular) and external events influencing the situation in Uruzgan, such as the deterioration of security during the spring and summer of 2011.

TLO tried to mitigate all these issues as much as possible by presenting change through facts and not just perceptions, and attempted to explain perceptions through an assessment of surrounding environmental factors that may have shaped public opinion and evaluations.

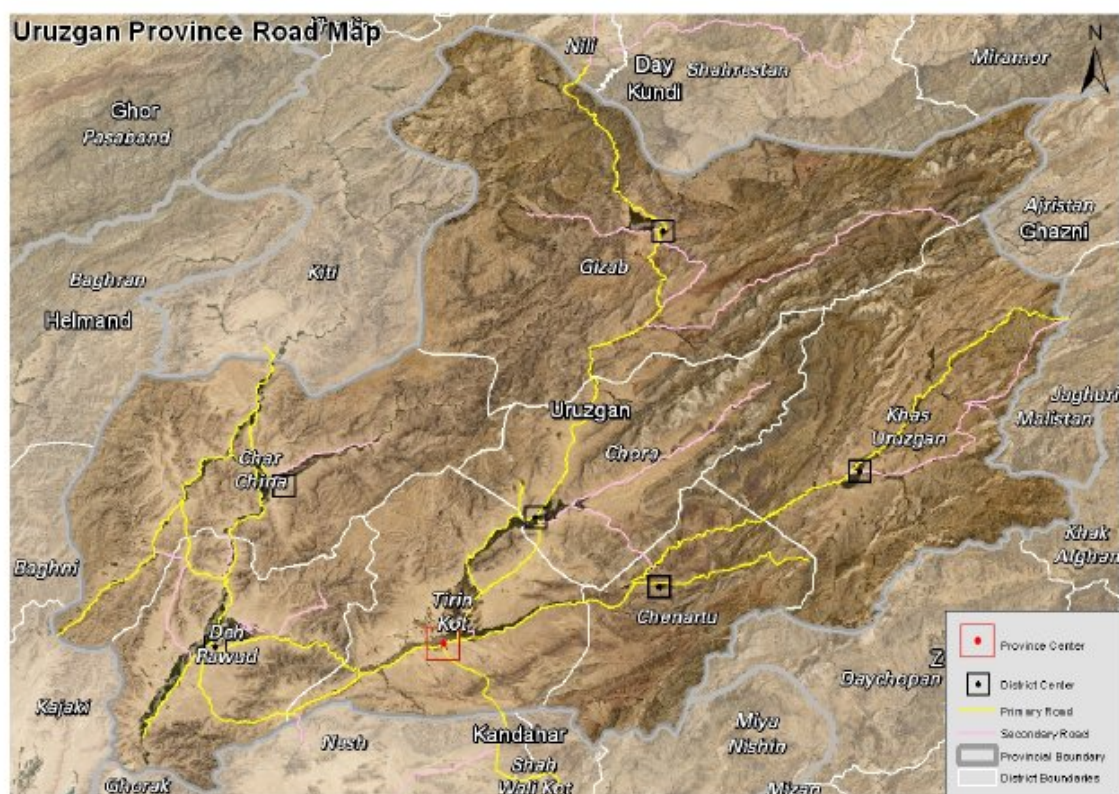
A final note on anecdotes used in this report: Afghans have a fondness for using stories to illustrate a point or explain a sentiment. Sometimes these stories are factual; sometimes they merely express the opinion respondents want to convey. Sometimes they are a mix of both, part fact with illustrations added to make a point stronger. TLO has applied care to only use anecdotes that it believes are mostly factual or indicative of widely held views. Yet the reader should keep in mind that anecdotes may have some exaggeration to underscore the respondent's viewpoint.

1.2 Provincial Background

One of Afghanistan's thirty-four provinces, Uruzgan is located in the centre of the country, bordering Day Kundi to the north, Kandahar to the south, Helmand to the west, and Zabul and Ghazni to the east (see Map 1). The present borders of Uruzgan were created on 28 March 2004 prior to the first presidential elections when President Karzai gave into a long-standing demand of the Hazara community and hived off a part of Uruzgan to create the majority Hazara province of Day Kundi.⁶

Two districts in Uruzgan, however—Khas Uruzgan and Gizab—still have significant Hazara populations (27 and 21%, respectively). The politics around these minority Hazara communities have been a source of tension. As a result, Gizab has yo-yoed back and forth between Uruzgan and Day Kundi. Officially Gizab is now an administrative district of Uruzgan, although even some officials within the Uruzgan government continue to think of it as part of Day Kundi. Notably, Gizab was part of Day Kundi for the 2010 Wolesi Jirga (Parliamentary) elections, which had significant repercussions for both Hazara and Achekzai candidates in the province (see Section 4).

⁶ A problem for Hazara areas has always been that Tirin Kot was never centrally located in the old Uruzgan, but more oriented to the Pashtun part of the province. Even today, the districts with sizeable Hazara minorities—Khas Uruzgan and Gizab—are at a disadvantage in terms of proximity to the provincial centre. The relatively long travel routes coupled with road insecurity and general tensions between the Pashtun and Hazara population may leave the latter more vulnerable to crime and insurgent targeting than their Pashtun counterparts.



Map 1: Uruzgan Province

Uruzgan is tribally and culturally similar to other provinces in Afghanistan's Southern region and is heavily influenced by neighbouring Kandahar. Uruzgan was originally inhabited mostly by Hazara who were forced to leave in several waves throughout the 18th and 19th centuries when Afghan kings introduced Pashtun tribes into the region during what they considered state consolidation efforts.⁷ As a result, the majority of Uruzgan's population today is Pashtun (91%), with a Hazara minority (8%) and other smaller ethnic communities (Sayed, Tajiks, Quraish, and Sikh/Hindu) making up the remaining 1% (see Table 1). The Pashtun population is made up mostly of three tribal confederations: the Zirak Durrani (57%), Panjpai Durrani (18.5%) and Ghilzai (14%).⁸

⁷ Ahmad Shah Abdali (locally also called Ahmad Shah Durrani or Ahmad Shah 'Baba' – the father of Afghanistan) expelled the Hazara of Deh Rawud, Tirin Kot and parts of Shahidi Hassas during his empire building efforts in the mid 18th century. Later, Amir Abdur Rahman Khan continued the process by pushing out Hazara from remaining parts of Char China/Shahidi Hassas, Chora, Khas Uruzgan, and Gizab in the late 19th century.

⁸ The presence of these different tribal groups is linked to the state consolidation attempts under Ahmad Shah Durrani. After the short rule of a Hotak (Ghilzai) dynasty over what is now Afghanistan, most of Iran, and northwestern Pakistan—which began after Mirwais Hotak successfully revolted against the Persian Safavid Empire in 1709—Durrani leaders have ruled the area. In 1739, Nader Shah (of Persia) ended the Ghilzai dynasty, and in 1747, Ahmad Shah Abdali (who later changed his last name to Durrani), a young soldier under Nader Shah, established the Durrani dynasty and what is considered the foundations of the current Afghan state, which is why he is widely seen as the 'Father of Afghanistan.' In his effort to defeat the Ghilzai he pushed them to the East, making the South, especially Kandahar, the centre of the Durrani Empire. Ever since, Afghan kings and rulers, with the short interruption of the communist and Taliban regimes, have come from Durrani tribes. Ghilzai tribes have a nomadic history, while Durrani tribes were often considered to be the more

Table 1: Estimated Ethnic and Tribal Composition of Uruzgan Province

Zirak Durrani	57.5%	Panjpai Durrani	18.5%	Ghilzai	14%	Other	10%
Achekzai	35.0%	Khogiani	1.0%	Babozai ⁹	5.0%	Hazara	8.0%
Popalzai	10.5%	Nurzai	17.5%	Hotak	4.0%	Other Pashtuns ¹⁰	1.0%
Barakzai	9.0%			Tokhi	2.5%	Other non-Pashtuns ¹¹	1.0%
Mohammadzai	1.5%			Suleiman Khail	1.0%		
Alkozai	1.5%			Andar	1.0%		
				Taraki	0.5%		

While local politics in Uruzgan are shaped by these historic alignments, more recent events have added to an already complex political environment. First, Hazara-Pashtun tensions are exacerbated by the inconsistent policies vis-à-vis Gizab, the invalidation of Hazara votes in Khas Uruzgan in the 2010 Parliamentary elections, and ethnic tensions related to the Afghan Local Police in Khas Uruzgan.¹²

Second, intra-Pashtun tension and division is growing. In many respects these divisions were precipitated by the actions of former Governor and local powerbroker, the now deceased Jan Mohammad Khan, who attempted to establish Popalzai dominance in the province by exploiting existing tensions between the Achekzai and Nurzai—Uruzgan’s two largest tribes—by pushing them, respectively, into the pro- and anti-government camps. The former Governor also initiated an aggressive campaign against people he considered even marginally associated with the Taliban government, disproportionately targeting Ghilzai tribes in and around Tirin Kot. Political decisions that favour the Popalzai also continue. For example, the district of Chenartu pending final parliamentary approval is essentially a Popalzai tribal enclave carved out of Chora, a district with a majority of Achekzai and Barakzai tribes.

It is important to avoid viewing Uruzgan solely through the tribal and ethnic prism. Moreover, it is important to appreciate that existing tribal and ethnic divisions are often stoked or exploited by local powerbrokers in order to expand their personal power.

urbanized settled part of the Pashtun population; albeit it is difficult to make such generalizations. Ahmad Shah Durrani, as well as Amir Abdur Rahman, exiled rivaling tribes from their lands and moved them elsewhere..

⁹ While TLO treated the Babozai in the last update under ‘other Pashtuns’, further discussions made us revert back to placing them under the Ghilzai banner, showing the difficulties of placing this particular tribe, but also the fluidity of tribal genealogy. Presently, the Babozai see themselves as Ghilzai, but not as sub-tribe of any other tribe, as it was previously assumed (such as putting them as part of the Nurzai (Panjpai Durrani) or Hotak-Ghilzai).

¹⁰ Mostly Kakar in Deh Rawud, but also some Wardak in Khas Uruzgan, both considered as belonging to the Ghargasht confederation. There are also small numbers of Ghilzai Ishaqzai in Deh Rawud and Chenartu.

¹¹ Sayed, Quraish, Tajik

¹² See Section 6.3.1.2.

TLO's Adjustment of Uruzgan Population Estimate

In 2011, TLO re-estimated the population of Uruzgan to account for demographic changes including natural growth, rural-urban migration, and other population shifts such as forced displacement from insecure areas. The new population estimates are closer to those of the Central Statistics Organization (CSO) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which support the CSO. Significantly, all government planning, including the *1390 Uruzgan Provincial Development Plan*, is based on the UNFPA/CSO figures.¹³

The overall decrease in the provincial estimate can be explained by out-migration, both forced and voluntary.¹⁴ The only significant discrepancy between TLO and CSO/UNFPA estimates are for Tirin Kot. TLO bases its higher estimate on the fact that urban settlements tend to expand much faster than rural ones. Tirin Kot city has seen dramatic growth over the past few years, due to rural-urban migration driven by the search for security, economic opportunities, and better service provision.

Booming land prices in Tirin Kot city (*nahiya* or precinct 1 in particular) seem to confirm this, as they are driven by increasing demand. What TLO cannot account for is that any central hub, such as Tirin Kot city, is likely also affected by a significant seasonality in its demographic patterns, for example, when people return to their farms in other districts for planting and harvest.

Table 2: Uruzgan Population Estimates (Number of People)

District	TLO 2008/9 Estimate	TLO 2011 Estimate	CSO/UNFPA Estimate
Tirin Kot	90,000	125,000	96,400
Deh Rawud	78,750	57,400	57,400
Chora	72,000	53,480	48,000
Chenartu	30,000	14,000	12,100
Khas Uruzgan	80,000	53,200	53,200
Gizab	59,000	63,500	63,500
Char China	84,000	55,500	55,500
TOTAL	493,750	422,080	386,100

¹³ *Uruzgan Provincial Development Plan for 1390* (April 2011) covering March 2011-March 2012
http://www.usaid.gov/pressroom/publications/pubout.cfm?ID=8696_9795_9299_5576_4044&Type=

¹⁴ Susanne Schmeidl, Alexander D. Mundt and Nick Miszak, *Beyond the Blanket: Towards more Effective Protection for Internally Displaced Persons in Southern Afghanistan*, (Washington D.C./Kabul: The Brookings Institution and The Liaison Office, 2010); www.brookings.edu/reports/.../05_idp_protection_afghanistan.aspx

2 Socio-Economic Development and Reconstruction

In this section, the education, healthcare, infrastructure, water/energy, and media/communication sectors are discussed. Where possible, gender considerations are mainstreamed into each sub-section and Chapter 3 is devoted exclusively to gender equality. Respondents expressed a great diversity of views concerning these sectors. Despite the diversity, however, there were some clear trends. Progress was consistently noted in the areas of infrastructure development, education, water/energy (mostly access to drinking water) and healthcare. There was less progress noted in the areas of agriculture and private sector development. Community satisfaction of projects was closely linked to whether the project was implemented in an effective way. Communities seemed to have an overall preference for smaller-scale projects that made concerted efforts to consult with the community.

Development is still seriously constrained by security concerns, which was raised by 40% of NGOs interviewed, even though local organizations often managed to successfully manoeuvre threats and work in insurgency-controlled areas. Still, insecurity restricts organizational mobility and creates an imbalance of coverage, with more projects implemented in secure areas. In the words of one NGO respondent, “Security is manageable most of the time in our target communities, but it is a major problem for outreach. If we expand to other sectors, we will probably only work close to the district centres.”¹⁵

As a result, there is an imbalance of development activities between districts considered relatively safe and accessible (Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, and Chora) and those where governmental control is more tenuous (Gizab, Char China, Khas Uruzgan, and Chenartu). Furthermore, the depth, impact, type, and quality of projects implemented in insecure areas is often inferior compared to similar projects in secure areas.

All development actors working in Uruzgan implement projects in Tirin Kot, and a majority reported projects in Deh Rawud (71%) and Chora (63%). In contrast, none of the other districts are served by more than an estimated 40% of the development actors (38% in Char China, 33% each in Khas Uruzgan and Chenartu, and 21% in Gizab).¹⁶

¹⁵ Interview 13, International NGO representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011

¹⁶ Gizab has unique circumstance in that a number of respondents reported that one reason why they did not work in Gizab was that their donors still considered it to be a part of Day Kundi administratively and therefore did not feel responsible to expand outreach to the district. See interviews local NGO representatives, Kabul, 29 June 2011 and 11 July 2011

2.1 Development Actors in Uruzgan

There has been a consistent growth of organizations working in the province since 2001. A handful of organizations have been active in the province for more than a decade. Most (78%) began working in Uruzgan after 2006 when the Netherlands government started actively attracting development actors to the province.

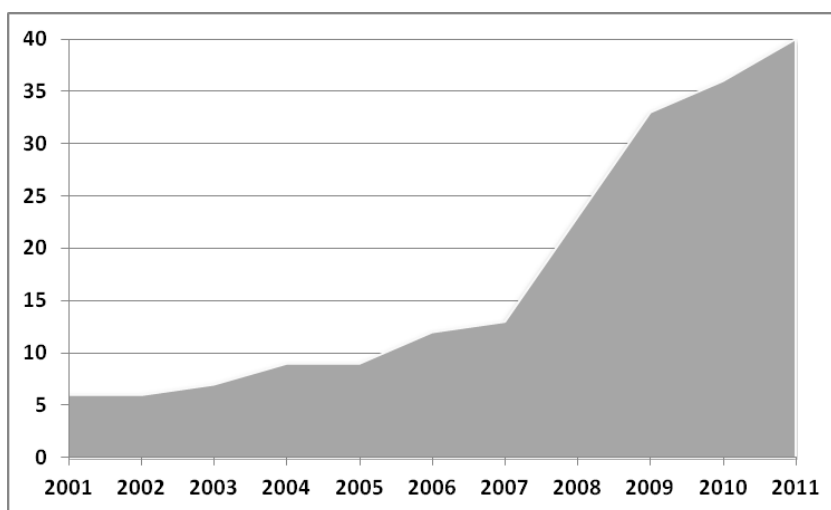


Figure 1: Overview of Increase of Organizations working in Uruzgan

The newest additions to the development scene in

Uruzgan were the 2011 arrivals of the International Legal Foundation-Afghanistan (ILF-A), working on legal aid;¹⁷ Afghanistan Business Capacity Development (ABCD Consultants), a new facilitating partner for National Solidarity Programme (NSP) Phase III; and Checchi Consulting, working to strengthen community-based dispute resolution mechanisms.

Additionally, The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), previously covered Uruzgan from its Kandahar office, but established a permanent field office with international staff in Tirin Kot centre in April 2011.¹⁸ The new field office also spurred ICRC's programming expansion (see section 2.3).

Four other organizations began activities in Uruzgan in late 2010: Afghan Education and Rehabilitation Programs (AREP), working in community development through religious leaders; the Afghan Veterinarians Association (AVA), an implementing partner of the Dutch Committee for Afghanistan-Veterinary Programmes (DCA-VET) that provides training and support to para-veterinarians and basic veterinarian workers; and the Louis Berger Group (LBG) that focuses on infrastructure construction.

In 2007, under the lead of the Netherlands, international NGOs piloted a development programme called the Dutch Consortium for Uruzgan (DCU), which now consists of five international organisations (Cordaid, HealthNet-TPO, DCA-VET, ZOA Refugee Care, and Save the Children) and 9 Afghan NGOs. The goal of the DCU is to help boost programming efficiency amongst development actors working in the province. Central to its efforts to

¹⁷ Interview, ILF representative, Tirin Kot, 26 July 2010.

¹⁸ Interview, ICRC Representative, Tirin Kot, 10 July 2011

improve coordination was the establishment and maintenance of a common Tirin Kot office for all DCU partners. While all partner organizations maintain their own staff, the project also employs core DCU-wide staff. The DCU also has coordinators in both Kabul and The Hague. Funding for the DCU comes from the Dutch Embassy in Kabul.¹⁹

The DCU has four main programming areas: healthcare, agriculture, education, and capacity building.²⁰ Working through local partners, the international NGOs comprising the DCU are able to access areas that would otherwise be too insecure. Partnering also gives the DCU the opportunity to strengthen the capacity of local organisations during the project planning and implementation processes, as well as through quality control and general oversight mechanisms on behalf of the international NGOs. When asked about the DCU, local respondents appreciated the ease with which communication between communities and the DCU partners took place. One respondent noted, “It was very easy to talk to the Dutch PRT through DCU about problems.”²¹ The appreciation for the DCU was echoed by various other local organizations as well.

Table 3 (with more detail in Appendix I) provides an overview of the 40 organizations TLO identified as currently operating in Uruzgan and the sectors in which they work.²² They present a mix of Afghan (45%) and international NGOs (25%), UN and international organizations (18%), as well as development contractors (12%). ADA and AHDS are the Afghan NGOs with the longest experience working in Uruzgan. Some NGOs such as ANCC are Kandahar-based organizations that expanded operations into neighbouring Uruzgan.

Table 3: Overview of development actors in Uruzgan by sector²³

Sector of development	Development Actors active in Uruzgan
Agriculture (capacity building)	ADA, AHDS, CORDAID (through NPO-RRAA), NCA (through ADA), FAO
Agriculture/Food security	ADA, ANCC, ARPD, NPO-RRAA, FAO, SADA, CORDAID (through NPO-RRAA), GIZ, NCA (through ADA), WFP (through ARPD, ANCC, and Department of Education)
Business/Management Training	ACTD, ANCC
Capacity building (other)	ANCC, AOAD, DAI, GIZ, ICRC, SVF
Child protection	SVF, Save the Children (through SVF)
Civil Society/community Development	ACTD, ANCC, AREP
Construction	ANCC, JACK, NERU, AOAD, SADA, DAI, GIZ, LBG
Disaster/Emergency Relief	ARPD, ICRC

¹⁹ Dutch Consortium in Uruzgan, Cordaid, available at <http://www.cordaid.nl/nl/Dutch-Consortium-Uruzgan.html?bron=1144>

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Interview, Local NGO representative, Kabul, 3 July 2011

²² There may have been some more in the past, as several organizations have discontinued their work in the province, such as ARD Inc.

²³ This table is based on interviews with NGOs, including the area of activities they specified.

Sector of development	Development Actors active in Uruzgan
Education	Save the Children (through ACTD, ANCC and JACK)
Education (Capacity building)	AOAD, Save the Children (through ANCC)
Financial services/micro credits	WOCCU/IIFCG
Food security (animals)	AVA (for DCA-VET and FAO)
Health-Care	AHDS (incl. construction), HADAAF, CORDAID (health-facilities and nutrition project through AHDS), HealthNet TPO (through HADAAF and one project on their own), ICRC, Save the Children (through ACTD; drug counselling)
Health-Care (Capacity building)	AHDS, HADAAF, CORDAID, HealthNet TPO, ICRC, ZOA (through NERU, ANCC and ARPD)
Health-Care (Education)	Save the Children (through AHDS and HADAAF), NCA (through ADA), ZOA (hygiene education through ANCC, ARPD and NERU)
Legal aid/justice	ILF-A, Checchi Consulting
Media	ANCC, SVF, FAO
Research	ACTD, TLO
Road Construction	CADG, DAI, GIZ, ICMA
Solar Panel Distribution	NCA (through ADA)
Veterinary services	ADA, AVA (for DCA-VET), DCA-VET
Veterinary services (capacity building)	AVA (for DCA), DCA-VET, ICRC
Water/irrigation (e.g., well construction)	ADA, JACK, SADA, CADG, GIZ, ZOA (through ANCC, NERU and ARPD)
Women	ACTD, AHDS, ANCC, AOAD, DAI, HealthNet TPO, JACK, NPO- RRAA, SVF

There is a core group of Afghan NGOs that work across several sectors, likely because of their capacity, experience, reach, and proven ability to deliver results. The Afghanistan National Reconstruction Coordination (ANCC) is clearly the front-runner here, followed closely by the Afghan Development Association (ADA), the Afghan Centre for Training and Development (ACTD), the Afghan Reconstruction Planning Department (ARPD), and the Afghan Health and Development Services (AHDS). Others include National Engineering and Reconstruction Unit (NERU) and Just for Afghan Capacity and Knowledge (JACK).

Table 3 also highlights that most international actors work through local implementing partners, with some exceptions such as the German firm *Deutschen Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH* (GIZ), which has numerous international staff permanently based in Uruzgan. The preference to work through local partners is partly linked to the precarious security situation in the province, with few organizations willing to risk basing international staff permanently in the province. As noted, the ICRC only started basing international staff in Tirin Kot in April 2011.²⁴

²⁴ Interview, ICRC Representative, Tirin Kot, 10 July 2011

In the spring of 2011, TLO conducted an assessment of NGOs to gauge what it meant to be a successful development organization in Uruzgan.²⁵ Looking at their performance, the following best practices were identified: building trust with communities regarding project implementation, keeping corruption within acceptable levels, and managing expectations.

TLO also concluded that geographic reach should not be mistaken or equated with thematic reach or technical competence. It is a mistake to believe that because an NGO can access a remote or insecure area, it can implement a project outside its focus area. Many respondents criticized NGOs for attracting projects that they lacked the technical capacity to implement. This also leads to resentment from communities if projects are poorly implemented, and also fuels perceptions of corruption. Governor Sherzad has himself been critical of the work of all NGOs in the province.²⁶

The arrival of several large, for-profit development contractors has been criticized by local NGOs. Local NGOs feel that these large firms have privileged access to donors, and then simply sub-contract their work to smaller Afghan NGOs, thereby capitalizing their role as middleman. This does not sit well with many locals who see these large firms as taking profit from Afghanistan's development aid rather than investing it in the community. Moreover, both local and international NGOs are sensitive to the way that development contractors often maintain very close relationships with the military. Many NGOs work very hard to project neutrality, which is key to gaining access to insurgent-held areas. However, when development contractors blur the civilian-military lines, local populations start to question whether all NGOs are working with the military, and become more reluctant to work with NGOs in disputed areas.

2.1.1 Adjusting to a new Development Lead

After establishing a working relationship with the Dutch over its five-year engagement in Uruzgan, development actors have had to adjust to working with a new major donor with a different development approach; with more emphasis on supporting government programmes and large-scale projects implemented by NGOs and/or contractors. A key change was the decline of smaller grants to local NGOs; at least in the opinion of the many NGOs interviewed.

In comparison to the Dutch, AusAID was seen as having, "a complicated and long process to decide on the funding of a project. Some important small-scale projects, however, need quick response and action. This is now missing in Uruzgan."²⁷ Several smaller Afghan NGOs lamented a perceived shift of AusAID to funnel their money either through bigger international NGOs or the Afghan government. The respondent noted the inefficiency of this, stating, "The Australians don't give money to small NGOs, but only to big internationals

²⁵ The Liaison Office, "Project Implementation in Uruzgan (2008-2010): An Assessment of Five Local NGOs," (Kabul: The Liaison Office, May 2011), internal donor report.

²⁶ Interview, Kabul, 15 October 2011

²⁷ Interview, Local NGO representative, Kabul, 16 July 2011

ones, even though those then in turn need implementing partners. Why not give the money directly to local NGOs and eliminate the middle-man?”²⁸ Some respondents also criticized the Australian policy of channelling development aid through Afghan government institutions, “because the government is unable to manage these sums correctly.”²⁹

In addition, some development actors raised concerns about Australian military forces directly participating in development activities. Simply put, development organizations feel that such activities directly blur the civilian-military lines and potentially put other non-military related organizations at risk. Several NGOs stated that they tried to stay away from the PRT as much as possible, even seeing the location of the airstrip inside the PRT as an easy way to tarnish a neutral image. One respondent put it bluntly, “If you go to the PRT compound, you are a target.”³⁰ Many international NGOs thought it better if military forces would stick to providing security and leave development to civilian actors. “The situation would be better if PRT did not do aid at all,”³¹ said another representative.

Other NGOs also voiced frustration with the unwillingness of international military forces to coordinate with NGOs. As one representative succinctly put it, “This causes problems because the NGOs are in close cooperation with the communities. Sometimes there are operations in their target areas, and it leads communities to think that the NGOs actually spy for the military. At the same time, the military and intelligence communities think we spy for the other side.”³² Not only does this frustrate NGOs by creating a backslide in mutual trust with the community—something they work very hard for months or even years to establish—it also can put them directly at risk of being targeted by either side of the conflict.

Overall, however, as the Australians continue to find their footing in Uruzgan, it is likely that some of these tensions will at least partially dissipate as the development community continues to build working relationships with the Australian-led PRT.

2.2 Education

There were notable achievements in the education sector over the past 18 months, which did not go unnoticed by respondents. Development actors echoed this when 16 of 24 NGOs interviewed indicated that the education sector improved, while one-third thought it had stayed more or less the same. There are numerous encouraging measures of progress, including more schools, more madrassas, more teachers, and more students. However, these improvements have not benefited all districts equally and girls continue to face significant hurdles accessing education.

²⁸ Interview, Local NGO representative, Tirin Kot, 23 July 2011

²⁹ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011

³⁰ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011

³¹ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 29 June 2011

³² Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011

2.2.1 Educational Facilities

The total number of education facilities province-wide at the end of 2011 is 205, an increase of 45 from 2010 (see Figure 2 and Appendix II). This included the opening of 25 new schools and the re-opening of 32 schools. The closure or merger of 12 schools offset the total of 57 new schools.³³ Ten madrassas opened, including the first two all-girl madrassas in Tirin Kot, for a provincial total of 18 madrassas.³⁴ The number of schools increased in all districts except Chenartu, which saw a decrease of two schools. The most significant increase was in Gizab, where 13 new schools and one madrasa were added. It now has 51 schools, the most of any district.³⁵

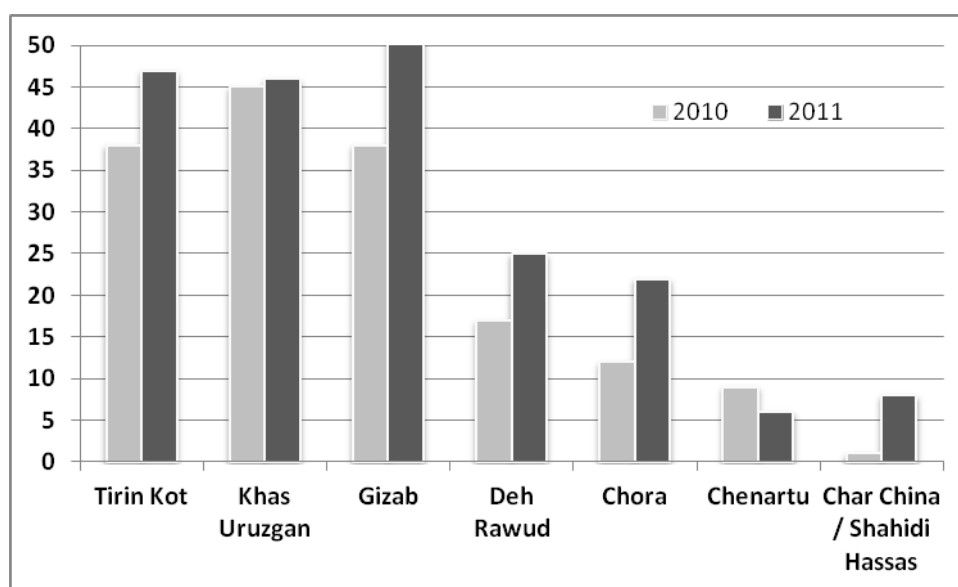


Figure 2: Overview of Increase in Schools in Uruzgan

It is worth highlighting a few of the key infrastructure improvements in the education sector:

- Construction of the Malalai Girls School, a large-scale and high-visibility Australian funded project in the centre of Tirin Kot. The school boasts a library, gym, and science laboratories, making it the most equipped facility for girls in the province. Residents are very pleased with the school, which has been holding classes since July 2011.

³³ The nine school closures were in Khas Uruzgan (3), Tirin Kot (3), Chenartu (2) and Chora (1). Three schools were merged, one in each of Tirin Kot, Khas Uruzgan and Chenartu.

³⁴ Eight madrassas were newly opened (one in Tirin Kot is community-owned) and two reopened, including the only girl's madrasa in Tirin Kot.

³⁵ The Department of Education has also worked on either upgrading or downgrading school levels depending on the demography (educational needs) of the student body. It should also be noted that Insecurity likely affected the school closures in Khas Uruzgan (one boys and girls elementary each, and one night high school for boys), Tirin Kot (two boys elementary schools) and Chenartu, albeit one of the two elementary schools for boys may have been mistakenly reported as already operating in 2010 when it had not yet been opened (and remained closed in 2011); the same applies for one boys elementary school each in Tirin Kot and Chora).

- The Afghan NGO Just for Afghan Capacity & Knowledge (JACK) constructed four schools and 25 boundary walls. The schools—three in Tirin Kot (a boys secondary school, one boys primary school, and one girls' primary school) and one (boys secondary school) in Chenartu—reflect JACK's holistic approach to education infrastructure development.³⁶ A new well for the whole community and a playground accompanied each of the new buildings.³⁷ JACK also opened a centre for educational resources in Tirin Kot centre.
- Five schools were constructed or renovated by various actors in the previously underserved district of Char China. CADG improved facilities in Shah Mashad and Yakhdan; PRT projects included school buildings in Sakhir and Oshay villages; and a school in Pasabara was also reportedly finished. Save the Children began construction on two new schools during the summer of 2011, shortly after the road between Char China and Deh Rawud reopened.³⁸

2.2.2 School Enrolment Figures

Increasing the number of schools in the province also expanded access to education and enabled a larger student population in Uruzgan (see Figure 3). Encouragingly, enrolment increased in all districts. It is, however, important to note that the MoE claims that enrolment doubled in Chenartu from 1,646 to 2,908, despite the closure of two schools.

The distribution of school grade enrolment (see Figure 4) illustrates the consistent yearly drop in enrolment by grade level, especially for girls. Enrolment most significantly drops between grades five and eight, when children are pulled from school in order to help support the family.³⁹ Girls are also often pulled as soon as they reach puberty.

It also appears that many families simply send their children to the nearest school, which can lead to discrepancies between the number of students and schools at certain grade levels. This is especially true for girls. As a result, the number of students by grade level does not correspond to the number of schools offering secondary and high school education. For example, most secondary and high schools, especially those for girls, tend to offer all grade levels.⁴⁰ This school-attendance trend will only change when education becomes more widely accessible in Uruzgan. (For a more detailed discussion on girls' education see Section 3.4.)

³⁶ Interview, JACK representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011; JACK originally planned to construct a second school in the Langar area of Chenartu; insecurity however forced the NGO to cancel the project.

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ Interview, Save the Children Representative, 13 July 2011

³⁹ The Liaison Office, *Educational Institutions in Uruzgan 2010: A TLO Evaluation*, Internal report, (Kabul: The Liaison Office, March 2011), p.28

⁴⁰ In theory, however, grades 1-6 should be provided exclusively by elementary schools, whilst secondary education (grades 7-12) is to be provided in two three-year shifts, secondary school (Grade 7-9), and high school (grades 10-12).

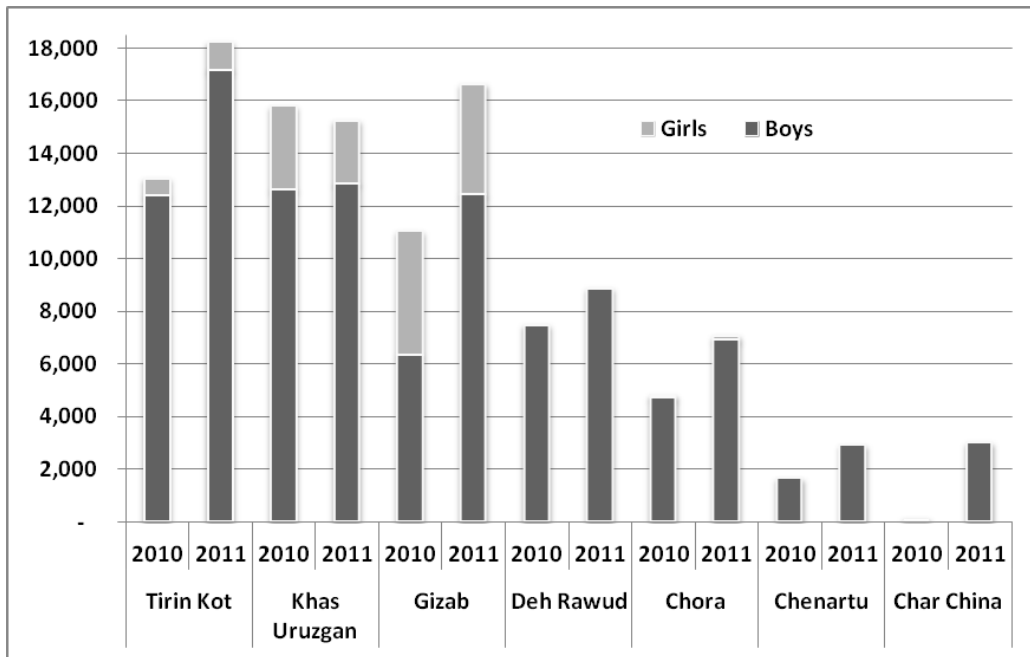


Figure 3: School Enrolment in Uruzgan by District and Sex (2010/2011)

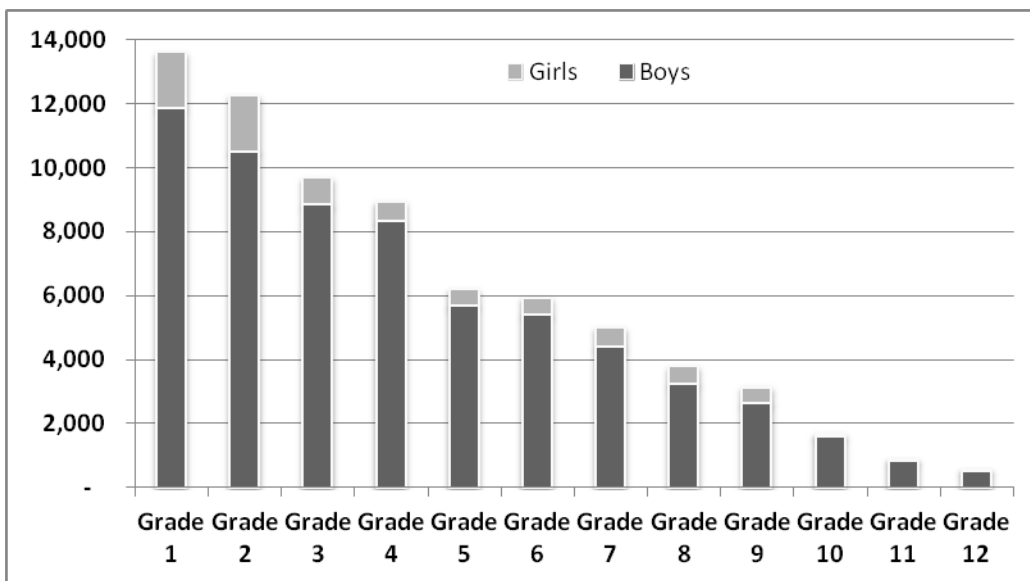


Figure 4: School Enrolment in Uruzgan by Grade Level and Sex / DoE

The number of enrolled students needs to be understood in relation to the estimated number of school-aged children in Uruzgan.⁴¹ Figure 5 provides an overview of the percentage of school children enrolled in Uruzgan's schools for each district, comparing 2010 with 2011 figures. Province-wide, school enrolment rose to 39%, which is a step closer to the national average of 50%.⁴² Six districts saw an increase in overall enrolment. The exception was Khas Uruzgan, where enrolment declined slightly, but with a 57% enrolment rate, Khas Uruzgan still has province's best enrolment rate. As noted above, Gizab – the other district with a considerable Hazara minority – saw an impressive rise in enrolment to 52% in 2011.

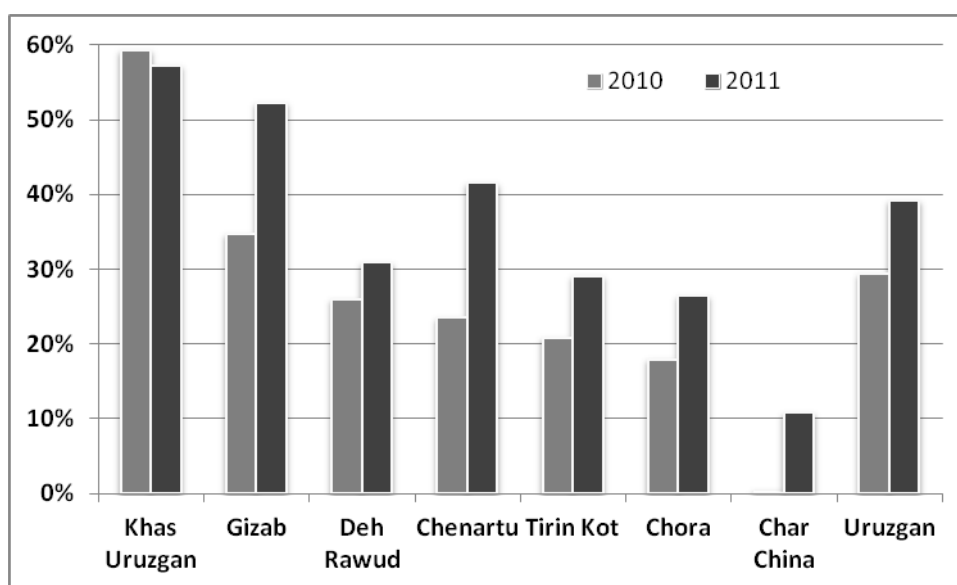


Figure 5: Estimated Percentage of School-aged Children enrolled in Uruzgan's Schools

Despite the achievements in Tirin Kot, its comparatively large population size⁴³ puts a slight buffer on some of the accomplishments made in the provincial centre, as a result showing an increase in school enrolment figures from 21% in 2010 to 29% in 2011. Similarly, although Gizab has the overall largest absolute number of student enrolment, Khas Uruzgan has a higher proportion of student enrolment relative to its estimated population of school-aged children. Deh Rawud also showed an increase, despite less schools being open than in Chora, with both districts increasing enrolment from 26% to 31% and 18% to 26%, respectively. Char China managed to rise from a negligible student enrolment rate in 2010 to 10% in 2011. The puzzle again is Chenartu, which saw school closures while reporting a sizeable increase in school enrolment from 24% in 2010 to 42% in 2011, opening up the possibility that some mistake in the recording of these figures occurred.

⁴¹ These figures are very rough estimations working with a population pyramid of that estimates 70% of the population to be 18 years or younger. Health data indicate that about 20% of all residents in are under the age of five; hence about 50% of the population can be considered of school age, and 50% of those girls.

⁴² 2007 UNDP Human Development Report.

⁴³ See Table 1 at the end of Section 1.3 for new estimates.

2.2.3 The Teaching Profession

Over the past 18 months 145 new teachers were added province-wide.⁴⁴ After departures of other teachers, the net increase was 77 for a current provincial total of 1294 teachers.⁴⁵ The number of teachers decreased in Khas Uruzgan (56) and Chenartu (12).⁴⁶

Despite efforts on several fronts, TLO was ultimately unable to obtain an official breakdown of the number of male and female teachers. NGO and MoE advisors, however, indicate that in 2011 there were 45 female teachers in Uruzgan. In 2010 there were 67 female teachers, indicating a 22-person drop in teachers. The decrease in numbers is not necessarily negative, but rather appears to be the result of the MoE removing “ghost teachers” following its July 2011 audit.⁴⁷ This effort to improve accountability is a positive step by the MoE and an indicator of its increasing capacity.

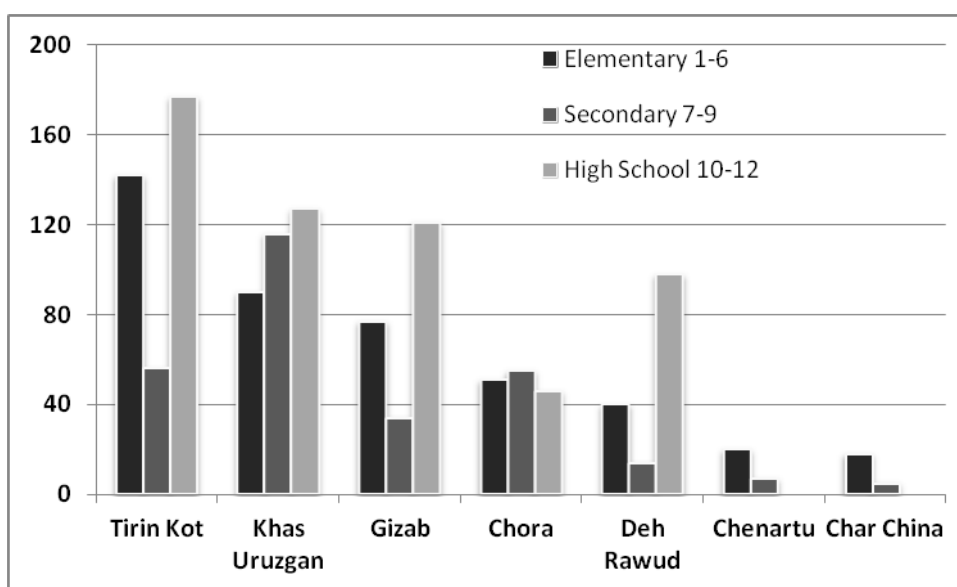


Figure 6: Overview of Teachers in Uruzgan by Type of School and District

When comparing the number of schools, teachers, and students enrolled by grade level, a discrepancy is visible between the number of schools and teachers on the one hand (see Figure 6 for overview of teachers by type of school), and students enrolled at each grade

⁴⁴ The 145 new teachers were distributed as follows: Tirin Kot (62), Gizab (31), Chora (22), Char China (19) and Deh Rawud (11).

⁴⁵ A few schools in Gizab were not able to provide a *tashkeel*, thus the actual growth might be slightly higher. The Provincial Development Plan (PDP) puts the number of teachers in mid-2010 at 1,344, which was however before the MoE audit. The PDP also sees a disconnected between the MoE in Kabul and the provincial director, in the sense of providing up-to-date information about all the teachers from Kabul who are temporarily fired or hired.

⁴⁶ TLO was unable to confirm if some of the teachers who lost jobs due to school closures in Khas Uruzgan and Chenartu ended up teaching in one of the other districts. Given the overall teacher shortage in the province, this is at least plausible.

⁴⁷ Morten Sigsgaard (Eds.), *On the Road to Resilience: Capacity Development with the Ministry of Education in Afghanistan*, (Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning and UNESCO, 2011); p.140; http://www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Info_Services_Publications/pdf/2011/Afghanistan_Resilience.pdf; a similar estimate was provided to TLO by an NGO working with schools in Uruzgan in July 2011.

level on the other. For example, while Char China reportedly has one secondary school with five teachers, it has no students beyond Grade six (the last grade of elementary school). Similarly when calculating a student-to-teacher ratio, the average students per each teacher was 137 for elementary grades (1-6), 50 for secondary grades (7-9) and 26 for high school (10-12).

The large discrepancy in student-to-teacher ratios further supports the earlier hypothesis that secondary and high schools actually teach students from all grade levels, rather than specializing on their grade level. If this was not the case, data would indicate that elementary school teachers would have extremely large class sizes while high school class sizes would be extremely small. If, however, all school levels actually teach all grades, the student-to-teacher ratio becomes more balanced. Unfortunately, without knowledge about grade levels per school, much is left to speculation.

Figure 6 also illustrates that the majority of all teachers teach at the elementary school level, either at elementary schools or for Grade 1-6 students at other schools. This corresponds with the relatively high number of entry-level students in Uruzgan, and is unsurprising for a province where the population has much catching up to do. Efforts to close the education gap between Uruzgan and the rest of Afghanistan means that there are many older children at lower grade levels.

The DoE teacher pay scale is based on the qualifications of the teacher. Permanent teachers earn between 2,800-3,500 Afghani (AUD 52.41-65.52; € 42.62-53.28; USD 56.27-70.34) per month, while temporary teachers can earn up to triple that amount, equivalent to 3,500-10,000 Afghani (AUD 65.17-186.21; € 42.62-152.06; USD 70.34-200.98) per month. Temporary teachers often are part-time and do not receive the same benefits of full-time teachers. Teachers in Char China only started to receive their salaries—which is reportedly 5000 Afghani/month (AUD 93.10; € 76.02; USD 100.48)—in October 2010.⁴⁸

Uruzgan's Provincial Development Plan indicates that only 40% of teachers have higher education and emphasises that most teachers are not properly qualified.⁴⁹ There are Teacher Training Centres in Tirin Kot and Khas Uruzgan that have 19 and 14 current trainees, respectively. To date, all trainees have been men.

Attracting new teachers from Uruzgan can be a challenge. First, there is the lack of qualified individuals, perhaps best illustrated by the dismal provincial literacy rate of 7% for men and 0.6% from women. Teachers and community respondents indicated that security and insufficient salaries were the two key deterrents to teaching in Uruzgan. In terms of security, some teachers indicated that they had received direct threats. As for salary, given the lack of individuals with higher education, many teachers were able to command much higher salaries for positions with NGOs.⁵⁰ Many teachers also supplement their salaries by holding

⁴⁸ <http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/isaf-releases/uruzgan-teachers-to-begin-receiving-salaries.html>

⁴⁹ *Uruzgan Provincial Development Plan for 1390 2011*, p.9

⁵⁰ *Educational Institutions in Uruzgan 2010*

down a second job. Remoteness of some schools was another factor, although this was often coupled with security concerns.

In its 2010 survey, TLO found that two-thirds of all teachers worked on temporary contracts, which can be given to people who are not qualified teachers. Usually temporary teachers include high school graduates or individuals with some type of religious teacher training certificate.⁵¹ Temporary contracts are also given to teachers who work in shifts, sometimes at more than one school. By contrast, permanent contracts are given to individuals with teaching qualifications, and are accompanied by benefits and other perks.

The high number of contracted teachers is significant in that it could lead to an inflation of the overall teacher numbers if some teachers under more than one contract are counted two or three times. Officially, according to DoE staff, no teacher can have more than one permanent contract, but it appears likely that this rule is enforced loosely, if at all. From interviews, TLO understood that some teachers with permanent contracts at one school may also hold temporary contracts at one (or several) other school. Similarly, teachers with temporary contracts may also hold several with different schools.

2.2.4 The Capacity Gap in Education

The demographic and numerical breakdowns of student enrolment, gender, and facility, reveals little about the overall quality of education provided. A local NGO representative noted, “The new school buildings alone do not make it better if everything else like teachers, training, materials, and payments are lacking.”⁵² An international NGO representative more pointedly observed that, “The quality of education and teachers is bad. There is not enough qualified staff. The training for teachers in the province is bad, if they are graduates [from teacher training] they still can do much less than in other places.”⁵³ Another agreed, “The authorities are still not in a position to provide quality of education. There are no good teachers, and there is a lack of teachers and a lack of materials. Most of the new schools are white elephants.” This respondent expanded on his statement, explaining that he thought many of these new schools remained empty or improperly used.⁵⁴

There are a limited number of on-going projects that focus on improving the educational needs of the population. Save the Children is an important contributor that funds the construction of education facilities and related infrastructure. It also funds capacity building initiatives that are implemented through three local NGOs: ACTD, ANCC, and JACK.⁵⁵

⁵¹ These teachers have to undergo additional training every three years to meet new education requirements. Most teachers that can access a teacher diploma should be high school graduates, and if not, they should have received additional training. Temporary contracts can be provided for as little as an hour of teaching, while the longest contracts last for one year.; The Liaison Office, *Educational Institutions in Uruzgan 2010: A TLO Evaluation*, (Kabul: The Liaison Office, 2011)

⁵² Interview, local NGO-representative, Kabul, 3 July 2011

⁵³ Interview, International NGO representative, Tirin Kot, 26 July 2011

⁵⁴ Interview, local NGO representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011

⁵⁵ Interview, Save the Children, Kabul, 13 July 2011

The Quality Primary Education Programme (QPEP) is implemented by ANCC via Save the Children, and focuses on providing educational opportunities to children that are unable to attend government schools. The programme currently has around 2,900 students enrolled, most of whom are girls. QPEP operates in Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Chora, Char China, and Khas Uruzgan, and helps re-integrate students who have been outside of the formal system back into schools with an accelerated learning programme. ANCC also runs a teacher training programme, which aims at training 1,020 teachers and 95 school principals.

ACTD runs an adult literacy programme, which taught 150 men and 200 women last year.⁵⁶ Save the Children also offers scholarships for Uruzgan residents to attain a teaching-bachelor-degree at an Indian university.

Residents were encouraged by and have high hopes for the new four-year, AusAID-funded Save the Children programme that was announced in May 2011. The project aims at increasing access to basic education services across the province with a focus on community-based education, teacher training, women's literacy, child-focused health education, and increasing the capacity of local government. Citizens in Tirin Kot have high hopes for this project.

Uruzgan faces many challenges in the education sector and its efforts to increase access to education. It is critical that the GIRoA, local NGOs, and international stakeholders continue to invest in education infrastructure and capacity building. As discussed in the gender section (Section 3), there is a particular need to ensure that girls can complete their education and eventually enter the workforce.

Despite these challenges, given the years of very poor access to education, communities are simply happy that more of their children have access to education, even if quality remains a concern.

2.3 Healthcare

The Healthcare sector made modest gains over the past 18 months. A Basic Health Centre (BHC) opened in Kishi Village of Char China and two Health Sub-Centres (HSCs) re-opened in Gizab.⁵⁷ There are now 20 clinics open throughout the province (see Table 4).

32 new health posts were established in Tirin Kot (14), Chora (8), and Khas Uruzgan (10), increasing the provincial total to 234. The number of community health workers for these health posts also increased by 52 (21 men; 31 women) for a provincial total of 349. Each health post has at least one female healthcare worker.⁵⁸

Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Chora, and Char China all have Drug Treatment/Counselling Centres (DTCs) are attached to Community Health Centres (CHCs) or the provincial hospital in Tirin

⁵⁶ Interview, ACTD, Kabul, 11 July 2011

⁵⁷ It is unclear if they are operating as there are no official *tashkeel* figures available with the Department of Public Health in Tirin Kot as these had previously been administered from Day Kundi.

⁵⁸ No information on Chenartu was available, which still may be subsumed under Chora.

Kot. Gizab's was recently taken over by the NGO Afghan Health and Development Services (AHDS), which has been the lead NGO in the healthcare sector. AHDS has been trying for some time to open a clinic in Mehrabad. It is hopeful that the security gains achieved in the area in 2011 will finally enable them to open a clinic in 2012.⁵⁹

Table 4: Achievements in Healthcare in Uruzgan⁶⁰

District		2006	2010	2011 Clinic with Additions	2011 Staff Additions
Tirin Kot	↗	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District hospital BHC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial hospital CHC 69 health posts (HPs) BHC (Surkh Murghab) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial hospital; upgraded CHC (Yak Linga); new building BHC (Surkh Murghab); new building⁶¹ 14 new HPs to a total of 83 Two new mobile health teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One for prison One for Kuchi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 Doctors (3 M.D.s, 1 Paediatrician, 1 Orthopaedic and 1 Medical Specialist) 1 Nurse 2 Pharmacists⁶² 23 new Community Health Workers (CHW); 18 are women
Deh Rawud	↗	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHC 2 BHCs 37 HPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHC (Karez Killai), new building 2 BHCs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zarana Warkh Dezak; renovated 37 HPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Nurse
Chora	↗	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHC BHC 24 HPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHC (bazaar); new delivery room for women built BHC (Sarab) renovated 8 new HPs to a total of 32 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 new Community Health Workers (CHW); 9 are women The BHC in Sarab allegedly has a female medical doctor as of December 2011
Chenartu	↗	Nothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHC (Markaz) renovated, with plans and tashkeel to upgrade it to a CHC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Technician (Laboratory)
Khas Uruzgan	↗	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHC 2 BHCs 1 health sub- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHC (Old bazaar) new building 2 BHCs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Doctor (MD) 1 Technician (Pharmacy) 12 new CHWs, 4 are

⁵⁹ Interview, local NGO-representative, Kabul, 16 July 2011; the AHDS staff was later successfully released with the assistance of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

⁶⁰ TLO checked its own primary data regarding facilities and staffing against information provided directly from AHDS (facilities) and MoPH (staffing). The official numbers were used when/if discrepancies arose.

⁶¹ This BHC was not included in the 2010 Annual report. However, TLO has since confirmed that the Surkh Murghab BHC had in fact been operating out of rented premises, with the new building constructed by Australian military. It is unclear when exactly this occurred, but assumed to fall within the past 18 months. Recent reports suggest that it was closed in January 2012 due to insurgency threats.

⁶² The only Physiotherapist resigned in September 2011 and had not yet been replaced when the report was finalized.

District		2006	2010	2011 Clinic with Additions	2011 Staff Additions
			centre (HSC) • 26 HPs	• Gandab • Hossaini; renovated • 1 HSC (Palan) • 10 new HPs to a total of 36	women
Gizab	↗	• CHC • 2 BHCs under Taliban control	• CHC • 2 BHC under Taliban control • 29 HPs	• CHC Gizab Markaz • 2 BHC • Khalaj • Tamazan • 2 Health Sub-Centres (HSC) • Nickabad HSC • Beri HSC • 29 HPs • Coalition forces have also been opening temporary clinics.	• 1 Doctor • 3 Nurses • 2 Midwives • 2 Technicians (Pharmacy and Laboratory) • 2 Vaccinators • 1 CHW • Security has overall improved, but overall service has not necessarily increased.
Char China	↗	Nothing	• CHC • 17 HPs	• CHC (Oshay) • BHC (Kishi) completed • 17 HPs	• 1 Doctor (MD) • 2 Vaccinators • Allegedly in December a female doctor was added to the CHC in Oshay

Over the last 18 months, development organizations and the Afghan government have prioritized improvements to existing facilities, the construction of new buildings for health clinics, and the provision of equipment. Some particular achievements include:

Four Basic Health Centres (BHCs) were renovated: one each in Dezak village of Deh Rawud, Hossaini village in Khas Uruzgan, Sarab in Chora, and the District Centre of Chenartu. AHDS is actively seeking funding to upgrade the BHC in Chenartu to a CHC.

New buildings were constructed for five Comprehensive Health Centres (CHC) and the provincial hospital: Yak Linga Village, Tirin Kot; Karez Killay of Deh Rawud, Chora bazaar (a new delivery room was added),⁶³ and the old bazaar in Khas Uruzgan. Communities also noted that the Australian military constructed a new building for an existing clinic in Surkh Murghab village north of Tirin Kot city, which serves both men and women.

⁶³ **Basic Health Centres (BHCs)** are facilities where patients can receive basic diagnostic, vaccination and medications. A qualified doctor may operate the facility but in some cases there are only nurses. A basic health centre does not have the capacity to host patients overnight and to treat emergencies. **Comprehensive Health Centres (CHCs)** are usually practices where patients can receive diagnostic and medical treatments requiring sustained attention. Equipment varies but at minimum every comprehensive health centre is expected to be equipped with 5-10 beds and a stock of drugs. One qualified doctor or more are responsible for delivering the majority of the medical services. A **Health Post (HP)** is staffed by one male and one female volunteer who provide very basic first aid and health advice and refer more serious cases to the relevant facility. Often they are educated to detect early signs of disease in an attempt to contain outbreaks.

In addition to the government-sponsored clinics, there is also a private hospital in the Tirin Kot Bazaar (see Picture 1), which opened in mid-2011 and a medical laboratory. While residents appreciated the additional healthcare facilities, TLO was unable to obtain many detailed opinions about the services offered.



Picture 1: Private Clinic in Tirin Kot

While the number of clinics did not significantly increase, the total number of **health workers** rose by 32 professional staff (107 to 145; see Figure 7). This included eight new female staff, 1 nurse and 7 midwives, taking the total number of women to 32.⁶⁴ Overall, the percentage of women health workers remained unchanged at 22%.

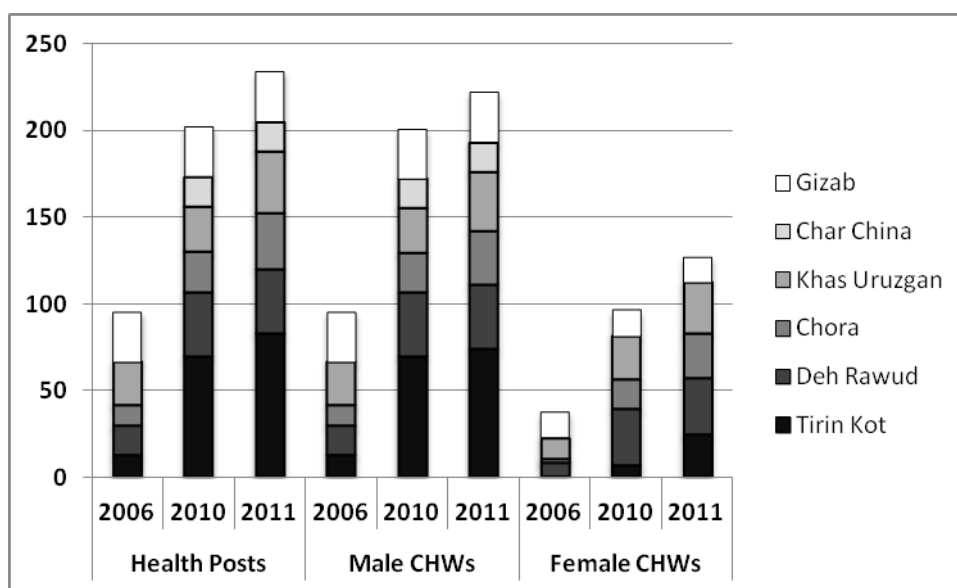


Figure 7: Health Workers by Profession in Uruzgan: 2010⁶⁵ vs. 2011

⁶⁴TLO was also told in December 2011 that two new female medical doctors had been added as well, one in the clinic in Sarab and one in Char China. TLO was unable to verify this with the government, however, so it is not included in the figures.

⁶⁵ The 2010 figures were slightly adjusted after the Department of Public Health provided new numbers, mostly correcting inflated numbers for medical doctors. Thus, there is a minor difference between the figures used here and in TLO's 2010 report.

It is also worth noting that of the 12 midwifery graduates from the 2010 AHDS programme, 10 were reported to be working in their communities (including the seven identified above).⁶⁶ One international NGO representative, however, was critical of the programme suggesting that none of the graduates were working in the districts.⁶⁷ Elsewhere it was indicated that at least two of the graduates were, by late 2011, working at the district level. Irrespective, the graduation of 12 new midwives is a success and efforts must continue to ensure that these new graduates are able to access communities throughout Uruzgan.

Encouragingly, as demonstrated by Figure 8, new staff was distributed across the districts. Still, the majority of staff—especially women—remain concentrated in Tirin Kot, the district with the highest staff growth between 2010 and 2011.

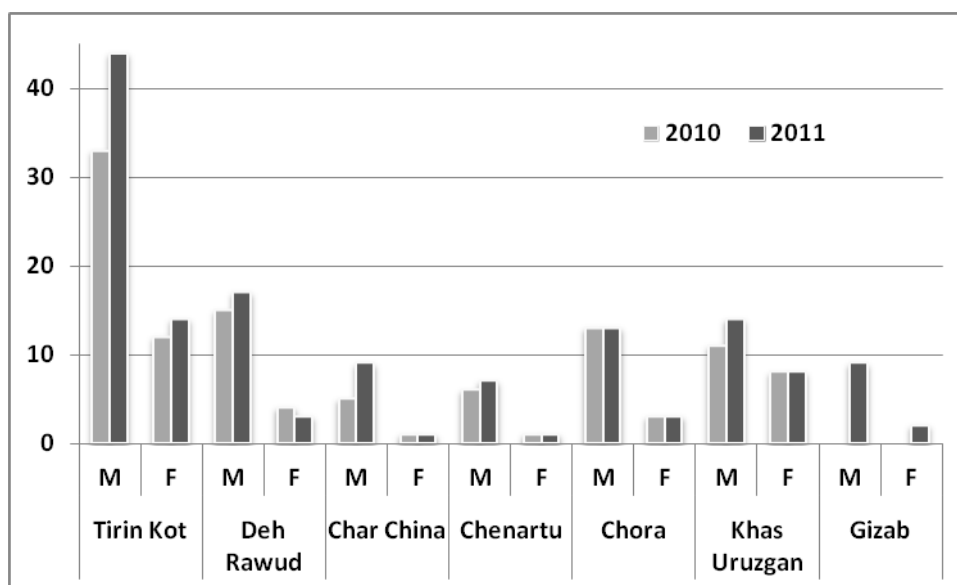


Figure 8: Healthcare Workers in Uruzgan by District and Gender

The number of doctors and nurses in Uruzgan increased by 17 (from 41 in 2010 to 58) since mid-2010. The increase brought the healthcare professionals per 10,000 people ratio in Uruzgan from 1 to 1.4 (the OECD average is 32 per 10,000). If all healthcare staff is included, the ratio increases to 3.4 in 10,000 and if community health workers are included the ratio increases to 12 per 10,000.

Several development actors and NGOs implemented healthcare programming in Uruzgan during the reporting period. The NGOs often coordinated their activities between themselves and with the Department of Public Health. According to a representative from HealthNet TPO, an organization that works across Afghanistan, the push to expand healthcare-related programming and local capacity is particularly critical in Uruzgan where,

⁶⁶ Interview, Kabul, 12 July 2011

⁶⁷ Interview, International NGO Representative, Kabul 12 July 2011

“The number of persons with psychological and mental problems, diseases, and disabilities is much higher than in other provinces.”⁶⁸

In the area of capacity building, the following achievements can be reported:⁶⁹

- The AHDS midwifery programme expanded enrolment from 12 in 2010 to 20 in 2011, and as of November 2011 will also include Gizab district.⁷⁰
- The first cohort of a two-year HealthNet TPO training programme (through HADAAF and ACTD) for 45 community health workers (20 female nurses, 10 laboratory students and 15 pharmacy students) graduated at the end of 2011.⁷¹ The curriculum received national accreditation by the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), which means that graduates now receive a certified diploma. A train-the-trainer component was also added to increase sustainability.⁷² Participants were selected jointly with communities.
- HADAAF, funded by HealthNet TPO and the MoPH, continued its training of private health practitioners (PHPs), a total of 60 since 2009 when the programme started. These unpaid PHPs (in insecure areas they receive some financial incentive) are registered with the MoPH and offer preventive healthcare services (reproductive health and immunizations) and raise awareness of different health-related issues. They currently operate out of 25 different private service provision outlets in areas where there formerly were only curative ones. As of late 2011, 34 of their 60 PHPs have worked on vaccination programs in hard to reach areas.⁷³
- The Dutch NGO Zuid Oost Azie (ZOA) funded a hygiene education programme for communities using MRRD-provided materials that were distributed by NERU in Tirin Kot, ANCC in Deh Rawud, and ARPD in Chora.⁷⁴

Other programmes in the Healthcare sector include:

- HealthNet TPO cooperates with the European Union (EU) on their provision of Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) and Essential Package of Hospital Services (EPHS) in Uruzgan, which focuses on institutional support and capacity building to the MoPH/DoPH and funding for healthcare providers to ensure the provision of free healthcare services. The EU renewed its commitment to this programme in 2011 for another two years.⁷⁵
- HealthNet TPO also employs two local women to assist with their psychosocial counselling programme for women and children at Tirin Kot hospital.⁷⁶
- Additionally AHDS has been working to increase the vaccination rate for preventative diseases, especially polio. According to the organization, 85% of children and 7% of pregnant women are submitting to vaccinations.⁷⁷

⁶⁸ Interview, HealthNet TPO, Kabul, 26 June 2011

⁶⁹ Most programs cited exclude Gizab district until late 2011 when the administrative shift from Day Kundi to Uruzgan occurred.

⁷⁰ Interview, CORDAID representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011

⁷¹ Interview, HealthNet TPO representative, Kabul, 29 June 2011; the programme is part of the unique ‘Public Private Partnerships’ Programme (PPP) for the improvement of Maternal Health in Afghanistan. Interview, Kabul, 11 July 2011

⁷² <http://www.healthnettpo.org/en/1118/dutch-consortium-uruzgan.html>

⁷³ Interview, HADAAF representative, Kabul, 29 June 2011

⁷⁴ Interview, ZOA representative, Kabul 12 July 2011, repeated in interviews with NERU, ANCC and ARPD

⁷⁵ http://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan/press_corner/all_news/news/2011/20111103_01_en.htm

⁷⁶ Interview, HealthNet TPO representative, Kabul, 29 June 2011

⁷⁷ Interview, Hilla ‘Achekezai’ (Senator), Tirin Kot, 8 August 2011

- Supported by Save the Children, HADAAF also runs environmental health project (awareness raising and promoting health). It also manages independent, private clinics.
- ACTD is operating the rehabilitation centre for drug-addiction in Tirin Kot, which receives referrals from the counselling centres in Deh Rawud, Chora, and Char China.⁷⁸
- CORDAID representatives implemented a nutrition project (CMAM) that seeks to decrease the amount of malnutrition in children.⁷⁹ The following health facilities are covered by this nutrition project: Tirin Kot (Provincial Hospital, Yak Linga CHC, and Surkh Murghab BHC), Chora (CHC and Sarab BHC), Deh Rawud (Centre CHC, Dewana Warkh and Dezak BHCs), and Char China (CHC).
- The ICRC also increased their presence in Uruzgan with the establishment of a permanent field office in April 2011 (see Section 2.1).⁸⁰ Previously, ICRC activities in the province were overseen from a satellite office in Kandahar, and were mainly confined to a free ambulance service that transported the wounded to Kandahar for medical attention.⁸¹ The ICRC also regularly brings in a nurse from Kandahar who examines war-wounded patients and provides basic first-aid trainings to ANA and KAU in Tirin Kot.⁸²
- The Accessibility Organization for Afghan Disabled (AOAD), an Afghan NGO that works to create an inclusive environment for people with disabilities, has been operating in Tirin Kot since 2009. It started a new women's programme in May 2011. Based out of the Malalai High School in Tirin Kot, the programme provides skills training in subjects such as sewing, English language, and computers to 46 individuals. The AOAD also serves as an educational resource to help link people with disabilities with other health services and educates the broader population about persons living with disabilities.⁸³
- There are also two other education programmes, school health education by AHDS and an environmental health project run by HADAAF. Both are active in Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, and Chora.
- Save the Children is implementing a significant four-year program, funded by Australia, called "Children of Uruzgan." The programme seeks to enhance access to basic health services in every district of Uruzgan. There is a particular focus on child and maternal health. The programme will increase the number of community health workers, particularly female health workers, and the quality of the services provided through additional training to diagnose and treat common childhood illnesses. Malnutrition in children and mothers will also be targeted and up to 50 new midwives will be trained.

Generally, residents indicated satisfaction with the new buildings and upgrades to health facilities, which they felt contributed to an overall improvement in the quality of care available to them. Many, however, complained that there was a lack of district hospitals and, as a result, many residents must travel to Tirin Kot to receive better healthcare. As a result, access to healthcare was seen as limited to certain areas only.

Of 20 NGOs willing to assess the healthcare sector, 60% thought that improvements had been made; of which 10% thought the improvements had been significant. The other 40% indicated there had not been much change. One local NGO representative alluded to the

⁷⁸ Interview, ACTD representative, Kabul, 11 July 2011

⁷⁹ Interview, CORDAID representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011; All children who are suffering from acute malnutrition without complications are giving their treatment by distribution of plump Nat, which is a high caloric and protein food.

⁸⁰ Interview with ICRC representative, 10 July 2011

⁸¹ Interview, ICRC representative, 10 July 2011

⁸² Ibid

⁸³ Interview, AOAD Representative, Kabul, 26 June 2011

depth of the challenges in the healthcare sector, estimating that, “30-40% of the province is still without access to even basic health services.”⁸⁴

A key critique raised by communities was the lack of qualified healthcare practitioners. This was also highlighted in the *Uruzgan Provincial Development Plan*, identifying low pay and insecurity as main deterrents to attracting qualified healthcare staff from other provinces, which is necessary given the lack of qualified healthcare workers in Uruzgan. The challenge is particularly acute in terms of attracting qualified personnel to more remote and insecure districts.⁸⁵ One respondent commented, “There are not enough real professional doctors. They simply do not want to work in the province, because there are no incentives to come here.”⁸⁶ As a result of the shortages nearly all healthcare staff were said to work double-shifts, one in a government-run clinic and one in a private facility.⁸⁷

Some residents feel that the scarcity of higher-level healthcare practitioners means that patients do not always get the quality of care they need. This was also noted by an international NGO representative, who wryly said, “There is no healthcare. They have doctors, but just by title. They do not know enough. They can just treat a cold. The equipment and the clinics are good, but the doctors are bad. They rush 300-400 people through their practice every day. You cannot treat patients properly like that.”⁸⁸ A local NGO representative had a similarly dim view about the quality of care, commented, “No matter what the illness, they give you the same pills.”⁸⁹

2.4 Agricultural Development

Uruzgan continues to struggle in developing an economy beyond subsistence farming and a reliance on opium poppy for export. Droughts and poor irrigation systems make it difficult, if not impossible, for farmers to count on reliable harvests and grow enough produce to sell surpluses in the market. Additionally, most development money spent in Uruzgan continues to be spent on indirect economic expansion through the improvement of basic infrastructural elements such as roads, schools, and clinics rather than on direct investment in the local agrarian economy.

As expanded upon below, Uruzgan produces a variety of crops for exports. Yet despite this, it is important to emphasize that poppy cultivation remains the primary and most reliable source of income for the majority Uruzgan’s farmers.

The farmers of Uruzgan export wheat, cumin, caraway, maize, barley, corn, potatoes, rice, and melons as cash crops. Saffron was also grown as a cash crop and exported in small

⁸⁴ Interview, local NGO representative, Kabul, 11 July 2011

⁸⁵ *Uruzgan Provincial Development Plan for 1390* 2011, p.13; at present each official doctor gets paid 12,500 Afghani per month (AUD 246, €197).

⁸⁶ Interview 23, International NGO-representative, Tirin Kot, 26 July 2011

⁸⁷ The Liaison Office, “Report on Sectoral Monitoring in Uruzgan: Findings from First Trial Data Collection,” Kabul: The Liaison Office; 18 December 2011

⁸⁸ Interview 24, International NGO-representative, Tirin Kot, 26 July 2011

⁸⁹ Interview, local NGO representative, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011

quantities. This was supported through a Dutch-funded project that ended in June 2011.⁹⁰ Uruzgan also has a significant orchard industry that produces nuts and fruits. Uruzgani dry apricots⁹¹ and almonds are particularly in demand outside the province.⁹² Some animal products such as wool and raw leather are also exported.⁹³ Most of Uruzgan's produce is exported to Kandahar, which is then transported to other parts of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the UAE.

Crucial problems, however, continue to plague the sector. The failure of timely wheat seed distribution in 2010 and a drought contributed to an extremely poor harvest in 2011.⁹⁴ Farmers also complained that flash floods in the spring caused by melting snow also led to lost crops. To improve the situation, a local NGO representative highlighted the need for water shed management projects saying, "We need more new dams, which would also be good for hydroelectricity."⁹⁵

In *Strategic Approach to Aid in Afghanistan for 2010-2012*, AusAID recognized that, "Agriculture, access to markets, financial services, and improved crops and water management, are fundamental challenges for the rural population."⁹⁶ This is also a local priority leading many residents to complain that Uruzgan has seen less investment in agricultural-related development compared to investments in infrastructure improvements, healthcare, and education. Of 18 interviews with NGOs representatives who felt they could judge the progress in this sector, 50% judged that there had been no significant progress since mid-2010. Another 39% thought it had improved, but only 11% of that group thought the improvement was significant. Another 11% thought the agricultural sector had actually deteriorated.

A core of five international organizations self-identified as focusing in the area of agriculture, mostly through local implementing partners: CORDAID (through NPO-RRAA), the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO; through AHDS, and ANCC, ARPD, and SADA), Norwegian Church Aid (NCA; through ADA), GIZ, and the World Food Programme (WFP; through ARPD, ANCC, and the Department of Education).

Starting in 2008, the FAO ran several projects that provided alternative livelihood structures, wheat seed, fertilizer distribution, and winterfeed for livestock although the projects finished

⁹⁰ *Uruzgan Provincial Development Plan for 1390* (April 2011), p.62. In 2010 TLO spoke to farmers about this project and received mixed feed-back. It only succeeded in Tirin Kot as the harsh winters in Chora and Deh Rawud destroyed the crop.

⁹¹ Uruzgan produces a superior quality of dry apricots called *Shakar Para*, which are dried on the tree. *Socio Economic Feasibility Study of Civilian Airport in Uruzgan*, p.14

⁹² Focus Group discussion, 3 Deh Rawud surveyors, 3 July 2011; Gizab trucker, Tirin Kot, 5 March 2011

⁹³ *Socio Economic Feasibility Study of Civilian Airport in Uruzgan*, p.14.

⁹⁴ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 29 June 2011 and Afghan NGO representative, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011; This, even though, in addition to FAO, also ISAF reported to have assisted the Afghan government and army in a winter distribution of 80 metric tons (176,000 pounds) wheat seed in Khas Uruzgan, Gizab and Char China in late October 2010. <http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/isaf-releases/ana-u.s.-special-forces-team-up-to-provide-winter-wheat-seed-2.html>. Also for reference please see:

⁹⁵ Interview, Afghan NGO representative I, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011

⁹⁶ AusAID, *Strategic Approach to Aid in Afghanistan for 2010-2010*. (7 January 2011). Available at http://www.usaid.gov/pressroom/publications/pubout.cfm?ID=8732_2914_8593_8681_5910&Type=

in April 2011.⁹⁷ The discontinuation of their large-scale projects was felt on the ground, especially by previous implementing partners, one critiquing that, “There are a lot of meetings on agriculture, but practically nothing has happened.”⁹⁸ That said, while farmers appreciated the receipt of wheat seeds, a TLO evaluation found that the project was also marred with corruption and the inability to deliver both seeds and fertilizers at the same time.

The FAO is hoping to begin a new project in cooperation with GIZ on almond tree management, a main licit cash crop in Uruzgan. The project would involve capacity building on care and maintenance of almond orchards. FAO also leads a Technical Working Group on Agriculture that tracks and coordinates the work of various NGOs in order to identify gaps and avoid duplication.

Afghan NGOs such as ADA, the Norwegian Project Office-Rural Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan (NPO-RRAA), SADA, and TLO implemented agriculture projects with the goals of improving farming skills, ensuring food security, and improving animal husbandry.⁹⁹ Some other notable achievements included:

- ADA set up 20 demonstration gardens, distributed 10,000 root samplings, and trained approximately 600 farmers on nursery and pest control management as well as post-harvest processing.¹⁰⁰ To boost food security, ADA also distributed fertilizer and seeds to 800 farmers, and concurrently provided winterfeed for 500 farmers. Finally, ADA operates a veterinary clinic in the provincial centre with one doctor and two assistants.
- NPO-RRAA, with funding from the Dutch Consortium Uruzgan (DCU), continued its agricultural programming in Gizab district. This includes a plan to set-up 21 seed banks, open four nurseries with a total of 25,000 saplings, train 100 women on irrigation and fertilizer use,¹⁰¹ and donate tools and equipment to families in need.¹⁰²
- SADA established 12 jerib nurseries in Tirin Kot and 8 jerib nurseries in Chora during the reporting period. In addition, a SADA representative told TLO that it distributed almond, apricot, peach, and decorative saplings to residents for free to help ensure food security.¹⁰³
- TLO, through its “Spring Initiative” and “Farmers’ Day” celebrations promoted the agricultural sector by celebrating the beginning of the new growing season with the distribution of 2,000 saplings in the districts of Tirin Kot, Chora, and Deh Rawud. TLO also hosted “Farmers’ Day” celebrations in each of the districts in March 2011. Farmers received agricultural tools including spray pumps, cucumber and onion seeds, turbans, shovels, pickaxes, working scissors, and saws.

⁹⁷ Interview, FAO representative, Tirin Kot, 25 July 2011

⁹⁸ Interview, Afghan NGO representative II, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011

⁹⁹ Interview, ADA Representative, Kabul, 22 June 2011; Interview, NPO-RRAA Representative, Kabul, 3 July 2011

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

¹⁰¹ While the interviewee stressed that women were the primary target-recipients of the trainings and noted that the local community better received such trainings for women than originally anticipated, it was also indicated that NPO-RRAA had some plans for sporadic male-centric trainings. However, specific details were not shared with TLO.

¹⁰² Interview, NPO-RRAA Representative, 3 July 2011

¹⁰³ Interview, SADA Representative, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011

The Afghan Veterinarians Association (AVA) for the Dutch Committee for Afghanistan Veterinarian Programme (DCA-VET), NPO/RRAA, ANCC and the ICRC also contributed to veterinary services in order to support Uruzgan's livestock.

- AVA is running a comprehensive veterinarian programme including veterinarian health centres that provide vaccinations of animals, treatment of animal diseases, distribution of medicine for animals, and artificial insemination assistance.¹⁰⁴
- ANCC reported the construction of two animal clinics.¹⁰⁵
- Both AVA and NPRO/RRAA distributed winterfeed to prevent livestock deaths.¹⁰⁶
- AVA also provided basic veterinarian training to 16 individuals, including six Kuchi, and more advanced para-veterinarian training to 10 individuals.
- The ICRC, in addition to their more traditional work on protection and reducing the harm caused by armed conflict, recently set up a veterinary vaccination programme where they train farmers and other residents on how to properly vaccinate animals.¹⁰⁷
- In September 2010, Afghan and Coalition Forces treated more than 960 animals during a three-day veterinary and medical operations programme clinic.¹⁰⁸

Despite these initiatives, it is important to avoid over-inflating agricultural gains. Many projects have achieved their intended objectives, but they are few in number and their geographic scope is very limited. The lack of reach to more rural areas is especially problematic. An international NGO representative noted that, "There are still a lot of needs and too few organizations working in this area, although more opportunities exist."¹⁰⁹

Another NGO representative was critical of the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (DAIL) for the lack of progress, adding that while the DAIL may have "better qualified staff members now, they still have very limited funding."¹¹⁰ Another noted, "Agriculture needs more funding, it needs continuous support, it needs an extension of services, and it needs to be linked to value chains."¹¹¹ Indeed, improvements in agriculture will only be fully realized if there are also improvements in other key areas, in particular the transportation sector, which farmers rely on to get produce to market.

"Farmers complain there just aren't enough customers to buy up all their produce when it comes into season, so that they are forced to drop their prices or leave it to rot. Meanwhile, Pakistani vegetables are imported to Uruzgan out of season and [sold] at high prices... Uruzgan province only has one highway connecting it to Kandahar province. That road is in poor condition and isn't good for transporting vegetables. That's another reason why vegetables sell at depressed prices within the province."

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¹⁰⁴ Interview, NPO-RRAA Representative, Kabul, 3 July 2011

¹⁰⁵ Interview, ANCC Representative, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011

¹⁰⁶ Interview, DCA Representative, Kabul, 27 June 2011

¹⁰⁷ Interview, ICRC Representative, Tirin Kot, 10 July 2011

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/isaf-releases/afghan-coalition-forces-treat-livestock-in-uruzgan.html>

¹⁰⁹ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 27 June 2011

¹¹⁰ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011

¹¹¹ Interview, International organization representative, Tirin Kot, 25 July 2011

Both the NCA and ZOA underscored the need to strengthen the relationship between agriculture and private sector development.¹¹² NCA emphasized that, “Working to increase output won’t help the communities if there are no linkages to the market.”¹¹³ Both organizations are also working to bridge the gap between the private sector and agricultural production so that Uruzgani farmers can generate income while meeting the needs of the broader community.

2.4.1 Opium Poppy

Poppy production continues throughout Uruzgan and the price of poppy continues to rise. Local opinion on poppy production varies significantly. From a security standpoint, opium production is a conflict driver that undermines the influence of the Afghan government. From a livelihood perspective, rising opium prices¹¹⁴ provide farmers with an essential and stable source of income. One respondent from Tirin Kot said that, given the high price and how little land is needed for poppy cultivation, “If [an Uruzgani] cultivated one *jerib*¹¹⁵ [of poppy] this year, next year he will try to cultivate ten.”¹¹⁶

The 2011 Afghan Opium Survey released by Afghanistan's Ministry of Counter Narcotics (MCN) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) cited a 45% increase in opium poppy cultivation in Uruzgan, from 7,337 ha in 2010 to 10,620 ha in 2011.¹¹⁷ Additionally, other TLO respondents indicated that in some districts like Deh Rawud, as much as 50-80% of the population is involved in opium cultivation in one way or another.¹¹⁸

Poppy cultivation is not uniform throughout the province, however. In Khas Uruzgan and the Darafshan area of Tirin Kot, some farmers told TLO that the insurgency was actively promoting poppy cultivation with the objective of increasing their tax revenue in the spring of 2012. Insurgents are said to request anywhere between 10-20% of the harvest depending on their hold on communities. This usually takes place in kind (actual harvested goods), but some farmers allegedly also pay cash.

Opium poppy was reportedly extensively planted in December 2011 in the Khas Uruzgan *manteqa* of Sartangai (an area mostly inhabited by Pashtuns), which is known for the quality of the poppies it produces.¹¹⁹ By contrast, the Head of the Counter Narcotics Department

¹¹² Interview with NCA representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011; Interview with ZOA representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011

¹¹³ Interview with NCA representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011

¹¹⁴ Opium prices are mostly likely rising as counter-insurgency (COIN) operations have reduced the supply available, while the demand either remains steady or increases, which is usually the case for addictive drugs. For an in-depth discussion of explanation of the relationship between counter-narcotics operations and insurgency, including a case-study of Afghanistan, see generally, V. Falbab Brown, *Shooting Up: Counterinsurgency and the War on Drugs*, (Brookings Institution Press, 2009).

¹¹⁵ A *jerib* is a traditional measurement of land in many Middle Eastern and Central Asian societies, and is measured differently in different places. In Afghanistan, one *jerib* equals one-fifth of a hectare, or 0.4942 acres.

¹¹⁶ Interview, Tirin Kot tribal elder, Tirin Kot, 2 August 2011

¹¹⁷ http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Afghanistan/Executive_Summary_2011_web.pdf

¹¹⁸ Interview with a district-level government official during Summer 2011.

¹¹⁹ As Khas Uruzgan is relatively colder than Char China, planting tends to occur in December and harvesting in May, while it is November and April in the latter.

argued that the presence of irrigation facilities in the Hazara areas of Khas Uruzgan have encouraged a shift away from opium poppy to other crops.¹²⁰ Indeed, very few Hazara farmers in Khas Uruzgan were reported to have planted poppy by the end of 2011.

In December 2011, senior provincial government officials attended a meeting called by the Department of Counter-narcotics aimed at increasing awareness about the damages and risks of poppy cultivation.¹²¹ Government officials cited the existence of 18,000 drug addicts in Uruzgan. A few days after the gathering the residents of Khaneqa *manteqa*, apparently influenced by government officials, began eradicating poppy. One local farmer said he was switching from opium to wheat and ascribed the change to the new PCoP, commenting, "Matiullah Khan has told us not to grow poppy, and we will do whatever he says. He has closed down all the shops that used to sell opium and he's arrested the smugglers. People have realized that growing poppy is no longer to their advantage, so they've decided to grow other crops."¹²²

On 10 October 2011, the ANP announced that it had confiscated 287kg of opium and 38kg of hashish in Tirin Kot city. During a press conference, the Head of the Counter-narcotics Department said that since the beginning of 1390 (21 March 2011), the Uruzgan police had already confiscated a total of 1,490 kg of drugs (1,222 kg opium and 267 kg Hashish) and arrested 11 individuals. Police also impounded two cars and two motorcycles during the same time period.

Police enforcement, however, will not in itself deter poppy cultivation. In order for opium poppy eradication to be successful, the root causes that drive farmers to cultivate this crop need to be more seriously addressed. Stability Jirga respondents highlighted the following reasons for poppy cultivation: unemployment in rural areas (24%), lack of market-access for other crops (19%), comparatively better prices for opium poppy (12%), better chances for a good crop with opium poppy (15%), especially during drought years (21%), and insufficient efforts by the government to eradicate poppy (9%). If one can learn anything from the success of opium poppy production, it is the importance of creating a value-chain and supporting farmers comprehensively from planting to market.

2.5 Water and Energy

There were some achievements regarding access to water and energy during the reporting period. Communities reported greater change and contentment with energy sector projects, but were less encouraged with water sector projects. However, it is possible that the on-going drought and subsequent losses in agriculture blurred achievements in the water

¹²⁰ Interview, Tirin Kot, 8 January 2012

¹²¹ Attendees included: PG Sherzad, PCoP Matiullah Khan, MP Obaidullah Barakzai, and Provincial Council Head Amanullah Hotaki.

¹²² Ahmad Shah Jawad, "A Rare Sign of Hope in Afghanistan." The Institute of War & Peace Reporting (10 January 2012); <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2012/01/10/135366/a-rare-sign-of-hope-in-afghanistan.html>

sector. When TLO asked over 500 *jirga* attendees to name key infrastructure developments in their area, those related to water were most frequently cited.

TLO project evaluations, completed in mid-to-late 2010, found that after basic healthcare, access and management of water was identified as the most pressing need of Uruzgan residents. Community needs tended to gravitate toward rural infrastructure projects that provide access to irrigation and potable water such as culverts, siphons, retaining walls, and wells. Of all projects TLO evaluated, these are uniformly the most liked and appreciated.

2.5.1 Potable Water and Irrigation

While initial interviews with local residents revealed a widespread perception that drinking water-related projects were largely confined to Tirin Kot, Chora, and Deh Rawud, interviews with development actors indicated that such projects had indeed been implemented in five of Uruzgan's seven districts—a much larger beneficiary pool than credited by interviewees (see Table 5). NGO representatives highlighted new wells in Deh Rawud, Gizab, Chora, Khas Uruzgan, and Tirin Kot. Not all considered this to be an achievement, however, and a representative of an international NGO questioned the sustainability of this change, noting that, "Too many wells get dug, causing the water levels to go down."¹²³

Table 5: Achievements in Water and Irrigation

District	Changes in Potable Water		Changes in Irrigation Water	
Tirin Kot	↗	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most people in the centre (90% or more) now use well water for drinking as opposed to river water. Respondents from other villages estimated that about 60% have access to potable water. 	↔	No change
Khas Uruzgan	↔	No change	↔	No change
Gizab	↗	While some respondents reported no change, others say that 10 new wells were dug in the district centre by the National Solidarity Programme	↔	No change
Deh Rawud	↗	While some respondents reported no change, others said that NGOs and private citizens dug many new wells and installed hand pumps.	↔	No change
Chora	↔	No change	↗	Irrigation channels constructed by TLO, MRRD, and PRT have helped increase access to water.
Chenartu	↔	No change	↔	No change
Char China	↔	No change	↔	No change

¹²³Interview, Tirin Kot, 25 July 2011

Development actors such as ADA, ZOA, the PRT, as well as Community Development Councils (CDCs) of the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) implemented sizable projects during the reporting period with the objective of improving access to safe drinking water:

- ZOA, through their local implementing partners ANCC, NERU, and ARPD completed the construction of 150 new wells in the districts of Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, and Chora. ZOA's implementing partners also made repairs to over 600 wells in the area.¹²⁴ ZOA also runs a shop where residents can purchase spare parts to repair hand pumps.¹²⁵
- Community Development Councils (CDC) reported the completion of 69 wells and two water supply reservoirs in Khas Uruzgan and Deh Rawud.
- ZOA also partners with local shuras, usually CDCs, to provide water management training to local community members. After the training, community members form a water subcommittee where they can apply their knowledge to help the community make development decisions that ensure sustainable access to drinking and irrigation water.¹²⁶
- ADA used NCA funding to provide 20 villages in Deh Rawud with potable water, also by digging wells and installing hand pumps.¹²⁷
- A Barakzai elder from Chora told TLO that the PRT built hydroelectric dams for the villages of Akhtar, Saray, and Ashazai in his district.¹²⁸

Residents and NGO officials seem to agree that access to potable water is much more limited outside the provincial and district centres. In Khas Uruzgan, local assessments of drinking water were poor. An elder from the Saydan area told TLO that access to drinking water in his village deteriorated between 2010 and 2011, commenting, "We rely on natural sources of water like rivers and Karez. These are not available for us this year because of the on-going drought."¹²⁹ Similar experiences were echoed by respondents from the more remote (and less secure) districts, as well as by one NGO representative who underscored the crucial need to improve access to potable water for residents in Khas Uruzgan, Char China, and Gizab.¹³⁰

While improvements in access to safe drinking water were acknowledged, existing irrigation systems were the subject of near-unanimous criticism. Some respondents noted that they were unable to access water because the irrigation canals and channels (*karez*) were insufficient to reach their lands. The critique is somewhat surprising given that CDCs reported 130 completed or on-going small projects in the irrigation sector in Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Chora, and Khas Uruzgan. This included the reported completion of 50 *karez* and canals, 160 protection or gabion walls, and several water reservoirs. Furthermore, GIZ also implemented several irrigation projects, including the construction of micro-drams.

¹²⁴ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011

¹²⁵ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011

¹²⁶ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011

¹²⁷ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 22 July 2011

¹²⁸ Interview, Barakzai Elder from Chora, Tirin Kot, 3 July 2011

¹²⁹ Interview, Tribal Elder from Khas Uruzgan district, Tirin Kot, 12 July 2011

¹³⁰ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011

The *1390 Uruzgan Provincial Development Plan* also details at least two substantial irrigation-related programmes that were being carried out in Uruzgan:¹³¹

- Emergency Irrigation and Rehabilitation programme (EIRAP) by the World Bank/MRRD, with completion date in March 2011.
- Rural Water Supply and Irrigation programme (RuWATSIP) through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) of MRRD, on-going.

Other efforts include the Central Asia Development Group's (CADG) Cash for Work programme that employs hundreds of daily labourers who work on community improvement in Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, and Chora. The projects mainly focus on both road and water related construction. Local respondents are generally happy with the CADG programme, but expressed a desire to see the programme increase productivity, hire more workers, and improve the quality of work.

In Tirin Kot, CADG activities throughout early 2011 focused on the rehabilitation of street drainage in Tirin Kot centre. Local residents not only applauded the improvements in their immediate surroundings, which meant a direct benefit from the project, but were pleased with the overall number of jobs created. The income from CADG reportedly helped offset some losses from the poor harvest.

A plausible explanation for the fact that water and irrigation projects are both appreciated and critiqued is because of the overwhelming importance of irrigation. The importance of irrigation has been further highlighted by the recent drought and its devastating impact on local communities. As a result, the expectations and focus on this sector is higher than others. Additionally, there has been a lack of irrigation projects in many rural areas because of insecurity.

2.5.2 Energy Sector

All districts reported improvements in access to electricity, except Chenartu. Opinion in Deh Rawud was also somewhat divided. Despite the progress, the expansions in electricity have mostly been concentrated around the provincial and district centres (see Table 6). There were, however, some notable exceptions such as the new wind turbine installed by GIZ in the Sajaqal village of Tirin Kot. The turbine produces 20 kilowatts of electricity and is available for use by 100 households in four villages. In another initiative, ADA reportedly distributed solar panels to 850 families in urban areas of Tirin Kot and Deh Rawud.

Interviews from numerous Tirin Kot residents illustrate the vast differences in access to electricity, even within Uruzgan's provincial centre. A respondent from Tirin Kot centre estimated that the Tirin Kot bazaar now has nearly 100% access to electricity.¹³² By contrast TLO's office in Tirin Kot mostly relies on generators for electricity outside of the five, often-interrupted, hours of municipal electricity between 5-10 pm.

¹³¹ *Uruzgan Provincial Development Plan for 1390* 2011, p.65

¹³² Interview, Tirin Kot resident, Tirin Kot, 2 August 2011

Table 6: Achievements in Energy

District	Changes Observed	
Char China	↗	Foreigners distributed solar panels in Sahel bazaar. A main road near a Forward Operating Base now has streetlights.
Chenartu	↔	No change.
Chora	↗	The PRT provided solar panels for the bazaar and some small hydropower dams in Akhtar, Sarab, and Ashizai villages.
Deh Rawud	↗	Some respondents reported no change, others say ADA and SADA provided solar panels, and solar electricity is now available.
Gizab	↗↗	Considerable increases in both hydropower and solar electricity. 25-60% of the government-controlled areas of the district now have power, up 20-25% from last year.
Khas Uruzgan	↗	More electricity being generated by privately owned hydropower dynamos, most of which are in the district centre. Outlying areas still have very little electricity.
Tirin Kot	↗	Increases in electricity from solar panel and hydropower dynamo purchases by private citizens. Virtually everyone in the district centre has electricity now, but power is much scarcer in the outskirts.

Outside Tirin Kot district, there were improvements to the electricity supply, although its distribution and coverage varied greatly. An elder from the recently secured Mehrabad area told TLO that, while access to power via solar panels increased between 2010 and 2011, only about 10% of the population is able to afford it.¹³³ In the Saydan area of Khas Uruzgan, an elder indicated that the district centre did have electricity, but it is reserved only for government offices and the Shashpar village, adding that, “other people might have a generator, but there isn’t broad access in any areas.”¹³⁴ Chora appeared to fare somewhat better with respondents appreciatively noting the PRT’s effort to distribute solar panels as well as the construction of three hydroelectric dams in the villages of Akhtar, Saray, and Ashazai.¹³⁵ While most of the province remains underserved by electricity distribution efforts, both military and non-military efforts were commendable during the 18-month reporting period.

2.6 Key Infrastructure Development

The Netherlands and Australia have given significant support to reconstruction efforts in Uruzgan in general and Tirin Kot in particular. That said, when attendees of the December 2011 stability *jirga* were asked to name the most important infrastructure project completed over the last year within their district, over one-third (37%) argued that no infrastructure

¹³³ Interview, Mehrabad Elder, Tirin Kot, 13 July 2011

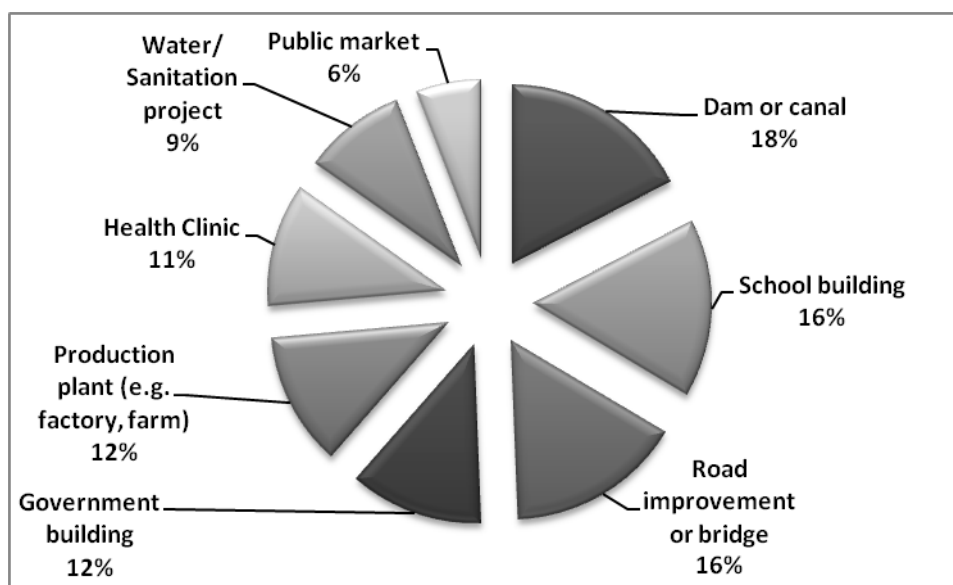
¹³⁴ Interview, Khas Uruzgan Elder, Tirin Kot, 12 July 2011.

¹³⁵ Interview, Barakzai Elder, Tirin Kot, 3 July 2011.

projects had been completed over that time. This echoed frequent complaints by local communities that development activities in Uruzgan had generally slowed. Interestingly, this is the exact opposite assessment of development actors interviewed, with two-thirds indicating that improvements in this sector were made, with a small minority judging it to be significant.

These different assessments could be explained by the uneven distribution of infrastructure development throughout the province. More accessible areas including Tirin Kot, Chora, and Deh Rawud have received most of the infrastructure development, although projects are largely confined to the district and provincial centres, even in these areas. Districts that are more insecure or have difficult, rugged terrain saw less development. For example, Khas Uruzgan, Chenartu, and Char China only saw a handful of infrastructure projects over the past 18-month period. The small number of projects that were implemented includes the AWCC cell phone tower that is under construction in Khas Uruzgan, as well as the completion of the road connecting Deh Rawud and Char China. Encouragingly, infrastructure projects are commencing in secure areas of Gizab and Char China.

The two-thirds (63%) of stability jirga elders who said they had seen a key infrastructure projects in their district over the past 18 months identified a wide array of projects distributed across several sectors (see Figure 9). The three most commonly identified areas



were watershed management projects (18%), school construction (16%), and road improvements (16%). The least reported area of activity was private sector infrastructure such as markets (6%) and production plants (12%).

Figure 9: Key Infrastructure Projects Highlighted by Jirga Respondents

Aside from road construction and the central prison, other infrastructure projects that fall slightly outside these sectors are worth highlighting:

- In April 2011, a multi-month effort to install a new runway at the airstrip in Tirin Kot was officially concluded. The US military-funded project will significantly improve air transportation to and from the province. Local NGO representatives cited the runway as a key infrastructure improvement.¹³⁶
- The construction on the Australian Defence Force-funded Central Mosque (*Jami Jumat*) in the Surkh Murghab village of Tirin Kot in mid-2011. The community wanted the mosque for some years, and is reportedly very happy with the new mosque, which has a wide range of facilities for locals to use. The Australian Defence Forces also constructed a mosque to honour Rozi Khan in Shar Sheklay, who was accidentally killed by the Australian Special Forces in 2008.
- The Australian Defence Forces are completing construction on the new Department of Water Management in the provincial capital.

2.6.1 Key Road Projects

The combined value of the 20 most expensive infrastructure projects in the Provincial Development Plan for 1390 is over \$US 115 million.¹³⁷ Half of these—and by far the most expensive—relate to requests for paved roads. The comparatively high budget for these projects underscores the still-urgent need for upgrades to Uruzgan’s transportation infrastructure.

Two major road construction projects were completed in 2011: the main road connecting Tirin Kot to Chora and the Chutu-Sarab road between Deh Rawud and Char China. Both illustrate the importance of security as a necessary precedent to development. In the latter case, the security provided by Matiullah Khan’s private security force—the *Kandak-e Amniat-e Uruzgan* (KAU)—enabled the completion of what is now the main artery for the residents of Char China, who are grateful for its completion. Many residents, however, reported to TLO field surveyors that they were too scared to use the Tirin Kot-Chora road after Surkh Murghab due to Taliban attacks in the Baluchi valley. Residents indicated that they accordingly used the alternative Dasht (desert) Road for everyday transport.

Besides the two roads mentioned above, most transportation-related infrastructure projects are relatively small-scale and implemented through one of the Afghan government programmes—implemented by NGOs—such as the National Solidarity Programme (reporting the gravelling of 33 mostly tertiary roads in 2010/2011) or the National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP). Still, other larger, USAID direct-funded transportation initiatives implemented by bigger contractors. Notable projects of both types include:

- The 160-metre bridge linking Chora and Gizab to the provincial capital, built by the DRRD with funding from the Netherlands, was inaugurated by Governor Sherzad on 16 January 2011.¹³⁸ The

¹³⁶ Interview, ZOA representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011

¹³⁷ This project grouping only refers to the projects listed under “Infrastructure sector.” Education and healthcare infrastructure (facilities) are grouped in their own respective categories alongside programming and capacity building projects. See *Uruzgan Provincial Development Plan for 1390* (April 2011)

¹³⁸ Ahmad Umair Khpalwak. *Key Bridge Inaugurated in Tirin Kot*. Pajhwok Afghan News, January 2011

bridge reportedly had a very positive effect on the district's population, as it improved mobility during the flood season.

- Two bridges were constructed in Char China: one by a Turkish firm between the villages of Yakhdan and Sakhar villages and the other by the Louis Berger Group (with funding from USAID) in the district centre, reportedly named *Rigak bridge*.
- In Gizab, DRRD made a concerted effort to advance projects throughout 2011. As of late 2011, the construction continued of retaining walls for the Tamazan River, the Kagh Dara area, and nearby the Sra Manda River. The DRRD also sponsored the gravelling of three main roads during the reporting period.

2.6.2 Challenges in Infrastructure Development

Infrastructure projects face similar challenges as other sectors. Due to the size and significant cost of infrastructure projects, however, they face some unique challenges and seem to be scrutinized much more closely. Irrespective of the underlying reasons, community members and NGO representatives continuously cite waste, dependency, tribal rivalries, and the lack of management oversight as chronic issues hampering infrastructure development.

Both the timely completion and quality of infrastructure projects suffer greatly due to endemic waste and corruption. There was a divergence of opinions, however, concerning the cause or source of the waste and corruption. Community members point their fingers at development actors, including contractors and NGOs, who in turn point to the Afghan government and community members. The government, perhaps in an attempt to garner populist support, generally shifts the blame back onto development actors.

Of course, there is never just one source of waste and corruption. What is important is that both exist at significant levels, and the frustration of the local community is palpable. One local NGO representative summed up the frustration of local communities regarding waste. They argued that the Afghan population has become increasingly frustrated with the (often incredibly) high salaries of foreign contractors and development actors, especially when they see project implementation as sub-standard.¹³⁹ He recounted a popular community anecdote about two brothers who threw their third brother out of their house after the latter refused to work to support the household to illustrate his point. "If Afghans will do that to their own family," he impudently asked, "What do you think they would like to do to these foreigners?"¹⁴⁰

Respondents also felt that the seemingly new preference for large development contractors has translated into an ever-increasing number of sub-contracts, with funds disappearing into each new sub-contract. Some local NGO respondents critiqued the practise to award big contracts only to large, for-profit international development contractors rather than

¹³⁹ Interview, Local NGO representative, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011

¹⁴⁰ Ibid

spreading it out across smaller development organizations—most of which are Afghan organizations—that ultimately implement the activities at the end of the day.¹⁴¹

The complaint against the NGO practise of bringing in staff from other areas in Afghanistan is a long-standing grievance that has not improved. The son of a local shopkeeper argued that people from other provinces can work everywhere in Afghanistan, but Uruzganis can only work in their own province because of widespread stereotypes that they are all Taliban.¹⁴² NGOs are aware of the criticism, and indicated that they do try and hire locally. However, the NGOs acknowledge that most of the locals hired are for low-skill or unskilled positions. There simply are not enough Uruzganis available with the skill sets for more senior or skilled positions.

Many respondents also believed that the need for security provision to guard against insurgent attacks was wasteful. For example, a local NGO representative argued that the organization building the Tirin Kot-Chora road, “spent more than twice as much on security and protection than they did on the actual construction materials.”¹⁴³ Of course, this exaggerated opinion must be counterbalanced by the fact that security has enabled the construction of these projects, allowing communities to benefit upon their completion. Local communities who provide the security guards also benefited from jobs as security providers. Another NGO, however, felt that this undermined other development projects because community members come to expect that their locals will be given jobs, driving up costs.¹⁴⁴

Most NGOs saw government corruption or bribes demanded from powerbrokers as one of the single largest sources of waste in the sector. One local NGO representative openly admitted to bribing government officials to ensure monitoring of their projects was actually conducted.¹⁴⁵ The representative, echoing numerous other interviews, alleged that bribery is widespread in the province and that organizations often have no choice if they want to continue to operate and access full government support, or not be disrupted by local power politics. “Corruption is like a virus,” he noted, “everyone is affected.”¹⁴⁶ There were also reports of NGOs paying the insurgency to allow them to implement projects, although this practice is mostly kept quiet.

Another source of waste highlighted by development actors was the allegedly commonplace looting of construction materials, driven by poverty or a growing “hand-out” mentality. An Afghan representative of an international NGO told TLO that several projects were delayed after materials were stolen from construction sites. He went so far as to indicate that the stolen materials had become the, “community contribution” to the project.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴¹ Interview, Local NGO representative, Tirin Kot, 23 July 2011

¹⁴² Interview, Tirin Kot, early July 2011

¹⁴³ Interview, Local NGO Representative, Tirin Kot, 3 July 2011

¹⁴⁴ Interview, Local NGO Representative, Tirin Kot, 3 July 2011.

¹⁴⁵ Interview, Local NGO representative, Tirin Kot, 22 July 2011

¹⁴⁶ Ibid

¹⁴⁷ Interview, International NGO Representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011.

That Infrastructure projects can give rise to concerns around aid dependency is another challenge to project planning and implementation. This is particularly the case with projects that are focused on outputs and not on capacity building of local communities. As a result, a troubling trend has developed whereby local communities increasingly look to outsiders to take care of their problems. One NGO respondent explained, “Community mechanisms sometimes disappear. People stop using traditional methods of handling problems (like repairing traditional irrigation systems themselves) and wait for the NGOs to come and do it.”¹⁴⁸ This dependency undermines development efforts because NGOs must focus on projects that communities could do themselves. Over time, communities also lose the knowledge and skills to deal with local issue themselves, thereby increasing their own vulnerability and perpetuating the reliance on outside actors.

Tribal issues also impact project implementation. This is usually related to demands that development actors only hire workers from a particular tribe. This, however, was more of an administrative inconvenience that drains resources. CADG, the organization running the large-scale “Cash for Work” employment programme noted, “occasional problems where one tribe wants to have a disproportionate representation in our workforce.”¹⁴⁹ While CADG said that these did not significantly delay work, it was “troublesome” and required the organization to divert resources (time, money, etc.) to resample the population (via random sampling) in order to make sure that the workforce does in fact reflect the tribal composition of the population in a given district.¹⁵⁰

Finally, respondents underscored the need to ensure that facility construction is matched with adequate management capacity and considerations of sustainability, including sequencing. Unfortunately, the latter is often overlooked, undermining the effectiveness of the project. The sewage treatment plant built on the outskirts of Tirin Kot provides an unfortunate example of this. While the plant itself is described as “beautifully constructed,”¹⁵¹ it is not operational because there are simply no adequately trained local staff to ensure its operation.¹⁵²

2.7 Private Sector

There has been tangible growth in the private sector over the last 18 months. Private businesses, especially in Tirin Kot, are booming. The number of shops in the Tirin Kot bazaar has noticeably increased in numerous areas, including clothing, groceries, household goods, luxury, medical, and services. The largest growth has been in car dealerships, automotive good stores, and construction material suppliers. Most construction material such as cement

¹⁴⁸ Interview, International NGO Representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011.

¹⁴⁹ Interview, CADG Representative, 27 July 2011.

¹⁵⁰ Interview, CADG Representative, 27 July 2011.

¹⁵¹ Tom Hyland, “Hearts, minds sink in Afghan sewers,” *The Age*, 29 May 2011; <http://www.theage.com.au/national/hearts-minds-sink-in-afghan-sewers-20110528-1f9ro.html#ixzz1WZNEcKa1>

¹⁵² AUSAID has indicated that the capacity piece had been intended to be supported through the US funded ICMA project and its successor. Unfortunately, unavoidably RAMP-UP mobilization was delayed by almost 12 months.

is easily obtained locally. For example, stone in the province's mountain ranges is broken down at one of five crushing plants in Tirin Kot. The growth of the construction industry and need to move supplies also expanded the transportation sector.¹⁵³

Though relatively few, the reported increase in the number of luxury stores selling goods such as birdhouses, books, or DVDs indicates that residents have more disposable income than in the past. There are also several new stores that cater exclusively to women (e.g., cloth, shoes, hair pieces, and jewellery).

The expansion of bazaars is mostly limited to district centres and tend to be more vibrant and diverse than those in villages. Bazaars generally have a variety of stores such as car/motorcycle dealerships, car spare parts and repairs, construction materials, moneychangers, electronics, food and snacks, and services (barber, tailor). Villages usually lack the diversity of the larger bazaars and are limited to clothing and household good stores, and general stores that carry a variety of products. Pharmacies, fresh fruit and vegetables, dry fruit shops, and tools were more varied in their availability.

With the exception of Khas Uruzgan and Chenartu, which remained insecure and hard to reach during most of the past 18 months, respondents reported that the main bazaar in their district saw an increase of shops and a better variety of goods for sale. In Chora and Deh Rawud, for example, the expansion of car and motorcycle shops was noted.

Increasing security and increased mobility following the completion of the Deh Rawud road led to an increase in shops in Char China. Local respondents commented that in comparison to last year, the majority of essential goods can be found in the bazaar. In Deh Rawud, the completion of the Chutu Dam has also boosted the bazaar in the district. Respondents noted that as many as 100 shops were added over the past year.

Most respondents complained that goods in the market became more expensive, especially in Chora, Char China, and Khas Uruzgan. One respondent lamented, "The number of shops and the activity in the bazaar improved, but prices increased a lot."¹⁵⁴ In Chora, some respondents even accused shopkeepers of keeping prices artificially high, as they felt that the increased number of shops should mean increased competition. Expanding bazaars also led to a drastic increase in the price of land plots in their vicinity, especially in Tirin Kot.

Different explanations for the price climb were offered. Some attributed high prices to failing harvests caused by the drought¹⁵⁵ while others cited the high price of fuel and its impact on transportation costs.¹⁵⁶ Most goods are usually imported from Kandahar City, with many Tirin Kot shopkeepers doubling as wholesalers and distributing goods to the other districts. Shopkeepers in Chora and Deh Rawud, however, prefer to obtain their goods directly from Kandahar City.

¹⁵³ The Liaison Office, "Are We There Yet? Transport in Uruzgan." (Kabul, The Liaison Office, 2011).

¹⁵⁴ Interview, Local NGO Representative, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011

¹⁵⁵ Interview, Local NGO Representative, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011

¹⁵⁶ Interview, Local NGO Representative, Tirin Kot, 13 July 2011

2.7.1 Banking/Lending

The banking sector has not expanded much in Uruzgan. Kabul and Azizi banks remain the only commercial institutions (in addition to the *Da Afghanistan* or Central Bank that is located inside the Governor's compound). Respondents noted that they would prefer Islamic banking services to the conventional services offered.

Furthermore, the World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) established several financial cooperatives called the Islamic Investment and Finance Cooperatives Group (IIFCG) in Uruzgan. Starting its operations in 2008 in Deh Rawud, and later expanding to Tirin Kot and Chora, each district had a community-owned financial cooperative that provided small loans to community members, usually around 25,000 AFN (AUD 465.52; EUR 380.15; USD \$ 502.44). These financial cooperatives have around 2,500 members and a varying degree of borrowers (around 1,700). Their focus is to provide short-term loans of between two and eight months with a low interest rate of around 2% to borrowers.¹⁵⁷ They created their own shura in Tirin Kot that functions as a Board of Directors and consists of 43 *maliks* and community elders.

This shura requested that the cooperatives stop charging interest, as it is widely recognized as contrary to the principles of Islamic banking. The solution devised in consultation with the local religious community was to stop providing financial loans and instead provide in-kind assistance in the form of seeds, fertilizer, or other agricultural items in the value of the loan. The beneficiary was then required to return money at the end of a set term.

Due to problems with borrowers re-paying loans, however, WOCCU recently closed their cooperatives in Deh Rawud and Chora, and concentrated efforts on Tirin Kot instead. Mainly, WOCCU representatives found that it was very difficult to get the borrowers to repay the loans and found that community members simply did not grasp the concept of microfinance or loans generally. WOCCU representatives added that communities have come to depend on free handouts from development actors rather than pay back loans.¹⁵⁸ Often loan collection agents had difficulty locating the correct person to collect from, and even when they did, the borrower would sometimes pretend that they were not the person who signed for the loan (despite WOCCU's careful record keeping.) Other times, it became clear that the borrower simply had no intention of paying the loan back.

Tirin Kot is one of the few districts with an official *Hawala* system. Residents of other districts exchange money with shopkeepers. The Pakistani Rupee (PKR) remains the most frequently used currency in Uruzgan, at least for business transaction and trade. Some respondents argued that they get cheated because of what they consider to be unfair exchange rates. Often the official currency, the Afghani and PKR are treated as if they were of equal value, despite the lower value of the latter.

¹⁵⁷ Interview, WOCCU representative, Tirin Kot, 26 July 2011

¹⁵⁸ Ibid

The most common reasons for borrowing money are to pay for weddings, medical services, land purchases, or to construct a house. Most individuals surveyed noted that people borrow money either from a rich person in their community or family members. Only when it is not possible to get a personal loan will people approach a money exchanger or bank.

Respondents gave a variety of responses when asked about the typical amount of a personal loan. The average amount was PKR 70,000 / AFN 38,268.80 (AUD 712.60; EUR 581.91; USD 769.11). The highest total given was PKR 450,000 / AFN 246,013.72 (AUD 4,581.00; EUR 3,740.84; USD 4,944.27). Most loans had terms of 26 to 52 weeks. Respondents initially denied that loans involved any interest, due to the Islamic prohibition on usury. Eventually, however, most acknowledged that loans did carry interest charges and suggested that the average interest rate was 5-20%. Some in Tirin Kot, however, indicated that the interest rate was as high as 50%. Most lenders require that the loan be secured and borrowers often provided either property (82%) or future harvests (18%) as collateral. Farmers often borrow against their future-harvest value in order to buy seeds or fertilizer. These transactions are frequently on unfavourable terms and farmers must sell their produce at fixed rates that are below market rates.

2.7.2 Private Sector Development

Recently some organizations have focused on private sector development through vocational training.

- The Business Development Centre (BDC) in Tirin Kot, which is managed by the Afghan Centre for Training and Development (ACTD) offers three courses targeted at local entrepreneurs and shopkeepers. According to BDC staff, they have managed to train 200 students in business development, 150 students in computer usage, and 350 students in English language skills since 2009.¹⁵⁹
- The Social Volunteers Foundation (SVF) also ran a vocational training in 2011 that taught approximately 360 children of both sexes how to sew and embroider.¹⁶⁰ The SVF programme also provided the boys with electrician training.¹⁶¹

The fact that so many Uruzganis have demonstrated an interest in acquiring additional skills is a positive indicator. At the same time, a survey of 50 bazaaris revealed that many are sceptical of the Business Development Centre (BDC). The bazaaris were also rather dismissive of NGOs and argued that NGOs have nothing to do with the business community and therefore nothing to teach them.

Despite its best efforts, TLO was unable to identify one individual who completed a course at the BDC. A community elder told TLO that he was not surprised that they could not identify any graduates. He went on to explain that many of them might have never started a business and those who are already entrepreneurs are unlikely to admit they had taken a course,

¹⁵⁹ Interview, BDC staff, Tirin Kot, August 2011

¹⁶⁰ Interview with SVF representative, Kabul, 22 June 2011

¹⁶¹ Ibid

especially if it did not provide them with a significant advantage over those who did not undergo the training.¹⁶²

Based on these interviews and the courses offered, it seems that the greatest benefit of BDC courses are for Uruzgani residents seeking the necessary skills to enter the booming NGO labour market. Students interviewed seemed to regard the computer and English classes offered as more beneficial than those on business development.¹⁶³

Mobility is a catalyst for economic development,¹⁶⁴ which is a constraining factor in Uruzgan. Indeed, the rugged terrain, volatile climate, poor state of road infrastructure, and insecurity severely isolates Uruzgan and each of its districts. Improving the transportation infrastructure and ensuring that Uruzgani goods and produce can reach export markets is a priority.

2.8 Media and Communications

The area of media and telecommunications has had some setbacks over the past 18 months, with pressure coming from both the insurgency and government. Despite on-going threats against telecommunication expansion in Uruzgan for several years, the Taliban had not interfered much with communication infrastructure in the provincial capital. This changed during the reporting period.

In March 2011 the Taliban blew up the AWCC cell tower and in March 2011 they destroyed the new Etisalat transmitter in Shah Mansur village. These attacks were mostly just minor inconveniences as cell phone users could switch networks. The same could not be said for the complex attack of July 2011 that destroyed the RTA building. The attack not only had a devastating human toll, it also severely limited the operations of the province's main source for television and radio news. RTA is now run out of a sea container and receives support from ISAF to ensure it can transmit its broadcasts.

This insurgent attack on the media is a troubling development. Indeed, amongst those killed was Omaid Khpalwak, who many considered the star journalist in Uruzgan. His death leaves a vacuum in provincial journalism and international media are struggling to find a replacement with the same depth and objectivity.¹⁶⁵

Furthermore, even though President Karzai gave a speech in Tirin Kot in 2010 in defence of free speech, according to the late Khpalwak, media in Uruzgan had come under increasing

¹⁶² Interview, tribal elder, Tirin Kot, August 2011

¹⁶³ Interview, BDC student, Tirin Kot, August 2011

¹⁶⁴ Jean-Paul Rodrigue, "Transportation and Economic Development" in Jean-Paul Rodrigue, Claude Comtois, and Brian Slack [eds]. *The Geography of Transport Systems*. (Routledge, 2009); <http://people.hofstra.edu/geotrans/eng/ch7en/conc7en/ch7c1en.html>

¹⁶⁵ In addition to working for BBC and Pajhwok Afghan News, Afghanistan's largest independent news agency, he was an ad hoc stringer of numerous Dutch and Australian newspapers.

pressure from Afghan government actors as well as pro-government strongmen who wanted a positive portrayal of the province and no critique of their behaviour.¹⁶⁶

The lack of Internet access in the province is also frequently cited as an inhibitor to freedom of speech.

2.8.1 Media Outlets

Media coverage and access have improved in Uruzgan, even though the number of commercial media outlets accessible in Uruzgan has remained unchanged and continues with five radio stations, two combined radio/TV stations and one exclusive TV station (see Table 7).

Table 7: Media Landscape in Uruzgan

Name of Station/ Channel	Description
Radio Television Afghanistan (RTA) 89.5 FM	Radio: (Uruzgan) National Radio has been operating in Tirin Kot for seven years. It has a staff of three full-time employees and six volunteers. Its main content consists of broadcasts of the Governor's speeches, government announcements, and reports from meetings around the province. Overall, locals perceive it to be a neutral and informative station. TV: The <i>National TV</i> channel is linked to the RTA radio station and uses the same staff. It mostly broadcasts music and religious programs but also features reports on meetings and other government events.
Paiwastun Zhagh Radio 89.9 FM	Usually translated as 'Connecting Voices' this station was founded in July 2010 by Matiullah Khan, and is perceived as being critical of the government. It will be interesting to see if the tone changes following his appointment as the PCoP. Almost all of Tirin Kot district, as well as parts of Deh Rawud and Chora, are able to pick up the station's broadcasts, as it uses a very powerful transmitter. Programming mostly includes news taken from other sources, such as the internet or the Pajhwok news agency. The station's slant is said to be quite popular with locals, and the station is drawing more and more listeners. Respondents noted that some information presented was biased and painted PCoP Matiullah Khan in a favourable light.
BBC Radio 89.0 FM	BBC radio is well liked for its news and educational programs. Listeners also enjoy its dramas such as <i>New Home</i> , <i>New Life</i> and <i>Our World, Our Future</i> . BBC employed local journalist Omaid Khpalwak who was killed in the July 2011 RTA attack.
Voice of America (VoA) / 100.5 FM	This international radio station's news programmes are appreciated by its listeners.
Radio Nawa 103.1 FM	This station is received in Tirin Kot, Chora, Deh Rawud, and Khas Uruzgan. However, it rarely features broadcasts about Uruzgan. The headquarters of this radio station are located in Kabul and is said to receive funding from the Netherlands.
Uruzgan Zhagh Radio 100.3 FM	This station broadcasts to Tirin Kot, Chora and into Kandahar. It mostly features music, as well as news and ISAF announcements.
Aryana Radio 93 FM and TV	Owned by Eng. Bayat, a businessman, philanthropist and owner of AWCC, accessible in Tirin Kot with 24-hour programming from Kabul.

¹⁶⁶ Omaid Khpalwak & Mohammad Umer Sherzad, "Two Afghan Views of Australia from Uruzgan," Afghan Voices Series, Lowy Institute for International Policy (November 2011); <http://www.lowyinstitute.org/Publication.asp?pid=1754>

Saba TV	Broadcasting from Kabul with financial help from the Dutch government, features reporting focused on Uruzgan for an hour and a half a week. According to local respondents, the Uruzgan-specific reporting is influenced by Matiullah Khan (MK) as the two reporters working for Saba TV in Uruzgan, Abdul Manan Arghandiwal and Ajmal Wisaal, also work for Matiullah Khan's radio station. Allegedly this influence is primarily targeted towards shaping the perception of certain tribal elders in the province.
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ISAF has expanded its Uruzgan Zhagh (lit. "Uruzgan Voice") Radio to Char China, Deh Rawud, Khas Uruzgan, and Gizab districts; where it is locally known by the district name (e.g. Deh Rawud Zhagh, Char China Zhagh, etc.). These stations broadcast music and ISAF announcements. These stations are handed over to local government counterparts once they have the necessary capacity to operate independently. For example, *Gizab Voice* was transferred to DCoP Lalai in September 2011.¹⁶⁷ In addition to the radio stations, this government outreach initiative also includes the distribution of radios. For example, 240 radios were distributed at a meeting organized by the Gizab District Development Assembly (DDA).¹⁶⁸ Moreover, numerous respondents from various districts of Uruzgan told TLO that the sound quality of radio broadcasts has greatly improved in the last year due to the activation of a new transmitter in Tirin Kot.

RTA became available in Chora, Gizab, Char China, and Deh Rawud districts. Not only will this expand access across the province, it will also provide equal access across the five major tribal groupings.¹⁶⁹ Unfortunately, Uruzgan Zhagh no longer works in Uruzgan. The station closed for the remainder of 2011 after the 28 July 2011 complex attack took out the building in which the station was housed. While the station remained closed as of December 2011, there were plans to re-open the station in the coming months.

An estimated 90% of the provincial population (of which the majority lives in Tirin Kot) have access to radio, and use the radio broadcasts as their primary source of news about current events. Access to television is far more limited, and is mostly only found in urban areas. Many Uruzgani youth also watch television on their mobile phones.

Paiwastun Zhagh Radio was able to attract many listeners with programming that is critical of the Afghan government, but many respondents did not like the frequent praises of Matiullah Khan and the lack of educational programming. In addition, the station was shut down for the second half of 2011 after the building in which it is housed was badly damaged during the 28 July attack that targeted MK's compound. *Nawa Radio* remains the most popular station because it has both educational and music programmes. Its educational drama *Our World, Our Future*, modelled after BBC's long-running soap opera *New Home, New Life* is well liked.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ <http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/news/coalition-officials-in-gizab-turn-over-control-of-radio-station-to-district-chief-of-police.html>

¹⁶⁸ Gizab District Development Assembly holds Shura, 12 December 2011. Available at http://www.dvidshub.net/news/81789/gizab-district-development-assembly-holds-development-shura#.Tw_uCWNPhUt

TxSjftWucTY

¹⁶⁹ Ibid

¹⁷⁰ Phone Interview, TLO female surveyor, Kabul 28 July 2011

Every Friday, radio stations broadcast programmes about human rights and the problem of violence against women from the perspective of Islam, sponsored by the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC). The AIHRC also recently signed an agreement with the Department of Hajj and Religious Affairs, in which the latter agreed to use the media to condemn underage marriages.

According to TLO surveyors and local respondents, only 20% of the people in the provincial centre have access to print media. Most of these people are located in or near the Bazaar, as readership is constrained by limited print runs and distribution of the various publications. A further limiting factor is widespread illiteracy.

There is nevertheless some variety of print media in Tirin Kot. A biweekly magazine, *Expectations of Youth*, which is printed by the Ministry of Information and Culture with the financial support of USAID, and a monthly newspaper, *Bayaan*, which is printed in Kabul and transported to Tirin Kot. *Da Azadi Zhagh* (Pashto for “Voice of Freedom”), which does not have a set printing schedule, is also printed in Kabul, with financial support from the PRT. Finally, *Spin Ghar* (Pashto for “White Mountain”) is printed in Kandahar and read by people in Tirin Kot.

Da Azadi Zhagh is by far the most popular publication, drawing an estimated 70% of the district’s readership. *Spin Ghar* comes in second with 20% of the readers. Still, some respondents argued print media has been in decline since Abdul Hakim Munib left the office of Provincial Governor. During his tenure, he sponsored a newspaper named *Nawy Uruzgan* (“New Uruzgan”) and Development Alternatives International (DAI) funded another newspaper, *Da Zwanano Zhagh* (“Voice of Youth”). Both, however, closed with the departure of Munib.

There are four journalists and several male radio hosts. Women are largely absent from local media due to Uruzgan’s conservative cultural values. There used to be a woman working for *Paiwastun Radio*, but rumours and gossip about her in the community forced her to quit. The DoWA is currently looking for a female presenter to help increase the visibility of women in the media.¹⁷¹

2.8.2 Telecommunications

Uruzgan’s telecommunications infrastructure saw little improvement over the last 18 months. The fact that the insurgency started targeting cell phone towers has actually decreased service in this sector. As noted, the Taliban blew up the new Etisalat transmitter in Shah Mansur village near the Tirin Kot district centre in March 2011. In Chora, the AWCC tower was destroyed on 20 September 2010.¹⁷² Community members without access to cell networks are forced to rely on very expensive satellite phones, which cost 80 AFG (AUD 1.49; Euro 1.22; USD 1.61) per minute, as their only alternative.

¹⁷¹ Phone interview, TLO female surveyor, Kabul, 28 July 2011

¹⁷² <http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/isaf-releases/insurgents-destroy-cell-phone-tower-in-uruzgan.html>

As in other provinces, there are occasionally technical problems with all mobile service providers in Uruzgan, including issues with call clarity and loss of service that normally last for a few hours but sometimes for as long as a day or two. Roshan and AWCC are the most reliable mobile phone networks. Recently established MTN continues to struggle with coverage. Most people are said to prefer Roshan with the exception of government workers who use AWCC. Etisalat also had plans to break into the market until their mobile transmission tower was targeted by the insurgency. The following discusses coverage at the district level:

- Since its inception, MTN has reportedly extended its services into the Pay Nawa area in Tirin Kot. The signal is apparently received as far as the Tangi area of Deh Rawud and the Garmab manteqa in Tirin Kot. TLO surveyors could not confirm the existence of a reported new telecommunications tower built in 2011 in Amir Jan and Makhmat Khan Village, in Tirin Kot.
- In the first half of 2011, a new Roshan tower was built in Tirin Kot close to the provincial hospital. No Garmab towers have been constructed in 2011, but the area has coverage from towers in the provincial capital.
- There were no telecommunication-related changes in Deh Rawud, although there are rumours that MTN and/or Etisalat will extend service into the district in the near future.
- AWCC has worked on the construction of a communications tower in Khas Uruzgan that subsequently received threats from the insurgency, making it uncertain when it will be operational.¹⁷³
- There are no transmission towers in Gizab, Char China, or Chenartu.
- In Chenartu residents rely on one Afghan Telecom Public Call Office (PCO).¹⁷⁴ Demand can be so high that it can take up to five days to make a phone call.
- There are 6-7 PCOs in Gizab and 8-10 PCOs in Char China. Afghan Telecom, Areeba, Roshan, and AWCC provide Service. Local respondents expressed a preference for Afghan Telecom, as it reportedly has the best call clarity.

The biggest problem for Uruzganis regarding telecommunication is the high cost of making calls, particularly at Public Call Offices (PCOs). For example, it costs 30-35 PKR / AFN 16.40-19.13 (AUD 0.31-0.36; EUR 0.25-.30; USD 0.33-0.39) per minute to make a call at a PCO in Gizab, and 45-50 PKR / 24.60-27.33 AFN (AUD 0.46-0.51; EUR 0.38-0.55; USD 0.50-0.42) per minute in Char China.

There are no public Internet cafés in Uruzgan. Internet access is limited to people who work for NGOs, international organizations, contractors or the provincial government. While there were discussions that the NGO Wadan—not yet active in the province—may set up a multi-

¹⁷³ AWCC has already received Taliban's threats. "In Chora and Deh Rawud the AWCC services is restricted to 8-6 pm and 8-5 pm daily, allegedly due to Taliban threats" (TLO, August 2010, p. 23)

¹⁷⁴ Public Call Offices (PCOs) are privately owned call centres where residents can go and pay to make a telephone call. Usually these offices have only a handful (between 2-5) phones for people to use. According to TLO surveyors, these are most commonly desk phones, although cell phones are also sometimes used. The high cost of satellite phones de facto prohibits their use in PCOs.

media centre in the future, it has not moved past an idea.¹⁷⁵ Young Uruzganis lament the lack of Internet as they feel cut-off from the outside world.

¹⁷⁵ Reference during an informal discussion with TLO in September 2011.

3 Achievements in Gender Equality

There were some small gains in the advancement of gender equality. Overall, however, changing attitudes in a very conservative province remains a challenge. Respondents indicated that this was the area where men had the least expectations of change, and while women were hopeful they also tended to temper their expectations, clutching to the slight progress achieved.

Increased security provided women with greater freedom of movement in Tirin Kot district centre. According to the TLO research team, more women could be seen on the streets walking alone with their children or in groups together with other women than in years past. However, the majority of women are only seen in public with male family members.

All women in public wear *burqas*, and according to respondents, one can tell by the colour if they belong to the NGO or professional community (blue) or ordinary Uruzgani women (green or brown). There are also more incidents of women being seen riding on the back of their male relatives' motorbike (often two behind a man), always in *burqa*.

Both male and female respondents acknowledged that the situation of women in Tirin Kot in particular, as well as Uruzgan in general, will only improve if women receive the active and public support of key government officials and local notables. Individuals highlighted by respondents as key to promoting the inclusion and rights of women include the Provincial Governor, the Provincial Chief of Police, the Head of the Department of Hajj and Religious Affairs, the AIHRC, judges, as well as key leaders and strongmen. According to the DoWA head, the support of the religious establishment such as mullahs who could encourage fathers to send their daughters to school, and improvements to the security situation would contribute most to the support and inclusion of women in the public sphere. In addition, international actors, especially UNAMA, were also seen as key in supporting women's rights.

3.1 Women's Overall Mobility

Women's visibility in the Tirin Kot bazaar has significantly increased as well. Shopkeepers in the bazaar estimated that 40% of their customers are now women, with a majority identified as Hazara women from returnee families—many of whom experienced more freedom of movement while living outside the province—or NGO workers.¹⁷⁶ While usually accompanied by a male relative, young women accompanied by an elderly woman can also go to the bazaar and buy things for themselves. The increased mobility and resulting visibility of women in public spaces in Tirin Kot reportedly had a trickle-down effect in other parts of the province such as Chora where women are seen much more frequently in the bazaar. This mobility, however, largely remains the privilege of older women and women who already move more freely in the community such as midwives or teachers.

¹⁷⁶ Interview, Shopkeeper, 16 July 2011. Interview conducted in Tirin Kot.

A midwife working in Tirin Kot reported that while in early 2010 hardly any women were able to do their own shopping in the bazaar, now at least 20% could do so. The fact that Tirin Kot Bazaar now has several shops catering exclusively to women is also indicative of their increased mobility.

According to one of TLO's female field surveyors, the increased freedom is not universally appreciated and continues to be difficult, as women, "cannot go to the bazaar easily because the shopkeepers insult us and tell



Picture 2: New Shops in Tirin Kot catering to women's needs

us to stay at home and send our children or men to bring us stuff. The problem is that the men are not at home all the time."¹⁷⁷ A local female respondent noted that rumours circulate about the alleged presence of prostitutes in the bazaar in order to discourage women from going there.¹⁷⁸ Many women continue to stay home in order to avoid this stigma and will buy things from small shops run by women out of their homes or from travelling saleswomen.

In general, when travelling outside of their own village, women always have to be accompanied by a *mahram* (a male guardian, who must be a husband or blood relative such as a brother, father or son). Such travel, however, is rare except to visit their parents' home, attend family functions, or attend to medical emergencies. Interestingly, even the wives of individuals affiliated with the Taliban are allowed to go out in public under the supervision of a *mahram*. As a matter of fact, some respondents claim that vehicles with women and families are overall less bothered by the insurgency, which, at least according to one respondent, has led taxi drivers to rent out their car *and* their family when taking people to Kandahar outside convoy days.

¹⁷⁷ Interview, TLO female surveyor, Tirin Kot, 10 August 2011

¹⁷⁸ Ibid. While there are undoubtedly some women who (usually widows), due to extreme poverty and lack of viable alternatives, are forced into prostitution, TLO considers this to be rare. Such stories appear to serve more as a moral imperative to keep women from spending excess time visiting shops, or branches of shops that do not directly relate to a woman's place in the family (i.e., infant clothing stores). Regardless, it's worth noting that, while most of these stories are not true, local residents do appear to believe them.

3.2 Women's Participation in Politics

Uruzgan's most prominent female politicians are Senator Hilla Achekzai, Provincial Councillor Marjana, and Wolesi Jirga member Reihana Azad. In addition, women head the Department of Education, the Department of Women Affairs, and the National Environment Protection Agency (NEPA) offices in Tirin Kot.

None of these six women in highly visible positions are originally from Uruzgan, although Reihana Azad does hail from Day Kundi, which was originally a part of Uruzgan. This highlights the difficulty for local women to break into the public space in Uruzgan, further underscored by their personal stories. For example, insurgents killed Hilla Achekzai's husband. MP Reihana's husband tried to discourage her from running for office; Reihana and her husband have since separated.

Female respondents looked positively upon the women's representation in the Provincial Council, Senate, and Parliament. That said, although the respondents seemed well informed about the backgrounds of their female representatives, they could not provide any information about any specific projects or issues on which these women focused.

Aside from some women's participation in shuras in Hazara/Shia villages, there are no women reported on any shuras in the Pashtun areas of the province. Disappointingly, this includes no women on any CDCs, despite this being a clear requirement of the NSP, which is complied with in other conservative provinces. There are also no women on any of the province's District Community Councils.

The DoWA reportedly created a new all-women shura in March 2011; a similar attempt failed in 2009. The DoWA Head leads it, and the other 30 members are mostly professional women such as teachers, nurses, midwives, doctors, and government or NGO employees. The shura meets once a week and has reportedly been active in lobbying the Provincial Council for cooperation on a variety of activities, including English and computer classes. It

Matiullah Khan and the Advancement of Women

All female politicians report support from Matiullah Khan, who helped them during their election and in their current job. Furthermore, according to the DoWA Head, Matiullah Khan has supported the department by fixing its car and has also promised to assist in the construction of a training centre. This highlights the importance of key actors in the advancement of women. MK also provides financial support (about 500 AFG) to needy women, such as widows, who come to his compound at the outskirts of the city on some Thursdays.

Some critical voices, however, see Matiullah Khan's efforts chiefly as one of constituency building rather than a sincere desire to advance the role of women in society. Many female respondents lamented that he does not educate his own three wives or daughters, and keeps them hidden from the public eye. Many women believe that it is at home where men need to start supporting women's equality.

also has held discussions about women's rights, women's education, and employment opportunities.

There is discussion about UNAMA assisting DoWA to set up further shuras in Uruzgan. According to the DoWA head Rana Samim, the establishment of women's shuras at the district level would be an important step in improving the situation of women in Uruzgan. She also indicated that more training opportunities and literacy courses for women at the district level would be useful.

3.3 Women's Access to Education

While some tangible gains have been made in terms of access to education for girls in Tirin Kot, there was an overall statistical decline in the enrolment of girls in school province-wide. As noted previously, this decline is attributable to the MoE audit that adjusted student numbers to reflect the number of students actually going to school and removed students that existed only on paper.¹⁷⁹

Out of the four districts with girls' schools (Tirin Kot, Chora, Gizab, Khas Uruzgan) only Tirin Kot showed an increase in educational facilities for girls, nearly doubling the total number of schools from four to seven, plus two additional madrassas.¹⁸⁰ In contrast, schools offering girls' education in Chora and Gizab decreased by one, with Khas Uruzgan staying constant.¹⁸¹

Due in part to the MoE audit, the number of girls enrolled in school decreased from 8,585 in 2010 to 7,788 in 2011, which represented 16% and 11% of the total student population respectively. While the new figures present a more accurate picture of school enrolment, it is disappointing to see that the already small number of girls in school was previously inflated. The correction, however, simply reflects reality. It is also supported by anecdotes, for example a former teacher at Chora High School explained that while his records showed an enrolment of 15 girls, he never saw them in class.¹⁸²

Girls are able to access education in 38 all-girls schools and seven mixed schools. The majority of these schools are in the predominantly Hazara districts of Gizab (20) and Khas Uruzgan (15). Tirin Kot has nine educational facilities accessible to girls (seven schools; two madrassas). There is one elementary school in Chora¹⁸³ (see Figure 10).

¹⁷⁹ Interview, Department of Education Representative, Tirin Kot, 15 December 2011

¹⁸⁰ The new facilities were two elementary schools that re-opened, and one newly opened; one madrassa re-opened while one newly opened.

¹⁸¹ See section 2.2.1 for more details.

¹⁸² Interview, Tirin Kot, 15 December 2011

¹⁸³ Chora actually decreased its number of educational facilities for girls by one, due to making a mixed elementary and a mixed high school into boys' only schools, and only opening one girls' elementary school (while simultaneously opening nine new boys schools). Neither of the two newly opened madrassas are open to girls.

A significant achievement in Tirin Kot was the opening of the Malai Girls High School in July 2011. This is a model school constructed with funds from the Australian Government. Students are reportedly very happy with the high quality of the facilities, which include a gym and science labs. A reported 437 girls are now attending classes at the new school, representing about one-third of the total female student population in Tirin Kot. Despite being called a high school, there are reportedly no girls enrolled in grades 10-12.

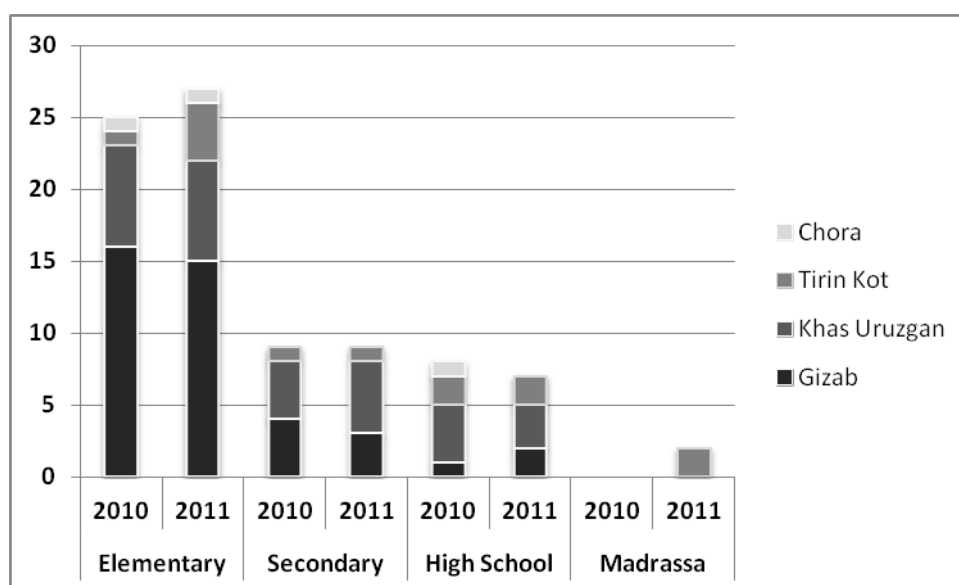


Figure 10: Educational Facilities open to girls in Uruzgan (2010 vs. 2011)

Significant efforts, on many levels, will be needed before a majority of Uruzgani girls will have access to education.¹⁸⁴ As indicated in Figure 10, there are no formal schools for girls in Deh Rawud, Chenartu, and Char China, while Chora only has one elementary school for girls.

Another source of concern is the precipitous drop of female students after the first two grade levels (see Figure 11). Puberty often triggers the end of education for girls due to cultural sensitivities about women and public spaces. For example, the majority of girls in Chora leave school after grade four with only a few continuing to grade seven. Khas Uruzgan stands out as an exception, as it is the only district with girls enrolled in high school (grades 10-12). Tirin Kot and Gizab do have a small number of girls in grade nine.

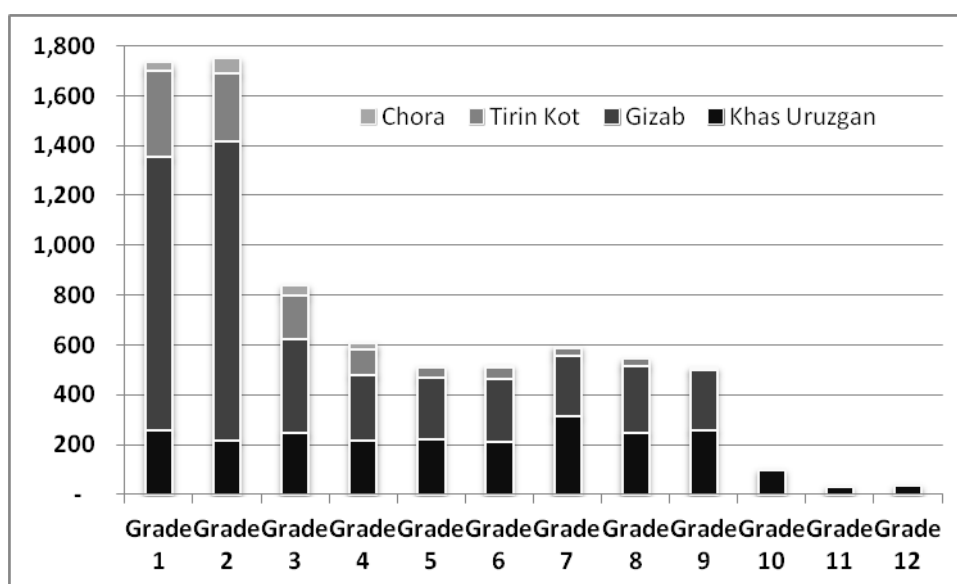
The high enrolment in early years of elementary school, however, does demonstrate that families are at least starting to send their girls to school in larger numbers than previous years. If these girls were to stay in school, it could significantly contribute to an educated female labour force in Uruzgan. So far, however, the trend indicates that a vast majority of all girls (77%) do not make it beyond the elementary grade levels.

Unfortunately, due to road insecurity, no students from Gizab or Khas Uruzgan made it to the provincial capital to write the all-important Kankor University Entry Exam that was

¹⁸⁴ For further discussion on education in Uruzgan, including total number of schools, please see Section 2.1 above.

administered in Uruzgan for the first time in December 2011.¹⁸⁵ As a result, no women from Uruzgan were given an opportunity to enter university in 2012. Female university graduates are desperately needed in Uruzgan and greater efforts are essential to ensure that female graduates are given every opportunity to succeed.

Figure 11: Girls' Enrolment in Uruzgan's Schools by Grade Level



The removal of ghost-students from the provincial student enrolment figures during the July 2011 MoE Audit in Uruzgan led to a decrease of girls enrolled in Uruzgan schools from 8% in 2010 to 7% in 2011 (see Table 8).

Table 8: School Enrolment in Uruzgan's Districts by Sex (2010 vs. 2011)

	2010		2011	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Tirin Kot	40%	2%	55%	3%
Khas Uruzgan	95%	24%	97%	18%
Gizab	40%	30%	78%	26%
Deh Rawud	52%	0%	62%	0%
Chora	35%	1%	52%	1%
Chenartu	47%	0%	83%	0%
Char China	1%	0%	22%	0%
TOTAL	43%	8%	61%	7%

¹⁸⁵ Interview, MP Reihana Azad, who participated as observer in these exams, Tirin Kot 18 December 2011. She especially lamented the fact that no Hazara had managed to make it to the exam, due to insecurity on the roads.

The enrolment rates decreased in the two districts leading in female education: in Khas Uruzgan from 24% to 18% and in Gizab from 30% to 26%. By contrast, the enrolment rates for boys increased in both provinces. Chora stayed the same for girls' enrolment. In Tirin Kot the number of girl students nearly doubled from 644 in 2010 to 1,057 in 2011.

An interesting development is the gradual elimination of mixed schools that are increasingly being turned into either all-boys or all-girls schools, particularly at the post-elementary level.¹⁸⁶ In 2010 there were two mixed secondary and four high schools, while in 2011 only one of each was left. In addition, the number of mixed elementary schools decreased from 7 to 5. Either this means an adjustment to real attendance, or the DoE is trying to reduce one possible obstacle to girl's education—having boys and girls attending the same school post puberty.

Table 9: Changing Demographics of Schools

Gizab	Tirin Kot	Khas Uruzgan	Chora
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 2 Mixed ES becomes boys' → 1 Mixed ES becomes girls' → 1 Girl's ES becomes boys' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 1 mixed SS becomes girls' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 2 mixed HS becomes boys' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 1 Mixed ES becomes boys' → 1 Mixed high school becomes boys'

Aside from the formal schools described above, there are some alternative education opportunities available such as homeschools or Community-based Education (CBE) offered in Uruzgan. CBE is part of a joint MoE/UNICEF's Basic Education and Gender Equality Programme. The programme is specifically targeted at increasing access to education for girls who are often unable to attend formal schools. It identifies educated community members and has them teach students in whatever community space is available.¹⁸⁷ These CBEs follow the MoE's official curriculum and are provided with the essential MoE teaching materials. In 2010/2011, the MoE provided 700,000 schoolbooks to Uruzgan in support of CBEs.¹⁸⁸ TLO was unable to obtain the exact number of CBEs, but they were reported in Tirin Kot, Chora, and Deh Rawud. Save the Children has plans to expand CBEs to at least two other districts in Uruzgan and is currently considering Gizab and Char China.

According to a teacher at one of these "homeschools," parents send their daughters more willingly to a home school because many of them live far from formal schools, and also

¹⁸⁶ Only one girl's elementary school in Gizab that was converted into a boy's only one; but then Gizab is the district with most access to education by girls.

¹⁸⁷ Morten Sigsgaard (Eds.), *On the Road to Resilience: Capacity Development with the Ministry of Education in Afghanistan*, (Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning and UNESCO, 2011); p.145; http://www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Info_Services_Publications/pdf/2011/Afghanistan_Resilience.pdf; a similar estimate was provided to TLO by an NGO working with schools in Uruzgan in July 2011.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid

because insurgents are not always aware of the presence of these informal schools. Such schools exist in and around the provincial capital Tirin Kot City and Deh Rawud, where the villages of Myando, Mazar, Bazaar, Dewana Warkh, and Lublaan all have home schools that teach basic curriculum to approximately 40-45 girls under the age of 10.¹⁸⁹ The relative popularity of home schools suggests that the lack of formal schools for girls does not mean that Uruzganis place a low value on girls' education. Rather, as one female surveyor explained, the lack of formal opportunities probably has more to do with cultural sensitivities surrounding girls leaving the home.¹⁹⁰ According to her, "People do not allow their daughters to go [to school] because people are afraid of others judging them," for letting their daughters go out in public.¹⁹¹

Respondents also cited the lack of female teachers as a reason why families are hesitant to send their girls to school beyond the primary school age. Female teachers remain scarce in Uruzgan. Logically, this problem will not improve if women are unable to complete their education, including attending university.

Finally, there are on-going efforts to provide targeted adult education to women. The World Food Programme (WFP) created its own literacy course for women, with 50 kilograms of flour and 4 kilograms of oil offered as incentives to encourage participation. DoWA has also been active in helping to introduce the women of Tirin Kot city to some training opportunities offered by NGOs. Examples of such training include the nursing and midwifery courses run by AHDS and other NGOs as well as literacy and handicraft programmes funded by USAID.

- The AHDS implemented Midwifery course graduated 12 students in 2010, 10 of which reportedly found work in the province.¹⁹² According to a CORDAID representative,¹⁹³ enrolment for the 2011 programme cycle nearly doubled with 20 students participating.¹⁹⁴
- Originally the Afghan NGO ADA did not implement projects for women out of cultural sensitivity, but now they do after they discovered that agricultural training for women in gardening was surprisingly well-received in the province.¹⁹⁵
- The NGO AWARD introduced a training programme that teaches women how to make jam and embroidery. According to an NGO representative, this programme has been well-received because of their respect of conservative gender norms. "When female staff are in a room," he explained, "then male staff cannot enter. One needs to be careful not to antagonize anyone in a conservative society like Uruzgan."¹⁹⁶

In sum, even if at a slower pace than most development actors and women's rights advocates would like, education for women in Uruzgan continues to improve. It is important to remember that Uruzgani society maintains very conservative gender norms and ideas

¹⁸⁹ Interview, Babozai Midwife, Deh Rawud, 17 July 2011

¹⁹⁰ Ibid

¹⁹¹ Ibid

¹⁹² Interview with Cordaid representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011. This programme is discussed in more depth in section 2.3.

¹⁹³ Cordaid is one of the funding partners of the AHDS programme.

¹⁹⁴ Interview with Cordaid representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011

¹⁹⁵ Interview, ADA Representative, Kabul, 22 June 2011

¹⁹⁶ Interview, HADAAF representative, Tirin Kot, 13 July 2011

about girls' education in particular. These ideas appear to be changing, but will take time and must take place at a pace appropriate for each community. As one respondent eloquently put it, "You can't change communities over night, and beyond the point of saturation you need to get to the roots of the communities."¹⁹⁷

3.4 Women's Employment

In Tirin Kot, residents reported an increase of women seeking jobs outside the home. Most respondents attributed this to shifting societal attitudes toward women working in the public sphere. This sentiment was echoed by a variety of respondents. A HealthNet-TPO representative told TLO that, "In 2008, when women started to work in our office in Tirin Kot, local notables and mullahs came to complain and made a huge fuss, arguing that it was immoral for women to work. Now it is no longer considered a problem."¹⁹⁸ Another respondent agreed, explaining, "Three years ago, there were no women working; now they work in lots of projects and for NGOs. It is also acceptable to work in the Health sector, but in other sectors it is not."¹⁹⁹

Respondents told TLO surveyors that the relatively large salaries offered to women working in Uruzgan have attracted workers from all over Afghanistan, including Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Logar. Uruzgan's female MP Reihana Azad explained that, "Women working in Uruzgan can obtain USD 500-600 (AUD 463.26-555.92; EUR 378.30-453.96) per month, depending on their education and the position. There are even some women who hold several positions simultaneously."²⁰⁰

Still, while women's participation in the workforce has increased somewhat, the employment of women is basically only in Tirin Kot, and is very limited even there. Only about 20% of development actors working in Uruzgan employ women at all. Those that do indicated that women composed only between 20% and 30% of their staff and the other half reported even lower proportions. Female staff tend to work mostly for projects targeting women, which includes positions as teachers, trainers or health-professionals.

A significant number of the other development actors mentioned that it was not possible to hire local women for their organization.²⁰¹ One local NGO staff blatantly said that, "It is not possible to employ women."²⁰² Some organizations that do hire women noted that female staff needed special accommodations. One NGO respondent commented that, "It is very hard to find any women to come and work for us because the environment still pretty much forbids that. That is why our female staff does not work in the office. They sometimes send us reports, or we meet at neutral places."²⁰³

¹⁹⁷ Interview, Local NGO-representative, Kabul, 11 July 2011

¹⁹⁸ Interview, International NGO-representative, Kabul, 29 June, 2011

¹⁹⁹ Interview, International NGO-representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011

²⁰⁰ Interview, Reihana Azad (MP, Wolesi Jirga), Tirin Kot, 28 July 2011

²⁰¹ See, for example Interviews, International NGO Representatives, Kabul, 16 July 2011 and Tirin Kot, 25 July 2011

²⁰² Interview, Local NGO-representative, Tirin Kot, 23 July 2011

²⁰³ Interview, International NGO Representative, Kabul, 2 July 2011

In Deh Rawud, Chora, and Char China, women are increasingly operating small-scale home-based businesses where they make and sell handicrafts. Women in the centre of the province work in orchards, picking fruits and almonds in secluded places where no one can see them. There are also women known in Pashto as *sawdagara* (lit. “business woman”), who bring materials such as makeup to the villages and sell them to local women.

Despite these overall gains, working outside the home directly puts Uruzgani women in danger by making them targets for insurgent harassment. For example, a young, college-educated woman reportedly wanted to assume a teaching position in Deh Rawud, but changed her mind after receiving threats from the Taliban.

3.5 Women’s Access to Healthcare

NGOs respondents indicated that the training of midwives had a positive impact on increasing skilled birth attendants in health facilities and building trust with communities. That said, they also acknowledged the constant struggle to find girls willing to be trained as midwives and then to return to their communities to work afterward. Over the past 18 months, new healthcare staff consisted of one nurse in Tirin Kot and seven midwives across the province (see Section 2.4). There is still only one female doctor and no practicing female surgeons, dentists, or head nurses in Uruzgan (see Table 10). Additionally, there are still districts where female practitioners are virtually non-existent.

There have reportedly been threats against the female staff of healthcare facilities, but these threats did not seem to be a major problem in Tirin Kot City. In fact, the Taliban is reported not to hinder the transport of women to clinics or midwives travelling to insurgency-controlled areas. As one local midwife explained, insurgents also want healthy babies, mothers, sisters, and wives.

Women and children reportedly have good access to immunization services, and many children under the age of five get their shots (see Section 2.3). Additionally, some 30% of the women in Tirin Kot are taking or have taken birth control at some time. According to local respondents, this relatively high level of usage is attributed to the fact that female staff at the healthcare facilities actively informs female patients about family planning options and distribute birth control medications for free.

A midwife from Tirin Kot reported that there has been an increase in the number of female patients travelling to the healthcare facilities in the city, at least when security is good. The increase in gynaecology patients has been particularly dramatic, going from two to three patients per day in 2010 to 13-14 per day in 2011. Other notable developments include:

Table 10: Women in Healthcare Positions

Position	Number
Doctor	1
Admin	1
Nurse	4
Midwife	20
Vaccinator	6
Community Healthcare Supervisor	1
Community Health Workers (Health Posts)	127
Total:	149

- The increase in women's willingness to use clinics in Tirin Kot might be facilitated by the large number of female staff employed by health facilities in the district. According to TLO field data, approximately 58 women work in various professional capacities from doctor to cleaning women. As previously mentioned, two women are also working as assistants in the psychosocial counselling programme at the Tirin Kot hospital (see Section 2.3). Perhaps the sustained visibility of women at these facilities helped the broader female population trust in the safety and professionalism of clinics and health posts.
- Women's access to clinics improved in Chora, where the Australians funded a delivery room staffed by two midwives inside the CHC in the central bazaar. This clinic reportedly enjoyed success this year due to the free medicine that it dispenses and the presence of female staff on-site. Additionally, there is reportedly one midwife on staff at the Chora BHC.
- In Deh Rawud, patient numbers at the clinics are up for both genders.²⁰⁴ Similarly, in Tirin Kot, more women use clinics now than a year ago (300-400 per day, compared to 200-220 in 2010), and female doctors even work night shifts.
- In Khas Uruzgan, there are 3 female nurses in a CHC clinic located in the centre of the district, one midwife in a BHC clinic in Sya Baghal, and one midwife at each of the BHC clinics in Hossaini village and Gandab. Each of the BHCs also has a female vaccinator on staff.
- In Gizab, there is one CHC clinic in Chawni village, and two BHC clinics—one in Tamazan and the other in Khalij village.²⁰⁵ Women can seek treatment at all three clinics, but there are no female doctors²⁰⁶ or nurses in any of the clinics, making women more reluctant than they might otherwise be to go to the clinics.
- The only healthcare practitioners available to women are the two midwives in Char China and the one in Chenartu. There are no female doctors, nurses, vaccinators, or community health workers in either district, and local culture forbids women from visiting male doctors.

The US military has also tried to improve the access to healthcare by women:

- On 14 April 2011 "A coalition cultural support team assisted by Afghan forces, held a women's shura and medical clinic in the Nikuzai village of Uruzgan province [Gizab] . . . The purpose of the event was to build rapport, encourage information flow, and build relationships with the female population in the area. At the clinic, Afghan and Coalition medics examined and treated women and children. The medics also discussed preventive health initiatives and distributed pamphlets with visual instructions on how to avoid dehydration."²⁰⁷ A similar event occurred on 1 April 2011, in an unnamed village in Gizab.²⁰⁸
- On 4 May 2011, "Members of a U.S. Special Operations cultural support team, along with a coalition female treatment team, met with women from villages in the Shahid-e-Hassas district at a family compound in Oshay village [Char China] . . . The intent behind the shura was to provide health education to local women and a venue to discuss their issues. . . . The

²⁰⁴ Interview, Babozai Midwife, Deh Rawud, 17 July 2011. The interviewee highlighted the fact that men also have access to private clinics and general pharmacies, where they might get better medical attention more quickly than the private clinics. Thus, these discrepancies do not necessarily mean that women have more access to healthcare than men. Rather, men and women appear to access different (public v. private) facilities.

²⁰⁵ All three clinics were established with the aid of the Bakhtar Development Network.

²⁰⁶ The two Gizab BHCs lack any doctor, male or female.

²⁰⁷ <http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/isaf-releases/u.s.-cultural-support-team-conducts-women-s-shura-and-medical-clinic-in-gizab.html>

²⁰⁸ <http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/isaf-releases/cultural-support-teams-provide-medical-care-for-women-children-in-gizab.html>

women said they were pleased with the outcome and are looking forward to future shuras and medical clinics for women.”²⁰⁹ About 38 women were said to have attended, some having travelled from as far away as Kandahar.

3.6 Women’s Access to Justice

Access to justice in Uruzgan is limited due to the insufficient presence, lack of trust, and poor capacity of the formal justice system. Female respondents indicated that absence of female lawyers and judges compounded the situation for women, thereby hindering equal access to justice. Despite the noted shortcomings, women still indicate that they prefer the formal system to the informal system. Respondents indicated that this preference was due to the fact that they at least have rights within the formal system. By contrast, female respondents indicated that they have no rights or voice in the informal system and were completely subject to the decision of men. As a result, female respondents cited a strong preference for the formal system.

Many respondents, both men and women, pointed to two recent court cases where judges ruled in favour of women in order to demonstrate that the rights of women were being protected by the formal justice system.

- In February 2010, the husband of a pregnant woman in critical condition prevented her from going to the hospital despite the fact that the midwife strongly recommended it. When the pregnant woman died in childbirth, her husband blamed the midwife. This case was referred to the court, which decided in favour of the midwife.
- In 2008, the son of a locally active women—Marjana—was killed and his murderer escaped. When Marjana became a member of the Provincial Council (PC) in 2009, she managed to have her case referred to the Prosecutor who identified the murderer and saw that he was successfully prosecuted for murder and sent to prison.

Women, however, argued that these two cases were the exception and pointed out that women who were victims of domestic abuse had no access to legal assistance or protection. The two main organizations working to address domestic abuse are the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) through its female legal counsellor and the Afghan NGO Humanitarian Assistance and Development for Afghanistan (HADAAF), which offers counselling for women and girls in the provincial hospital.²¹⁰ AIHRC recently signed an agreement with the Department of Hajj and Religious Affairs, according to which the latter will condemn violence against women during its weekly Friday radio broadcasts. The AIHRC also has an active women’s rights section that prepares reports about women who are beaten or killed.

As noted, female respondents do not feel that they have rights or a voice in the informal justice system. Another issue is that the informal justice system is based on tribal codes of honour, such as Pashtunwali, the traditional source of law for Pashtuns. Within this system,

²⁰⁹<http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/isaf-releases/women-s-shura-in-uruzgan-provides-medical-treatment-and-health-education.html>

²¹⁰ Interview, AIHRC representative, Tirin Kot, 4 July 2011

when an individual commits a crime they are obligated to *badal*, which means to provide compensation to the harmed party. The ultimate goal of *badal* is to repair the damage to the social fabric of the community and re-establish peace. In affluent Pashtun areas, this process mostly takes the form of money or luxury goods such as cars, property, etc. However, in poor areas where the claimant cannot afford large amounts of money or expensive luxury items, the practise of *baad* (provision of girls as *badaal* for crimes committed) is common, using the woman's dowry value as compensation.²¹¹ In this sense, the woman is basically chattel. The exchanged girls are frequently treated very poorly by their new families who sometimes make them servants or subject them to violence.

There are some attempts to ensure that this practice ends. For example, the Eslahi Shura (see Section 5.3.1) set-up by PCoP Matiullah Khan has assisted to overturn a *baad* request and ensured that a land plot was given as compensation instead. Some elders have also reportedly switched to applying Sharia law, which prohibits *baad*, for cases involving women.

Unfortunately *baad* is not the only example of how poverty increases the vulnerability of women. Dowry prices are very high across Afghanistan, ranging from 400,000-500,000 PKR in Uruzgan.²¹² While fathers have the ultimate say in their daughter's marriage, affluent families who are more financially stable may allow their daughters some small amount of input as to her suitor. However, families often have many children, and cannot afford high dowry prices. Due to the inability to pay a dowry, many poor families have simply married off daughters to close friends or family members as a way to break even, so to speak. Poor families who do find a way to pay the comparatively huge amount of money demanded for a dowry sometimes places high expectations on the new bride. In a sense, she becomes an investment with the obligation to work hard for the family as a return. Likewise, her failure to live up to these expectations can have grave consequences, and contribute to incidents of domestic abuse.

3.7 Women's Access to Information

According to respondents, the primary way that women get their information is radio (or television for more affluent respondents) and conversations at clinics. Women tune into radio stations like RTA Radio, where they can hear programming on a variety of topics such as health, education and music, all in their native Pashtun.²¹³ Another respondent noted that Nawa Radio is popular with young women who like to call into the station, recite poetry, and request songs.²¹⁴ In fact, Nawa Radio's programmes are so popular that the DoWA is

²¹¹ In practice, however, *baad* does not always restore the good relations between the conflicted parties. Quite often, the victims' family will hold grudges that translate into ill-treatment of the new bride. In this way, extreme poverty makes young women more vulnerable to mistreatment. See also, section 5.3.1.

²¹² Interview, tribal elder from Khas Uruzgan, 2 August 2011

²¹³ Interview, TLO female surveyor, Tirin Kot, 10 August 2011

²¹⁴ Phone Interview, TLO female surveyor, Kabul, 28 July 2011

reportedly seeking female staff for the radio station that can help increase women's visibility in society.²¹⁵

Health information is obtained by coming to hospital for check-ups or classes. Men now know that women get information at the hospital and therefore are reportedly more willing to allow them to go there, even if they have no immediate health concerns. Many women come to the clinic to get advice on how to properly clean and care for their children, and to receive a free kit with the necessary supplies. According to a local respondent, a woman makes rounds to speak about hygiene and malnutrition in clinics.²¹⁶ Women who participate in these trainings receive about 300 AFN (AUD 5.85; EUR 4.59; USD 6.06).

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Interview, TLO female surveyor, 28 July 2011.

4 Governance Overview

According to the 2010 *Sub-national Governance Policy* (SNGP) the institutional structure of governance and administration in Afghanistan is divided into three levels: Provincial, District, and Village.²¹⁷ The SNGP also provides for municipal government in large urban centres.²¹⁸

The SNGP, however, has not been fully implemented. As such, village level structures consist mostly of Community Development Councils (CDCs), which are part of the MRRD's National Solidarity Programme (NSP). CDCs concentrate on local development initiatives and perform some minor administrative functions. Other governance bodies, such as councils of tribal notables and religious figures, fall under the realm of informal governance.

Government performance and capacity in Uruzgan continues to be hampered by a lack of qualified personnel and an inability to efficiently deliver public services to the population. Development actors acknowledge that, along with justice, governance has seen the least improvement over the last 18 months.

During the December 2011 stability *jirga*, TLO asked participants what the most important issues were that government organisations in Uruzgan needed to address in order to enhance their performance. Out of 521 respondents, 28% stated that government offices lacked sufficient staff, and that existing staff are not adequately trained to do their jobs well, confirming what was also highlighted by Governor Sherzad in the *1390 Uruzgan Provincial Development Plan*.²¹⁹ Another 12% observed that many government officials had little or no knowledge of national laws. Approximately 26% noted the problem with corruption in government departments, while 13% thought that neither the provincial nor district government had a large enough budget to tackle all the problems in the province. Another 11% felt that the central government dominated the decision making process when it comes to Uruzgan. Others identified conflicts between government departments (5%) and the lack of coordination between government and international organizations (6%) as challenges.

As noted, Governor Sherzad acknowledged that government institutions fail to deliver services to the majority of the people of Uruzgan.²²⁰ He identified the high level of vacancies in government positions as a core problem, noting that the existing number of staff is less than half of the necessary *tashkeel* of 235 personnel, resulting in a considerable capacity gap.²²¹

²¹⁷ Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), *Sub-national Governance Policy* (Spring 2010); <http://www.idlg.gov.af/IDLG/images/Policy/SNGP-English-Afghanistan.pdf>

²¹⁸ The municipal administration is led by mayors, currently appointed by the President, with functional and service-delivery responsibility mainly for urban services. See World Bank, "Service Delivery and Governance at The Sub-National Level in Afghanistan," Kabul: World Bank, July 2007; <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/Publications/448813-1185293547967/4024814-1185293572457/report.pdf>; pp.6-7

²¹⁹ *Uruzgan Provincial Development Plan for 1390* (April 2011)

²²⁰ *Ibid*

²²¹ *Ibid*, p.10

Notwithstanding these problems, some promising efforts to strengthen governance institutions at the provincial and district levels occurred during the last 18 months, such as the creation of a Provincial Peace Council (PPC) as part of the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP) in December 2010. 2011 also saw the revival of Ulema shuras, which are now active in Tirin Kot and Chora, but less so in Deh Rawud. Furthermore, District Community Councils (DCCs), which are part of the Afghan Social Outreach Programme (ASOP), were created in all districts, except Tirin Kot and Chenartu, in late 2010/early 2011.²²²

4.1 Provincial Governance

Tirin Kot is a municipality, as well as the political centre of Uruzgan and the seat of the provincial government. Uruzgan has an elected Provincial Council (PC), although it plays a minor role in decision making and driving the provincial agenda when compared to other provinces.²²³

Governance in Tirin Kot is greatly influenced by the Provincial Governor (PG) and the Provincial Chief of Police (PCoP). The last 18 months saw changes in these key provincial positions. After sitting vacant for nearly 10 months, Mohammad Omar Sherzad was appointed Provincial Governor on 11 December 2010.²²⁴ On 7 August 2011 Matiullah Khan was appointed as the new Provincial Chief of Police. Matiullah Khan replaced Fazel Ahmad Shah, who lasted only four months in the position after he replaced the long-standing PCoP Juma Gul. With the new appointment, Matiullah Khan's *de facto* power in the area of security provision was finally formalized.

Uruzgan's political landscape was dramatically altered on 17 July 2011 when Jan Mohammad Khan, a key ally of President Karzai, former Uruzgan Governor and preeminent provincial powerbroker, was assassinated. Mohammad Hashim Watanwal, one of Uruzgan's elected Parliamentarians and political protégé of Jan Mohammad Khan was also killed in the attack. The assassination was significant as it came five days after the killing of Ahmad Wali Karzai, Kandahar's Provincial Council Chairman, President Karzai's half-brother and regional powerbroker.

Jan Mohammad Khan and his second cousin Matiullah Khan were widely regarded as the two most important political actors in Uruzgan, in large measure due to their recognized

²²² According to the ASOP Director, Tirin Kot's application for a DCC is pending approval, and Chenartu planned to submit the necessary papers. Interview, Kabul, 9 July 2011; However, TLO has not heard that anything has happened further in this regard, and some say as provincial capital district, Tirin Kot would not have a DCC as it has the Provincial Council.

²²³ Good points of comparison are Kandahar province before the death of provincial council head Ahmad Wali Karzai, and Nangarhar, where the provincial council represents a second pole of power opposite the provincial governor.

²²⁴ Since the finalization of this report, Sherzad was removed from his position and replaced with Amir Mohammad Akhundzada on 2 April 2012. Currently the Deputy Minister of Tribal and Border Affairs, he served as a former deputy Governor of Helmand (2006-2008) and was the *de facto* northern regional governor of Helmand (Nad Zad, Kajaki, Musa Qala districts) during the tenure of his brother Mullah Sher Mohammad Akhundzada as governor (2002-2005).

provincial leadership in the Popalzai tribe.²²⁵ Many argued that the death of Jan Mohammad Khan left a significant power vacuum. It appears, however, that Matiullah Khan has already filled the void and is the province's undisputed powerbroker.

4.1.1 The 2010 Wolesi Jirga Elections

The 2010 Elections for the Wolesi Jirga, the lower House of Parliament, were held on 18 September. Voter apathy, insecurity, and administrative problems led to a very low turnout, with Uruzganis casting fewer votes (6.4% of registered voters) than the residents of any other province except for Zabul. Female participation was also disappointing. Uruzgan had the smallest percentage of female voters of any province, with women casting only 11% of the valid votes.²²⁶

One incumbent, the now deceased Mohammad Hashim Watanwal,²²⁷ successfully defended his seat. The two other seats went to newcomers Haji Obaidullah Barakzai (Barakzai from Chora) and Reihana Azad (Hazara, originally from Day Kundi). All three are strongly linked to either Matiullah Khan or the late Jan Mohammad Khan. The other incumbent Haji Abdul Khaliq Mujahed (Achezkai, Chora), finished a distant eighth in the final tally.²²⁸

Ethnic tensions and politics dominated the 2010 elections in Uruzgan. This revolved around the Hazara community of Uruzgan, who, as with Hazaras throughout Afghanistan, are well known for their extremely high voter turnout. The Hazara community's enthusiasm for democratic participation, however, threatened to sweep the elections and leave Uruzgan's other ethnic and tribal communities without any representatives of their own.²²⁹

An official reason was never provided, but prior to the election a decision was taken to treat the predominantly Hazara district of Gizab as part of the Hazara-dominated province of Day Kundi. Irrespective of the rationale for the decision, it did greatly reduce the chance of a Hazara candidate winning in Uruzgan's election. It also prevented Pashtun voters of the Achezkai from rallying around one of their candidates from Uruzgan.²³⁰

²²⁵ For more details see Susanne Schmeidl, 2010, "The Man who would be King: The Challenges to Strengthen Governance in Uruzgan", The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael'; http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2011/20110316_cru_publicatie_sschmeidl.pdf

²²⁶ The next lowest percentage of female voters was Zabul, where women cast 26.7% of votes.

²²⁷ He died alongside Jan Mohammad Khan on 17 July 2011.

²²⁸ He had been in fifth place after the preliminary vote, but 617 of his 1,204 preliminary votes (51%) were invalidated, dropping him to eighth.

²²⁹ This is a product of Afghanistan's widely criticized Non-Transferable Voting System. Most election experts now agree that SNTV is not appropriate in the Afghan context. Because representatives are elected from multimember districts and voters have only a single vote, a popular candidate can win a large number of votes and leave relatively few votes to split among less popular candidates. The result is that candidates can win seats with very few votes, and a relatively large number of votes are "wasted" on losing candidates. The system also discourages the development of political parties; with elections being decided by a small number of votes, politicians are not motivated to seek the support of broad coalitions either as candidates or governing officials, but instead to cling to small ethnic support bases. Democracy International, *Election Observation Mission to Afghanistan Parliamentary Elections 2010*, (Final Report, June 2011), p.13; <http://www.democracyinternational.com/>

²³⁰ Not many Gizab Achezkai voted as a result.

In Khas Uruzgan—the other district with a sizeable Hazara population—there was a very low turnout amongst Pashtuns (again mostly from the Achekzai tribe). Most respondents indicated that the lack of enthusiasm was due to disillusionment and broken promises from previous elected officials. In contrast and as expected, the Hazara population turned out in high numbers. By mid-day, 4,200 votes had been cast at the sole polling centre in the Hazara part of the district. These 4,200 votes were split between just two (male) Hazara candidates, Asadullah Mustafa and Mohammad Arif Arifi.²³¹ Combined with fellow Hazara Reihana Azad's lead among female candidates, Uruzgan was poised to have three Hazara representatives, in a province with a 90% Pashtun population.²³²

When it became clear that a single Hazara polling centre might end up handing the entire Uruzgan Parliamentary delegation to the Hazara, Pashtun community leaders began submitting complaints to the provincial Independent Election Commission and reportedly lobbied allies in government. In the end, all 4,200 Hazara votes were declared null and void.

Election officials justified the decision by saying that there had been widespread ballot stuffing and fraud at the Hazara polling site. The Hazara, understandably angry about this decision, were unable to do anything. In the final vote count, only 960 votes from Khas Uruzgan district were accepted, all from a polling centre located in the solidly Pashtun district centre.²³³

4.1.2 Provincial Governor's Office

As illustrated in Table 11, there have been six Provincial Governors in Uruzgan since the fall of the Taliban in 2001.²³⁴ This includes current Governor Mohammad Omar Sherzad, who was appointed in December 2010. Of these six, the provincial powerbroker Jan Mohammad Khan—who served as Governor from 2002 to 2006—was the most dominant. Even after he was removed from office—allegedly because the Netherlands lobbied for his removal²³⁵—he continued to cast a long shadow over all subsequent Governors and remained the province's dominant political powerbroker until his assassination in July 2011.

²³¹ Martine Bijlert, "2010 Elections: What if the Hazaras win in Uruzgan?" Afghanistan Analyst Network Blog, 2 October 2010; <http://www.hazarapeople.com/2010/10/02/2010-elections-what-if-the-hazaras-win-in-uruzgan/>; accessed 12 January 2011

²³² A predicatble result given Afghanistan's ill-conceived electoral system, but also one that all communities could have acted on had they wished.

²³³ "Uruzgan | 2010 Wolesi Jirga Elections," National Democratic Institute, 2011. In the 2009 elections, Khas Uruzgan voters cast 8,967 valid votes, or over nine times as many as in 2010.

²³⁴ The 2 April 2012 newly appointed governor Amir Mohammad Akhundzada makes this count seven.

²³⁵ The Dutch allegedly considered that his favouritism of the Popalzai tribe and marginalization of Ghilzai tribes was a destabilizing factor.

Five of the six Governors had political roots that trace back to either the Daoud Government (1973-1978) or *jihadi* factions. The three following Governors were Popalzai from Uruzgan:

- **Malem Rahmatullah** only ruled for a few months.
- **Jan Mohammad Khan** had the longest tenure (2002-2006) in Uruzgan. After leaving office he served as an advisor to president Karzai and continued to dominate Uruzgan's politics until his assassination on 17 July 2011.
- **Khodai Rahim Khan** is the long-standing Deputy Governor who was acting Governor between March and December 2010. He is the maternal uncle of the current PCoP Matiullah Khan.

Table 11: Uruzgan's Provincial Governors to Date

Name	Tribe	Time of Service
Malem Rahmatullah	Popalzai (Uruzgan)	2001– 2002
Jan Mohammad Khan [killed 17 July 2011]	Popalzai (Uruzgan)	2003–2006
Mawlawi Abdul Hakim Munib	Alikhail (Paktia)	2006 – 9/2007
Asadullah Hamdam	Wardak (Zabul)	9/2007 – 3/2010
Haji Khodai Rahim Khan (acting capacity)	Popalzai (Uruzgan)	3/2010 – 12/2010
Mohammad Omar Sherzad	Khogiani (Nangarhar/ Kandahar)	12/2010 – present

The three following Governors came from other provinces of Afghanistan:

- **Mawlawi Hakim Munib** is a Ghilzai (Pashtun) from Paktia and former official in the previous Taliban government. During his tenure he tried to reach out to marginalized tribal groups, including the Taliban, which created suspicion and distrust among pro-government elites in the province. He was forced out of office amidst rampant corruption rumours.
- **Asadullah Hamdam** is a Wardak (Pashtun) from Zabul who was seen as instrumental in attracting more development actors and projects to Uruzgan. He was also accused of trying to benefit from this development surge by requesting bribes from NGOs and international organizations. He was forced out of office due to these corruption allegations.
- **Mohammad Omar Sherzad** is a Khogiani originally from Nangarhar who was appointed Governor on 11 December 2010. He was a Senator from the Zhari district of Kandahar at the time of his appointment in Uruzgan. In the *jihadi* days, Sherzad lived with President Karzai's father in Quetta, forming the basis for a lasting friendship between Sherzad and the Karzai family. Long considered a good candidate for higher office, Sherzad reportedly turned down two other governorship positions before accepting the one in Uruzgan.

Since his appointment, Governor Sherzad has demonstrated a strong commitment to improving governance in Uruzgan. He fostered a more professional provincial and district administration and demonstrated a commitment to coordinating with key stakeholders. One area of success has been the fulfilment of his promise to overhaul the provincial and district administrations, a task that led him to replace nine line department heads and four district governors with qualified individuals. He has also engaged in outreach and travelled to all of Uruzgan's districts during his year in office.

Sherzad also helped establish the Provincial Peace Council, which falls under the Afghan Peace and Reconciliation Programme (APRP) and a monitoring commission for all governmental offices. In April 2011, with the assistance of Australian development advisors and UNDP and in consultation with village and district councils, Provincial Line Departments, and local NGOs, the Governor launched the province's first comprehensive *Provincial Development Plan (PDP)*.²³⁶ The PDP provides a situational assessment of key sectors and outlines development priorities for the province.²³⁷ Sherzad described the effort as transforming "stakeholders' kaleidoscope of views into one strategic vision to address gaps, challenges, and problems of development."²³⁸

One year into his term, Governor Sherzad continues to receive generally positive reviews from Uruzganis. He is widely praised for his inclusive, consultative efforts and also for listening to the concerns of his constituents. His accessibility to his constituency addresses one of the most common criticisms levelled at just about all politicians in the province, past and present.²³⁹ Additionally, residents positively noted his efforts to reduce corruption in the provincial administration and his emphasis on merit-based appointments for key government positions.²⁴⁰ Uruzgani residents praise him for exuding professionalism in his speeches and every day activities.

Local communities also appreciated that he was not embroiled in local politics upon taking office and continues to play a relatively neutral and impartial role at the top of the provincial governmental structure. He is also said to maintain a positive relationship with all key tribal elders in the province. Finally, he has reportedly served as an important symbol for Uruzgan's non-Popalzai tribes, who have long felt shut out of the most important positions in the local government.²⁴¹

Despite the overall positive opinions of Governor Sherzad some respondents did voice impatience regarding what they perceived to be slow progress in replacing some key government positions. Many respondents, including some of Tirin Kot elites, were also concerned that the Governor had not succeeded or focused sufficient efforts on attracting development projects to the province. One respondent noted, "Can you show me any major project or projects which are or were initiated by him?"²⁴²

²³⁶ The Governor was working on finalizing the *1391 Provincial Development Plan for Uruzgan* (March 2012-March 2013) toward the end of 2011.

²³⁷ http://www.usaid.gov/development/development/publications/pubout.cfm?ID=8696_9795_9299_5576_4044&Type=

²³⁸ *Uruzgan Provincial Development Plan for the year 1390* (April 2011), p.2

²³⁹ Interview, Deh Rawud tribal elder, Tirin Kot, 5 July 2011

²⁴⁰ Interview, Popalzai elder from Tirin Kot, conducted on August 2, 2011.

²⁴¹ This might continue the interrupted experience of Asadullah Hamdam who was also not seen as embroiled in local tribal politics. Since Hamdam departure is largely attributed to the conflict with the pro-Karzai leadership of the Popalzai tribe in Uruzgan, Sherzad attitude as a non-Popalzai towards those leaders – those still living – may be crafted after the experience of Hamdam.

²⁴² Interview, Tirin Kot elder, September 2011; Respondents recognize the difficult tasks and challenges faced by the Governor of Uruzgan. Nonetheless, they still have high expectations for Governors who they believe should work collaboratively with other high-level officials, avoid and reduce government corruption, and attract development projects to the province.

Indeed, most major projects were initiated before Sherzad's appointment. The criticism of Governor Sherzad, however, is somewhat unfair given the lag time between project identification and implementation. As such, Sherzad's early perceived failings are more a product of the fact that the governor position had been vacant for nearly nine months before his appointment and security rapidly deteriorated soon thereafter. The hand-over from the Netherlands to Australia as the lead-nation for the PRT shortly before Sherzad's appointment also meant a realignment of donor focus and shifting of funds. In 2012, when AusAID's programs are going to start with greater intensity, more change should be visible in the province.

By the end of 2011 critical voices started to become more frequent. Whether this is a product of widespread dissatisfaction is unclear, as much of the criticism appears to originate from PCoP Matiullah Khan. Several respondents indicate that the latter went so far as pointedly telling the Governor that he was going to denounce his poor leadership and lack of results. A group of tribal elders, reportedly led by MP Obaidullah Barakzai and Provincial Council Head Amanullah Hotaki, subsequently travelled to Kabul and met with President Karzai to lobby for the Governor's replacement, ostensibly due to his failure to deliver development projects. The group allegedly went so far as to propose two possible replacements.²⁴³

4.1.3 Provincial Chief of Police

Until recently, the Provincial Chiefs of Police enjoyed rather stable tenures relative to their gubernatorial counterparts (see Table 12). Since 2002, Uruzgan has had five different PCoPs, many of whom were replaced amidst allegations of corruption, personal conflicts with key local powerbrokers, or complaints of incompetency. In 2011, however, the position saw two changes.

Table 12: Uruzgan's Provincial Chiefs of Police to Date

Name	Tribe	Time of Service
Rozi Khan [killed 17 September 2011]	Barakzai (Uruzgan)	2002 – 2006
Gen. Qasim Khan	Suleiman Khail (Paktia)	2006 – 2008
Juma Gul Khan Hemat	Babozai (Uruzgan)	2008 - 2011
Fazel Ahmad Sherzad	Nurzai (Farah)	4/2011 8/2011
Matiullah Khan	Popalzai (Uruzgan)	8/ 2011 - Present

Matiullah Khan was named PCoP on 7 August 2011, replacing Fazel Ahmad Sherzad, who had been in office for only four months.

Matiullah Khan's predecessors were of a diverse background, with only two others coming from Uruzgan. Neither of the two outsiders (Gen. Qasim Khan and Fazel Ahmad Sherzad) lasted much longer than a year, both struggling either with Jan Mohammad Khan or

²⁴³ Mawlawi Hamdullah (Tor Mullah), the previous head of the Department of Hajj and Religious Affairs in Tirin Kot, and Mawlawi Mohammad Jan, the head of the Provincial Court of Appeal. The fact that the latter is a Tokhi (Ghilzai) may make him a particularly attractive option.

Matiullah Khan. The two Uruzgan insiders (not counting the current PCoP)—the now deceased **Rozi Khan**²⁴⁴ and **Juma Gul Khan Hemat**—both enjoyed longer tenures of four and over three years respectively.

Juma Gul was removed in April 2011, reportedly after several powerful tribal elders²⁴⁵ complained to the Ministry of Interior (Moi) that he was a corrupt official who committed large-scale embezzlement, using the salaries of ghost-policemen to line his pockets.²⁴⁶ This was even noted in an audit report from the Office of The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.²⁴⁷ Despite this, it took some time for Juma Gul to be removed due to Jan Mohammad Khan's continued support.

Despite persistent rumours that Matiullah Khan would replace Juma Gul Hemat as the PCoP, the job was instead given to **Fazel Ahmad Sherzad** (no relationship to Governor Sherzad) who worked with the Najibullah government (1986-1992) and was well regarded within Moi circles for his work in Kandahar and Helmand.²⁴⁸ Sherzad's tenure as PCoP started on a positive note and many citizens from Uruzgan's more marginalized tribes regarded him as someone who could do his job without falling prey to Uruzgan's local political conflicts. In the end though, Sherzad only lasted four months. To his credit, in this short time he managed to push through some much needed internal reforms that aimed at improving the professionalism of the police and ensuring that officers received their uniforms, supplies, food, and most significantly, their pay. Not surprisingly, police officers reported being much happier now that they receive salary and food regularly. A performance improvement was also noted during interviews (see Section 6.4.2.1).²⁴⁹

²⁴⁴ He subsequently became the District Governor of Chora, a post he held until he was accidentally killed in 2008 in a friendly-fire incident in Sarchakhli village, when Australian military mistook him for an insurgent.

²⁴⁵ These include amongst others Malem Rahmatullah, the late Daoud Khan, and Mohammad Nabi Khan, who allegedly even sought support from the current PG of Nangarhar and Kandahari strongman Gul Agha Sherzai. Gul Agha then used his internal connections (some argue via Karzai's brother Mahmud) to push the appointment of Fazel Ahmad Sherzad through. Whether or not the story is true—rumours in Afghanistan are abundant—it does suggest that many in Uruzgan do not yet fully trust the Afghan government's supposedly merit-based appointment system, and suspect that it always takes strongman support to go anything done.

²⁴⁶ As noted in previous TLO reports, it was difficult to obtain an accurate head count of the Uruzgani ANP from Juma Gul himself, and in different interviews he reported different figures. Overall, it is estimated that he over-reported his police force by about 1/3 (if not even more), sharing the profit in salaries with Jan Mohammad Khan, to whom he owned his appointment. TLO had also heard previously that Juma Gul had to pay JMK about US\$10,000 every month in order to ensure JMK's political support, which was necessary for Juma Gul to remain in his position. See The Liaison Office, *The Dutch Engagement in Uruzgan: 2006-2010* (Kabul, August 2010).

²⁴⁷ Office of The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, 2011, "Despite Improvements in Moi's Personnel Systems, Additional Actions Are Needed to Completely Verify ANP Payroll Costs and Workforce Strength;" 25 April 2011; <http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/audits/SIGAR%20Audit-11-10.pdf>; p.13

²⁴⁸ Sherzad's family lives in the centre of Kandahar province, where he had worked as a deputy PCoP and head of security for Kandahar City before his appointment in Uruzgan. Ahmad Wali Karzai, the assassinated (12 July 2011) half brother of President Hamid Karzai, allegedly was close to Sherzad and put in a personal recommendation on Sherzad's behalf when the position in Uruzgan opened up.

²⁴⁹ Under Sherzad's watch, the police department facilities were also upgraded. The compound now includes a clinic (manned by four trained doctors), a large dining hall, and a meeting hall that can seat up to sixty officers. Sherzad was said to also have addressed a more symbolic complaint by insisting that the Afghan national flag be raised every morning and flown all day, in accordance with Afghan law; previously there had been no national flag at the station.

July 2011 brought drastic changes to the security situation in Uruzgan, which according to local respondents, triggered PCoP Sherzad's removal on 7 August 2011 after local elites grew anxious about their future. The elders decided that action needed to be taken to break the Taliban's momentum and reassert the power of the government in Uruzgan²⁵⁰ According to a local Tirin Kot elder, fifteen of Uruzgan's most powerful political figures²⁵¹ met with President Karzai in Kabul on 6 August in order to lobby for Matiullah Khan to be appointed as PCoP. Matiullah Khan had given his acquiescence to the group to lobby on his behalf the day before the meeting.

It is worth noting that local rumours suggested that Matiullah Khan may have been linked to the deterioration of security in Tirin Kot in order to prove that PCoP Sherzad was incompetent.²⁵² While it is difficult to prove that Matiullah Khan directly contributed to the insecurity, it was certainly to his benefit to see Sherzad fail. To this end, it does appear quite possible that he at least stood back and chose to passively observe the situation instead of lending support to the PCoP's efforts to establish security in Uruzgan.

The appointment of Matiullah Khan should be seen both in light of the security situation in Uruzgan, as well as the broader context of the frequent assassinations of government and pro-government elites across Afghanistan, most notably in neighbouring Kandahar.²⁵³ The pressure of the insurgency on the Afghan government and President Karzai has been great, with the Taliban trying to eliminate key figures and pro-state elites. In this situation, President Karzai was forced to make a choice in order to restore faith in the Afghan's government ability to reign in the insurgency and protect pro-government elites.

President Karzai had many reasons to favour the appointment of Matiullah Khan. First, he and Matiullah Khan had an existing personal relationship dating from 2001 when Matiullah helped Karzai launch the uprising against the Taliban from the mountains between Deh Rawud, Tirin Kot, and Nesh districts of Helmand.²⁵⁴ Thus, Karzai had first-hand knowledge of

²⁵⁰ He was named the PCoP of neighbouring Zabul province within three days of his removal in Uruzgan. (see Section 6 for more detail)

²⁵¹ This group included all four of Uruzgan's Members of Parliament, Hilla and Haji Amanullah Azimi from the Meshrano Jirga, and Obaidullah Barakzai and Reihana Azad from the Wolesi Jirga. Uruzgan's third Wolesi Jirga representative, Mohammad Hashim Watanwal, was killed in the attack that killed Jan Mohammad Khan on 17 July 2011. The long standing Head of the Provincial Appeals Court Mawlawi Mohammad Jan, Tor Mullah, the recently-wounded Head of the Department of Hajj and Religious Affairs; Amanullah Hotaki, the Head of the Provincial Council; and a host of other important tribal elders.

²⁵² In the opinion of many respondents MK seemed to have also been engaged in a silent tug-of-war with the then PCoP. Sherzad allegedly told MK that some of his *Kandak-e Amniat-e Uruzgan* (KAU) officers who guard the Kandahar-Tirin Kot road were on the payroll of the Ministry of Interior (Mol), and hence either should provide security free of charge (as any policeman should) or be taken off the government payroll. In an interview with TLO in early July, MK evaded any questions in this regard, and chose not to say much about Sherzad and his performance, aside from MK's judgement that Sherzad was only providing security in Tirin Kot bazaar, but could not go outside the district capital. Likewise, Sherzad avoided any questions about MK.

²⁵³ For example, this includes the killings of the Kandahar PCoP Matiullah Mohammad Mujahid on 15 April, 2011 the chairman of the Kandahar Provincial Council and President Hamid Karzai's half-brother Ahmad Wali Karzai on 12 July, 2011 and Kandahar City mayor Ghulam Haidar Hamidi on 27 July, 2011).

²⁵⁴ Others included the late Rozi Khan, Malem Rahmatullah, Sultan Mohamed, Haji Zaher Khan, Saifullah Khan and Haji Mohamed Hashim Khan.

Matiullah Khan's ability to fight the insurgency. Making Matiullah Khan PCoP also meant a consolidation of *de facto* and *de jure* power in Uruzgan's security sector. Finally, the assassination of Jan Mohammad Khan removed a barrier to Matiullah Khan's appointment. Many respondents argued that Jan Mohmmand Khan had grown wary of his second cousin's ascent to power and reportedly blocked Matiullah Khan's candidacy in April.

Local respondents indicated that they had high expectations that Matiullah Khan's appointment as PCoP would lead to improvements in the province. None, however, expected the rapid success that the new PCoP achieved by clearing the Mehrabad valley. People praised PCoP Matiullah Khan for this strategic success that extended the reach of the Afghan government into an area held by insurgents since 2004. One respondent highlighted the joy of a relative who had not been to Mehrabad for several years because of the presence of Taliban. Reportedly, upon arrival he said, "I cannot believe I am in Mehrabad. We never thought it would be possible again to come to Mehrabad under this government. Many other operations took place but failed."²⁵⁵

Clearing the Mehrabad valley proved a strategic success for Matiullah Khan on several levels. First, it sent a strong sign that Uruzgan's security sector was changing. Second, Ghilzai tribes, whom Matiullah Khan's second cousin Jan Mohammad Khan had continuously marginalized, largely inhabit Mehrabad. Retaking the area therefore helped repair some past inter-tribal misgivings and increased support from non-Durrani tribes. Finally, taking Mehrabad also secured access to Chenartu district, a Popalzai enclave. Chenartu residents had long been frustrated with their isolation from Tirin Kot. By boosting the ability of Uruzgani Popalzais to travel to the provincial centre, Matiullah Khan further consolidated power within his own tribe.

Security gains aside, Matiullah Khan's strength in his new position is evident in the manner in which he is able to exert influence over the careers of his political rivals. The most obvious example is his reported rivalry with the Governor Sherzad (see Section 4.1.2).

PCoP Matiullah Khan remains very popular in the province, particularly in Tirin Kot, largely due to the increased security. His popularity received a further boost in December 2011 when he distributed goods and materials allegedly worth about 9.3 million AFN (AUD 173,174.44; EUR 141,414.20; USD \$186,907.09) to residents of Tirin Kot bazaar whose houses and shops were destroyed or damaged during the implementation of early phases of the new master plan for Tirin Kot city (see Section 4.2.5). Even respondents who were previously critical of PCoP Matiullah Khan now speak positively of him. The few remaining critiques mainly come from political rivals and people who fear that he is simply becoming too powerful.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁵ Interview, Mehrabad elder living in Tirin Kot, need to get estimated date 2011

²⁵⁶ Interviews with Tirin Kot elites and elders, early December 2011

4.1.4 Provincial Line Departments

Provincial Line Departments are sub-national extensions of national ministries. Centralization of power limits the autonomy of the line departments who have little control over their budgets or the authority to hire staff. The line department heads are appointed in Kabul, although Afghanistan's SNGP states they are also accountable to the Provincial Governor.²⁵⁷

According to TLO's count, as of December 2011, there are 31 government departments, bodies or commissions operating in Tirin Kot. This includes 20 (out of a possible 25) Provincial Line Departments,²⁵⁸ six other government bodies,²⁵⁹ and three independent commissions.²⁶⁰ Thus, overall, Uruzgan is a very well served province in terms of government entities.

Two-thirds of line department heads come from Uruzgan, mostly from Tirin Kot district.²⁶¹ Seven department heads come from outside Uruzgan province. In terms of gender, it is significant that in Uruzgan, which is considered to be very conservative, there are three female heads of line departments, including Tajwar Kakar the new acting Director for Education who returned to Afghanistan from Australia. Respondents indicate that she is well respected and known as a knowledgeable 'white-haired' woman (the female equivalent to the Spin Giri—white bearded elder). Two sisters, Rana and Fershota Samim head the Department of Women's Affairs and the National Environment Protection Agency (NEPA), respectively. None of these women, however, is from Uruzgan.

While the tribal/ethnic composition of department heads has improved, some key tribes are still underrepresented. Popalzai representation amongst line department heads has decreased from one third to about one quarter.²⁶² The Babozai (5% of the population), concentrated largely in Deh Rawud, lead three departments. One of Uruzgan's largest tribes, the Achekzai (35% of the population), only lead one department (Transportation). There are no Nurzai (17.5% of the population) department heads, nor are there any department heads

²⁵⁷ Sub-national Governance Policy 2010, p. 11 and 63 see Art. 137, Afghan Constitution

²⁵⁸ Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL); Border and Tribal Affairs; Communication and Information Technology; Counter-Narcotics; Defence/Afghan National Army; Economy; Education; Hajj & Religion Affairs; Information, Culture & Youth; Justice (including the Huquqiyah Directorate), Finance/Mustofiat (Revenue/Tax); NDS; Public Health, Public Works; Refugees and Returnees; Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD); Social Affairs, Labour, Martyrs and the Disabled; Telecommunication; Transportation and Civil Aviation; Provincial Chief of Police (PCoP); provincial office of the National Department of Security (NDS); Mustofiat (Revenue Department of the Ministry of Finance); Provincial Prosecution Office; Water and Energy (one Director for Energy and one for Water/Irrigation); and Women's Affairs. Absent are only five departments: Foreign Affairs, Commerce and Industry, Urban Development, Mines, and Higher Education.

²⁵⁹ The Central Statistics Organization (CSO) in charge of issuing the national identification cards (tazkira), the Independent Directorate of Kuchi Affairs (IDKA), the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), the National Environment Protection Agency (NEPA), the National Olympic Committee, and the Tirin Kot Municipality.

²⁶⁰ The Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC), the Independent Elections Commission (IEC), and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC); albeit only the latter is truly perceived to be outside the realm of government.

²⁶¹ with the exception of one person each from Deh Rawud, Chenartu, and Khas Uruzgan districts.

²⁶² All estimates of tribal percentages are TLO's own from 2009, see The Liaison Office, 2010, *The Dutch Engagement in Uruzgan: 2006 to 2010*; A TLO socio-political assessment; Kabul: The Liaison Office.

from the Ghilzai Pashtun tribes (9% of the population). Other department heads include two Barakzai, two Hazara (non-Pashtun minority), and one Alkozai.

Overall 50% of the provincial line directorates are held by people from the Zirak Durrani Pashtun tribes (Acheckzai, Alkozai, Barakzai/Mohammadzai—60% of the population). The already-marginalized Ghilzai confederation and the second-class Panjpai Durrani sub-confederation (18.5% of the population)—including the second largest tribe of Uruzgan, the Nurzai—go empty-handed. Of the heads of the nine other government bodies, four are from Uruzgan.²⁶³ While the tribal representation here is better, the Ghilzai confederation is once again completely absent.

About one-third of all department heads have changed (and one was shifted from one department to another) since mid-2010:

- **Border and Tribal Affairs:** Niamatullah (Mohammadzai from Tirin Kot/Ghulam), friend of the late Jan Mohammad Khan, shifted from heading the Department of Water and Energy to this position in July 2011.
- **Civil and Urban Development:** Sardar Mohammad joined the provincial administration in this position in late 2011. According to local respondents, Sardar Mohammad is a very young man who recently graduated from high school. However, his tenure was extremely short-lived as he quit the position shortly thereafter to enrol in college.
- **Counter-Narcotics:** Abdul Zahar Salari (Hazara; former District Governor of Khas Uruzgan) replaced Dost Mohammad Khan (Kakar from Tirin Kot district) in October 2011.
- **Economy:** Eng. Abul Manan (Sayed from Takhar) replaced Dr. Ghulam Farooq (Tokhi from Surkh Murghab/Darafshan) in November 2011.
- **Education:** Tajwar Kakar (Australia/Kunduz) is the current head. This position changed hands twice in the reporting period. First the longstanding head and local strongman Malim Rahmatullah was removed in October 2010 because of corruption allegations. His replacement likewise served barely a year after being removed after similar allegations of corruption surfaced.
- **National Environment Protection Agency (NEPA):** The previous head of the Department of Women Affairs (DoWA), Fershotia Samim, moved to this position. However, respondents did not think this office was functional in any significant way. Many felt she simply wanted to keep a government post and used her influence to do so.
- **National Directorate of Security:** Colonel Khan Mohammad (Shinwari from Parwan) replaced the long-standing Zakaria Stanikzai from Maidan Wardak in August 2011.²⁶⁴
- **Public Health:** Dr. Mohammad Nabi (unknown origin) replaced the long-standing Khan Agha Miakheil (from Nangarhar Province) in an acting capacity in late November 2011.
- **Public Works:** Eng. Mohammad Sabir (Ahmadzai/Ghilzai) replaced the long-standing local strongman Haji Nic Mohammad in July 2011. He is considered to be a personal appointment of President Karzai.

²⁶³ The four from Uruzgan are the newly minted Mayor Niamatullah Khan Akbari (Acheckzai from Gizab), the CSO Director Amanullah (a Popalzai from Tirin Kot), the IED Head Obaidullah Osmani (a Barakzai from Sarchakhli), and the IARCSC Director Parviz Khpalwak (a Nurzai from Deh Rawud).

²⁶⁴ TLO was not able to obtain insights into this appointment. There were no complaints against Stanikzai. The change, however, did occur around the same time that Matiullah Khan was appointed Provincial Chief of Police.

- **Tirin Kot Municipality:** Niamatullah Khan Akbari replaced Mullah Obaidullah Akhund (Kakar from Talani Kalay of Tirin Kot) as Mayor of Tirin Kot in July 2011. Obaidullah was a friend of and appointed by the late Jan Mohammad Khan. The new Mayor is the son of a former Senator and graduated from a technical high school in Kandahar in 1973 before taking on various government and NGO jobs over the years. According to local respondents, upon his appointment Niamatullah promised to attract more infrastructure projects to the city of Tirin Kot, beginning with streetlights. So far Tirin Kot residents have voiced approval for the productivity of the new mayor.
- **Water and Energy (Energy division):** Sami Sharafat was newly appointed in March 2011 replacing the outgoing Niamatullah.
- **Women's Affairs:** As mentioned above, Fershota Samim was shifted from this position and replaced by her sister, Rana Samim. Respondents said that Fershota was moved from DoWA as she was generally disliked. Furthermore she was seen as corrupt, pocketing funds meant for the advancement of women and feeding it into the car dealership she allegedly owns.

4.1.4.1 Existing Capacity Gaps

A small survey of government officials in Tirin Kot in July 2011²⁶⁵ yielded the following concerns of line departments:

- All of the sampled departments, except the Department of Public Health (DPH), reported that they lack essential staff. All departments attributed this staffing shortage to both a general lack of respect for government positions, stemming from distrust of the government, and insufficient salaries. One department head indicated that many top candidates ultimately were attracted to NGOs due the latter's more competitive compensation packages.
- All interviewees stated that an acceptable level of cooperation between the different departments exists. Most said they contact the Provincial Governor and, to a lesser extent, the Kabul office of their Ministry for assistance and advice. Interestingly, all interviewees noted that they have extensive contact with both the current and former Provincial Chiefs of Police.²⁶⁶
- Insecurity was not cited as a main obstacle to carrying out the various duties of the departments. However, nearly all departments noted that the insecurity occasionally limited their ability to conduct programming in some areas of the province.

Local assessments of the performance of provincial line departments, however, contrasted starkly with the department heads' self-assessment of their performance. Overall, line departments in Tirin Kot remained some of the most criticized and least respected organs of government in Uruzgan during the reporting period.²⁶⁷ Respondents echoed the problems of capacity, as well as the lack of professionalism amongst senior government officials. Respondents, for example pointed out that offices sometimes open for only two or three hours a day, usually in the late morning, before shutting down for the afternoon.

²⁶⁵ The survey included: the Departments of Agriculture, Education, Public Health, Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Public Works, Women's Affairs, the Provincial Governor's office and judges.

²⁶⁶ While Juma Gul was in power when initial interviews were conducted, TLO was told that Matiullah Khan has also been in touch with line ministries, voicing support for their work.

²⁶⁷ Interview, Tirin Kot elder, 2 August 2011

Many respondents also complained that government officials do not work in the public interest, but instead are only accountable to the individuals who engineered their appointments. As a result, most department heads are viewed more as political appointments rather than public servants working in the interest of the people.

Respondents were particularly critical of the Departments of Agriculture, Education, and Public Works, as well as the Central Statistics Organization.²⁶⁸ In a province with as many farms and as poor education and infrastructure as Uruzgan, these departments are probably those whose services are most needed by the population, making their ineffectiveness and parasitic behaviour very problematic. Other general concerns expressed by respondents included the following:

Tribal Imbalance: Local respondents noted that the provincial government does not accurately reflect the tribal balance of the province. Achekzai, the province's largest tribe are generally thought to be underrepresented, as are the Barakzai, Hazara, and Alkozai. The Nurzai and Ghilzai appear excluded from high level positions in the provincial government altogether. Contributing to this perception was the fact that Jan Mohammad Khan was allegedly very influential in the appointment of department heads.²⁶⁹

Lack of Capacity: Respondents repeatedly criticized the lack of capacity of Provincial Line Departments. A representative of an international NGO lamented, "Political officials are appointed due to personal relations. They lack the capacity to do their job. For them it is not about the real needs [of the people], but they work in the interests of the people who got them appointed."²⁷⁰ Governor Sherzad likewise acknowledged this in his foreword commentary on the Provincial Development Plan (1390).

However, it seems that at least some of the complaints about capacity may be coloured by misconceptions about what specific departments actually do. For example, the Department of Public Health (DPH) was commonly cited as an example of insufficient capacity, but it was apparent to TLO that some residents have a poor understanding about the DPH role in accordance with national policy and implementation strategies for health in Afghanistan. Several respondents complained that the DPH failed to provide even a single doctor for the provincial hospital, which subsequently was staffed by the Afghan NGO Afghan Health and Development Services (AHDS). The hospital itself is allegedly in very bad condition, and what supplies and facilities it does possess are nearly all provided by NGOs or international donors.

²⁶⁸ The survey however was done before some of the line department heads were relaxed.

²⁶⁹ Susanne Schmeidl, "The man who would be king: The challenges to Strengthening Governance in Uruzgan," Conflict Research Unit Occasion Paper; The Hague: The Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael' (November 2010); http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2011/20110316_cru_publicatie_sschmeidl.pdf

²⁷⁰ Interview, International NGO-representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011

In reality, however, the DHP is not responsible for staffing doctors or providing medical supplies to hospitals. It sets the policies and monitors delivery by the NGO delivery partner (i.e. AHDS in Uruzgan) for health services. Moreover, residents attributed (their perceived) lack of capacity as the fault of the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC), who is responsible for capacity building. Since residents felt the DHP was not functioning correctly, they were unsure what the IARCSC is actually doing.

The fact that Tirin Kot residents misunderstand the role of the DHP suggests the need for a better information campaign on the respective roles of government departments. This false perception of DPH's responsibilities leads to a negative evaluation, and may very well come from the times of war when NGOs essentially took on government roles in service delivery.

Lack of Coordination: A related problem raised by respondents was the lack of coordination between government entities. As put by an NGO representative, "There is no cooperation and solidarity between the different positions and departments of the government; instead they fight with each other. This hurts the people because of the lacking results of government work. It creates problems in general and also for NGOs."²⁷¹

Corruption: Respondents frequently referred to government corruption, especially within the Departments of Education, Public Works, and Agriculture.²⁷² NGOs are particularly frustrated with government corruption as they feel it impedes their work and creates waste. One international NGO representative summarized what many other organizations raised:

"If we select a village for one of our projects, we get ten letters from government officials who want us to allocate the funds to other villages they favour, but that are not needed according to our assessment. Political actors make promises to their constituencies and want NGOs to fulfil those promises, even if the NGOs can't do that according to their own Codes of Conduct. Unfortunately, you have to make compromises with them; otherwise they create problems for you."²⁷³

Another local NGO shared the following story:

"Powerful people come by and ask for something all the time. The governmental departments only complain about the good NGOs that don't pay. If there is a project proposal, they decide on the basis of how much they can personally profit and not on the utility and necessity of the projects. One government official offered us to close one of our more remote projects and share the profit. He was very angry with us after we declined and from that point on raised objections against us in every meeting we

²⁷¹ Interview, Local NGO-representative, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011

²⁷² As noted above, two past DoEd heads were changed due to corruption allegations. Both were said to have siphoned of teacher salaries while Malim Rahmatullah also stood accused of having tried to benefit from school construction projects, either through requesting bribes or by awarding contracts to his family and patronage network. The past head of the DPW Haji Nik Mohammad was also accused of requesting bribes from companies engaged in road construction. He even admitted to this personally in a discussion with TLO in early July 2011.

²⁷³ Interview, International NGO-representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011; see also Interview, Local NGO-representative, Kabul, 23 July 2011.

attended together.”²⁷⁴

There are also complaints against the **Central Statistics Organization** for charging high fees for issuing *tazkiras* (the national identification card). Many respondents said that no *tazkira* is issued without paying an extra bribe on top of the official fees.

A frequently cited complaint against the **Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (DAIL)** was the diversion of wheat distribution and other programmes to friends and families of DAIL officials instead of needy farmers the projects were designed to target. The recipients, who tended to be wealthy, then sold the seeds in the Bazaar rather than planting them. The DAIL was also accused of distributing dangerous pesticides that severely harmed the harvest.

The **Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)** was also heavily criticized for its perceived lack of impartiality. Respondents noted that it inappropriately influenced the 2009 presidential and 2010 parliamentary elections. There were early allegations of IEC officials calling certain candidates and telling them they should not bother running. Later, the IEC allegedly affected the outcome of the elections in favour of the Pashtun contingent of Khas Uruzgan (see Section 4.1.1).

The only exceptions were the positive opinions expressed regarding the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC). Female respondents, in particular noted their appreciation for the assistance that the AIHRC provides in difficult family cases and instances of domestic violence. But then, the AIHRC was generally viewed more as an NGO than a government body.

4.1.5 Provincial Council

The powers of the Provincial Council (PC) are derived from Articles 138-140 of the *Constitution of Afghanistan*.²⁷⁵ The PC is designed as a representative body that links the community to government. According to Afghanistan’s Sub-National Governance Policy (SNGP), the PC is intended to have an advisory and oversight role for development planning and provincial administration respectively. After a 2007 amendment to the SNGP, the PG is required to approve the provincial budget and is “legally obliged to provide information before the Provincial Council once a month.”²⁷⁶ To fulfil its duties, the PC has three commissions: a monitoring commission, an amendments/corrections commission, and a complaints commission.

In monthly meetings attended by the heads of all Provincial Line Departments, the PC reviews the monthly activity reports of each department and discusses any problems it identifies. Any Uruzgan resident is allowed to attend these monthly meetings and raise

²⁷⁴ Interview, Local NGO-representative, Kabul, 16 July 2011

²⁷⁵ The Constitution of Afghanistan (2003); <http://www.moi.gov.af/en/page/1684>; Art. 83 (requiring the adoption of an Election Law); Art. 137 (on devolving governmental responsibilities to the local level); Art. 138-104 on the Provincial Council

²⁷⁶ *Sub-national Governance Policy* 2010, p.14

problems directly with the PC. The PC, however, generally can only refer problems to an appropriate government body because it has very little independent power.

None of the eight, all-male, members of the first PC won re-election in 2009. Many respondents pointed to this fact as an affirmation of democracy in Uruzgan. Numerous respondents, however, did voice concern over what they perceive to be continued over-representation of the Popalzai tribe (about 10.5% of the population). Indeed, the Popalzai did win five of eight seats in the 2009 election.

The 2009 election included two reserved seats for women, one of whom—Hilla ‘Acheckzai’—was subsequently voted into the Senate (*Meshrano jirga*) alongside Amanullah Khan (Popalzai, Tirin Kot), allegedly with the support of Matiullah Khan.²⁷⁷ The two vacant seats were filled by Jan Mohammad (Popalzai from Chenartu) and Haji Naeem (Nurzai from Char China living in Tirin Kot).²⁷⁸

The two elected female PC members were (see Appendix III for information on the other PC Members):

- **Hilla Acheckzai** is an Ahmadzai originally from Paktia. She was married to an Acheckzai from Khas Uruzgan and lived in Tirin Kot city for some time, owning some land in the area. Prior to being elected into the Provincial Council and later Senate, she worked mainly with NGOs. Taliban killed her husband and injured her eldest son in an attack. Given her husband’s tribe and the fact that the Acheckzai are the biggest tribe in Uruzgan, Hilla has taken on the nickname Acheckzai since being elected, which at times creates confusion as to her tribal background.
- **Marjana** (Suleiman Khail Kuchi, originally from Ajiristan district of Ghazni province but settled in Tirin Kot for the past eight years). She is reportedly illiterate.

After the first PC chair, Haji Amanullah (Popalzai from Tirin Kot) was voted into the *Meshrano jirga*, he was replaced by Amanullah Khan (Babozai from Deh Rawud). Similarly, the Deputy position changed hands from Abdul Ali (a Hazara from Khas Uruzgan and highest vote getter) to Jan Mohammad (a Popalzai from Chenartu).

The PC is far weaker than the powers vested in them, and despite capacity building efforts, the legitimacy and authority of the body is strongly dependent on the personal authority and influence of its members, especially the Chair and Deputy Chair. The majority of local respondents noted that they were unimpressed with the performance of the PC and its function as a bridge between the people and the government or as a problem-solver.

4.1.6 Other Provincial-Level Bodies

In addition to the Provincial Council, the other provincial-level shuras in Uruzgan include the Provincial Development Committee (PDC), the Provincial Peace Council (PPC), the Ulema

²⁷⁷ According to Article 31 (1c) of the Afghan Electoral Law, “the top two most voted female candidates in each provincial council shall be automatically elected,” allowing women a minimum of two seats. <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/APCITY/UNPAN018178.pdf>; p.10 (Articles 28-31 cover the Provincial Council)

²⁷⁸ The son of local tribal notable Ghulam Hayder Khan, who ran unsuccessfully for the Wolesi Jirga in 2005 and 2010).

Shura, and Matiullah Khan's Reform Council (Eslahi Shura), which will be discussed under Justice Provision (see Section 5.3.1).

The **Provincial Development Committee (PDC)** is a coordination body chaired by the Governor that includes government departments, PC members, donors, the United Nations, NGOs, and members of the private sector. According to Afghanistan's Sub-National Governance Policy,

The main roles of the PDCs are 1) to coordinate activities of the line ministries; 2) to prepare Provincial Development Plans (PDPs); 3) to improve donor coordination; 4) to monitor the implementation of development projects; and 5) to enhance the capacity of the provincial administration for public administration and public service deliver Although PDCs are emerging as the main coordinating mechanism for development activities and planning, because there is not a strong link between the PDC and the budget process, such development planning does not necessarily have any impact on what actually occurs within the province.²⁷⁹

The PDC has seven sector Working Groups, chaired by a relevant government department head. The working groups include: Health and Nutrition, Private Sector Development, Social Protection and Agriculture, and Rural Development and Infrastructure, all of which meet regularly to formulate the Provincial Development Plan (PDP), taking into account existing District Development Plans (DDPs). The PDC usually meets once per month in Tirin Kot city, and the meetings were mentioned favourably during NGO interviews.

The PDC initially reported operational difficulties, which have largely been addressed since the introduction of technical advisors. The technical advisors provide assistance to the members of the PDC in conducting their meetings, as well as training in computer skills and English to staff of the line departments represented in the PDC. The aim was to facilitate cooperation and organization within the PDC as well as with the NGOs working in the province. These courses are funded through the USAID-financed Local Governance and Community Development (LGCD) programme implemented by the development firm DAI.²⁸⁰

The **Provincial Peace Council (PPC)** is part of the Afghanistan Peace and Reconciliation Programme (APRP). It is mandated to foster discussion with locals about grievance resolution and facilitate reintegration through projects and jobs.

In theory, the PPC should be representative of the province's diversity and include tribal notables, scholars, and elders who are able to facilitate negotiations with the insurgency. In practice, nearly all of the PPC members are from the greater Tirin Kot area, with no representatives from other Uruzgan districts except for one representative from Deh Rawud district.

²⁷⁹ Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), *Sub-national Governance Policy* (Spring 2010); <http://www.idlg.gov.af/IDLG/images/Policy/SNGP-English-Afghanistan.pdf>, p.64

²⁸⁰ Ahmad Omaid Khpulwak. "Uruzgan PDC well organized: officials," Pajhwok Afghan News, 23 September 2008, accessed online at <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2008/09/23/uruzgan-pdc-meetings-well-organized-officials>.

Respondents indicated that the PPC is not seen as representative or as effective as the Provincial Council or Eslahi Shura. To date there have been few key reintegration events and the Provincial Governor noted at an APRP review meeting that Uruzgan was not prepared for reintegration because it was not yet possible to ensure security for fighters who choose to lay down their weapons.²⁸¹ With the recent clearing of the Mehrabad valley, several former insurgents are rumoured to have asked to be reintegrated, yet no process seemed to exist, leaving the individuals at the mercy of the local police commander, who, counter to government policy, threatened to kill them. These potential reintegrates instead left the area out of fear and some re-joined the insurgency. This incident suggests that the PPC either exists in name only or its members are incapable of connecting with potential reintegrates.

The **Ulema Shura** of Tirin Kot, dormant since 2006, was revived in 2011 with the assistance of Mawlawi Hamdullah (Tor Mullah), the Head of the Department of Hajj and Religious Affairs and previous Head of the Provincial Council, who persuaded Governor Sherzad to support the revitalization of the Ulema Shura. It currently has 25 members who are all religious scholars.²⁸² So far, however, it cannot be considered a provincial-level shura as all its members are from the Tirin Kot area, with district-level ulema shuras also in existence in Deh Rawud and Chora. Considering only Tirin Kot, the members come from all the major tribes and there is no significant over- or underrepresentation of any particular tribe. Aside from holding regular meetings that include Governor Sherzad, the Ulema Shura has not yet reached its full potential to link government to village and district-level mullahs and spiritual figures who could also help guide the peace and reintegration processes or conduct other outreach, for example advocating for families to send their girls to school. Governor Sherzad has encouraged the Ulema Shura to spread messages of peace.

4.2 District Governance

Uruzgan province has seven districts. The key governance institutions of the District Administration include the District Governor (DG), the District Chief of Police Chief (DCoP), District Offices of Provincial Line Departments (PLDs) and the newly formed District Community Councils (DCCs). According to the SNGP, DG and Line Departments are responsible to the Provincial Governor and Line Departments.²⁸³ Furthermore, the DG is, according to the SNGP, responsible to the people via elected District Councils, but these do not yet exist anywhere in Afghanistan.²⁸⁴ The DG accordingly remains a political appointee.

²⁸¹ Presentation, APRP Review Conference, Kabul, 10-11 May 2011.

²⁸² The official ulema shura stopped meeting in 2006. Facilitated by TLO, it started meeting again in summer 2011. Unlike a typical ulema shura, however, they did not focus on general religious issues and dispensing justice.

²⁸³ Sub-national Governance Policy 2010, p.130 onwards; district governors and line departments are not specifically mentioned in the Afghan Constitution, although Art. 140 calls for elected district councils and Art. 141 provides for the establishment of municipalities with elected mayors.

²⁸⁴ Ibid, p.132

In Uruzgan, as in other areas of Afghanistan, the two key district governance positions are the DG and the DCoP. Uruzgan's districts witnessed multiple changes in these key positions since 2002. Between mid-2010 and the end of 2011, four districts received new DGs and DCoPs. Khas Uruzgan had two new DGs and DCoPs, while Chora had two DGs. Chenartu and Gizab have enjoyed consistent leadership in the two key positions. Presently all DGs are in acting capacity with the exception of Gizab and Chenartu.

Table 12: The Revolving Door of District Governance

District	District Governors since 2002		District Chiefs of Police since 2002	
Deh Rawud	10	Amanullah (since Oct 2011)	5 ²⁸⁵	Omer Khan (since Aug 2008)
Chora	12	Khalifa Sadat (Babozai from Deh Rawud) (since Nov 2011)	11	Mullah Niamatullah (since Oct 2011)
Chenartu	1	Malim Faiz Mohammad (Popalzai) since 2008	1	Commander Akhtar Mohammad (Popalzai) since 2008
Char China	7	Mohammad (Nurzai-Durzai from Sarab; since 9 November 2011)	4	Wali Dad (Popalzai from Pai Nawa) since 15 November 2011
Khas Uruzgan	9	Juma Gul Khan (Acheckzai) (since mid-Sept 2010) Abdul Halim (Acheckzai-Alizai from Hazar Kadam) since 26 December 2011	10	Sardar Wali (Alizai) Sept 2010-April 2011 Pai Mohammad (April-Sept 2011) Sardar Wali (Sept 2011-present)
Gizab	7	Dr Abdullah (since mid-April 2010)	?	Lalai (since mid-April 2010)

As noted, there are seven districts in Uruzgan, although the status of Gizab as part of the province has been contested. Because of this, some of Gizab's government services such as healthcare and education were administered via the provincial government in neighbouring Day Kundi until they were finally handed over to Uruzgan. The district was also considered part of Day Kundi during the fall 2010 Parliamentary elections (see Section 4.1.1).

Chenartu is still awaiting official Parliamentary approval, a process that was started on 5 August 2007. If approved, the district would contain 13,652 people in 41 villages, spread over an area of 703 km².²⁸⁶

²⁸⁵ There were some discrepancies here with some citing seven DCoPs and others 5.

²⁸⁶ TLO was able to obtain a copy of the document confirming the final approval of the district's full independence, which listed the above-mentioned parameters. It is noteworthy that TLO and GIS data put the size of Chenartu, with the new villages added from Khas Uruzgan (Sar Gull and Sagar), at 896.8 km² based on the boundaries of the district according to the local respondents' perceptions. The letter also contains a clarification of the district's borders, which now encompass Daba Kalay, Fazal Kalay, Sara Kalay, Tangi, Toghay, and Landi Walah villages of Tirin Kot district, as well as Sar Gulkhari and Sager villages of Khas Uruzgan district.

While Tirin Kot is often seen as a greater municipality area because it lacks a district government, the local population nonetheless sees it as a district that is simply administered directly by the provincial government.

Uruzgan may see an eighth district added to its administrative divisions, with renewed discussions about carving out the district of Sarab out of the western and south-western portions of Char China (including Tagab valley) emerging in the second half of 2010. While having the support of the Governor, there was some resistance from the central government, notably IDLG.²⁸⁷ At present, Sarab remains a district only in theory, without official approval and it is unclear where the process stands.

4.2.1 District Governor

The SNGP states that the District Governor (DG) is the Executive Head of the District Administration, responsible for overseeing district government functioning and serving as chair of most important district-level committees.²⁸⁸ Currently, except for Chenartu and Gizab, all of the province's DGs are serving in an acting capacity.²⁸⁹ This distinction, however, is only made at the bureaucratic levels. Not a single respondent, surveyor, or government official mentioned to TLO that most DGs were only appointed in acting capacity, suggesting that most Uruzgan residents either do not know this or simply do not care.

The power of most DGs is derived from their status as former or current commanders, elite tribal elders, religious leaders, and/or personal wealth as opposed to any formal authority or power inherent in the district governor position itself. The political dexterity of district governors combined with their ability to leverage local patronage networks is essential to the governing process, whether in acting or formal capacity.

The President upon the recommendation of the IDLG and a selection board appoints district Governors. Uruzgan's current and past Governors have been instrumental in the appointment process.²⁹⁰ As noted above, the position of DG in Uruzgan continued to be somewhat of a revolving door throughout mid-2010 and 2011. The majority of DGs in Uruzgan were allegedly removed following frequent complaints about unsatisfactory job performance or inappropriate behaviour toward the population. Some, however, also fall prey to local strongmen politics (as was argued to be the case in the removal of Daoud Khan from Chora).

²⁸⁷ As part of the process of separating Sarab from Char China, there has been much discussion of who will be the first DG and DCoP of Sarab. There is also still the question as to where the new district's capital will be located, albeit Sarab due to its proximity to the recently paved and secured Deh Rawud-Sarab road would ease logistics and troop movements into the new district centre. Most locals, as well as the provincial and national governments, disagree, insisting that the district centre should be in Tagab village, which used to be a large bazaar in the past and would be more centrally located within the new district; Sarab, on the other hand, would be on the northeastern fringes of the new district.

²⁸⁸ Sub-national Governance Policy 2010, p.132

²⁸⁹ Technically acting DGs do not receive government benefits and are largely voluntary. In reality however, their service is compensated through other funding sources.

²⁹⁰ A proposed presidential decree that would change the status of district governors from appointed officials to civil servants and hence require an openly competitively based recruitment process has yet to be approved.

The more recent reshuffling of DGs, however, could be also interpreted as the product of PG Sherzad's efforts to improve the quality of performance of government officials. PG Sherzad may have been testing the acting DGs to make sure they perform their duties to the expectation of their constituents before fully integrating them into the government structure on a more permanent basis.

Most respondents indicated that they have lost faith in their DGs. Many feel that they serve their patronage networks more than the overall district constituency. Positive feed-back is rare and only used when people feel a given DG is acting in a neutral capacity and trying to improve the situation of the district. To be fair, the position of DG is quite challenging and the expectations often placed on DGs do not reflect the very limited powers that they have in Afghanistan's highly-centralized governance system. The current DGs of Uruzgan include:

Deh Rawud: On 27 October 2011, after some anticipation and a lengthy search process, Amanullah, an Achekzai from Gizab was introduced to replace Khalifa Sadat,²⁹¹ who governed Deh Rawud for nearly two years. Khalifa Sadat was the longest ruling DG in the district. Amanullah is not new to Deh Rawud, having been its first DG for one year in 2003. In addition, he was also the first DG of Gizab and since his removal from Deh Rawud in 2003, the Director of the Afghan Red Crescent Society in Tirin Kot.

Chora: There have been two new DGs in the last 18 months. First, after several months of rumours, Lieutenant Colonel Gul Agha (an Afghan National Army commander originally from Panjshir who had worked in the district for some time) replaced Mohammad Daoud Khan²⁹² in December 2010 on an interim basis until another DG could be identified. Throughout his time in office Lt. Col Gul Agha remained in command of the 2nd Kandak.²⁹³ In November 2011, Khalifa Sadaat shifted from the DG position in Deh Rawud to Chora. So far, People are pleased with Khalifa Sadaat. In their opinion, he has spent the first few months of his tenure actively working to reduce corruption. One of the most visible ways was that he addressed the corruption in the Central Statistics Organization (CSO). Governor Sadaat is also reportedly also trying to fill empty staff positions on the *tashkeel*. Finally, in response to resident concerns, DG Sadaat also attempted to review CADG's "Cash for Work" programme following complaints of non-transparent hiring practices. While the accounts of events surrounding the conflict vary wildly between CADG and the PRT on one hand, and Khalifa

²⁹¹ Khalifa Sadat was allegedly serving more or less unofficially or in acting capacity only, because he had never travelled to Kabul to follow all of the official steps necessary to assume office in the first place. According to local respondents he was well-known for his favouritism of his own tribe, the Babozai.

²⁹² He was killed in late October 2011 in a personal dispute in his house in Paghman near Kabul. Daoud Khan took over the governorship from his father, prominent Barakzai elder Rozi Khan, in September 2008 after the latter died in a friendly fire accident by Australian soldiers. Rozi Khan himself ruled the district for one year after having served as Provincial Chief of Police for four years (2002-2006). This meant that the district governorship had been in one family for three years, which is remarkable for a district with a total of 11 DGs in 11 years, most serving around a year and some less than that. Daoud had very good relations with Dutch actors, as they tried to balance out governance dynamic by working with a non-Popalzai. The Australians later continued this.

²⁹³ A local battalion which can number up to 300 soldiers.

Sadaat and local residents on the other, residents reportedly appreciate the DG's willingness to address this grievance.

Khas Uruzgan: Khas Uruzgan also had two DGs appointed over the last 18 months, one of whom was appointed twice. The last appointee was Abdul Halim (Achezkai-Alizai from Hazar Kadam Manteqa of the district) who took office in December 2011. Abdul Halim is said to be a former member of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and worked as a teacher until he was chosen for the DG post.

Another change happened in September 2010, shortly before the Wolesi Jirga elections, when Commander Juma Gul Khan (Achezkai) replaced Sardar Wali (Alizai) at the helm of Khas Uruzgan, who was moved back to the DCoP post he held three times in the past. Sardar Wali was one of the longer-serving DGs in the district (about two year from mid-2008 until he was replaced). Prior to this he rotated in and out of the DCoP position several times, making him the person with the longest service history (a bit over five years) in the district.²⁹⁴

Juma Gul Khan received negative evaluations from respondents who generally dismissed him as having little authority. Respondents indicated that he was afraid of the district's ALP commanders who, it was suggested, are the real powerbrokers in Khas Uruzgan. In the end, this tension allegedly got him fired in early December 2011 when Khas Uruzgan elites and tribal elders complained about him (and the DCoP) in Tirin Kot and Kandahar for being unable to reign in the ALP.

Char China: Haji Mohammad (Nurzai-Durzai from Sarab district) was appointed DG on 9 November 2011, replacing Salam Khan (Alkozai from Abborda area of Tirin Kot) who held the position for over two years. Salam was seen as inactive by the community and criticized for not working well with the PG. Rumours about his pending replacement started to circulate in mid-2011. He was also accused of practising *bacha bazi*,²⁹⁵ and had tensions with US Special Forces that culminated on 23 August 2011 when the DG allegedly requested a kickback from a local contractor, leading to a confrontation with US Special Forces.

The new DG Haji Mohammad is a young man in his mid-to-late 20s from Sarab where most of his tribesmen, the Durzai, live. Respondents felt that he is too inexperienced for this position and is unable to lead the district with the iron hand they expect given the district's history of insecurity. This, however, is a common critique raised against young men who have yet to gain the full respect of elders.

4.2.2 District Chiefs of Police (DCoPs)

There were several new DCoP appointments over the last 18 months indicating the difficulties of finding capable and well-received Police Chiefs, and keeping them alive since

²⁹⁴ He served as follows: 2006 - mid-2008, mid Sept 2010-April 2011 and again mid-Sept 2011 to present.

²⁹⁵ Bacha Bazi is the act of keeping young boys (forcefully or against a price) for dancing and homosexual relations, essentially boiling down to sexual slavery.

they are a key target of the insurgency. Furthermore, often newly appointed Provincial Police Chiefs appoint new DCoPs they consider loyal to them. Thus, a turnover at the provincial level usually has a follow-on effect at the district level.

In Khas Uruzgan alone there were three changes, with one individual being appointed twice. No changes in the DCoP were reported in Gizab or Chenartu, with the latter being the one with the longest track record, and often also the most appreciated by the local population. The other districts also saw similar changes:

Chora: Mullah Nematullah (Nurzai from Char China) became the new DCoP on 9 October 2011, after the former DCoP Mohammad Gul was killed when his vehicle hit an IED. DCoP Nematullah is a career police officer and the former DCoP of Char China. He used to be a member of the Taliban during the 1990s. Chora residents are cautiously optimistic that DCoP Nematullah's education will ensure his success in the position. So far they are content that Nematullah has managed to avoid entanglement in local conflicts.

Char China: Wali Daad (a Popalzai from Pai Nawa, Tirin Kot) replaced Sher Ali as DCoP on 26 November 2011. Some respondents indicated that the appointment was a move by new PCoP Matiullah Khan to appoint individuals that are loyal to him. Sher Ali also faced challenges and respondents indicate that his authority was undermined when US Special Forces allegedly bypassed him and took control of the ALP themselves.²⁹⁶

Since Wali Daad took command in November 2011, there have been increasing rumours about a decrease in morale in the police force.²⁹⁷ The police headquarters is now considered—according to respondents—a venue of un-Islamic activities and possibly criminal activities.

Khas Uruzgan: This district saw the appointment of three different DCoPs during the past 18 months; one of whom was appointed twice. DCoP Sardar Wali (Alizai) was first appointed in September 2010 and served until April 2011 when he was replaced by Pai Mohammad Khan. Pai Mohammad served only five months before he too was removed from office, allegedly because of his poor relationship with international military forces and his alleged links to the insurgency.²⁹⁸ For example, Pai Mohammad was rumoured to have been involved in surrendering a group of Afghan Local Police (ALP) personnel to the insurgency, although TLO could not confirm this. In addition, security generally deteriorated in Khas Uruzgan during Pai Mohammad's short tenure.

Overall Sardar Wali has been the longest serving DCoP in Khas Uruzgan, yet communities still see him as unable to reign in the ALP. According to several respondents, Matiullah Khan has been looking for a possible replacement for Sardar Wali that would be up for the job, while

²⁹⁶ See Section 6.3.1.2.

²⁹⁷ There are rumours of the alleged presence of very young boys in the main police station who are reportedly subject to sexual abuse (bacha bazi).

²⁹⁸ Haji Pai Mohammad entered office as something of a persona non grata among the IMF: he had been fired from a previous police job in Chora after killing a fellow policeman, an act which earned him the condemnation of the foreign militaries.

also being a close ally and dependable associate, such as Abdul Rashid (Alkozai from Garmab in Tirin Kot).

4.2.3 District Line Departments

Filling positions in the district offices of Line Departments continues to be a struggle. As a result, there is significant variation in the presence of government officials at the district level. It is also difficult to verify the presence in each district as officials at the provincial level often provide different information than what is indicated by local respondents (including district-level government officials). Interestingly, provincial-level officials indicate there are fewer district-level officials than reported at the district level by local respondents (see Table 13). This is probably because many respondents had difficulty discerning between government officials and other people working on government projects. For example, in Chora residents and district-level officials reported that there was an MRRD official in the district. TLO, however, later clarified that this individual was in fact a MRRD Engineer in Gizab who oversees a range of NABDP projects in Chora as well.

Table 13: Presence of Line Departments across Districts²⁹⁹

District Line Department	Deh Rawud	Chora	Chenartu	Gizab	Khas Uruzgan	Char China
Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock	X	X		X	X	
Defence (ANA)	X					
Education	X	X	X	X	X	
Finance (<i>Mostofiat</i>)	X			X		
Hajj and Religious Affairs	X	*				
Justice – Huquq	X	X			*	
Public Health	X	*			*	
Rural Rehabilitation & Development		*				
Telecommunication	X	*			*	
Transportation	X					
OTHER OFFICES						
National Directorate of Security (NDS)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Courts (Primary) ³⁰⁰	X	X				
Prosecutor (Civil)	X	X	X		*	
Municipality	X		X	X	X	
Central Statistics Organization	X	X			X	

²⁹⁹ Where TLO encountered a dispute, it marked an asterisk (*) vs. an “x” for those positions that were confirmed by both sources.

³⁰⁰ In Districts, this court is referred to as “Primary courts.” However, in Tirin Kot, the same court is called “City Court.”

The departments that have the widest reach into the districts include the NDS, present in all seven districts, the DoE in seven districts, DoA in five districts. Otherwise, most departments usually have a representative in two or three districts. Overall, however, only about 18% of all government positions are filled at the district level, which is basically unchanged since 2010.

Table 14: Establishment of District Community Councils

District	Number of Council Members	Date Established
Gizab	45	6 October 2010
Khas Uruzgan	38	26 October 2010
Deh Rawud	42	25 November 2010
Char China	44	4 January 2011
Chora	39	12 January 2011

As indicated in Table 13, Deh Rawud has the greatest government presence with nine officials. Char China is on the other spectrum without any line department staff, a product of its precarious security situation.

Respondents expressed the same dissatisfaction with district-level government officials as they had for the provincial level: lack of capacity and corruption. The expectations for district level officials appear rather modest, with respondents indicating that what they hoped for was a government official who is approachable and does his or her job without showing favouritism to their own patronage network. Unfortunately, local respondents do not feel that this standard is met in Uruzgan's districts.

4.2.4 District Shuras

Arguably the biggest achievement in the governance sector in Uruzgan between mid-2010 and 2011 was the creation of District Community Councils (DCCs) in five districts. DCCs have changed the governance landscape in Uruzgan's districts. Beyond the introduction of DCCs, there were few notable changes in the informal governance sector since mid-2010.

4.2.4.1 District Community Council (DCC)

DCCs are part of the IDLG's Afghanistan Social Outreach Programme (ASOP) and are intended to act as an interim measure or precursor to the popularly elected district councils prescribed in Article 140 of the Afghan Constitution.³⁰¹

They are formed through an informal local electoral process managed by ASOP personnel in cooperation with local communities and government officials. Community notables from across the district participate in the process, voting one of their peers from a candidate list, with as many as 500 candidates nominated. The size of the DCC depends on the size of the district and its tribal/ethnic composition, with a maximum of 45 members. In Uruzgan, only Gizab has the maximum number of members (see Table 14).

³⁰¹ Interview, Kabul, 9 July 2011

Each DCC elects a Chairman, Deputy, and Secretary. Its members are then divided into three subcommittees: Peace and Stability, Justice/Conflict Resolution,³⁰² and Development/Monitoring. The Conflict Resolution subcommittee is the most active. The Development Committee is in charge of monitoring and evaluating projects, the Justice Committee focuses on conflict resolution, and the Peace and Stability Committee is tasked with assisting DGs in creating peace and stability on a district level. This assistance includes the mandate that committee members play an active role by reaching out to the insurgency, asking them to put their weapons down, and encouraging them to join the peace process. Given the absence of courts in Gizab, Khas Uruzgan, and Char China as well as the lack of government offices in most districts, these shuras help fill a gap in justice and governance.

Local respondents indicate that the tribal and ethnic representation on DCCs is relatively representative of district populations. Deh Rawud residents expressed satisfaction with the DCC, with one tribal elder saying that he is “happy with the shura because everyone is represented and it is a formal shura with a salary for its members.”³⁰³ Another respondent from Char China remarked that the relatively balanced membership made him optimistic that the shura will provide an effective forum for dispute resolution.³⁰⁴

The only complaints came from Khas Uruzgan, where the DCC was reportedly disintegrating due to insurgent pressure on Pashtun DCC members. Local respondents noted that four of its members have been killed, six no longer come to meetings, and one was arrested.³⁰⁵ This leaves a total of 29 members out of the original 40 active on the DCC, which is now comprised of 10 Hazara and 19 Pashtuns. Furthermore there were complaints that the DCC in Khas Uruzgan was not seen as fully representative, albeit the district grappled with deteriorating security and ethnic tensions over the past 18 months. There were also allegedly problems with the Afghan Local Police (ALP), which, according to some, reflects badly on the DCC because the shura is supposed to help introduce ALP recruits (see Section 6.3.1.2).

One year into their existence, the DCCs received overall positive reviews and were widely known (see Figure 12). Respondents indicated that DCCs have a positive impact on security and governance, especially in the area of conflict resolution. The success of the DCCs is said to be due to a combination of their official status as well as the involvement of local communities in the selection of DCC members. In general, DCCs reportedly encourage the population to voice grievances with the government peacefully and constructively.

³⁰² For more information regarding DCC justice provision, see Section 4.3 outlining the formal justice system.

³⁰³ Interview, Deh Rawud tribal elder, Tirin Kot, 5 July 2011

³⁰⁴ Interview, Char China shopkeeper, Tirin Kot, 12 July 2011

³⁰⁵ Haji Mullah Abdul Bari, an Achekzai-Alizai-Toshak from Garden Sakhy, is former fighter with Hizb-e Islami who is now rumoured to be in Bagram jail.

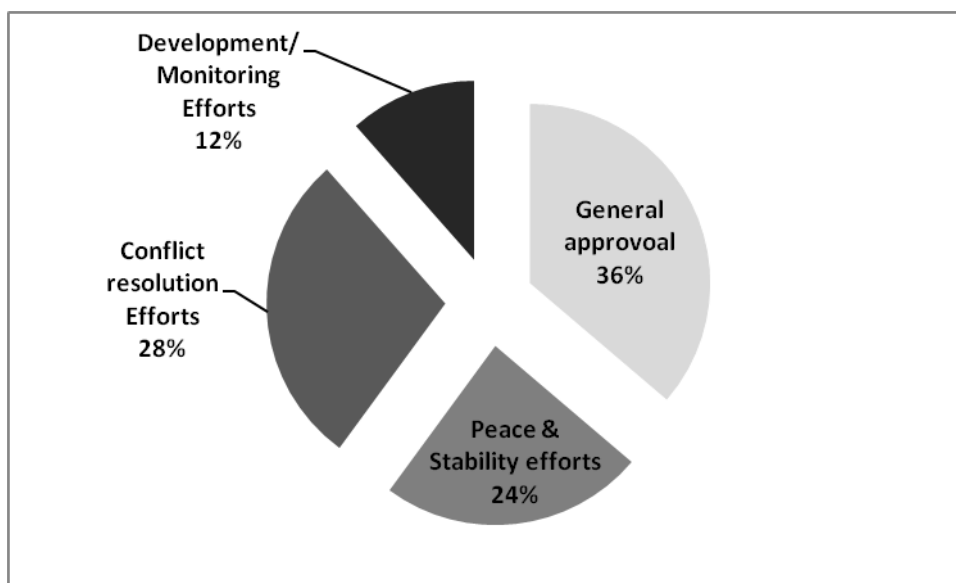


Figure 12: Perceptions about the District Community Councils in Uruzgan

Only 12% of 489 community notables attending a stability *jirga* in Tirin Kot in late December 2011 indicated that they did not know about their local DCC. Of the 489 respondents to this particular question, a majority (73%) positively evaluated the DCCs. Only a minority considered the DCC as unhelpful (20%), with another 7% feeling ambivalent about their performance so far. Among the 73% with a positive evaluation, a majority focused their praise on the DCC generally (36%), 28% highlighted DCCs' work in conflict resolution, and 24% praised efforts of peace/stability initiatives. Only 12% noted their development/monitoring efforts.³⁰⁶

This evaluation may be influenced by the fact that conflict resolution has formed a significant portion of the DCC's work in most districts. A Chora resident noted that residents are "happy with the presence of the shura" because of its "justice work for conflicts" and the fact that it "gives advice to the District Governor."³⁰⁷ A pharmacist from Chora Markaz concurred, saying that the DCC is liked for its "consistent relationship" with government officials and for its "work in all aspects of life."³⁰⁸ A Hazara resident from Gizab highlighted the intersection between projects and the potential for conflicts, seeing the DCC as a body that prevents "a lot of conflicts on the projects."³⁰⁹

In most districts, aside from the District Development Assemblies (DDAs), no other shuras exist alongside DCCs, with the exception of Deh Rawud. In order to avoid competition, the

³⁰⁶ This may simply be because the DCC development/monitoring mandate overlaps somewhat with that of the District Development Assemblies (DDAs, see Section 4.2.4.2). This necessitates close cooperation between the IDLG and MRRD and at least some consideration of merging existing and functional DDAs with the social and economic subcommittees of the DCCs. See, Micheal Shurkin, *Subnational Governance in Afghanistan*. (Arlington, VA : Rand National Defense Research Institute. 2011), http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional_papers/OP318.html; p. 11.

³⁰⁷ Interview, Chora tribal elder and surveyor, Tirin Kot, 3 July 2011

³⁰⁸ Interview, Chora pharmacist, Tirin Kot, 12 July 2011

³⁰⁹ Interview, Gizab tribal elder, Tirin Kot, 31 July 2011

DCC replaced and absorbed the existing tribal shura and shares its tasks with other shuras: the *malikan* shura, for example, continues as the main body that handles communication and interactions between the population and international military forces.

In the last quarter of 2011 there were rumours that members of DCCs stopped receiving their stipends from the IDLG, which prompted some respondents to speculate that, despite their popularity, the DCCs would disappear as fast as they were established. Indeed, it is understood that the US-funded the parent programme of the DCC—the ASOP—has recently ended and will not receive renewed funding. By December 2011, some communities had already noticed a decrease in DCC activities, expressing fear that these valued governance bodies would cease to exist without funding. While TLO is continually monitoring developments surrounding the DCC, it is likely too early to tell whether communities have appropriated DCCs to such an extent that they will be sustainable and outlive institutional funding.

Finally it is worth noting that an interesting link exists between the DCCs and the Afghan Local Police (see Section 6.3.1.2). Some US Special Forces consider the DCC to be key in selecting and providing some level of oversight for the ALP, with ALP officers being considered the ‘sons of the shura.’ The head of ASOP was more nuanced in his description noting that, while the DCC did assist in the identification of ALP members, the DCC is by no means responsible for their selection or performance, having nothing further to do with it.³¹⁰

4.2.4.2 District Development Assemblies (DDAs)

District Development Assemblies (DDAs) were created as part of MRRD’s National Area Based Development Programme (NABDP) in order to improve participatory development planning at a district level. At the village level, they are linked to the Community Development Councils (CDCs) under the National Solidarity Programme (NSP, see Section 4.2.5.1). In districts where CDCs exist, they form clusters to elect the DDAs, although in some of the more insecure districts MRRD allows for the establishment of non-elected DDAs.

In Uruzgan, all districts except for Chenartu have a DDA, with varying levels of activities. Char China’s DDA was established on 29 September 2011. The MRRD finally succeeded in forming a DDA in Khas Uruzgan in December 2011 after several previous attempts were hampered by competing local interests. With the assistance of acting DG Juma Gul around 20 individuals from the vast amount of candidates were selected. The elected members then came to Tirin Kot to officially be signed in as a DDA shura. Due to disagreements among leaders from the Achekzai majority tribe in the district, a rather unusual choice was made for the DDA head by picking Assadullah (a Niazai from Hazar Qadam), a painter.

DDAs have a range of planning, coordination, and advisory functions. Their responsibilities include identifying district priorities and strategies that reflect the interests of communities and villages. These responsibilities feed into provincial level planning processes through

³¹⁰ Interview, Kabul, 17 June 2011

District Development Plans based on the Community Development Plans (CDPs) formulated by CDCs at the village level. All CDPs are based on a participatory assessment of community needs.

Their terms of reference outlined in the SNGP also make them responsible for providing a channel for effective coordination between all development agencies, programmes, and projects at the district level. In this sense, they are expected to assist in “planning, resource mobilization, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation at the district level.”³¹¹ So far DDAs have co-existed well with the newly established DCCs, despite the slight overlap in their mandate to monitor development projects. The only exception was a conflict in Gizab that arose in mid-2010 after suspicions that the DDA Head (who is also the brother of DG Lailai) was trying to funnel development projects to his patronage network. The problem, however, was swiftly resolved and no further tensions have subsequently arisen.

During 2011, several planning workshops were held at the district level for the purpose of identifying and prioritizing community needs. Three such workshops—Tirin Kot, Chora and Deh Rawud—were held before the 1390 Provincial Development plan was formulated, while others were postponed due to insecurity.³¹² Similar meetings were conducted during the drafting process of the 1391 Provincial Development Plan. The last district-level planning workshop in the 2011 series was held in Gizab on 22 December, and discussed the refurbishment of the Helmand River Bridge. According to military sources, both the Gizab DDA and DG Lailai have taken on full responsibility to implement the project. In the assessment of a US Special Forces representative, “This decision to take ownership of the repair project without Coalition assistance is a step forward in the Gizab government’s progress toward self-sustainment and independence.”³¹³

TLO did not receive much community feedback about DDAs other than confirmation of their existence and periodic meetings. Some respondents considered DDAs inactive, possibly because communities generally felt that development had slowed over the last 18 months.

4.2.4.3 Other Informal District-Level Shuras

Only a few districts in Uruzgan have other types of shuras in existence, which perhaps helps explain why the DCCs were able to make such a big difference in a short period of time.

In Deh Rawud, a malikan shura exists to discuss community concerns with international military actors. In addition, TLO helped set up a shura that tried to link the informal and formal justice mechanisms. About one-third of its membership, however, was absorbed into the DCC when it was established.

TLO also helped establish Ulema shuras in Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, and Chora. These relatively new shuras have focussed on consulting District (and Provincial) Governors and providing a

³¹¹ Ibid

³¹² *Provincial Development Plan for 1390*, April 2011, p.5

³¹³ http://www.dvidshub.net/news/81789/gizab-district-development-assembly-holds-development-shura#.Tw_fbzWucTY

bridge to village-level ulema. All District Governors have used the shura to more effectively communicate with the religious establishment and encourage it to speak out for peace and invite insurgents to join the peace process.

Lastly, the Hazara of Gizab used to have a shura to regulate their affairs until the district was recaptured in mid-2010. Since the establishment of the DCC, TLO has not heard much of the Hazara shura. There is also supposedly a Hazara shura in Khas Uruzgan, where insecurity and isolation from the provincial and district centres forces the Hazaras to self-govern.

4.2.5 Village-Level Governance

Village-level governance in Uruzgan is usually dealt with through village-level shuras of community notables and religious figures. These informal shuras deal mostly with dispute resolution.

Community Development Councils (CDCs) under the National Solidarity Programme of MRRD, and sector-specific shuras – mostly education shuras linked to schools and health shuras linked to clinics – also exist in many communities.

There was little to report in terms of developments at the level of municipal administration until the second part of 2011 when several district centres had new Mayors appointed, including Tirin Kot and Deh Rawud, while Chenartu and Khas Uruzgan had a Mayor appointed for the first time. The mayoral position for Gizab is currently vacant.³¹⁴

- **Chenartu:** Fazal Mohammad (Popalzai from Khas Chenartu) was appointed as the first Mayor of the district in November 2011.
- **Khas Uruzgan:** Samiulhaq (Achekezai-Matakzai from Kochak) became the first Mayor of the district on 4 December 2011. Prior to his appointment, he worked as a teacher for Afghan National Police after graduating from the Teacher Centre in Kandahar two years ago.
- **Deh Rawud:** Zahir (Popalzai from Tirin Kot) replaced Haji Abdul Khaliq (Babozai from Lablan) as Mayor in December 2011 after the latter was sacked for corruption. Abdul Khaliq has been defined a “proactive leader” by USAID for his management of USAID-funded municipal infrastructure development projects in collaboration with Central Asia Development Group (CADG).³¹⁵
- **Tirin Kot:** Niamatullah Akbari was appointed in July 2011 (see Section 4.1.3) and made the implementation of the 2009 Kabul-developed master plan for provincial capitals,³¹⁶ also a core benchmark of the *Uruzgan Provincial Development Plan*, one of his key objectives.

³¹⁴ The position of the Gizab Mayor vacant, after the DCoP Lalai dismissed the August 2011 appointed mayor over corruption charges in October 2011, at time when the DG Dr. Abdullah was on a trip to the US. When the DG returned he tried to reinstall the mayor, but the DCoP objected, creating an open confrontation. The issue was resolved by the newly appointed Tirin Kot mayor who noted that he would assist in the selection of a suitable candidate in 2012.

³¹⁵ In the donor agency’s understanding, Deh Rawud’s former mayor intended to “stabilize the district by providing short-term employment and an influx of cash to local residents.... In the long term, the developed infrastructure would also improve the district’s business climate and enhance economic opportunities for its residents.” USAID, “Mayor Leads Stabilization Effort.” (USAID, 18 December 2011); http://afghanistan.usaid.gov/en/USAID/Article/2510/Mayor_Leads_Stabilization_Effort

³¹⁶ A much needed replacement for the previous master plan that was commissioned by the Daoud government in 1975-1977.

Mayor Niamatullah Akbari with the support of Governor Sherzad and PCoP Matiullah Khan started implementing the master plan in the last quarter of 2011. The new master plan recognizes the vast expansion of the municipal territory over the last years, and divides the city into four administrative sub-districts (*nahiyas*) comprising roughly a quarter of the city each.³¹⁷ The central feature of the master plan is the establishment of a new grid system of roads, designed to help accommodate the city's growing population. To realize this, the government has to demolish any building that does not comply with the current or former master plan.³¹⁸

In *nahiya* 3, where the plan was first implemented, Mayor Niamatullah explained to TLO that demolitions were relatively small, and in most cases, only destroyed a few walls. Nevertheless this sparked serious criticism from residents of the area, which PCoP Matiullah Khan tried to calm by distributing goods and supplies as compensation for the families who had all or part of their houses demolished. The latter, as it was said to have come out of his own pockets, of course created more goodwill for Matiullah Khan than the municipality. Thus, demolitions will continue to pose challenges to the popularity of the Tirin Kot government. The implementation of the master plan had another negative side-effect, as it was accompanied by a remarkable increase of urban land prices.³¹⁹

4.2.5.1 Community Development Councils under the National Solidarity Programme (NSP)

Taking advantage of the improved security in parts of Uruzgan, MRRD expanded the number of CDCs in many districts during the reporting period. MRRD also started rolling out NSP into high-risk areas. One of the major differences for CDCs in insecure areas is that they do not have to be elected if security is impermissible, but can instead be chosen through a consultative process with community leaders. To date facilitating partners indicate that all CDCs in Uruzgan were elected.

In late 2010, NSP entered its second phase. In NSP II, ANCC established CDCs in Deh Rawud, Chora, and Chenartu whilst ADA was responsible for facilitating CDCs in Tirin Kot and Khas Uruzgan. Gizab and Char China were excluded at this stage. During this phase, ADA's role as facilitating partner (FP) for NSP ended, allegedly due to both security and performance problems. Oversight of CDCs in Tirin Kot, and to a lesser extent Khas Uruzgan, was transferred directly to MRRD's Uruzgan Programme Management Unit (which is responsible for administration and monitoring oversight). By the end of NSP II, all 80 CDCs in Deh Rawud had used their entire block grant; this was not the case for many of the CDCs in Chora/Chenartu and Tirin Kot.

In an interview with TLO an ANCC representative indicated that it had set up a combined 240 CDCs in Chora and Deh Rawud, all of which are currently in Phase II of NSP³²⁰ and established

³¹⁷ Interview, Mayor, Tirin Kot, 17 December 2011

³¹⁸ Ibid

³¹⁹ Interviews, several property dealers, Tirin Kot, 8 and 9 January 2012; according to TLO respondents the price increase have occurred in the last five years, between 1385 and 1390

³²⁰ Interview, ANCC representative, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011

CDCs in all of Chora's villages with significant populations, which is reported to have benefitted 18,260 families³²¹ Similarly, 15,240 families reportedly benefitted in Deh Rawud. ANCC noted that due to improved security none of their CDCs have been closed over the past 18 months, even though they have had a very limited number of closures due to insecurity in the past.

In late April 2011, ABCD was contracted as the new FP for Phase III of the National Solidarity Programme. The focus of NSP III is to expand coverage across Afghanistan. In Uruzgan, this meant significantly boosting CDC coverage throughout the province. ABCD was given permission and funding to establish 88 CDCs in Gizab, 30 in Tirin Kot, 25 in Deh Rawud, 60 in Char China, and 25 in Khas Uruzgan. This marked the beginning of CDCs in both Gizab and Char China. ABCD mobilized by May 2011, and as of 21 December 2011, reported 107 elected CDCs, 86 of whom had completed Community Development Plans (CDPs). The new CDCs had submitted 217 subprojects for MRRD approval, 184 of which were approved. In fact, 21 of the approved projects—17 in Gizab and 4 in Deh Rawud—had already received funding and were underway.

Interestingly, the funding patterns of NSP III differ somewhat from Phase II, suggesting that a few lessons were learned. While ANCC continued to facilitate access to and use of block grants for CDCs they established in Phase II, the new CDCs established under Phase III do not have block grant funding structures. Instead, it appears that the FP helps CDCs submit project proposals directly to MRRD for funding approval.

A key objective of NSP is to ensure that all community members are able to participate in CDCs. As such the NSP stipulates that CDCs must include women. Despite this clear requirement, no CDCs in Uruzgan include women. The ANCC has tried to excuse this shortcoming by alluding to Uruzgan's conservative culture, which TLO has consistently questioned. To its credit, the MRRD has started to energize its own gender programme, trying to find ways to involve women on CDCs in provinces such as Uruzgan. Its activities to improve gender representation are slated to commence in early 2012.

The NSP has reportedly achieved its best results in Deh Rawud and Tirin Kot, with the implementation rate in the former far outpacing other districts in Uruzgan (see Table 15). The Provincial Monitoring and Coordination Committee explained that this was due to better security, coordination and the pool of reasonably well-trained staff available in the district. Indeed, Deh Rawud was reported to have high-functioning CDCs that have managed to spend their entire budget on development work.

One Deh Rawud resident complained that during 2011 CDC funding had been disbursed slower than in the past, a complaint echoed by Khas Uruzgan residents. Although communities were encouraged about the newly established CDCs in Chora, ANCC was quick

³²¹ Ibid

to flag corruption as an issue.³²² Khas Uruzgan is the only district where local respondents reported that CDCs were decreasing in number due to declining security.

Table 15: Uruzgan CDCs and their performance from establishment to December 2011³²³

District	CDCs	On-going CDC projects	Completed CDCs projects	Completed projects / CDCs
Tirin Kot	150	149	158	1.05
Deh Rawud	96	42	137	1.43
Chora	160	128	87	0.54
Khas Uruzgan	40	25	12	0.30
Gizab	45	101	0	0
Char China	45	78	0	0

Below are several comments illustrative of community perceptions of the more recently established CDCs across districts. Criticism appears to centre on membership selection and performance.

- In Char China, a tribal elder from Keshney village noted that while most district residents are excited about the formation of the CDCs, rumours are circulating that most CDCs were formed from members “from the same extended family,” raising concerns about nepotism and corruption.³²⁴ The same elder also indicated to TLO that he did not see the CDC producing many projects.
- Chenartu respondents voiced similar concerns about the way membership was chosen. Allegedly four people, all from the same family, were invited to Tirin Kot and given money by the NSP representative even though he believed that no formal CDC was created or any development work started.
- Another Chenartu resident stated that the 25-30 CDCs in his district were all inactive. However, in this case, the inactivity was reportedly caused by insecurity and poor road conditions that made the transportation of goods into the district impractical, if not impossible.³²⁵

Aside from planning and managing development projects, CDCs are also said to get involved in conflict resolution, around projects, but also more generally, especially in areas where no alternatives exist.

³²² Interview, ANCC representative, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011. This was already raised during a 2009 interview, see Schmeidl (2010)

³²³ Data provided by NSP MIS (Management Information System): the provincial monitoring committee estimates a total of 525 CDCs in Uruzgan, 11 less than NSP MIS (536). NSP Management Information System does not offer data for Chenartu as the district is counted as part of Chora.

³²⁴ Interview, Char China tribal elder, Interview 11 July 2011

³²⁵ Interview, Chenartu surveyor, Interview 4 July 2011

5 Justice/Rule of Law

The provision of justice is one of the most important functions of a state, and dispensing timely and legitimate justice is often equated with good governance. Justice provision in Uruzgan today, as in Afghanistan in general, needs to be understood in an historical context, especially the impact of the three decades of war on the state and social fabric of society.

Anthropologists remind us that ‘Afghanistan has often operated under dual systems of governance’— with the formal justice, as much of the Afghan state, never fully reaching into all rural areas, where the majority of the Afghan population reside.³²⁶ Even prior to the Afghan wars, the formal legal system, largely restricted to urban areas only, was considered “elitist, corrupt, [and] involved in long delays,” and in many ways irrelevant to the rural and illiterate majority.³²⁷ Indeed, there is significant variation in the strength of customary structures across Afghanistan. In the South, which includes Uruzgan, the informal system has been continuously eroded over the last few decades.

Respondents indicated that the formal justice system saw the least change over the last 18 months. On the other hand, many considered that the establishment of District Community Council’s (DCC) provided a welcome new informal dispute resolution mechanism at the district level.

Two new international actors working on improving access to justice established their offices in Tirin Kot in 2011. In April 2011, the International Legal Foundation-Afghanistan (ILF-A) that provides legal aid to the poor started working in the province. Checchi Consulting, which is implementing USAID’s Afghanistan Rule of Law Stabilization Program—Informal Component took expanded to Uruzgan in fall 2011.

Justice Providers in Uruzgan:

- Government – Formal justice system (courts, prosecutors, Huquqiyah Directorate of Ministry of Justice)
- Informal justice provision (*shuras*, new Community Development Councils)
- Individual justice providers (elders, mullahs, commanders/strongmen, government officials)
- Taliban courts

³²⁶ A. Wardak, ‘Building a post-war justice system in Afghanistan’, *Crime, Law & Social Change*, 41 (2004), pp.319-341, 326; see also M. N. Shahrani, ‘State Building and Social Fragmentation in Afghanistan: A Historical Perspective’, in Ali Banuazizi and Myron Weiner (eds), *The State, Religion, and Ethnic Politics: Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986), pp.23-74; A. Wimmer and C. Schetter, *Staatsbildung zuerst: Empfehlungen zum Wiederaufbau und zur Befriedung Afghanistans*, (Bonn: Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung, 2002), ZEF – Discussion Papers on Development Policy.

³²⁷ Wardak, ‘Building a post-war justice system in Afghanistan’, p.320³²⁸ Tilmann Röder, “Provincial Needs Assessment: Criminal Justice in Uruzgan Province,” Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, May 2010; p. 15.

5.1 Choosing Justice Provision in Uruzgan

After ten years of state-building efforts, Afghanistan's formal justice institutions remain weak, and Uruzgan is no exception. Respondents shared the view that the justice institutions lacked capacity and were sometimes unwilling to resolve disputes in a timely manner, or enforce decisions that were made.³²⁸ Consequently, the vast majority of all disputes in Uruzgan are solved informally, either by *shuras* or individuals of high social standing, such as community elders, mullahs, past commanders, or government officials. Taliban courts also continue to offer an alternative to some citizens.

Another recourse seems to be the use of government officials, although more on the basis of who they are and less as a function of their government office. Many seem to approach the Provincial Chief of Police (as well as DCoPs) to resolve conflicts because of his ability to enforce decisions directly, which is also the case for the Taliban court system and individual commanders or strongmen.³²⁹ Jan Mohammad Khan also played a significant role in conflict resolution until his assassination on 17 July 2011. According to one respondent, approximately 98% of the Popalzai now refer their disputes directly to PCoP Matiullah Khan.

According to the TLO survey during the 22 December 2011 stability *jirga* in Tirin Kot, respondents indicated that, according to their own experience and knowledge, only 14% of cases are taken to the formal court system in Uruzgan, with another 7% to the Office of the

Prosecutor (see Figure 13).

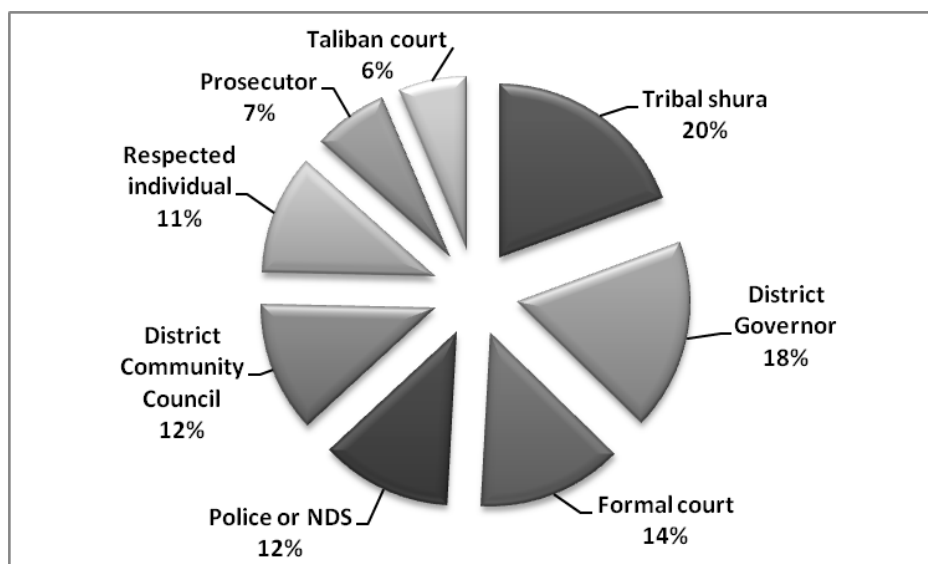


Figure 13: Overview of Reported Preferences of Justice Providers in Uruzgan

The fact that one-third of all participants were from Tirin Kot, while two-thirds from the other six districts, may explain this slightly higher estimate than from TLO's other research (suggesting 10% or less). This, however, still leaves about 79% of all disputes to be solved outside the government's

³²⁸ Tilmann Röder, "Provincial Needs Assessment: Criminal Justice in Uruzgan Province," Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, May 2010; p. 15.

³²⁹ Due to lacking enforcement mechanisms, traditional shuras and elders tend to rely on restorative (over retributive) justice.

justice system, which according to Afghan law theoretically should be the primary forum for justice provision.

Of course, one could count the estimated 12% of all cases taken to the police or National Directorate of Security (NDS) as an entry into the formal system, but interviews show that links between the two in Uruzgan are tenuous at best. As noted, police chiefs, especially at the district level, often resolve cases because of the high levels of respect afforded to them by communities as individuals, not necessarily because of their government position.

Combining the estimated 20% of cases taken to tribal shuras with the 12% allegedly put in front of the newly established DCCs, about one-third of all cases in Uruzgan are believed to be resolved by some kind of shura. If one further adds the estimated 11% of cases reportedly solved by influential individuals (by equating it with tribal elders or mullahs rather than strongmen), the proportion dealt with through the informal justice system rises to 43%.

According to local respondents, Matiullah Khan's Eslahi Shura is referred more cases for settlement than any other body in Tirin Kot, followed by the Provincial Peace Council and the Ulema Shura. Some argue that MK's Eslahi Shura is the preferred body as it is regarded as more representative and authoritative than other shuras, the latter due to its close connection to PCoP Matiullah Khan.

Only a small number of cases are reportedly taken to Taliban courts (about 6%). While it is possible that respondents did not want to admit using the parallel system, TLO's research indicates that it is less prevalent in Uruzgan than other provinces. Taliban courts are confined to areas where the insurgency still exerts significant power such as Char China, Darafshan in Tirin Kot, parts of Chenartu and Khas Uruzgan. In these and similarly contested areas, local residents may have little choice but to enlist the Taliban in dispute resolution because they are scared that using the formal system would be considered as showing support to the Afghan government, which could have dire repercussions. Other communities may simply opt for Taliban courts because they are not corrupt, can quickly decide cases and due to the capability of the Taliban to enforce decisions.

While some tenuous and limited links between the formal and informal justice systems exist, they tend to be *ad hoc* and based on individual relationships rather than institutional linkages. Courts may refer cases to the informal system (or disputants take their cases here if unsuccessful). Likewise, elders may send their cases to formal courts or other government justice bodies if they are unable to resolve them, or as a way of legitimizing and codifying their verdicts. In Deh Rawud, for example, the DCC is said to send its verdicts to the district court for formalization, reflecting a high level of cooperation between the two bodies.

The formal system, however, does not delegate final decision-making authority to the informal system because the informal bodies are outside the official Afghan legal system. For example, according to respondents, the last Deh Rawud DG and judge repeatedly quarrelled over who had the superior authority to resolve cases. Tensions reportedly eased between

the two in 2011 after Checchi conducted trainings in Tirin Kot and Kabul where each was told about their respective jurisdictional limitations.

5.2 Formal Justice System

Providing Uruzgan residents with access to the formal justice system is one of the most important responsibilities of the government. Unfortunately, the volatile security situation in Uruzgan, as in the rest of southern provinces, makes it difficult for the courts and other legal institutions, including the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Huquq Department, to function properly. There are two formal courts in the provincial capital Tirin Kot: the Primary or City Court and the Provincial Appeals Court. A military justice system also exists that deals with military cases through judges based in Kandahar City whose jurisdiction extends to Kandahar, Helmand, and Uruzgan provinces.

The PRT indicates that there are 14 prosecutors, an ANP internal affairs prosecutor and four NDS prosecutors that focus on political cases. It further indicates that there are now a total of 15 judges assigned to Uruzgan, six of whom are newly appointed. Local residents indicate that the Ministry of Justice has Huquq staff in Chora and Deh Rawud. There is also

Table 16: The Presence of Justice Officials by District

	Judge	Prosecutor	Huquq
Tirin Kot	X	X	X
Chora	X		X
Deh Rawud	X	X	X
Char China			
Chenartu		*	
Khas Uruzgan		*	*
Gizab			

reportedly a Huquq officer on the tashkeel of Khas Uruzgan although the officer has not visited the district for about four years (see Table 16).³³⁰

At the district level, Primary Courts are reportedly functioning in Chora and Deh Rawud. While Chenartu does not yet have a court, a Prosecutor by the name of Mirwais was reportedly added to the tashkeel of the Attorney General's Office in late 2011; he is now living in the district. Gizab and Char China have no court buildings or professional judicial staff. The new DG of Char China is lobbying to have a prominent local mullah, who already is part of the justice committee of the DCC, appointed as a judge.

³³⁰ Table 16 indicates the presence of Judges, Prosecutors, and Huquq officers by each district. However, this table reflects TLO surveyor—and therefore local—perceptions of judicial presence throughout the province. Therefore, there may be some discrepancy between this and GIRoA or PRT data. Positions marked with "*" indicate that there is reportedly an official holding the position but they are inactive. Interestingly, this includes the position of Prosecutor in Khas Uruzgan, held by Noorulhaq (Achezkai-Matazkai from Ashura Kalay). Allegedly, Noorulhaq fled the district during the Summer of 2011 because of threats. It is now believed that he had taken up residence in the Spin Boldak area of Kandahar province. In fact, there are rumours that he has since joined the Taliban; however, while TLO believes this to be mere rumour, it may prove damaging to local confidence in the GIRoA in the district.

- The Deh Rawud court reportedly hears only a very small minority of cases because people prefer nearly any other method – *jirgas* of tribal elders, the DCC, and the DG’s Office – to the court system. Local respondents were split in their opinion of Judge Abdul Wahad (Alkozai from Tirin Kot); some believe he is very honourable and effective while others accused him of corruption and taking bribes in return for solving cases.
- The judge of the Chora primary court, Mawlawi Dad Mohammad (Acheckzai-Ashizai), was allegedly rather inactive, having lived in Tirin Kot for two years. Due to Diabetes, he allegedly did not attend court for the last three months of 2011.
- In Gizab, locals were divided in their responses to the question of whether a formal court system exists, with some saying yes and some saying no, although one who answered in the affirmative also said, “the DG *de facto* discourages” people from using the formal court.³³¹ Most serious cases that are taken to the courts, however, end up in the provincial court in Tirin Kot, which is perceived as the most functional. A teacher from Gizab noted that since the Taliban no longer ruled Gizab, its courts have stopped operating and cases are now being pursued in the formal courts.³³²

The Huquq Department is part of the Department of Justice, which operates independent of the courts under the supervision of Kabul’s General Directorate of Huquq, which is part of the Ministry of Justice.³³³ According to the Ministry of Justice the Huquq is in charge of settling “disputes arising out of debts, properties, and family of real and legal persons pursuant to the Civil Procedure Code and the Law on the Acquisition of Rights.”³³⁴ Huquq officials are present in Tirin Kot (Abdul Mohammad Khan, a Popalzai from Tirin Kot), Deh Rawud (Mohammad Sherif, a Babur from Shinghula), and Chora (Naiz Mohammad). In Khas Uruzgan, Mamor Mohammad Shah (Acheckzai- Badinzai from Badinzai Kalay) officially holds the position, but respondents allege that he has not visited Khas Uruzgan for at least several years.

When residents were asked about their perceptions of the courts, a majority answered that, despite some improvements over the last 18 months, mistrust persists and few citizens bother bringing cases to official courts. Two main reasons were cited for this. First was the lack of highly educated professional staff to fill the courts’ *tashkeel*, which often results in undue delays.³³⁵ Second, were frequent complaints of rampant corruption in the legal system, where bribery and personal relationships often overshadow a fair application of the law.

Prison management was seen as similarly problematic, with certain people being able to bribe their way out of prison in no time while others lingered for months and years. Uruzgan

³³¹ Interview, Teacher from Gizab, Tirin Kot, 31 July 2011

³³² Ibid

³³³ <http://moj.gov.af/en/page/1672>

³³⁴ Ibid

³³⁵ The current judicial system in Uruzgan consists of a mere seven judges for the entire province. This is significantly smaller than the official *tashkeel* that calls for a total of 35 judges and 22 support staff (clerks, administrators, and financial managers) positions. The extreme staffing deficiency means that even minor cases can take months or years to be settled by the courts.

did not come up under the UNAMA study as a site of torture, but the treatment of prisoners is said to be highly unequal regardless.³³⁶

One female respondent bluntly remarked that the practise of soliciting bribes from claimants discouraged people to use the formal court system.³³⁷ A Popalzai elder from the provincial capital complained that, “Courts take too long and do not use [a body of] law deemed acceptable by the people.”³³⁸ An international NGO employee described the Attorney General’s Office as very corrupt, with frequent bribes funnelled to the prosecutors.³³⁹ In his view, the court was much less corrupt but not perfect, with judges lacking a basic understanding of both Islamic and statutory laws. In his opinion, all well-qualified legal professionals simply leave because nobody wants to work in Uruzgan.³⁴⁰

Respondents indicated that judges often did not base their decisions on the official laws of Afghanistan, but on *Sharia* or *Pashtunwali*. Some respondents highlighted this to illustrate the poor capacity of justice officials in Uruzgan. Some argued that if the courts were applying *sharia* or *Pashtunwali*, they were better off just going directly to more knowledgeable mullahs and tribal elders who use these legal frameworks.

Local respondents also accused judges of falling prey to political and tribal rivalries that compromise their impartiality. One example was given to TLO where one of Matiullah Khan’s sub-commanders allegedly murdered a local man. When the victim’s brother tried to bring a case to the formal court, the judge reportedly declined to take the case for fear of retaliation from Matiullah Khan. Only after some four years was the brother able to achieve any kind of resolution, and only through the informal system.

Despite widespread dissatisfaction with the court system, there are three types of cases taken to the formal court system, mostly because communities see an advantage or lack of choice to do so:

- **Cases of (wrongful) detention or imprisonment:** Given that the police or the army is most often responsible for detainment and imprisonment, communities feel forced to engage the government on its terms in order to resolve the situation.
- **Criminal cases, especially murder:** If they have not already been referred to the police for investigation. Especially if the murderer is considered an outsider to a community, families may proceed through the formal system. Only if the murderer is from within the community may they seek restorative justice through the informal system in order to keep peace.
- **Land conflicts** where either one or both parties hold an official land title (or the best semblance thereof) to the land in question, and the relevant information is kept on file with the government.

³³⁶ Interview, International NGO representative, Tirin Kot, 26 July 2011

³³⁷ Interview, Tirin Kot midwife, 10 August 2011

³³⁸ Interview, Tirin Kot tribal elder, 13 July 2011

³³⁹ Interview, Tirin Kot, 16 July 2011

³⁴⁰ Ibid

Although it was hard to verify by TLO, respondents in Tirin Kot also claimed that women have begun to increasingly seek justice through official channels. This is common throughout Afghanistan as women are more likely to trust the formal system because they lack any standing or rights in the informal system. To illustrate this, several respondents highlighted the successful filing of a petition for divorce by a young woman in July 2011. The woman was engaged to a boy during her childhood and her family used to ask for money and wheat from the boy's family, as a partial advance for her dowry.³⁴¹ When the girl's father died and she became an adult, she refused to marry the boy because of his physical appearance and bad character. After several mediation attempts failed, she referred her case to the then-DoWA Head Fershota Samim, who sent it along to the formal court. Subsequently to her case being reviewed by the judges, the woman managed to get her engagement officially dissolved.

The image of the judiciary in Uruzgan has improved somewhat during the reporting period, mainly due to capacity building and training. The formal justice system also received a capacity boost with the April 2011 establishment of the International Legal Foundation-Afghanistan (ILF-A) in Uruzgan, which started working in the province at the request of AusAID.³⁴² ILF-A focuses on providing legal aid through free defence counsel for those otherwise unable to afford it. It operates a legal clinic that is staffed by a mix of lawyers and paralegals who are trained in statutory law, Islamic studies, or political studies faculties. They establish contact with clients in three different ways: 1) referral by the formal court, 2) prison visits; and 3) community referrals. ILF-A staff currently includes one defence lawyer and one paralegal, with the others still in training. So far, their work is limited to Tirin Kot due to what they consider the lack of "legal infrastructure in other districts," poor security, and an absence of prisons.

Furthermore, in mid-May 2011, "Australian Special Forces and subject matter experts from the United States ... conducted a three day programme designed to teach local legal authorities about evidence collection, forensic exploitation, and criminal conviction. Twenty one prosecutors and five judges from Uruzgan attended the first training course, which included a live demonstration of varying charges used in Improvised Explosive Devices (IED), bomb components, fingerprinting, DNA theory, facial recognition and biometric analysis."³⁴³

Finally, the recently-established ICRC office has increased their activity level to include prison inspections that verify that international legal obligations regarding prisoner treatment and accommodations are upheld.³⁴⁴ ICRC maintains a good relationship with PCoP Matiullah Khan, who saw the value in ICRC's work first-hand whilst seeking past treatment in an ICRC hospital in Pakistan. The PCoP's support ensures that the ICRC is duly notified when

³⁴¹ This practice is relatively common, and part of the prevailing cultural norms in the area.

³⁴² Interview, ILF-A representative, Tirin Kot, 26 July 2011

³⁴³ <http://www.isaf.nato.int/article/isaf-releases/special-forces-training-enhances-the-rule-of-law-in-uruzgan.html>

³⁴⁴ Interview, Tirin Kot, 11 July 2011

somebody is arrested so that the organization can contact the detainee's family, provide information about his or her whereabouts, and facilitate letter transfers.³⁴⁵

Under customary law,
 "everyone gets something,"
 unlike the formal courts, where
 "one party gets nothing."

Tirin Kot Elder

5.3 Informal Justice Providers (shuras/elders/mullahs)

Traditional or customary institutions have settled disputes at all levels, from community disputes to conflicts between villages and tribes, for centuries. However, while these traditional means have existed for centuries, it is important to recognize the changes that followed the 1978 coup d'état that brought the communist government to power and challenged authority of traditional tribal elites (e.g., *khans* and *maliks*). Space was opened in the ensuing wars for two social groups—*mujahideen* commanders, and religious figures (mullahs)—to become justice providers.

Later the Taliban firmly introduced sharia-based justice (or their interpretation of it). This has led to a near abolishment of the *jirga* (an *ad hoc* decision making and conflict resolution tool called into action when needed), with those interviewed in Uruzgan not able to recall when such a body last heard cases. As a result, most cases in Uruzgan's customary system are either heard by local shuras (usually at the village level) or individual powerbrokers (local elders, *maliks*, mullahs, and religious figures such as *pirs*).

Notwithstanding these changes, the informal system remains the primary form of dispute resolution throughout Uruzgan, especially in areas outside the provincial and district centres, simply due to their easy accessibility and speed in conflict resolution. The various actors and bodies functioning in the informal, non-state domain investigate and resolve matters according to traditional *Pashtunwali* norms (the customary law as well as code of conduct of the Pashtuns) as well as *sharia* law.³⁴⁶ As these non-state legal systems have been in use for so long, Uruzgan's citizens are more familiar with their pros and cons. Unlike the courts, elders are key community members who know both parties, are well versed in district affairs, and have a direct stake in resolving the conflict and restoring good relations throughout the community. This was highlighted by one respondent who noted that with a

³⁴⁵ Ibid

³⁴⁶ A key problem of *Pashtunwali* is that it tends to be applied by men of a certain age and social standing, hence by default excludes women and young male adults from the decision-making process. Furthermore, it tends to favour the rights of men over those of women, with women often having little if any recourse under this form of customary law. Finally, *Pashtunwali* focuses on communal rather than individual justice, thus often violating the individual rights of a woman for the purpose of creating peace between communities. A good example is the practice of giving a female family member of an offender to the family of the victim as compensation for crimes committed, a practice known locally as *baad* (see Section 3.6). By contrast, *sharia*, if applied justly, grants women more rights than traditional law. For example, under *sharia* the exchange of women for crimes committed is forbidden.

shura, “everyone gets something,” unlike the formal courts, where “one party gets nothing.”³⁴⁷

At times, local government authorities support and even participate in traditional conflict resolution, even at the expense of the formal courts to which they are professionally linked. In general, most Uruzganis interviewed by TLO believe that all minor crimes should be referred to *shuras* who can provide swift resolution and save the courts valuable time. Finally, *shuras* allow Uruzgani communities to resolve conflicts independently of the on-going struggle between the Afghan government and Taliban, particularly in contested areas.

As noted, the establishment of District Community Councils (DCCs), that have conflict resolution as one of their three official mandates, has enriched and expanded the reach of informal justice provision in Uruzgan, (see Section 4.2.4.1). Currently, there are functional DCCs in Char China, Chora, Deh Rawud, and Gizab.³⁴⁸ So far, the DCCs have been very successful and regularly used by the population. In Chora, residents have come to prefer the DCC over the formal court system in less than a year. In the words of one respondent, if the formal court “feels that the case is too difficult, too delicate, or might be too lengthy, they send it to the DCC.”³⁴⁹ Interviewees in Gizab went a step further and told TLO that residents use the DCC as the first choice for conflict resolution, with the police even making direct case referrals to the *shura*. According to one student, “People respect the [ASOP] *shura* a lot, there are people of each tribe, and no one can reject its decisions.”³⁵⁰ While Deh Rawud residents still primarily rely on village level dispute settlement, they praised the DCC as well. One resident noted that people were happy with the *shura* because it “facilitates communication and conflict resolution.”³⁵¹

The informal justice sector is about to receive capacity building trainings with the expansion of the USAID “Rule of Law Stabilization Program–Informal Component” that will be co-funded by the Australian Government and implemented by Checchi, a US development firm, in Uruzgan in 2012. As part of the project, professional legal training will also be provided to judges, police, and prosecutors. The project also fosters networking opportunities between the formal and informal sectors.

5.3.1 Eslahi Shura (Reform Council)

A prominent example of a customary body that plays a key role in dispute settlement is the Eslahi Shura (or reform council), created by PCoP Matiullah Khan in Tirin Kot in January 2010. According to elders on the Shura and PCoP Matiullah Khan, it was set up to compensate for the weakness of the state judiciary and due to the lack of reliable justice services at the provincial and district level. Many respondents saw the establishment of the Eslahi Shura as a positive step that improved access to justice. Others, however, see it as a politically astute

³⁴⁷ Interview, Hotak elder from Mehrabad, 5 July 2011

³⁴⁸ There is also officially a DCC in Khas Uruzgan district. However, as of December 2011 it is currently non-functional.

³⁴⁹ Interview, TLO Chora surveyor, 17 June 2011. Interview conducted in Tirin Kot.

³⁵⁰ Interview, Gizab student, 13 July 2011. Interview conducted in Tirin Kot.

³⁵¹ Interview, Deh Rawud resident, 16 June 2011.

move by PCoP to ensure that he can influence conflict resolution and increase his power in the province.

The Eslahi Shura consists of tribal notables (*maliks, khans*), mullahs, as well as intellectuals. While the Shura started originally with about 100 members, it has retained a solid core of about 50, 20 of whom are mullahs. It includes members from all major tribes in Tirin Kot, but neglects Uruzgan's third-biggest tribe, the Nurzai, as well as the Babozai, neither of which have a significant presence in Tirin Kot. Due to its more limited membership, the Reform Shura is more useful for settling cases in Tirin Kot district, rather than on a provincial level as was originally intended.

Meeting twice a week on Mondays and Thursdays, the Shura heard 206 cases in the 20 weeks between July 28 and December 15, 2011.³⁵² The Shura divides cases into three categories: crimes involving the use of violence, conflicts related to marriage and family, and property disputes. Disputants have to apply for assistance and then are given a number for when their case is heard.

The Shura requires parties to provide objective evidence, sometimes in the form of witness testimony. Cases usually take about an hour and are promptly resolved within a few days. As with other informal shuras, the Eslahi Shura settles both criminal and civil cases in accordance with traditional norms and values, not according to Afghan state laws. Interestingly, local respondents claim that the Eslahi Shura will only hear a case if neither party has referred the case to a government body or court. After the Eslahi Shura makes a decision, the ruling is reportedly referred to a formal court for ratification and approval. TLO was unable to verify if this actually happened.

Despite its informal status, the Eslahi Shura commands significant respect, mostly on account of PCoP Matiullah Khan's personal and professional status in the province. Of note, PCoP Matiullah Khan reportedly uses his official police capacity to summon reluctant plaintiffs.

In the nearly two years of its existence, the Eslahi Shura has earned a reputation as an effective and reasonable deliberative body. Respondents from Tirin Kot generally had good things to say about the Eslahi Shura. A Hotak respondent from Mehrabad said that the Eslahi Shura produces satisfactory results because its members "know each other" and the people whose complaints they are hearing.³⁵³ TLO's observation when sifting through several case litigations in December 2011 was positive. It appears that the members take their job seriously, which includes reviewing a case and interviewing both conflict parties before making a decision.

Despite its many positive attributes, it is nonetheless important to caution that the Eslahi Shura's reach remains largely limited to Tirin Kot and is viewed much more favourably by members of the Popalzai tribe. The Eslahi Shura is viewed less favourably by other tribes,

³⁵² The Shura Secretary told TLO in an interview on December 15, 2011 that the pre-28 July data was no longer available as it was destroyed in the complex attack on Tirin Kot.

³⁵³ Interview, Mehrabad elder, Tirin Kot, 5 July 2011

especially the Ghilzai of Mehrabad and Darafshan. This is in spite of the efforts of PCoP Matiullah Khan to broaden its tribal representation. In a recent interview, PCoP Matiullah Khan also noted that he had heard that international actors thought that the Eslahi Shura was not good and was a means he used to control the political scene. As a result, he commented that he was thinking of “breaking it up”.³⁵⁴

5.4 Justice Provision by Individuals

In addition to the presence of both formal and informal conflict resolution mechanisms in Uruzgan province, cases are also directly settled by a handful of key actors. In the past, individuals traditionally approached Sayeds³⁵⁵ and *pirs* (spiritual leaders) for conflict resolution. Today local strongmen have largely taken over this role. In Uruzgan, PCoP Matiullah Khan plays a key role in conflict resolution, especially if one party to the conflict has ties to him. Rather than engaging the formal system directly, many respondents—especially Popalzai—told TLO surveyors that they felt comfortable directly approaching Matiullah Khan with their problems. For better or worse, MK also sometimes uses his influence to secure the release of prisoners without engaging the formal court system. This is relatively rare, however. Other government officials such as DGs and DCoPs also use their position to arbitrate between parties.

These semi-formal justice providers are most important in districts like Char China, Chenartu, and Khas Uruzgan that have no functioning court. In Char China, for example, people mostly referred their cases to the last DG who was trusted by most of the local population. Similarly, the Hazara in Gizab sometimes approach the DG for arbitration.³⁵⁶

Apart from political powerbrokers like PCoP Matiullah Khan, local commanders are sought out for conflict mediation and resolution, usually by people from their own tribes such as Mohammad Nabi Khan Tokhi, from Surkh Murghab village in the Darafshan manteqa of Tirin Kot district.

5.5 Taliban Justice System

Taliban courts operate in the areas where the Taliban exercises more influence than the government. For example, Taliban courts deal with most cases in Char China, one of the few districts still largely under Taliban control. Taliban courts are similar to mobile courts in that they are not stationed in one place, but constantly move along with the Taliban fighters who constitute them. The mullahs who command the Taliban groups in their localities run the courts, and solve cases based on their interpretation of *sharia* law.

The Taliban usually pass cases to their field commanders and local mullahs who maintain good relations with them. Handling a case in strict accordance with all technical provisions

³⁵⁴ Interview, Tirin Kot, 15 December 2011

³⁵⁵ Sayeds claim to be direct descendants of Prophet Mohammad (may peace be upon him).

³⁵⁶ Interview, Khas Uruzgan farmer, Tirin Kot, 12 July 2011

sharia law would, however, require particular procedures and professional legal staff, both of which are beyond the capacity of the Uruzgan Taliban. Instead, under the Taliban's simplified interpretation of *sharia*, even less educated mullahs decide cases in a matter of minutes or hours, and no one has the right to object to the verdict or appeal the decision to a higher court for review. While locals acknowledge that punishment is harsh (e.g., execution, amputation, or floggings),³⁵⁷ many believe that Taliban courts are not corrupt and provide swift justice.

Locals, however, do not always see Taliban justice as unequivocally fair and impartial. There have been accusations of Taliban judges who let their personal or tribal interests influence their judgements. Some respondents also noted that the establishment of courts by the Taliban is not meant to provide justice to local people, but rather to highlight the Afghan government's inability to provide justice and undermine already-weak government control in some areas.

The Taliban justice system in Uruzgan has been significantly weakened over the last year as more areas have come under government control. According to local respondents, some of the more secure districts such as Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, and Chora never really had a fully functioning parallel justice system like in other southern Afghanistan areas. In cases where Taliban reach is more limited, they work through local mullahs instead of their court system described above. When the insurgency is approached with a request to resolve a conflict, they will generally pass the request on to a local mullah. The insurgency usually only interferes with the resolution process if they feel that the case has not been resolved appropriately and believe direct intervention is required in order to produce a desired result. Local respondents agreed that substantive and important cases brought to the Taliban in Tirin Kot are referred to higher-level Taliban in Quetta.

The following perceptions were ascertained concerning the use of Taliban justice in Uruzgan's districts over the past 18 months:

- According to respondents virtually no one in the government-controlled sections of Gizab use the Taliban courts any more, while it was not clear how this is handled in the other parts of the district.³⁵⁸
- In Khas Uruzgan, people who live in Taliban-controlled areas are said to use the Taliban justice system, and are ostensibly happy with the results that system provides.³⁵⁹
- Chora respondents were certain that the Taliban still runs a court in the district, but could not name the current Taliban judge,³⁶⁰ and thought that these courts heard less than 5% of conflicts because people prefer to use elder or shuras for conflict resolution.

³⁵⁷ Similar to capital punishment in the West, the Taliban sees such harsh penalties as deterrents to future offenders.

³⁵⁸ Security concerns prevented TLO from interviewing anyone from the Taliban-controlled areas. Given the total lack of government presence in these areas, though, it would seem unlikely that there are many alternatives to the Taliban courts.

³⁵⁹ Interview, Khas Uruzgan shopkeeper, Tirin Kot, 12 July 2011

³⁶⁰ They did, however, point out that the former Taliban judge in the district was Mullah Dad Mohammad Akhund (Achekezai-Ashizai from Nuri), who was arrested during in raid few months before.



- Taliban justice provision in Chenartu also had positive review. One respondent commented that the Taliban justice was, “very good. Their judgment is good and fair. They solve cases quickly and very well.”³⁶¹
- In Char China respondents noted that in areas under Taliban control they had to use Taliban courts or else they would be seen as pro-government.
- In Tirin Kot, respondents thought that Taliban justice still only operated in the Darafshan area.

³⁶¹Interview, TLO Chenartu surveyor, Tirin Kot, 4 July 2011

6 Security / Stabilization

At the end of 2011 there was broad agreement among local residents and development actors that security had improved since the summer of 2010; despite having fluctuated significantly throughout the last 18 months (see Figure 14). Only some of this fluctuation may be attributed to the traditional fighting cycles in Afghanistan, including spring and fall offensives and a winter retreat of insurgent fighters into Pakistan.

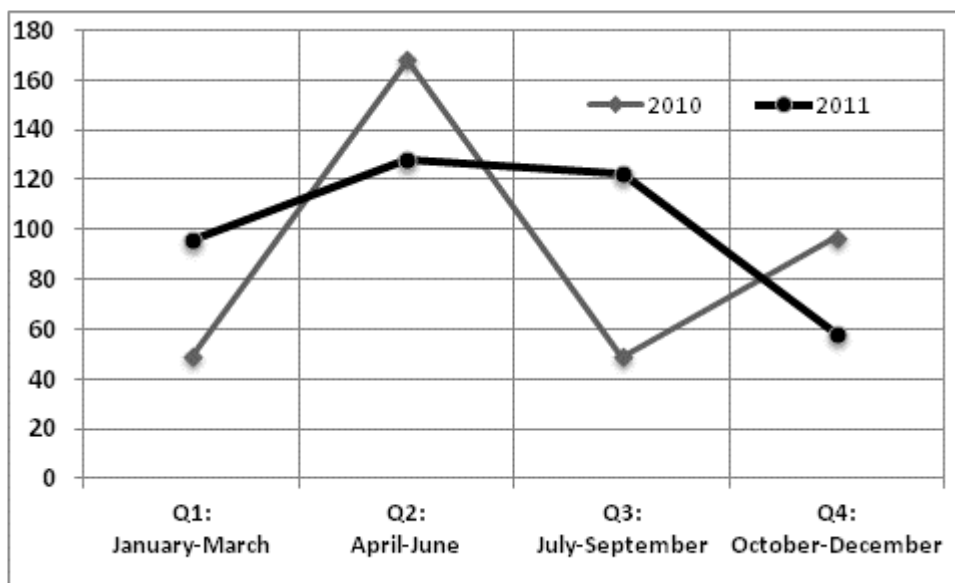


Figure 14: Change in Anti-Government Attacks in Uruzgan per quarter (2010 vs. 2011) / Source: ANSO

Initially, there were encouraging security gains during the second half of 2010 (particularly the third quarter), which coincided with the Dutch-Australian hand-over and the noticeably more aggressive stance of the Australian military, as well the initial rollout of the Afghan Local Police. Security, however, rapidly deteriorated during the Taliban's 2011 spring offensive and reached a violent climax in the summer of 2011 when the Taliban stepped up its operations to prominently announce its continued strength and relevance.

The Taliban's offensive included an increased use of improvised explosive devices (IED), ambushes and targeted attacks on government officials and powerbrokers,³⁶² as well as one complex attack on the provincial administration in Tirin Kot on 28 July 2011 that resulted in 29 deaths and 35 wounded.³⁶³ According to the Afghanistan NGO Security Office (ANSO), while there was only an 11% increase of anti-government attacks between 2010 and 2011

³⁶² This included the July assassinations of Uruzgan's most prominent powerbroker Jan Muhammad Khan and Uruzgan parliamentarian Muhammad Hashim Watanwal in Kabul, which followed the killings of high profile pro-government figures in Kandahar.

³⁶³ UNAMA, *Afghanistan Annual Report on Protection of Civilians of Armed Conflict 2011* (UNAMA, February 2012); p. 18; <http://unama.unmissions.org/Portals/UNAMA/human%20rights/March%20PoC%20Annual%20Report%20Final.pdf>

(363 vs. 404), the vast majority (86% or 346) occurred before the end of September 2011, with the second and third quarter being the most violent by far (see Figure 14).³⁶⁴ Numerically this made the months of July/August 2011 one of the most insecure periods since the collapse of the Taliban regime in the province.³⁶⁵

These very visible attacks deeply shook residents of Uruzgan—especially in the provincial capital—and created a fear of the insurgents’ determination and capacity to strike at the Afghan government at a time when it started to prepare for transition. The spike in attacks also called into question the ability of ANSF to consolidate previous advances made with international forces and the limits of the reach of the Afghan government. Most prominently it triggered the removal of Provincial Chief of Police (PCoP) Fazel Sherzad on 7 August 2011, a mere four months after his appointment. He was replaced by long-time provincial powerbroker Matiullah Khan (See Section 4.1.3).

Under PCoP Matiullah Khan the security situation rapidly improved. ANSF began to take the fight to the Taliban and rapidly advanced into the Mehrabad valley of Tirin Kot, as well as loosening the insurgents’ grip on Char China and Gizab.³⁶⁶ All these areas had been under insurgency control for several years, with Gizab being the first district taken from the Taliban by a joint Afghan/international offensive in the spring of 2010. Nevertheless insurgent pockets remain in the majority of all Uruzgan districts, with Khas Uruzgan seen as the last main Taliban stronghold in the province.

The achievements of the Afghan National Policy (ANP) under PCoP Matiullah Khan’s command in such a short period of time are impressive and beg the question of how the new PCoP was able to lead his troops to success in areas where his predecessors had utterly failed for years. Many residents attribute his success to both his strong commitment to defeat the insurgency and his ability to enlist the help of other local powerbrokers. Others more cynically questioned whether previous insecurity was linked to Matiullah Khan’s passivity and intention to demonstrate that only he could master the PCoP position in Uruzgan.

There are, however, other factors that also contributed to the improved security situation. First, both communities and NGOs primarily highlighted the contribution of the Australian army (and, to some extent, the US army) due to what key stakeholders termed their proactive, “go get ‘em!” mentality and their willingness to maintain “direct physical security.”³⁶⁷ An international NGO representative explained, “When the Australians hear a report of roadblocks or mines, they directly go there, risking their lives and maintaining the

³⁶⁴ The Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, *Quarterly Reports* for Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 2011. These public reports are circulated among NGO members and are archived on the ANSO website: <http://www.ngosafety.org/index.php?pageid=67>

³⁶⁵ Figure 15 also illustrates that insecurity increased already in the last quarter of 2010, and visibly dropped in the last quarter of 2011, moving Uruzgan from an “above average” number of incidents to what is considered by ANSO standard as about “average” for Afghanistan at that time.

³⁶⁶ Mehrabad had been under insurgent control since 2004; government control was restored to Gizab after nearly five years of sustained insurgent control.

³⁶⁷ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011

peace.”³⁶⁸ Adapting the Dutch credo of ‘development where possible’ and ‘force where necessary’ the Australians focused on securing areas first in order to make development possible, especially in areas outside the traditional Tirin Kot/Deh Rawud/Chora focus. A local NGO respondent noted, “There are more bases and more soldiers in Char China, Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, [and] Khas Uruzgan... The Americans and Australians came and installed new security stations. There are also more government security stations now.”³⁶⁹

Second, as Uruzgan’s local insurgents are mainly tasked to maintain a disturbance potential, the ability of the overall Taliban structure to place external fighters in the province also influenced security. The military surge in the neighbouring provinces of Kandahar and Helmand initially may have pushed more fighters into Uruzgan, as well as Farah and Ghor. With foreign insurgency support removed, the main fighting element was shortly shifted with local insurgents mainly tasked with maintaining a disturbance potential. A similar lull was visible toward the end of 2011 when foreign insurgents left the province for their winter break in Pakistan, leaving local Taliban to hold the front.

While the Taliban may be weakened and displaced from long-held areas, they are by no means defeated in Uruzgan. For some time, the insurgency has relied on the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), targeted ambushes, and assassinations over face-to-face combat. These tactics have proven successful for them and remain an ever-present threat. Furthermore, research for this report concluded at the end of December 2011, which is when many fighters take their traditional winter break. The 2012 spring offensive will show if newly secured areas can be maintained and further advances be made.

6.1 Sources of Insecurity

Currently there are four main sources of insecurity in Uruzgan. First are Taliban operations that target ANSF, especially the ANP. IEDs remain the weapon of choice for the insurgency, though they also man shadow checkpoints on major roads, conduct ambushes or targeted assassinations of pro-government leaders, and occasionally destroy government buildings, including schools and telecommunication infrastructure. The insurgents’ soft warfare repertoire includes threatening night letters and house visits to prominent elders.

A second source of insecurity to communities comes from Taliban requests for food and shelter. Communities often give in begrudgingly out of fear, only to be targeted by the ANSF and IMF who interpret such acts as active rather than *coerced* assistance to the insurgents. The population of Khas Uruzgan, for example, is increasingly caught between a rock and hard place, and is beginning to see a multi-polar environment as the greatest threat and any kind of security force as enemy.

A third source of insecurity is in-fighting amongst the local communities themselves, either along tribal/sub-tribal lines or in the form of blood feuds between families. These conflicts,

³⁶⁸ Ibid

³⁶⁹ Interview, Local NGO representative, Kabul, 6 July 2011

however, should not be viewed in isolation from the broader Afghan conflict. Intra-tribal and inter-tribal divisions are often exploited, splitting tribes into pro-government and pro-insurgency camps. Especially leadership competitions can easily morph into a broader competition between Taliban and ANSF/IMF.

Caution, however, must be used when trying to understand conflicts solely through the lens of tribal dynamics. There are in fact few disputes that are purely 'tribal' in nature. Most disputes instead centre on leadership issues between powerful individuals, with tribe often, though not always, becoming a rallying tool for these individuals to gain or consolidate support vis-à-vis their rivals. Likewise, even longstanding and severe cleavages between groups can be quickly overcome when alignment benefits both sides.

Finally, Uruzgan is a relatively isolated province with comparatively little strategic importance to either the insurgency or the IMF. ANSF and IMF continue to make advances in Uruzgan but it is unlikely that they will be able to secure the entire province until contested areas in neighbouring provinces, especially northern Helmand, the southern districts of Ghazni, and northern Kandahar are brought under government control. The terrain in Uruzgan is simply too difficult to hold the province against insurgents moving in from other areas.

6.2 District Security and Government Control

As noted, by the end of 2011 the security situation had improved in Uruzgan. The increase in security applied to all of the province's districts except Khas Uruzgan, where security continued to deteriorate despite concerted efforts by ANSF and IMF. The most notable achievements were made in Char China where government control of the district moved from 2% to over 50% in a short period of time (see Figure 15 and Appendix IV). The insurgency has now largely been pushed into isolated pockets of control in certain districts, most notably Khas Uruzgan.

TLO estimates—based on interviews with local respondents and their judgement of what villages are considered secure, which was subsequently confirmed with PCoP Matiullah Khan—indicate that approximately 55-65% of Uruzgan is now under government control.³⁷⁰ In 2010, an estimated 50% of the province was considered to be government controlled.

³⁷⁰ The estimates of government control is a combination of taking into consideration the land size of the different districts as well as the population density of secure vs. insecure areas after asking locals which villages/areas they consider under government/insurgency control. Overall, TLO's estimates largely overlapped with those of PCoP Matiullah who put the overall provincial areas under government control at 65-70%. Only in two districts there was a divergence in estimates with TLO considering government control at 50-55% in Char China and 35% in Chenartu, while PCoP cited it as closer to 70% and 80% respectively; Interview, Chief of Police Matiullah Khan, Tirin Kot, 15 December 2011

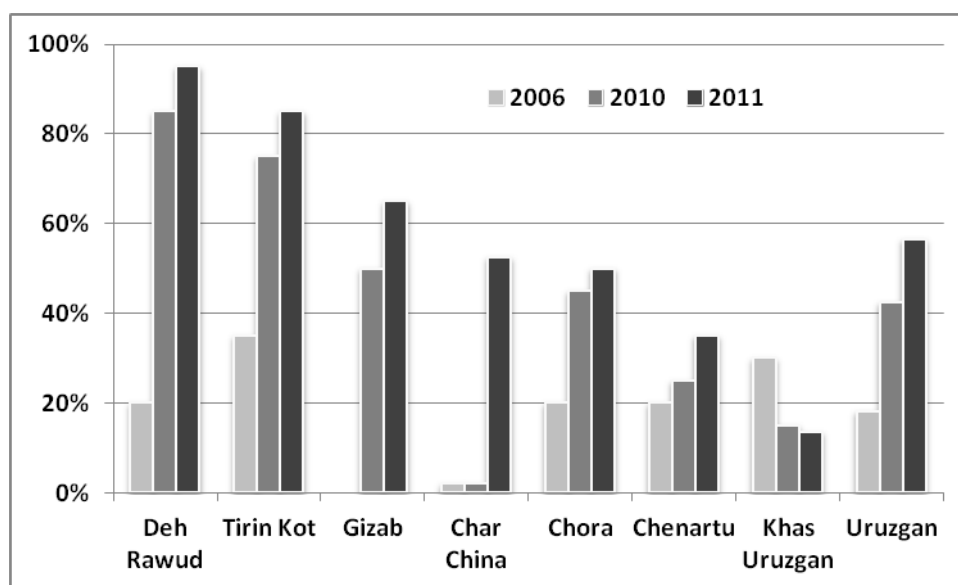


Figure 15: Approximate Areas under Government Control 2006, 2010, 2011

↑ Deh Rawud (95% secured): Even though Deh Rawud already was one of the most government-controlled districts of Uruzgan in mid-2010, small security gains were made in Dezak and Myando areas of the district, increasing government controlled territory by about 10%. A key driver for improved security provision was the road construction around Chutu village, extending security north to the Char China border, which increased the presence of ANSF/IMF.

The only remaining pocket of insecurity in the district is in the Tangi area, which includes the Lundiana area and the last part of the Tirin Kot-Deh Rawud road extending into the Deh Rawud bazaar. Furthermore, there is some sporadic insurgent activity in the Dezak, Shinghula, and Myando areas of the district. While the Taliban did take advantage of the summer months between July and September 2011 to step up attacks on ANP checkpoints and persons affiliated with the government, the commencement of winter brought relief for Deh Rawud residents. As the district with the highest security rating, the end of 2011 also saw the commencement of hand-over from IMF to ANSF.

↑ Tirin Kot (80-90% secured): Security in Tirin Kot fluctuated considerably over the past 18 months. After some improvements in the second half of 2010 (notably in the Darafshan area where the Tirin Kot-Chora road construction forged ahead) it started to slowly deteriorate during the first half of 2011, especially in and around Tirin Kot City, hitting an all-time low on 28 July 2011, when the Taliban managed to orchestrate a complex attack on the provincial capital, killing a total of 24 people and wounding another 37. Pressure from the insurgency continued during the holy month of Ramadan in August with direct attacks targeting civilians considered to be pro-government. As elsewhere, face-to-face combat decreased while IEDs increasingly became the weapon of choice by the insurgency.

Security started to rebound in September 2011, about a month after the appointment of PCoP Matiullah Khan³⁷¹ who prioritized securing Tirin Kot and striking at the Taliban heartland in Mehrabad Valley. To the disbelief of many, he managed to drive the insurgency from the Mehrabad Valley, an area they had controlled since 2004.

By the end of September 2011 almost all of Mehrabad valley was under government control, establishing security and direct access from Tirin Kot to Chenartu, which had been impossible for a long time. By the end of 2011, security in Mehrabad remains stable, with the insurgency trying to disturb the situation by planting IEDs, many of which are located and disposed of by ANSF/IMF. Over 150 IEDs were reportedly disabled in the last three months of 2011 alone.

This success, however, came somewhat at the cost of security in Darafshan, which initially increased as a by-product of the Tirin Kot-Chora road project and operations in August/September 2011. Insurgents driven out of Mehrabad, however, sought refuge in the area around the Baluchi valley and made it their goal to disrupt the rise of the newly paved road by targeting it with IEDs. As a result, many residents have reverted to using the unpaved *dasht* (desert) road. Two ANP checkpoints on the road, one in Salihzai and the other in Sajaawal village were subsequently established.

↑ Gizab (60-70% secured): Since Gizab was retaken from the Taliban in April 2010, ANSF (with IMF support) have been able to make slow and consistent improvements in security. The establishment of the ALP as well as efforts by the District Chief of Police (DCoP) contributed significantly to this increase in security. Despite some hiccups, especially with ALP contingents coming in from Day Kundi, ANSF made advances in insecure areas in the far northwest corner of the district such as Parasto and Waghair, which lie between Gizab Markaz and the Tamazan valley. Activities in these areas mainly focused on clearing-out insurgents and setting up checkpoints. Additional checkpoints in Chapari, Huta, and Chawni villages serve as something of a front line, dividing the government-controlled western half of the district from the insurgent-controlled eastern half. The Hazara areas of the district continue to be generally secure as the Hazara have maintained good relations with the Afghan government.

Significant gains aside, 30-40% of the district remains under Taliban control with little to no government presence in much of the eastern half of the district. The eastern, Taliban-controlled areas basically have no access to education, healthcare, or any other government services. Indeed, TLO had difficulty finding respondents from eastern Gizab, as most people who live in the area either cannot travel due to insecurity or are too fearful of insurgent reprisals to feel comfortable speaking to an NGO. There is also no mobile phone service. Insurgents reportedly use their control over eastern Gizab to facilitate weapons and drug smuggling between Day Kundi and Ghazni/Zabul provinces. Reportedly Taliban frequently move between Gizab and Pakistan where they are said to receive operational training and tactical planning advice.

³⁷¹See Section 6.1.2.

↑↑ Char China (50-55% secured): Char China is the success story of the past 18 months with security significantly improving. The situation began to change in the fall of 2010 when Matiullah Khan's personal strike force—the *Kandak-e Amniyat-e Uruzgan* (KAU)—pushed northward from Deh Rawud into Char China, winning a decisive victory during a battle in Shah Mashad village on 29 September 2010. After securing the road to Oshay and the Char China District Centre, the KAU moved northwest to Yakhdan before moving southwest to Sarab and Tagab. The KAU and the ALP now man checkpoints along all of the district's major roads, making travel possible between Tagab, Sarab, Yakhdan, Char China District Centre, and Deh Rawud, for the first time in many years. A new road connecting Sarab with Chutu village in Deh Rawud was also constructed, secured, and opened for traffic in the summer of 2011. ALP operations also secured the road between Char China and Deh Rawud, which is known as Gharo road and runs along the Helmand River from Chutu to Char China district.

More recently secured areas include Wrishim Sufla, Wrishim Ulya, Spir Ko, Garmab, and Botaw after the ALP was established in the area. Part of the credit for this success goes to the November 2011 appointment of a new ALP commander in Char China, Haji Naeem (Nurzai-Babakzai from Spir Ko, member of the Provincial Council and son of Ghulam Hayder Khan, an influential member of the Nurzai tribe in the district).³⁷²

In addition, PCoP Matiullah Khan's KAU was hired to provide security to trucks carrying construction materials for the Sakhar Bridge that was completed in December 2011.

Despite these achievements, a few areas such as Khod Naw have reportedly fallen back into insurgent control. The Tagab area (Durji, Zamburay Sanginak and Yawmanay, Husi Kalay, Owbeh, Serkay and Karkara Villages to the north) continues to be a major problem both due to its proximity to northern Helmand—where much of the insurgency in the area have retreated—and because many key local leaders have fled the area, leaving a leadership vacuum. Some respondents argued that if some of these key elders were to return and join ANSF in the battle like ALP commander Haji Naeem did, security could be established.³⁷³

Smaller problems exist in the areas of Lawar Do Aan, Kakraka, Anar Joy, Lawar Ghwarghin, Kashata Ghwarghin, and parts of Khod, which borders Kajaki district in Helmand. Furthermore, most of the proposed new district of Sarab (Sarki, Oba, Zanbury, Siya Sang, Tagab, Kand, Shiri Stan, Baghi Yousf, Langar, and Kadi) is still under Taliban control. The road to Kejran district of Day Kundi, which runs north from Yakhdan through Sarsina and Khod manteqas, remains closed for government officials and those considered pro-government. Local Hazara and Pashtuns who have nothing to do with government can travel it freely. TLO also received scattered and somewhat disjointed reports of US-backed militias in Sarsina manteqa.³⁷⁴ The mostly mountainous Northeast of Doane and Oshay villages, toward the

³⁷² See Section 6.3.1.2.

³⁷³ This would include Haji Sayed Ali Khan (Nurzai-Babakzai) who has lived in Kandahar for the past few years and Haji Haqdad (Nurzai-Omranzai from Kurk area), who allegedly has joined the Taliban in Helmand.

³⁷⁴ A TLO surveyor for the district reported in April 2011 that Afghan Security Guards (ASG) that are meant to guard US Special Forces but are locally considered as a militia were active in Sarsina manteqa. The ASG were said to be paid and trained by the Americans, and they have one Pashtun commander and one Hazara commander.

borders of Tirin Kot and Chora districts, are reportedly completely outside of government control.

↑ Chora (50% secured): Security in Chora only marginally improved over the last 18 months by 5% because gains were cancelled out by losses. Control of the district is now more or less evenly split between the insurgency and Afghan government. Still, some areas that used to be firmly under insurgent control such as Khawja Kadir (close to Gizab), Awi, and some parts of Sarab were secured. Khawja Kadir had long been a menace to travellers on the Chora-Gizab road, but the establishment of ALP checkpoints in Khwaja Kadir (Chora side) and Ghowaina (Gizab side) villages substantially lowered the security threat in the manteqa. Furthermore, mid-September clearing operations involving ANSF and the former DG (an army commander himself) in the areas of Siya Sang, Zir Zagi, Nuri, and Kamisano resulted in the establishment of new ALP checkpoints in the Zardegay area. Unfortunately, DCoP Muhammad Gul was killed when his vehicle hit an IED on 28 September 2011 while he was returning from these operations, handing the insurgency a small victory and sending a warning to all his successors.

These improvements notwithstanding, local respondents indicated that they felt losses in other areas mostly cancelled out the overall security achievements in the district. The local population noted that they were puzzled that ANSF and IMF focused their efforts on the more remote areas of the district while the Taliban destabilized areas closer to the populated district centre, including Ashizai Manteqa, Samiyano Kalay, Nawab Khan, Khar Kalay, Maruf Kalay, and some parts of Sarab Manteqa. As a result, residents from across the district reported that they do not feel particularly safe. Multiple respondents told TLO that travel after nightfall is impossible, either because of insurgent threats or because of the risk of being mistaken for an insurgent (and shot) by foreign forces. Only the start of winter brought some relief, with some Taliban leaving for their annual break.

↑ Chenartu (35% secured): Residents of Chenartu district did not see much change in the security situation until the Mehrabad valley—which the road to Tirin Kot runs through—was cleared in September 2011. This ended the district's long isolation from the provincial centre, which had frustrated its population. In the past, residents had to risk going the longer and only slightly more secure route via Chora to Tirin Kot or simply stay put.

Overall, however, the security gains were minimal (increase of 5-10%), given that the southern (from Abdullah Kalay Village up to Charkh Zamin village) and eastern parts (from Faiz Mohammed Manteqa to the border with Khas Uruzgan) of the district remain under Taliban control. Only Charmestan, Masud, Khas Chenartu, Hawas, and Faiz Mohammed Manteqas are completely under government control. As elsewhere in the province, the Taliban increasingly relies on IEDs as a potential disturbance, particularly on the newly cleared road through Mehrabad that leads to Tirin Kot (mostly in the Masud and Nurzai Charmistan areas).

A promising development highlighted by some respondents in December 2011 was the fact that two communities started to reach out to the local government for assistance. First, villagers of Siya Chu (Syachaw), who are mostly Barakzai, asked DCoP Akhtar Mohammad for help in clearing their areas from Taliban and Shpologh³⁷⁵ villagers requested more checkpoints in their area. As both areas have been Taliban strongholds, this gesture by villagers could be an opportunity to squeeze out the Taliban and improve security in Chenartu.

↓ **Khas Uruzgan (only district centre nominally secured):** For a great part of 2010 and 2011, security in Khas Uruzgan slowly improved. The situation, however, began to drastically deteriorate following the disintegration of the newly rolled-out ALP that occurred after the Pashtun ALP commander Mullah Neda Muhammad and 20 of his ALP troops were killed on 15 June 2011. Subsequently, some 50-100 ALP reportedly defected to the Taliban (some put the figure as high as 200). Since then, the conflict between the Mullah Neda's family and the insurgency responsible for his death has morphed into a personal blood feud. Furthermore, the Hazara ALP Commander Shujoyee continues to stir Hazara-Pashtun tensions due to his participation of raiding Pashtun communities (see Section 6.4.2.2.), with prominent Hazara from the district now actively lobbying to have him replaced.

At present, security estimates indicate that only the district centre is really under government control, with the rest of the district either insurgency or self-controlled.³⁷⁶ Optimistic estimates place government control as extending 8-10 km from the district centre. The road through Chenartu to Tirin Kot remains impassable.

At the end of 2011, few non-native Taliban were left in Khas Uruzgan, yet their absence only means a short respite until the usual spring offensive. Furthermore, communities increasingly complain that ANSF/IMF operations targeting local insurgents and those believed to support the insurgency are causing civilian casualties. As in Char China, respondents also point to the Afghan Security Guards (ASG) that work for US Special Forces as some of the most ruthless and brutal irregular armed group.

6.3 Road Security

Road security has improved over the last 18 months in Uruzgan. The key achievement was securing the Tirin Kot-Chenartu road through the Mehrabad valley and the Deh Rawud-Char China road. The improved security is generally attributed to the rollout of the ALP, and the deployment of Matiullah Khan's KAU which laid the groundwork for the roads connecting Deh Rawud and Char China to be re-opened. ALP positions in Gizab, Deh

An interesting development is that the insurgency allegedly tends to not bother cars with *burqa*-clad women inside. Some taxi drivers have responded by not only renting out their vehicle, but their entire family to reduce the risk of individuals travelling alone on the Tirin Kot-Kandahar road.

³⁷⁵ Sometimes also called Ashflooq.

³⁷⁶ This applies largely to Hazara areas, often cut off from the rest of the district.

Rawud, and Char China played critical roles in maintaining sufficiently high levels of security on the major roads to permit the movement of people and goods with at least relative safety.

Table 17 outlines the areas of government and insurgent control on some of Uruzgan's major roads as of December 2011. Of note, the risk on roads is highest for government officials, ANSF, IMF, development actors, and other persons considered to be pro-government. Other Uruzgan residents can generally freely travel, although security is by no means guaranteed.

Table 17: Areas of Control on Major Roads in Uruzgan

Road	Change	Government-controlled	Insurgency-controlled
Deh Rawud-Char China	↑	<p>The road from Deh Rawud Centre to Chutu Kalay/village of Deh Rawud splits in two after Chutu with one following the Helmand riverbed and running directly north to Char China. This very insecure road was secured in November 2011 following the appointment of a new ALP head.</p> <p>The other road via Chambarak/Sakhar bridge was also secured, which was helped by the completion of Sakhar bridge and checkpoints put up by PCoP Matiullah Khan between Sarab centre and Sakhar.</p>	Only light IED presence on both roads.
Tirin Kot - Khas Uruzgan	↑	<p>Since PCoP Matiullah Khan cleared the Mehrabad valley, the road is now nearly 95% secure to Chenartu.</p> <p>AUP is also securing the stretch from Chenartu centre to Tangi village of the district.</p>	<p>In Mehrabad, the area around Masud and Nurzai Charmistan are still somewhat insecure due to the prevalence of IEDs and Taliban attempts to ambush convoys and pro-government tribal elders.</p> <p>Between Leywanyan and Syah and after Chalabi the road becomes unsafe all the way up to the district centre of Khas Uruzgan. Strong insurgent presence starts in Chalabi to Sya Chob-e-Gulakhar Manteqa up to Wardak Kut Village of Khas Uruzgan.</p>
TK-Deh Rawud	↔	One of the safest roads in the province. It is controlled by ANA, ANP, and also some KAU checkpoints.	Areas close to Deh Rawud bazaar such as Lundiyana are still considered dangerous because of IED threats, however, the situation improved during the last two months of 2011.
Tirin Kot-Kandahar Highway	↔	A convoy occurs every ten days that is used by travellers, government officials and for ISAF supplies. PCoP Matiullah Khan also recently set-up some checkpoints to	Outside convoy days, the road is difficult for foreigners or government-affiliated locals to travel, and insurgency controlled <i>ad hoc</i> checkpoints prevail on

Road	Change	Government-controlled	Insurgency-controlled
		facilitate road construction efforts.	parts of the road. Locals who are not affiliated with the government or the internationals can travel the road freely, but at risk.
TK-Chora Road (via Darafshan and Baluchi Valley)	↓	The paved portion of the road from Tirin Kot centre until Surkh Murghab remains secure. Here the road forks and the newly paved portion running through the Darafshan and Baluchi valley was only secure during road construction. Shirzaai Security Company, a sub-contractor of Unique Builder Construction Company (UBCC), manned various check points. In early January 2012, PCoP Matiullah Khan set-up a few checkpoints in the Baluchi valley in an attempt to improve security on this road.	The situation deteriorated around the withdrawal of the road construction security checkpoints that were pulled out as the road was completed and inaugurated in early October 2011. Villagers related a number of security incidents and local residents no longer consider the route as secure.
TK-Chora (via desert)	↑	The paved portion of the road from Tirin Kot centre until Surkh Murghab remains unchanged and secure. Here the road forks, and while local do not necessarily consider the alternative desert road very secure, they now prefer to travel on this road since the insurgency shifted its focus onto the newly paved main road. The fact that the road is very flat and no villages are near-by reduces the ability for insurgents to launch attacks. Thus, this road is considered relatively safe now.	
Chora-Gizab	↓	While initially security levels improved dramatically thanks to the establishment of ALP posts in Khwaja Kadir, Ghowaina, and Chapari villages; the area is now considered very dangerous. The only secure section runs from Gizab Markaz to Senjed Dara.	After Senjed Dra to Chora, Taliban control the road and allegedly also search vehicles. Strong insurgency in Kutal, Bulagh, Qala-e-Surkh, Myantak.

The decrease of security on the Tirin Kot to Chora road has been a serious disappointment for local residents. TLO surveyors were told by residents that that the road was dangerous past Surkh Murghab due to IEDs and that they have reverted to using the desert road. The smaller roads indicated below are also insecure, with the exception of the Gizab-Day Kundi (Nili) road, which was secured through ALP checkpoints during the last two months of 2011:

- Chenartu-Chora
- Char China-Day Kundi (via Khod valley), but for government and NGOs only. Some Hazara from Day Kundi are using this road for transporting goods from Kandahar to Day Kundi.
- Char China-Kajaki/Helmand (aka Shiri Kotal road): Closed since winter 2010, heavily mined with IEDs.
- Tirin Kot-Char China (via Chenarak)

- Chora-Gizab-Day Kundi (Shahrestan district via Mohammad Khwaja village) Taliban control most of Mohammad Khwaja and other major areas that this road goes through.

6.4 Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF)

2011 was an eventful year for security forces in Uruzgan, which witnessed the first handover of responsibility for security from IMF to ANSF, significant changes in the leadership of the ANP, professionalization of the ANP and an expansion of the ALP. In addition, the ANA expanded their ranks in the province by about 17% and increasingly managed to boost operational professionalism and competency as a force.

In a matter of four months in 2011, the ANP had two changes at its helm and several changes at the district level.³⁷⁷ Under PCoP Matiullah Khan's leadership, the ANP started becoming a more pro-active force, quickly undertaking several successful operations. Efforts of both Matiullah Khan and his short-term predecessor to improve the pay and benefits of ANP during 2011 and the pride it derived from successful operations have resulted in a more professional ANP; something that was noted by local respondents for the first time since the force was established in the province.

The Afghan Local Police (ALP) was also rolled out as a new security provider in five of the province's seven districts in late 2010. The ALP quickly established itself as an effective security provider and its units continue to perform relatively well in all its areas of operations, with the exception of Khas Uruzgan.

The positive contributions of the ANP and its ALP sub-pillar, however, should in no way obscure the fact that communities across Uruzgan continue to complain about the corruption and abuses of the ANP, and especially the ALP. Numerous incidents significantly decrease respect for the ANSF and—by extension the government—and makes it unlikely that communities will support them. Moreover, tensions and occasional clashes between the AUP and ALP have not helped to instil faith in the ANP.

The *Kandak-e Amniyat-e Uruzgan* (KAU), Matiullah Khan's private security force continued to display its effectiveness in clearing and holding insecure areas, particularly in Char China, where the KAU has been largely focused since 2010. It remains unclear now that Matiullah Khan is the PCoP, whether the KAU will be integrated into the ANSF.

The transition from IMF to ANSF responsibility for security began with the hand-over of Forward Operating Base Hesar in Deh Rawud to a combined force of ANP and ALP in November 2011 and areas of Bariki in the same district to ALP and ANA in October 2011. Local respondents were very happy about the transition as it has led to a reduction of tension in Hesar, Gharam, Chutu, and other nearby areas.

³⁷⁷ See sections 6.1.2 and 6.2.2.

As eventful as the last 18 months were, 2012 and beyond will likely be even more eventful as powerbrokers and the insurgency position themselves for the pending withdrawal of IMF in Uruzgan.

6.4.1 Afghan National Army (ANA)

The ANA in Uruzgan is composed of six *kandaks* (army battalions) under the 4th ANA Brigade (205th Corps). The ANA headquarters in Uruzgan is located adjacent to the airport/PRT complex.³⁷⁸ There is also a separate Afghan Special Forces *kandak*. Four of these *kandaks* are infantry, with the sixth one having been added in the past 18 months. Two others are support *kandaks* stationed in Tirin Kot. The six *kandaks*, with areas of responsibility, are:

- 1st Infantry Kandak (Deh Rawud, Char China, Khas Uruzgan);
- 2nd Infantry Kandak (Chora and Tirin Kot, incl. Mehrabad);
- 3rd Infantry Kandak (Tirin Kot, including Surkh Murghab, Darafshan, Perosha, Sajawal, and Qala-e-Naw);
- 6th Infantry Kandak;
- 4th Combat support Kandak (Tirin Kot HQ); and
- 5th Combat Services Support Kandak (Tirin Kot HQ)

Brigadier-General Mohammad Zafar Khan (Yahya Khel District, Paktika) was appointed as Commander of the 4th ANA Brigade on 11 September 2010. While the ANA is generally liked in the province, the General has by no means attained a similar prominence as PCoP Matiullah Khan.

ANA figures are similarly difficult to obtain as that of other ANSF, given the large number of 'leave absences' in the province.³⁷⁹ That being said, current ANA figures were put at about 6,000, indicating a more than 1,000 soldier increase over the past 18 months. Local respondents, however, noted that they felt that there was little change in the ANA numbers in their areas, as the ANA is primarily concentrated in and around Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, and areas where they conduct operations such as Khas Uruzgan.

- In **Tirin Kot** there are ten ANA bases. Four bases are in the Darafshan manteqa, in the villages of Khurma, Sajawal, Kapito, and Qala-e-Naw. There are five ANA bases in Mehrabad manteqa: Musazai (combined ANA/Australian base), Surkh Lez (combined ANA/Australian base), Nayak, Haidar/Kochkel, and Nawjoy. According to local respondents, there are no ANA bases in Pay Nawa and Garmab manteqas. In term of hand-over, local respondents noted that IMF left Sajaawal in early 2011 because security was good enough to turn the responsibility for the area over to ANSF.

³⁷⁸ The location of the ANA base, and the fact that the entire military complex has to be entered through one gate, with another set of gates before entering the Camp Holland (PRT) base, the ANA base, and also the Special Forces base, creates the assumption amongst locals that the ANA is based inside the PRT.

³⁷⁹ This means that soldiers take a leave of absence and never return to duty, but are still considered to be serving. This is different than "ghost police officers" who actually only ever existed in name to boost salary contributions to the police commander.

- In **Deh Rawud**, the main ANA base is located in Lablan village, with additional Forward Operating Bases in Tangi and Chutu. Respondents from Deh Rawud applauded both the increase in ANA numbers in the district and the increased equipment and training for current ANA.
- The ANA reportedly now has a robust presence in **Chora** with a main base one kilometre from the district centre and various outposts in villages such as Khwaja Khadir, Nuri, and Shanoda, which all are still considered somewhat insecure. The acting DG of Chora led the 2nd ANA kandak stationed in Chora for the three last years, which facilitated improved cooperation between ANA and other ANSF in the district.
- A local elder from **Khas Uruzgan** noted that in 2010, the figures given for the ANA in the district were artificially inflated. Now, however, the ANA are close to filling their *tashkeel*.
- A resident of **Gizab** reported that currently only 20-25 ANA are active in the district, mostly working with Special Forces; he noted that the local population would favour an increase in this number.
- Residents of **Chenartu** were disappointed by the lack of any known ANA in the district, except for those that accompany IMF on night raids.

“Despite years of efforts to increase the enlistment of southern Pashtuns, ... the number of them joining the army remains relatively minuscule, reflecting a deep and lingering fear of the insurgents, or sympathy for them, as well as doubts about the stability and integrity of the central government in Kabul, the capital.”

The New York Time, 6 September 2011

Most ANA in Uruzgan are not from the province. This is in part because most local residents believe joining the ANA is tantamount to committing suicide, given the Taliban’s targeting of ANSF.

Indeed, Pashtuns from Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul, Uruzgan, Ghazni, and Paktika only make up about 1.5% of all ANA soldiers recruited since 2009, with Uruzgan seeing only 14 new recruits in 2010-2011, a decrease from 60 in 2009-2010.³⁸⁰ A further obstacle in Uruzgan are the ANA recruitment screening rules that require two village elders to vouch for each recruit, making it impossible for a young man that does not want to put his family into danger to enlist and serve elsewhere in the country.³⁸¹

The ANA remains the best-liked and most respected security force in Uruzgan, with respondents from most districts submitting positive evaluations. The ANA rarely generates complaints from residents and are seen as performing their duties competently. The soldiers are widely praised for helping secure contested areas. Furthermore, the ANA is seen as better at conducting house searches and operations in villages than IMF. They are said to be more culturally sensitive and refrain from causing residents undue injury or property damage, something that goes a long way toward winning the respect of the average

³⁸⁰ Ray Rivera, “Afghan Army Attracts Few Where Fear Reigns,” (The New York Time, 6 September 2011); http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/07/world/asia/07afghanistan.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=tha2

³⁸¹ Ibid

Uruzgani. None of this represents any significant change though, as the ANA has been highly regarded within Uruzgan for some time, thanks to their extensive training and perceived professionalism and commitment to their duties and their fellow citizens.

One particularly exuberant respondent from Chenartu described the ANA as “super” and “brave,” saying that what security exists in the district is attributable almost entirely to the actions of the ANA.³⁸² While a resident of Khas Uruzgan said that, among the security forces active in that district, the ANA is the “best” and “most trained” force, also calling them “professional” in their conduct.³⁸³ The tune changed with the deterioration of security in district and more aggressive tactics being used. That being said, the ANA was able to increase its rating when it stood up against US Special Forces in Nov-Dec 2011 when they allegedly unanimously tried to sack the DG and the Head of the DCC.³⁸⁴

Some of the credit of the continuously improved capacity of the ANA goes to the Australian Defence Force (ADF) whose key objective has been the mentoring of ANA and the provincial Operation Coordination Centre (OCC-P).³⁸⁵ There are reportedly around 730 ADF currently mentoring ANSF, concentrated around Chora, Deh Rawud, and Tirin Kot—including the Darafshan area.³⁸⁶ ANA forces are being trained to locate and safely diffuse IEDs, find illegal weapons and drug caches, and become more skilled in fighting the insurgency. Successes are being highlighted in ISAF press releases and increasing reports of located and diffused IEDs indicates both the increased insurgent presence, as well as the increased effectiveness of the ANSF to deal with the insurgency.

The ultimate goal of the mentorship is to prepare the ANA for the transition to ANSF responsibility for security in 2014. Despite an early ADF assessment that the ANA needed three more years to be adequately trained for a complete handover, Brigadier-General Mohammad Zafar Khan went on record in late November 2011 that his soldiers were fully capable of providing security in Uruzgan. He called for Australian troops to leave immediately, “provided they leave behind millions of dollars' worth of sophisticated war-fighting equipment . . . [including] night vision and counter-improvised explosive device capability, artillery and access to medical evacuation helicopters.”³⁸⁷

³⁸² Interview, Chenartu tribal elder, 11 July 11

³⁸³ Interview, Khas Uruzgan shopkeeper, Tirin Kot, 12 July 2011

³⁸⁴ At the monthly *shura* meeting³⁸⁴, reportedly held on 23 November 2011³⁸⁴, a captain of the US SOF allegedly delivered a speech about the ineffectiveness of Juma Gul (the previous Khas Uruzgan DG) and questioned his ability to run the district. According to a participant in the meeting, the US captain suggested that Juma Gul does not have the capacity to hold the position of DG any longer and reportedly put forward the DCC Head, Haji Abdul Karim, Achekzai-Matakzai from Kochak, as a plausible replacement of Juma Gul as DG. While PG Sherzad initially offered his support to Juma Gul, Halim replaced him on 26 December 2011. See TLO, 2011 Fourth Quarter Provincial Update, February 2012 for more information.

³⁸⁵ <http://www.defence.gov.au/op/afghanistan/info/factsheet.htm>

³⁸⁶ Ibid

³⁸⁷ Dan Oakes, “Afghan chief wants Diggers to leave;” (Sydney Morning Herald, 21 November 2011); <http://m.smh.com.au/world/afghan-chief-wants-diggers-to-leave-20111120-1npcx.html>

6.4.2 Afghan National Police (ANP)

The ANP consists of four main pillars: the Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP), the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), the Afghan Border Police (ABP) and the Afghan Anti-Crime Police (AACP). In addition there are two sub-pillars, the Afghan Local Police (ALP) and the Afghan Public Protection Forces (APPF).³⁸⁸

So far the ANCOP has not yet been operationalized in Uruzgan, and the province has neither a very busy airport nor international border that would justify an ABP presence. TLO was able to interview two criminal investigation officers³⁸⁹ from the AACP, but it is unclear how many of its officers work in Uruzgan. Uruzgan was one of the first provinces to receive ALP units in late 2010, and are now operating in five of its seven districts.³⁹⁰

All ANP units in the province should fall under the control of the PCoP and the authority of the Ministry of Interior (MoI). This includes the ALP, although it is important to note that the control of the ALP is somewhat challenging, given the fact that its units are established, paid for, and mentored by US Special Forces.

Residents of Gizab, Deh Rawud, Char China and Khas Uruzgan, for example, commented on tensions between AUP and ALP, with the AUP feeling superior in their status as a permanent, not temporary force like the ALP. Fewer tensions were reported in Khas Uruzgan or Char China, possibly because the ALP is perceived as stronger than the AUP in these districts.

6.4.2.1 Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP)

As noted in previous TLO reports,³⁹¹ it is hard to obtain an accurate head count of the Uruzgan police. This difficulty is in part attributed to the practice of former PCoP Juma Gul of vastly inflating the number of ANP in order to collect their salaries,³⁹² some of this detailed in 2011 by the Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.³⁹³

³⁸⁸ See: Ministry of Interior (MoI), "Afghan National Police Strategy." (Kabul: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, MoI, Deputy Minister for Strategy and Policy Department of Strategy, Jadi 1388/January 2010); <http://info.publicintelligence.net/AfghanNationalPoliceStrategy.pdf>; Rebecca Barber, "No Time to Lose. Promoting the Accountability of the Afghan National Security Forces", Joint Briefing Paper (Oxfam International, 10 May 2011); <http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/afghanistan-no-time-to-lose-20110510-en.pdf>. There is however some lacking clarity, given that the original January 2010 Afghan National Police Strategy (ANPS) has undergone several revisions. The initial ANPS spoke of "six pillars of reform and growth for the police," which then included the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF). The 2011 Oxfam report, however, uses a revised ANPS and argues that the APPF had been dropped, and the ALP was made into a sub-pillar leaving four main police pillars plus the ALP.

³⁸⁹ In Chora and Tirin Kot.

³⁹⁰ There is no ALP in the provincial capital district Tirin Kot and the newly approved district of Chenartu.

³⁹¹ The Liaison Office, "The Dutch Engagement in Uruzgan: 2006-2010," August 2010.

³⁹² See 4.1.3

³⁹³ Office of The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, 2011, "Despite Improvements in MoI's Personnel Systems, Additional Actions Are Needed to Completely Verify ANP Payroll Costs and Workforce Strength," 25 April 2011; <http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/audits/SIGAR%20Audit-11-10.pdf>

Unfortunately many of these “ghost ANP” seem to still haunt Uruzgan’s districts.³⁹⁴ All figures should accordingly be treated with some scepticism.

In July 2011, former PCoP Sherzad cited the basic AUP officer strength at 2,560 men, plus 424 constables and 147 officers, putting the total number just over 3,000.³⁹⁵ PCoP Matiullah Khan confirmed these numbers in December 2011.³⁹⁶ Based on these interviews, around 65% of the AUP are stationed in Tirin Kot district, with the other 35% distributed around the other districts.³⁹⁷

PCoP Matiullah Khan told TLO in December 2011 that he recently requested the AUP *tashkeel* be increased to 5,000 regular police and 1,400 officers.³⁹⁸ He argued that with this troop level he would be able to retake and hold all of Uruzgan’s territory in a matter of weeks.³⁹⁹ He further noted that he wants to see the AUP increased rather than the ALP, which he considers a short-term solution that is counterproductive to the professionalization of the police. MK’s predecessor Fazel Sherzad shared this preference for AUP support over expanding the ALP programme.

TLO has observed a slight improvement in local perceptions of the AUP over the past 18 months. Perceptions particularly improved after the April 2011 appointment of PCoP Sherzad who ensured that AUP received their full salary, were well fed, and received better uniforms, equipment and facilities, which helped lift AUP morale and subsequent performance. Respondents especially highlighted the ‘new dress’ of the police, which make them look more professional and less like a ragtag force. Increased training by the Australian Federal Police-supported Police Training Centre and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commissions (AIHRC) were also said to improve the AUP’s performance.⁴⁰⁰

PCoP Matiullah Khan is clearly reaping some of the success that was started prior to his appointment but has also shown a commitment to further expanding the capacity of the

³⁹⁴ Deh Rawud served as an illustration of how bad it can get with a 2011 SIGAR (Office of The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction) audit report noting that about 173 more ANP were reported as being paid than officially authorized for the district in September 2010 (Deh Rawud then had a total of 191 ANP in their *tashkeel*, 139 were reported in the MoI personnel statistics report, while salary for 312 was being paid; *Ibid*, p.12). When interviewed on 3 April 2011, the DCoP of Deh Rawud still insisted that he was paying the salary for 360 police, while a police officer argued it was only 300 (Interview, Deh Rawud, 4 April 2011). A shop keeper estimated the AUP size closer to 200 (Interview, Deh Rawud, 4 April 2011). In December 2011, PCoP Matiullah still quoted a size of 336 AUP from reports he had received (Interview, Tirin Kot, 15 December 2011), showing how hard it is to overcome the ghosts in the system.

³⁹⁵ Interview, Chief of Police Fazel Wahed Shirzad (replaced on 7 August 2011), Tirin Kot, 4 July 2011

³⁹⁶ Interview, Chief of Police Matiullah Khan, Tirin Kot, 15 December 2011

³⁹⁷ Of those stationed outside Tirin Kot (less than 1,000 officers), about 22% serve in each Deh Rawud, Chenartu, and Khas Uruzgan (8% of the grand total), 14% in each Chora and Char China (5% of grand total), with only 6% in Gizab (2% of grand total). The Gizab police force of course was only stood up 18 months ago when the district was captured from the Taliban.

³⁹⁸ If a new ANP *tashkeel* was approved, he would have about 15 regular police officers for every 1,000 residents (not counting ALP figures). This would be three times the number of every one police for 300-350 population ratio that is advised for policing in an insurgency context. Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies and the Foreign Policy Research Institute, “Reforming the Afghan National Police,” (London/Philadelphia: Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), 2009); <http://www.fpri.org/research/nationalsecurity/afghanpolice/ReformingAfghanNationalPolice.pdf>, p.98

³⁹⁹ Interview, Chief of Police Matiullah Khan, Tirin Kot, 15 December 2011

⁴⁰⁰ The AIHRC provided basic human rights education to most police officers in Uruzgan, including Matiullah’s private security force (the KAU).

AUP. For example, he has been a positive supporter of further educating police officers, which he had previously emphasized for his own KAU, and is reported to have initiated a literacy programme for AUP across the province, with one teacher for every few checkpoints.⁴⁰¹ The efforts of the two PCoPs coupled with the AUP's successful operations have all contributed to the improvements in local perceptions of the police in Uruzgan.

Despite improvements, it is important to emphasize that the AUP continues to receive overall poor reviews from local residents.⁴⁰² There continues to be persistent complaints ranging from checkpoint extortion, abuse, banditry (police by day, bandits by night), sexual abuse of young boys (*bacha bazi*) and other poor behaviour. Also, a commonly cited complaint from shopkeepers is the tendency of police to take items from their shops without paying. Some respondent opinions about police performance in several districts are captured below:

- **Tirin Kot:** Residents were relieved about the improved security situation in the district since Matiullah Khan became PCoP, and the taking of Mehrabad valley also raised the profile of the AUP.
- **Gizab:** There were few complaints about the police, possibly because residents were simply happy to have such a force at all after years of Taliban control.
- **Khas Uruzgan:** The AUP here likely have the worst reputation of all police in the province, but then at present none of the security forces—Afghan nor international—received a good score card in this district, probably because it is being squeezed by the insurgency, ANSF, and international military. Here any kind of security force, especially police, is seen as predatory and criticized for harassing locals.
- **Deh Rawud:** Residents have long had a poor opinion of their police, partially because the DCoP is widely criticized as corrupt and unprofessional. In addition, there were complaints about extortion at checkpoints, mistreatment of locals (especially when refusing to pay bribes), and stories of AUP partaking in acts of vigilante justice. While sometimes offenders are identified and kicked out of the police, more commonly they are simply rotated to another area. AUP were also widely reported to have “taxed” opium in the spring of 2011. This did little to either earn the trust of locals, or provide a sense that they were advancing the rule of law. In December 2011, the DCoP in Deh Rawud finally took some disciplinary action. Respondents believe that this came because IMF gave a strong nudge after they passed an un-manned checkpoint and took the Afghanistan flag as well as few police caps to the DCoP to make a statement. He promptly called for a meeting with all his commanders to discuss repercussions for not showing up for shifts, leaving the checkpoint unmanned, clarified areas of jurisdiction, and emphasized the importance of wearing uniforms while on duty.

⁴⁰¹ Some argue that this is a long-standing government programme that PCoP Matiullah is simply reviving; yet local respondents often credit him for having started it.

⁴⁰² Poor perceptions about the Afghan police are not limited to Uruzgan alone, but a problem across Afghanistan, see for example, UNDP, “Police Perception Survey – 2010: the Afghan Perspective.” (Kabul, UNDP Afghanistan, 2010), [http://www.undp.org.af/publications/KeyDocuments/2011/Police%20Perception%20Survey%20Book%202010%20FINAL%20\(6th%20Jan%202011\).pdf](http://www.undp.org.af/publications/KeyDocuments/2011/Police%20Perception%20Survey%20Book%202010%20FINAL%20(6th%20Jan%202011).pdf)

- **Chora:** The AUP, especially those who received training, are reported to be more organized and professional than in the past, and also wear their uniform while on duty. Nonetheless, certain complaints were frequently cited such as extortion at checkpoints, taking goods from the bazaar without paying, driving fast and recklessly, and playing very loud music on motorbikes and in vehicles while driving through the main bazaar.
- **Chenartu:** Respondents reported no significant problems with the approximate 202 AUP in the district. A few did complain that the AUP sometimes demands bribes from vehicles transporting people between Tirin Kot and Chenartu districts. Approximately 25 Chenartu police officers received training at the Australian Federal Police-supported Police Training Centre in the Tirin Kot PRT for eight weeks, which ended in December 2011.
- **Char China:** Residents admitted that improvements had been made in the performance of the police, but still felt that the AUP were far way from being a good police force. However, at least “takings things from shopkeepers without paying” seems to have recently been curbed.

6.4.2.2 Afghan Local Police (ALP)

The ALP programme, which was somewhat reluctantly approved by President Karzai in July 2010, was established under the auspices of the Ministry of Interior (MoI), and rolled out in 41 “validated districts” across the country, five of which were in Uruzgan.⁴⁰³ The ALP is supported by the US Special Forces in terms of funding, training, and mentoring and is aimed at filling the gap left by over-stretched ANSF.

The current iteration of the village defence force builds upon several previous village defence force programmes,⁴⁰⁴ such as the Local Defence Initiative and the Community Defence Initiative, which were programmes developed by US Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force — Afghanistan.⁴⁰⁵ According to US Special Forces, over time they “identified and fixed failures,” and understood that part of the success was that it could neither be “US-led,” nor an “*arbakai*” (traditional Pashtun community-based police), or a “militia,” and above all needed “Karzai’s buy-in,” which they admitted was difficult to obtain because “he was reluctant and concerned.”⁴⁰⁶ Ultimately the ALP did come to fall under the authority of the MoI, although an MoI official reminded that ALP was neither “a Karzai

⁴⁰³ Ministry of Interior, “Afghan Local Police.” Overview sheet (Kabul: Ministry of Interior, 3 June 2011);

⁴⁰⁴ Interview, US Special Forces, Tirin Kot, SOF HQ, 17 June 2011

⁴⁰⁵ Mathieu Lefèvre, “Local Defence in Afghanistan: A review of government-backed initiatives,” (Kabul: Afghan Analysts Network Thematic Report, March 2010); <http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/20100525MLefevre-LDIpaper.pdf>

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid*; That being said, according to Andrew Wilder, “President Karzai has been advocating to increase direct support to tribal militias. At one of the first meetings of the Policy Action Group in early 2006, he reportedly pushed for more money to be channelled through “Special Operating Funds” to recruit tribal militias, arguing that tribal issues need to be dealt with in a tribal way.” So possibly Karzai was having his cake and eating it too. Andrew Wilder, “Cops or Robbers? The Struggle to Reform the Afghan National Police,” (Kabul: Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), July 2007); <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/47c3f3c60.pdf>, p.14

initiative,” nor really an Afghan-led one, and had to first be made palatable to the Afghan government.⁴⁰⁷ The ALP, however, continues in practice to be run by US Special Forces.

In Uruzgan the ALP started with the two pilot districts of Gizab and Khas Uruzgan⁴⁰⁸ in the fall of 2010, the ALP quickly expanded to Char China, Chora, and Deh Rawud. Tirin Kot and Chenartu do not have ALP. The ALP is seen as a temporary force designed to fill gaps left by the already-stretched ANSF, especially in remote areas and at the village level.⁴⁰⁹ ALP members, due to their part-time status, reportedly receive 9,000 Afghani per month, about 60% of the AUP salary.⁴¹⁰

In the first round of ALP allocation, Uruzgan accounted for 25% of the roughly 6,200 approved ALP *tashkeel* in Afghanistan.⁴¹¹ As US Special Forces and the MoI considered Uruzgan in general and Gizab district in particular one of the early success stories for the ALP, an expansion of the approved ALP *tashkeel* was swiftly approved in June 2011 from about 1,500 to 1,850, even though none of the districts had been able to fill the original ceiling of 300 men at this juncture (see Table 18).⁴¹²

Table 18: Overview of ALP in Uruzgan

District	Start	Approved Expansion	Estimated in place
Deh Rawud	150	300	90
Chora	179	400	Also less
Gizab	292	400	400
Khas Uruzgan	259	350	170
Char China	235	400	300
Total	1,115	1,850	≈960

The picture was not much different in December 2011, with PCoP Matiullah Khan estimating that only Gizab had succeeded in recruiting its expanded ALP *tashkeel*, while all other districts fell short. While this might be linked to overall attrition, defections to the insurgency, and problems with the initial recruitment to begin with, it may simply indicate the difficulty of accurately tracking ALP numbers. Even the MoI only seems to having a

⁴⁰⁷ Interviews: General, Ministry of Interior, Kabul, 10 July 2011; Uruzgan Chief of Police Fazel Wahed Shirzad (replaced on 7 August 2011), Tirin Kot, 4 July 2011; Matiullah Khan (appointed Chief of Police on 7 August 2011), Tirin Kot, 4 July 2011

⁴⁰⁸ Khwaja Basir Ahmad & Muhammad Jawad Sharifzada, “Uruzgan first to start recruiting for local police.” (Pajhwok Afghan News, 18 August 2010); <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2010/08/18/uruzgan-first-start-recruiting-local-police>

⁴⁰⁹ At least three or four similar such local defence forces have been rolled out since 2006, with an intensified search since early 2009. Mathieu Lefèvre, “Local Defense in Afghanistan: A review of government-backed initiatives,” (Kabul: Afghan Analysts Network Thematic Report, March 2010); <http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/20100525MLefevre-LDpaper.pdf>

⁴¹⁰ Interview, US Special Forces, Tirin Kot, 17 June 2011

⁴¹¹ Ministry of Interior, “Afghan Local Police.” Overview sheet (Kabul: Ministry of Interior, 3 June 2011)

⁴¹² Interview, PCoP Fazel Waheed Shirzad (replaced on 7 August 2011), Tirin Kot, 4 July 2011

tenuous grasp on the actual number of ALP in Uruzgan, perhaps a reflection of the lack of authority that it has over the force.⁴¹³

While not necessarily liked by most respondents, they begrudgingly acknowledged that the ALP has contributed to improvements in the security situation. The ALP was particularly seen as having played a significant role in securing some of the most important roads in the province, including the Chora-Gizab road and roads connecting Deh Rawud and Char China. The following paragraphs highlight key issues in each district:⁴¹⁴

Deh Rawud: Respondents indicated that tribal dynamics have caused problems in Deh Rawud and slowed recruitment. This is said to be a product of the fact that the ALP commander is a Popalzai while many of the recruits are from the Nurzai or Babozai, which have clashed with the Popalzai. There have also been rumours that some ALP checkpoint commanders tried to resign or were fired due to bad behaviour, but this could not be substantiated. Recruitment is most difficult in the insecure Tangi area of the district as it is remote, quite dangerous and populated mostly by the Khogiani and Barakzai tribe that are close to the insurgency. Most locals would not dare to join any government security force in fear of retaliation of other community members or the insurgency.

Chora: The ALP in Chora are clustered around Kotal and Khwaja Kadir, both of which lie to the north of the district centre along the road to Gizab. Most of the ALP in these villages are not from the area, as local residents did not sign up in significant numbers. Many of the ALP are said to come from the areas around Nuri and Shanoda, and when recruited were promised that their posting would be temporary. The exodus of young men from Nuri and Shanoda had the unintended consequence of making it easier for the Taliban to operate in those areas.⁴¹⁵ PCoP Matiullah Khan indicated in December 2011 that he had pulled all ALP from checkpoints in Chora and grounded them due to existing problems.⁴¹⁶ TLO was unable to confirm the status of the Chora ALP at the time the report was being finalized.

Gizab: The 360-strong ALP in Gizab is reportedly the largest ALP force in Uruzgan, with another 40 having been registered for training by the end of 2011. As noted, the MoI and US SOF often use Gizab as an example of how the ALP can improve security, decrease insurgent threats, and help expand the Afghan government's presence.⁴¹⁷ They argue that the ALP demonstrates, "how security paves the way for development," citing the fact that several large development projects were awarded to Gizab as a result of the improved security.⁴¹⁸ Local communities by and large agreed with this assessment, with district residents

⁴¹³ An email exchange in July/August yielded not a particularly good grasp by a MoI spokesperson on ALP figures in Uruzgan, both tashkeel and actual, with the person admitting that their information was not good. Numbers also varied from those reported by US SOF, showing that the ALP is in flux (due to defections and deaths), with possibly only those paying and arming them (US SOF) having an exact count.

⁴¹⁴ For more in depth information about the ALP in Uruzgan, see TLO's forthcoming report on the subject

⁴¹⁵ US SOF also recognized this problem and said it was being addressed ; Interview, US Special Forces, Tirin Kot, 17 June 2011

⁴¹⁶ Interview, PCoP Matiullah Khan, Tirin Kot, 15 December 2011

⁴¹⁷ Ministry of Interior, Afghan Local Police Weekly Update, 1 July 2011

⁴¹⁸ Ibid

registering few if any complaints about ALP conduct in the district. They credit the support of the US SOF mentors as a big part of the ALP achievements.⁴¹⁹ A student from Gizab told TLO that “without the ALP the other forces [ANSF/IMF] could not work as effectively,” citing the ability of the ALP to distinguish friend from foe thanks to their local knowledge.⁴²⁰

The only reported problem with ALP in Gizab was linked to a contingent of Hazara ALP from neighbouring Day Kundi province being stationed in the Tamazan valley, according to PCoP Matiullah Khan—who diplomatically acknowledged this as support for Uruzgan—on the orders of US SOF from the area.⁴²¹ In September 2011 a clash occurred between Gizab’s DCoP and his predominantly Pashtun AUP and the Hazara ALP from Day Kundi, with various accounts of the incident.⁴²² As a result, a further 100 ALP were recruited from Tamazan valley to replace the Day Kundi ALP. According to a Hazara villager, about 40% of the new ALP forces are Hazara and the rest are Pashtuns, mostly Achekzai. By December 2011, the training of these new ALP recruits was said to be well underway.

Char China: After some initial problems regarding distrust of the ALP for allegedly being a pro-insurgent force exclusively from only one of the two Nurzai sub-tribes and several defections of ALP fighters to the insurgency,⁴²³ the ALP in Char China was reshuffled when PCoP Matiullah Khan appointed Haji Naeem (Provincial Council member and son of an influential Nurzai elder Ghulam Hayder Khan from the district) as the new ALP commander, replacing the more controversial Mirza Khan (Nurzai-Khwaja Khadarzai from Shah Mashad). Haji Naeem also brought with him approximately 53 new men who were added to the ALP force. New checkpoints were established in Botaw, Garmab, Spir Ko, Warisham Sufla, and Warisham Awlia in late 2011. The ALP is now said to contribute to improved security in the area.

Khas Uruzgan: Respondents indicated that the ALP initially improved security, but the situation began deteriorating in the late spring of 2011 and continued on a negative

⁴¹⁹ For example, in November 2011 they were reportedly given 72 brand-new motorcycles, and in December a higher than usual salary.

⁴²⁰ Interview, Gizab student (interview conducted in Tirin Kot), 13 July 2011

⁴²¹ Interview, PCoP Matiullah Khan, Tirin Kot, 15 December 2011

⁴²² See Martine van Bijlert, “Trouble in Gizab; the fight everyone chose to ignore.” (Afghanistan Analysts Network blog, 31 October 2011); <http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=2199>; An interview with DCoP Lalai and others leads to the following account of events: The DCoP of Gizab Lalai along with US SOF mentors went to Tamazan in order to pay the ALP and register a further group of 32 individuals (mix Hazara and Pashtun, but mostly Hazara) to whom four vehicles were given by the PRT of Day Kundi. When they arrived, the commander and the DCoP sat down for lunch when shooting suddenly started. Locals claim that Mullah Sahan Gul (Achekzai, Khachuzai from Tamazan, who is an ALP commander) shot at Lalai and the mentors. When Lalai heard the shooting he retaliated, according to his own account. When one of the US mentors was injured, they called in an airstrike. According to Lalai, all others were killed in an airstrike, not by his men. While Lalai denies the killings, people think he is lying, alleging that Lalai wanted to get the ALP under his control by all means necessary. Only when they refused to accept his leadership, he reportedly ordered them killed.

⁴²³ On 28 June 2011 there was an incident of an entire ALP group (11 men in total) from the Shah Mashad area defecting to the insurgents. A subsequent ANP operation is said to have recaptured two of the defectors. The father of one of the ALP officer allegedly had tried to alert the district governor about his son’s intentions but was ignored. A tentative coexistence between ALP and Taliban also disintegrated into violence after Taliban attacked the local ALP checkpoints, prompting the Khawaja Khadarzai to directly raid Garmab.

trajectory throughout the fall. Most locals would attribute it to the problems with the Hazara ALP commander, and the killing of the initial trusted Pashtun ALP commander.

Controversy arose due to Hazara ALP exceeding their mandate and allegedly supporting night raids by US Special Forces in Pashtun areas.⁴²⁴ One widely reported incident occurred on 13 June 2011 when several Pashtun villages in the Abparan and Hossaini area in the north of the district were allegedly ‘raided’ by ALP under the leadership of Hazara Commander Shujoyee.⁴²⁵ Some argue that this led to retaliation by the insurgency against the ALP in Khas Uruzgan and the killing of its Commander (see below). US SOF insisted that any problems were simply a product of Pashtun residents disliking the Hazara ALP Commander.⁴²⁶ Prominent Hazara leaders, however, also have been concerned over his actions which they felt were increasing Hazara-Pashtun tensions and started to actively lobby to have him replaced.⁴²⁷ They also argue that as he hails from Malistan in neighbouring Ghazni province and not Khas Uruzgan proper, he should have never been allowed to command the local ALP to begin with.⁴²⁸

The initially well-functioning Pashtun ALP received a severe blow when the insurgency killed its Commander Mullah Neda Muhammad (Acheckzai-Kutubzai) on 15 June 2011. This instilled fear in some of the ALP fighters, with reportedly at least 53 ALP subsequently surrendering to the Taliban with their weapons. Some put these figures at nearly double. Many of the ALP who surrendered have since left the district out of fear they would be arrested by the government. Furthermore, Mullah Neda Muhammad’s brother, who replaced him as ALP Commander, took blood revenge on several relatives of the responsible Taliban commanders who were not insurgents themselves.⁴²⁹ This revenge act has turned the ALP-insurgency conflict into a very personal blood feud, with even non-insurgent family members joining into the fight.

Reportedly, the poor performance of the ALP contributed to the DG’s replacement at the end of 2011 with rumours that the DCoP would shortly follow suit due to his inability to reign in the ALP.

⁴²⁴ Some communities now alleged that at the time of said raid, Shujoyee and his men were still Afghan Security Guards working with Special Forces and only later legitimized as ALP.

⁴²⁵ “There is some suggestion that it was supposed to have been a joint operation and that the ALP who were stationed at a security post nearby had simply not waited for the US military to arrive. The raid sounds like it was rather a rough affair. A large number of houses were searched, several men were badly beaten, four men were detained and one man – the (mentally disturbed) brother of one of the detained men – was shot to death. The four detained men were initially held at the ALP checkpoint, but were later handed over to the US military (and were reportedly released three days ago).” Martine van Bijlert, “Khas Uruzgan violence and ISAF press releases.” Afghanistan Analysts Network Blog (Kabul, 26 June 2011); <http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=1846>

⁴²⁶ Interview, US Special Forces, Tirin Kot, 17 June 2011

⁴²⁷ Interview, previous DG of Khas Uruzgan and prominent Hazara leader, Kabul, 8 December 2011

⁴²⁸ Ibid

⁴²⁹ This included the brother and nephew of Taliban Commander Shah Wali (Acheckzai-Alizai-Sakuzai) and the brother and son of Taliban Commander Haji Mullah Abdullah Faroqi.

6.4.2.3 Local Perceptions about ALP Performance

Despite acknowledgements that the ALP contributed to improving security in certain areas of Uruzgan, local residents had misgivings about the ALP from the outset, simply for being an irregular security force rather than regular police. This was partially reflected by hardly anybody referring to the ALP by its official name—*police mahali*—using the term *arbakai*, their term for militia, instead. Many also doubted that the ALP was even ostensibly under the control of the MoI, suggesting that the main control was lying with either local commanders and/or US Special Forces especially in areas where neither the ANA nor the AUP had a good reach. Respondents were clear that given the choice, they always prefer a state-controlled police force to a militia, as it at least represents some sense of order and government control. At present, however, the trend in Uruzgan outside the capital district of Tirin Kot is that ALP are on pace to overshadow AUP, especially in Gizab (see Figure 16). This could explain why both PCoP Matiullah Khan and his predecessor expressed some reservations about the ALP, feeling that increasing the size of this ultimately temporary force undermined scaling-up and professionalizing the AUP. It also raises an uneasy question about what percentage of the ANP is truly under government control.

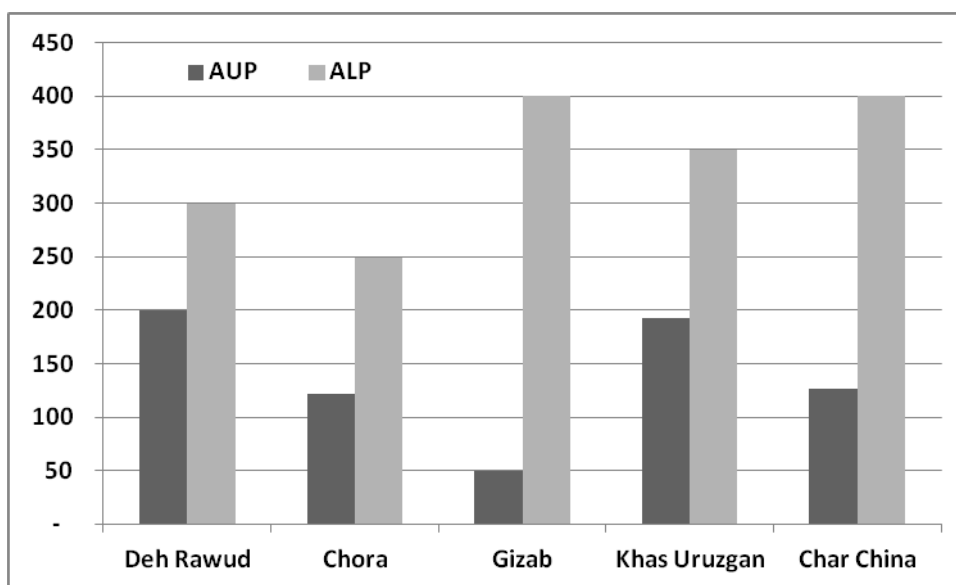


Figure 16: Comparison between AUP and Planned ALP Strength in Uruzgan

Finally, given the high un- and underemployment in Uruzgan, the idea of the ALP functioning as a part-time job was not understood by most of the population and many ALP themselves who consider their job full-time. This led to multiple complaints about the low salary.

By the end of 2011, with the exception of Gizab, many respondents started to question whether the ALP was in fact contributing to the overall security of Uruzgan. Local citizens increasingly complained of predatory behaviour, often followed by denunciations of ALP personnel as drug addicts, and criminals. Others argued that the ALP had disturbed local

dynamics and thereby created instability, especially in Khas Uruzgan and Char China, but also in Deh Rawud.

It appears that areas with relatively cohesive tribal structures had a more successful experience with the ALP (e.g., Gizab), while districts with more heterogeneous tribal and ethnic structure encountered problems when ALP forces were seen as linked to specific local leaders with a history of predatory and abusive behaviour towards residents. Many residents feel that the US Special Forces lack a sufficiently nuanced understanding of local dynamics, which often results in poor choices when forming ALP units. These choices often exacerbate local conflicts. There was also some reported tension between ALP and AUP, which in a few instances allegedly erupted in violence.

Key complaints can be roughly grouped into the following categories:

Lack of training/professionalism: Overall, the ALP is seen as ‘a less than perfect AUP,’ who have even less education and training, and are less professional. Many attribute the poor behaviour of the ALP to their continued drug use (despite mandatory drug testing before enrolment)⁴³⁰ and insufficient and ineffective training, falling far short of the amount needed to turn uneducated rural Uruzganis into an effective police force.⁴³¹ In the words of one shopkeeper from Char China, “the ALP are all addicted [to drugs], are appointed through other powerbrokers, and do not have good behaviour with people.”⁴³² An Imam (person who leads prayer) from Deh Rawud echoed this assessment about ALP in the district being “drug and hashish smokers; their education level is low and they don’t have respect [for] elders and ulema.”⁴³³

Inadequate vetting mechanisms: All ALP recruits are supposed to be nominated and vetted by a local *malik* or shura, then approved and biometrically enrolled by MoI and US SOF.⁴³⁴ In practice, however, numerous respondents indicate that the vetting process is sometimes reduced to simply displaying a national identity card (*tazkira*) and signing a form.

Respondents in Chora, Char China, and Khas Uruzgan expressed concern about unqualified or otherwise undesirable recruits being readily accepted into the ALP’s ranks without local concurrence. There were also stories in Char China of young men allegedly being pressured to join the ALP as a means of repaying a debt or ameliorating a feud rather than joining of their own volition. Forced recruitment would go against the ‘voluntary’ credo of the ALP. In Chora, an elder also alleged that the ALP was accepting underage recruits into their force.⁴³⁵

Influence of US Special Forces: There were many allegations of US SOF dominating the ALP recruitment process in order to ensure that their handpicked choices or those of their

⁴³⁰ Interview, US Special Forces, Tirin Kot, 17 June 2011

⁴³¹ The ALP undergo a three-week training course, which includes everything from first aid, hygiene, Afghan Constitution, vehicle searches, basic soldiers skills, small unit tactics, marksmanship, and how to deal with check-post life. In contrast the AUP training is eight weeks and was recently expanded to 11.

⁴³² Interview, Char China shopkeeper, 20 April 2011

⁴³³ Interview, Deh Rawud imam, 20 April 2011

⁴³⁴ Interview, US Special Forces, Tirin Kot, 17 June 2011

⁴³⁵ Interview, Chora tribal elder, Tirin Kot, 10 April 2011

Afghan Security Guards (ASGs) make it onto the force. Local residents in Khas Uruzgan, Deh Rawud and Char China separately voiced concern about the practice of US SOF appointing their ASGs as commanders or simply rolling several of their guards into ALP units.⁴³⁶ Char China locals also complained that the US SOF had only recruited members from one Nurzai sub-tribe, which ended up reviving tribal tensions with another Nurzai sub-tribe that were accused of supporting the Taliban. Some local community members in the district even developed conspiracy theories and argued that the arming and equipping of one community is a deliberate tactic by US SOF to incite a rift between the Nurzai. The new DCoP of Char China shared the apprehension of local residents that the US SOF were too involved in selecting ALP recruits and raised concern that US SOF continued to directly distribute weapons, salaries, and other materials to ALP rather than through his office. The perceived negative influence of the US SOF in Khas Uruzgan was highlighted by an elder who remarked positively that the ALP was becoming more independent from the Americans, a development that would be welcomed by many in that district.

Predatory behaviour: While similar complaints as those lodged against the AUP were raised in relation to the ALP, ranging from extortion, banditry, abuse, *bacha bazi*, and other unseemly behaviour, some complaints were unique to ALP. This includes rape, kidnapping, and several reported incidents of ALP killing innocent civilians in October and November 2011.

In many areas, checkpoint and district Commanders are criticized for putting their own personal gain ahead of their duty, and reports of ALP policemen robbing and harassing the populace received by TLO were confirmed by the AIHRC. Several respondents argued that the comparatively lower pay of the ALP might encourage them to engage in criminal activities and argued that a salary increase was necessary.

6.5 Kandak-e Amniat-e Uruzgan (KAU)

The KAU was established out of the disbanded Afghan Highway Police (AHP) in 2006. The AHP—then under Matiullah Khan’s command—were not integrated into the ANP due to the intervention of then governor and local strongman Jan Muhammad Khan. Since then the KAU has occupied an ambiguous grey zone, as until Matiullah Khan became PCoP it was not controlled by any government entity, yet frequently works in partnership with ANSF and international military forces to clear contested areas and secure roads in the province. This made the KAU in essence a hybrid ANSF and private security force.

In April 2010, the KAU led efforts to recapture Gizab and Char China in the second half of 2011. In cooperation with IMF and ANSF troops, the KAU spearheaded operations to clear the roads into and within Char China, rendering them safe for civilians to travel for the first time in years. After the kinetic phase of the operations finished, the KAU transitioned to

⁴³⁶ Interview, Khas Uruzgan tribal elder, Tirin Kot, 30 June 2011; This concern was also raised by PCoP Matiullah; Interview, Tirin Kot, 15 December 2011 and a representative of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Interview, Tirin Kot, 4 July 2011. ⁴³⁷ Interview, PCoP Maitullah Khan, Tirin Kot, 15 December 2011

more static duties, particularly in the areas around the border between Helmand province and Char China.

According to PCoP Matiullah Khan, the KAU currently secures three key roads: Tirin Kot to Kandahar, Tirin Kot to Deh Rawud, and Deh Rawud to Char China.⁴³⁷ Due to their role in security provision in Tirin Kot, Gizab, and Char China, locals had good things to say about the KAU and its performance, praising them for their competence and courage. Others shared the view that the KAU is an effective fighting force. Some, however, are concerned about the presence of a large private security force operating as Matiullah Khan's private militia.

The fact that Matiullah Khan is now the PCoP is somewhat problematic as it blurs the line between formal and informal power structures within Uruzgan's security providers. As a result, the future of the KAU is quite uncertain and it is unclear whether it might finally be absorbed into the ANSF.

6.6 International Military Forces

Uruzgan's residents have mixed feelings toward international military forces. Local residents see international forces as one of two belligerents in an armed conflict that often places Afghan citizens in the terrible situation of sitting between the two warring groups. Both sides know that the key to victory is winning the favour and support of the local population, favour that local residents would gladly forgo for a chance to live in peace. It is hardly surprising that local residents have negative perceptions of both sides in a conflict that—in the view of Uruzgan's citizens—is the greatest source of instability in their lives.

Many local residents are appreciative and recognized the significant contribution that international forces have made in improving the security situation in Uruzgan over the last year. Many respondents attribute this success to the more assertive approach of the Australian and US troops, which was often contrasted with the approach of their Dutch counterparts. Even NGO workers noted that the Australian and American approach is "different, tougher,"⁴³⁸ especially when compared to the Dutch, who "did not kill so many civilians and behaved with more caution when attacked."⁴³⁹

In some interviews, comments were made about the Dutch as one group and the Americans as another, with the Australians lodged somewhere in the middle, albeit they are frequently put into the American camp. One NGO representative, for example, noted that the Australians were referred to in some communities as the "new Americans,"⁴⁴⁰ while an elder humorously called the Australians "the new Dutch soldiers."

For the most part, however, any foreign military is viewed collectively as "*Amricayans*" and it is therefore difficult to identify the local perceptions of any one force. US forces are also

⁴³⁷ Interview, PCoP Matiullah Khan, Tirin Kot, 15 December 2011

⁴³⁸ Interview, Local NGO representative, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011

⁴³⁹ Interview, Local NGO representative, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011

⁴⁴⁰ Interview, Local NGO representative, Kabul, 11 July 2011

frequently viewed as the “the boss of other foreign forces,” who are capable of influencing the behaviour of other nation’s troops.

Local residents also have a difficult time distinguishing between conventional forces and SOF. The resulting confusion often led to ambiguous, if not contradictory, opinions from local residents who could not understand the difference between the soldier who by day is engaged in a reconstruction mission in their community and the soldier who by night is engaged in a kill or capture mission in their community.⁴⁴¹

Perceptions are also based on existing expectations communities had of IMF. For example, Deh Rawud residents expressed frustration that IMF was doing less development and reconstruction projects than in the past, which affected their overall judgement.

In the end, the opinions voiced are very difficult to attribute to any of the military forces operating in Uruzgan. TLO has tried to separate out the perceptions of the different international forces as far as possible, yet there is always the distinct possibility that one or the other evaluation was incorrectly categorized.

6.6.1 Australian Forces

While many residents attribute security improvements to PCoP Matiullah Khan, they also recognize that Australian forces played an important role. This was particularly highlighted by Gizab residents who alluded to the ADF’s partnership with ANSF in April 2010 to take the district from the Taliban. In Gizab, the perceptions of Australians are very positive, with communities thinking “that the Australians are serious and support the Afghan government in many ways. They say that the Australian forces should stay in Uruzgan province for a long period to help the Afghan government stand on its feet.”⁴⁴² Overall, respondents in Uruzgan appreciated the clear stance of the ADF vis-à-vis the insurgency. A tribal elder comparing the three military forces argued that “the Dutch were kind of friends of the Taliban, while the Australians hate the Taliban and kill them”⁴⁴³ and that he was puzzled by the Americans, “never sure which side they really are [on].”⁴⁴⁴

On the other hand, not everyone is necessarily happy about the more pro-active and aggressive approach the Australian army has adopted in Uruzgan. Some communities have become disillusioned arguing that the approach adopted by the ADF is simply too heavy handed.

Others focused on the non-lethal aspects of the ADF mission, with views divided by respondent. For example, one international NGO representative noted that the Australians

⁴⁴¹ For more please see the last article written by the late Uruzgani journalist Omaid Khpalwak, published by the Australian Lowy Institute post-mortem. Omaid Khpalwak and Muhammad Omar Sherzad, “Two Afghan Views of Australia from Uruzgan,” *Afghan Voices Series*, The Lowy Institute for International Policy (November 2011); <http://www.lowyinstitute.org/Publication.asp?pid=1754>

⁴⁴² Omaid Khpalwak and Muhammad Omar Sherzad, “Two Afghan Views of Australia from Uruzgan,” *Afghan Voices Series*, The Lowy Institute for International Policy (November 2011); <http://www.lowyinstitute.org/Publication.asp?pid=1754>

⁴⁴³ Interview, Tirin Kot elder, Kabul, September 2011

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid

are “not so good when it comes to the softer aspects of security,” including community engagement,⁴⁴⁵ while another expressed relief that the Australian transition seemed to go over relatively smoothly, praising the Australians for their willingness to communicate with the population about on-going offensives.⁴⁴⁶ Yet another argued that the jury was still out, saying “We will have to see whether the Australians take the time to learn and listen to the community.”⁴⁴⁷

6.6.2 US Forces

US forces continue to be the least liked IMF in Uruzgan, which is most likely liked to their extended presence in the province generally. Indeed, the US troops have been in Uruzgan much longer than either their Dutch or Australian counterparts, especially during a time when governance was extremely weak and strongmen influence was negatively impacting on the human rights situation.

Thus, many residents tend to associate the Americans with this difficult past. Since then most of the perceptions about US military is directly attributable to the frequent critiques levelled against US Special Operations Forces (SOF) for their role in night raids. The exception is Gizab district, where US mentors are seen as a positive force in building a strong and successful ALP.

Local respondents frequently called out US SOF for behaviour that was simply disrespectful, arrogant and in cases that could best be described as juvenile. In Khas Uruzgan, for example, respondents indicated that US SOF were extremely disrespectful of tribal elders who they called names, swore at, and tried to publicly humiliate if they showed any hesitancy in cooperating with IMF. These acts are highly offensive.

The behaviour of these forces has a destabilizing effect on the community as both the elders and the community they represent sour on IMF, become more reluctant to aid their operations, and in some cases seek revenge or join the insurgents.

More than anything, however, Uruzganis are disenchanted with the way IMF soldiers, especially Americans near-indiscriminately treat young men or people

Special Forces Conduct in Char China

An infamous Special Forces soldier known only as ‘Chris’ was reported as acting rather erratically in meetings, which has lead local respondents to believe that he is an alcoholic or at least behaves like he is drunk most of the time. A frequently cited example occurred in late December 2011 when Chris was paying out ALP salaries. Allegedly, he became infuriated with an ALP commander called Mullah Ismail (Nurzai Khwaja Khadarzai from Kashta Doane) for no apparent reason, even publicly threatening to fire him. The situation was only mitigated after others reportedly intervened, trying to calm Chris down. Some believe that Chris is lucky to still be alive given he insulted a respected community member in public.

⁴⁴⁵ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011

⁴⁴⁶ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 12 July 2011

⁴⁴⁷ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011

thought to be supporting or sympathetic to the Taliban as enemies, which many respondents believe has led to the unnecessary killing of civilians during night raids. Commenting on one such “accidental killing” in his district a tribal elder from Deh Rawud ominously warned that, “such acts committed in the district will not be forgotten by the people.”⁴⁴⁸

The American propensity to quickly use force was also noted by one NGO representative who highlighted the trigger happiness of US soldiers and indiscriminate response when coming under attack, saying, “The American instantly start shooting at everybody in the parameter.”⁴⁴⁹ The accidental killing of a prominent young local journalist in the Radio Television Afghanistan building during the 28 July 2011 complex attack on Tirin Kot has only reinforced the trigger-happy perception of US forces.⁴⁵⁰

6.6.3 A Note on Night raids

Night raids or kill/capture missions usually undertaken by SOF remain universally detested and a source of tension throughout Uruzgan. Respondents did acknowledge and appreciate that steps taken by IMF did lead to some improvements.

Despite these steps, Uruzgan’s citizens continue to perceive night raids as indiscriminate forms of collective punishment that target communities that IMF believes are in any way supporting insurgents. Char China residents; for example, are terrified of what they term the “brutal operations” conducted by the “bearded foreigners.” Moreover, respondents feel that foreign forces often use poor judgment during these raids and needlessly harm innocent civilians or raid buildings without having a clear military objective.⁴⁵¹

In late September, tribes from the Mehrabad, Khanak, and Darafshan areas of Tirin Kot gathered in Saad Marda to show frustration with the foreign military presence, and asked the commanding ANP officer of the area to forbid foreigners from conducting night raids. The tribes made it clear that they were willing to cooperate with ISAF and ANSF, but they strongly disapproved of night raids.

Some communities, such as in Mehrabad noted the improvement in the behaviour of SOF vis-à-vis locals during night raids. While previously foreign troops (in this instance Australian SOF) would enter houses without ANSF and, more importantly, without any permission or even a warning to the occupants, they now use a “soft knock” to alert residents and at times even search the house together with the resident or elders. Nevertheless, an elder from the area noted that his preference would be for the military to secure an area at night and

⁴⁴⁸ “Afghan Voices: Two Afghan Views of Australia from Uruzgan,” 2011, p.3

⁴⁴⁹ Interview, Local NGO representative, Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011

⁴⁵⁰ “According to NATO’s official account, he was shot by US forces who believed he was an insurgent that fired on them with a weapon and was subsequently taking action to detonate a suicide vest IED. According to [his] brother, he was probably reaching for his press pass.” “Afghan Voices: Two Afghan Views of Australia from Uruzgan,” 2011, p.1

⁴⁵¹ It is unclear if this was Australian or US Special Forces, as TLO was told both.

conduct the actual house search shortly after the Morning Prayer call at dawn, at which point they might even be offered tea.⁴⁵²

6.7 Taliban/Anti-Government Actors

The Taliban in Uruzgan suffered substantial territorial losses over the past 18 months, mostly in the second half of 2011. Despite losses, however, the Taliban still controls about 35-45% of the province (PCoP Matiullah Khan estimated 30%), and has pockets in every district, even if some have diminished.⁴⁵³ The areas with the least insurgent control are Deh Rawud (5%) and Tirin Kot (10-20%); the areas with most are Khas Uruzgan (85%) and Chenartu (65%). Gizab (30-40%), Char China (45-50%), and Chora (50%) lie somewhere in-between.

The biggest blows to the insurgency were the loss of the Mehrabad valley in Tirin Kot, which they controlled since 2004, Char China, held since 2007, and areas in Gizab, a district where they entirely controlled the Pashtun areas until April 2010. The Taliban made gains in other areas, such as Darafshan, and parts of Chora and Char China.

It is hard to provide a firm estimate of the number of Taliban forces active in Uruzgan as residents are, for the most part, very reluctant to provide details in fear of being seen as spies. An added complication is the mobility of the insurgency, differing between fighting and non-fighting seasons, scaling up during operations, while otherwise moving in small groups of no more than 10-20 fighters. Even though TLO was unable to obtain exact estimates, respondents reported an overall decrease in Taliban by the end of 2011 when many fighters left for their winter break. Some respondents communicated fears that insurgency numbers might drastically increase for the 2012 Spring Offensive.

Most could (or would) not name the Uruzgan Taliban Shadow Governor. A few respondents noted that in the past 18 months, Mullah Bari Gul (a Hotak from Darafshan) and Mullah Raouf (Alizai from Helmand) served consecutive terms as Shadow Governor in Uruzgan, with Shafiq Agha (Popalzai from the Charmistan area of Tirin Kot district) appointed at the end of 2011.⁴⁵⁴ In contrast, respondents agreed that the head of Taliban military forces in Uruzgan continues to be Wali Jan.

6.7.1 Composition

The insurgency in Uruzgan consists of a patchwork of tribes and individuals with a range of demands and interests. Locals told TLO that they separate the insurgents into various informal categories that carry substantial weight at different times:

- **District Taliban:** Residents native to the immediate district in which they operate

⁴⁵² Interview, Mehrabad elder, Tirin Kot, early July 2011

⁴⁵³ See Table 17 in Section 8.1)

⁴⁵⁴ Allegedly he has close connections with Qari Azizullah (Achezkai from Khas Uruzgan), an influential Taliban released from Bagram in Jan 2012.

- **Province Taliban:** Uruzgani residents that operate outside their district of origin (e.g., Khas Uruzgan Taliban operating in Gizab)
- **Non-Uruzgani Taliban:** Afghan Taliban from other provinces, e.g., Helmand, Kandahar etc.
- **Foreign Taliban:** Taliban not from Afghanistan
- **Logistic Taliban supporters:** These are not active fighters but run errands for the insurgency and offer minor logistical support. These are often confused with people forced to provide food, shelter and money, who may only do so under duress.

One respondent told TLO that it is not uncommon for villages to establish insurgent cells to keep out foreign Taliban in what could perhaps be described as an unusual take on the concept of local defence forces. This strategy is also employed to ensure that communities can avoid being taxed by external Taliban. In the past it was common for local Taliban to fight with external Taliban over revenues. Thus, standing up a local Taliban force not only helps keep more aggressive foreign Taliban out of the community, but also ensures that money remains 'in the neighbourhood'.

While the key provincial Taliban leadership in Uruzgan have traditionally come from Helmand or Kandahar, recently there seems to be more home grown military leaders, particularly at the mid-level. District leadership has frequently been from Uruzgan, even if not always operating in their home district. This leadership style might simply be because of the pressure that has been on the insurgency, forcing outsiders to leave, even if still nominally in charge from afar. Now much of the shadow government in Uruzgan is from the province, but the Taliban leadership in Quetta keeps a careful eye on local leaders, such as the Taliban shadow DG Malawi Saad Muhammad in Gizab who was sacked in September 2011 for his alleged connection with the Afghan government.

During the Taliban regime, the Achekzai tribe (Zirak Durrani and the biggest tribe in Uruzgan) had key figures in the movement. This continues today, especially as the Achekzai tribe has felt marginalized from political leadership post 2001. Thus, in the districts and areas where the Achekzai tribe is concentrated, it has proven hard to weaken the insurgency. This is the case in parts of Chora, where locals think that so little progress has been made to weaken the Taliban and where half the district remains under insurgency control, but also in Khas Uruzgan and parts of Gizab, the two districts where most Achekzai reside. The insurgency in Deh Rawud is said to be primarily composed of members of the Babozai, Nurzai, and Khogiani tribes, but also some Popalzai.

None of this, of course, means that an entire tribe supports the insurgency. Tribes are relatively large and are often internally divided as a result of power struggles, some of which originated during the *mujahideen* time and were never properly resolved, with further divisions created later by opportunistic strongmen. This is illustrated by the fact that, in Char China, most of the insurgency is said to come from only one of the two Nurzai sub-tribes and the ALP from another.

6.7.2 Insurgent Strategies

For most of the past 18 months, the insurgency avoided open battles and focussed instead on smaller operations (ambushes, IEDs, assassinations) and being a disturbance potential. For large scale, complex attacks and high profile assassinations such as the killing of Jan Mohammad Khan⁴⁵⁵, local insurgents usually have to rely on support from foreign Taliban who are not always present in the district or province, an indication that the insurgency has been stretched thin attempting to protect strategic territory in, for instance, central Kandahar and northern Helmand during combined IMF/ANSF 'surge' offensives in the south. The complex attack on 28 July 2011 in Tirin Kot City—one of the biggest not only in Uruzgan but the country—was a clear exception and a means for the insurgency to remind locals of their lethal potential and overall resilience especially as NATO and US forces in particular begin to more publicly talk about withdrawal and handover.

The current tactics of the Taliban include kidnapping, ambushing, and killing of government officials, pro-government elders, and NGO workers. The most high profile assassination was the killing of Uruzgan's former Governor and pre-eminent powerbroker Jan Muhammad Khan alongside Parliamentarian Watanwal in Kabul in July 2011. There were also numerous attempts, some successful, to kill lower-level government officials in Uruzgan.⁴⁵⁶ The IED is the key tool of the insurgency that provides insurgents with the ability to disturb areas under government-control.

As the Taliban lose control of areas and are forced to retreat into the shadows, they reportedly increasingly rely on *soft* intimidation tactics such as night letters or house visits. In Gizab, for example, the Head the District Development Assembly received a night letter threatening to kill him. In Char China, insurgents warned Garmab residents to not participate in the recently initiated National Solidarity Programme. Residents tried to explain to insurgents that, due to having come under government control, they would have to participate in the programme or they would be seen as suspicious and could possibly be targeted by IMF.

The Taliban also distributed night letters in some areas of Chora district in the late fall of 2011, instructing community members to not carry weapons after 9:00 p.m. so they could be distinguished from ALP. Furthermore, communities were warned to not assist in the identification of IEDs as this would be considered as spying for the enemy and punished by death.

In some places, however, the Taliban does not need to do much to be feared, as long as communities are uncertain of the ability of the Afghan government to secure recently

⁴⁵⁵ The assassination of Jan Mohammad Khan was carried out in Kabul. Given the huge variation in the human and security terrain between Kabul and Tirin Kot, it is unlikely that his assassination was executed solely by members of the local insurgency.

⁴⁵⁶ Mawlawi Hamdullah (Tor Mullah), the Director of the Department of Hajj and Religious Affairs, had an attempt on his life on 27 July 2011, when two men on a motorcycle conducted a drive by shooting. In early September, insurgents assassinated the Head of the Central Statistics Organization in Deh Rawud, with the Deh Rawud DCC Head surviving an assassination attempt the same week. On 16 September 2011, the Chora DCoP also died when his car struck an IED.

cleared areas. Despite the advances of Special Forces and their Afghan Security Guards in the Tagab area of Char China, for example, locals indicated that they thought that the KAU would soon leave the area to move on to other parts of the province; when this happens, local communities worry that the Taliban will quickly return, undo all of the progress made in the last year, and punish people who were seen as supporting the Afghan government or IMF.

In districts still under strong Taliban control like Khas Uruzgan, and parts of Chora, Chenartu, and Char China, the Taliban continued to collect *ushur* and *zakat* (taxes on crops and assets based on Islamic Sharia) in order to finance their operations (see also Section 2.4.1). Other areas also saw some taxation, although less than in the previous 18 months. The Taliban also sped up money collection in Chora district over the last three months of 2011, framing it less as tax than as an appeal for help (*Komak Rasara Waka*). To many, it seemed as if the insurgency was raising funds for the next spring initiative, as they were also sending their fighters to Pakistan. While some refused to pay by arguing they already contributed to some other insurgency group, others simply contributed out of fear. It was said this Taliban fundraiser was quite successful in Chora.

While many in Uruzgan may not actively oppose the Taliban out of fear, there are areas where the insurgency still has considerable support, especially in pockets where community feel excluded from government and development programs. In the southern parts of Chenartu, for example, where the Taliban enjoys a large measure of control and influence, one respondent told TLO that the Taliban social systems “are effective and people like them.”⁴⁵⁷

6.7.3 Development Actors, Communities and the Insurgency

Operating in a conflict zone remains a constant strain on NGOs. Despite the many challenges, NGOs have learned to cope with the situation and have a great deal of experience and often enjoy a geographic reach that extends beyond that of the government. NGOs have been particularly successful in ensuring the participation of local communities in the development process—from design to actual implementation. This participatory approach fosters local ownership and the willingness of communities to provide security-arrangements.⁴⁵⁸

Once rapport is established, community members often are willing to build a bridge between development actors and the insurgency. About 75% of all Afghan NGOs interviewed, especially those working in insecure areas, highlighted the necessity of having linkages with the insurgency to continue their work. One international organization representative even

⁴⁵⁷ Interview, Chenartu tribal elder, Tirin Kot, 11 July 2011

⁴⁵⁸ It was frequently repeatedly that NGOs indeed just pick another community to implement their project, if they have the feeling that local elders are either unable or unwilling to provide security. Interviews, several Local NGO-representatives, Kabul, 6 7 and 11 July 2011

admitted that they chose their local implementing partner according to the latter's ability to link up to communities in insecure areas.⁴⁵⁹

Once NGOs have community trust and buy-in, village elders seem more than willing to negotiate with Taliban to accept projects, and ignore NGO workers. One respondent noted, "The villagers are a wall between [us] and the Taliban."⁴⁶⁰ For example, communities sometimes warn development actors of danger in certain areas.⁴⁶¹ A local NGO representative explained:

"We move pretty freely in Gizab, but with some exceptions. For example [the local community] of Miana Dasht wanted us to do a follow up on last year's activities in May 2011, which is in an area under Taliban control. That has not been a problem before, but during that time the villagers told us that Talibs from other provinces and Pakistan recently began to use their area as a safe haven because they were driven out of other areas. The villagers advised us not to come because we would be attacked by these new Talibs otherwise."⁴⁶²

When the Taliban are from, and hence part of, a local community they directly benefit from projects and thus have a stake in making them work. This was explained by another local organization, "We don't have a problem with the Taliban in general; only foreign insurgents that are not really controlled by the local leadership pose a problem."⁴⁶³

Good community relations are also invaluable in helping to resolve problems, including the kidnapping of staff members. One local respondent recounted this incident, "Once our staff members were abducted by the Taliban; a local shura facilitated their safe release. If we had tried governmental support, we would not have gotten them back."⁴⁶⁴

NGOs walk a fine line between cooperating with line departments on the one hand and working in insecure areas—with the acquiescence of the insurgency—on the other. The government seems to have adopted a "don't ask, don't tell policy,"⁴⁶⁵ which is why NGOs' implementing partners are usually better known to communities than the Afghan government programme behind it. This of course robs the Afghan government of any recognition and contributes to the widely held view that it is incompetent. Similarly, cooperation with the PRT, or even being associated with them, was something that over 60% of the respondents tried to avoid at all cost, reasoning quite simply that, "if you go to the PRT compound, you are a target."⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁵⁹ Interview, International NGO-representative, Kabul, 25 July 2011

⁴⁶⁰ Interview, Local NGO-representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011

⁴⁶¹ Interview, Local NGO-representative, Kabul, 23 July 2011

⁴⁶² Interview, Local NGO-representative, Kabul, 3 July 2011

⁴⁶³ Interview, Local NGO-representative, Kabul, 29 June 2011

⁴⁶⁴ Interview, International NGO representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011; this was echoed in several other interviews with local NGO-representatives, Kabul, 6 July, 13 July, 23 July and 27 July 2011.

⁴⁶⁵ Interview, Local NGO-representative, Kabul, 29 June 2011

⁴⁶⁶ Interview, International NGO-representative, Kabul, 13 July 2011; similar comments were made by several other local and international organizations. Interviews: Kabul, 29 June, 12 and 23 July 2011; and Tirin Kot, 27 July 2011.

Appendix I: Development Actors

Table 19: Key Afghan NGOs in Uruzgan

Name of NGO	Acronym	In Uruzgan since	Major Activity Fields	Signature Project(s) in Tirin Kot District	Active in
Afghanistan Business Capacity Development (ABCD Consultants)	ABCD	2011	Facilitating Partner for Phase II of the National Solidarity Programme	NSP Facilitating partner	Tirin Kot, Gizab, Khas Uruzgan
Afghanistan Centre for Training and Development	ACTD ⁴⁶⁷	2009	Civil society development, capacity-building, research, community development, business-/management training	Rehabilitation centre for drug addiction, adult literacy program, construction of primary schools, business development centre	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Char China, Chora, Khas Uruzgan
Afghanistan Development Association	ADA	1992	Agriculture, capacity-building and energy	Gardens, training for farmers, maternity clinic for animals, distribution of solar panels	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud
Agriculture and Health Development Organization	AHDO	End of 2008	Literacy, training programs for women	Poultry production and literacy training for 75 women. Finished project in September 2009	Tirin Kot, Chora
Afghanistan Health Development Services	AHDS	1995	Health, agriculture, construction capacity building	Building and support of health facilities, support and training for community health workers, community midwifery training, fruit tree nurseries, greenhouses, facilitation of monthly NGO meetings	all districts of Uruzgan

⁴⁶⁷ Not to be confused with the French NGO ACTED (Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement).

Name of NGO	Acronym	In Uruzgan since	Major Activity Fields	Signature Project(s) in Tirin Kot District	Active in
Afghanistan National Reconstruction Coordination	ANCC	2004	Agriculture, food security, health, education, capacity-building	Implementing partner for MRRD (NSP), Save the Children (Quality Primary Education Programme and school construction), and ZOA (construction and rehabilitation of wells)	Tirin Kot, Char China, Chenartu, Chora, Khas Uruzgan, Deh Rawud; previously in Gizab
Accessibility Organization for Afghan Disabled	AOAD	2009	Education and capacity-building, primarily for disabled persons	Literacy, English, and computer-skills training for both sexes. Tailoring for women	Tirin Kot
Afghan Education and Rehabilitation Programs	AREP	End of 2010	Capacity-building, community development	Training for and through religious leaders	Tirin Kot
Afghanistan Reconstruction Planning and Development	ARPD	2004	Agriculture, construction (wells), health and education; (specialized in rural development)	Distribution of improved wheat seeds and fertilizer for FAO; disaster/risk management for UNICEF (storage and eventual distribution of relief materials)	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Chora, Char China
Afghan Veterinarians Association	AVA	2010	Veterinary, capacity building	Implementation partner of DCA-VET. Training and support of para-veterinarians (veterinarian workers with 5-6 month training) and basic veterinarian workers (veterinarian workers with 1 month training)	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Char China (their trainees work in all districts)
Afghan Women's Association for Rehabilitation and Development	AWARD	2009	Vocational training for women	Teaching women how to make jam	Tirin Kot

Name of NGO	Acronym	In Uruzgan since	Major Activity Fields	Signature Project(s) in Tirin Kot District	Active in
Humanitarian Assistance Development and Association for Afghanistan	HADAAF	2009	Health, capacity building	Training, support, and monitoring private health practitioners. Environmental health project (raising awareness and promoting health)	Main activities in Tirin Kot, private health practitioners in all districts except Gizab
Just for Afghan Capacity and Knowledge	JACK	2008	Construction in health and education sectors	Building schools, boundary walls, and one education centre; digging wells	Tirin Kot, Chenartu
National Engineering and Reconstruction Unit	NERU	2003 (1994)	Construction (roads, schools, wells), hygiene education, capacity-building	Construction of wells, rehabilitation of traditional irrigation systems	Tirin Kot; previously in Chora, Khas Uruzgan and Gizab
Norwegian Project Office-Rural Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan	NPO-RRAA	2009	Agriculture and capacity-building	Livestock project and feed bank	Tirin Kot, Gizab
Southern Afghanistan Development Association	SADA	2008	Agriculture, construction	Wheat seed and fertilizer distribution for FAO. Used to be implementing partner of ZOA, but cooperation ended 2010	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud and Chora; previously Khas Uruzgan and Chenartu
Social Volunteers Foundation	SVF	2008	Education, capacity-building, and child protection	Vocational training for children (embroidery, tailoring and electrician training), child protection cooperation network	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Chora
The Liaison Office	TLO	2006	Agriculture, capacity-building, peacebuilding, research	Monitoring/Evaluation, research, peacebuilding (Spring Initiative, Farmers Day celebration, youth, ulema), livelihood work in the past	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Chora, research in all districts of Uruzgan

Table 20: Key International NGOs in Uruzgan

Name of International NGO	Acronym	In Uruzgan since	Field	Signature Project(s) in Tirin Kot District	Active in
Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid (DCU member)	CORDAID	2002	Health, agriculture, capacity-building	Mainly work through implementing partners NPO-RRAA (Agriculture) and AHDS (health facilities). Community midwifery program	Limited to Tirin Kot. In all other districts through their implementation partners
Dutch Committee for Afghanistan Veterinarian Programmes (DCU member)	DCA-VET	2006	Veterinary medicine, capacity-building	Work mainly through implementing partner AVA. Training and support for para-veterinarians and basic veterinarian workers. Distribution of food aid for animals in the winter	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud. Trainees are active in all districts
Health Netherlands Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (DCU member)	HealthNet TPO	On and off for 16 years, more active since 2007	Health, capacity-building	Supports HADAAs PPP project. Trains relatively highly qualified local health workers (community nursing, community lab technician and community pharmacists). Psycho-social programme for women and children	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud and Chora
International Capital Market Association	ICMA	2007	Capacity-building, construction	Afghanistan Municipal Strengthening Programme (AMSP): technical assistance and training in the areas of sanitation management, road rehabilitation, water management, and electricity supply	Tirin Kot
International Legal Foundation – Afghanistan	ILF-A	2011	Legal aid	Provide defence lawyers on <i>pro bono</i> basis	Tirin Kot

Name of International NGO	Acronym	In Uruzgan since	Field	Signature Project(s) in Tirin Kot District	Active in
Norwegian Church Aid	NCA	2003	Solar power, food security, water/sanitation	Work exclusively through implementing partner ADA	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud
Save the Children (Afghanistan) DCU Member	SCA	2009	Education, capacity-building, health, construction	Provide technical assistance to their implementing partners: ACTD, ANCC, HADAAF, JACK, SVF, and AHDS	All districts except Gizab; but thinking to expand there
World Council of Credit Unions	WOCCU	2008	Small loans	Small loans for farmers, shopkeepers, etc. (usually around 25,000 AFG). Because loaning money was considered un-Islamic by their shura they now give out supplies (like seeds or fertilizer) or other products with the value of the loan and then receive money back, after the duration of the loan.	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Chora
Zuid Oost Azie (DCU member)	ZOA	2008	Construction, capacity-building	Work through their implementing partner NERU. Construction and maintenance of wells, hygiene education, training for shuras	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Chora

Table 21: Development Contractors in Uruzgan

Name of Contractor	Acronym	In Uruzgan since	Field	Signature Project(s) in Tirin Kot District	Also active in
Central Asia Development Group	CADG	2009	Construction	Construction of bridges, culverts, and drainage systems in Tirin Kot city	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Chora
Checchi Consulting	Checchi	2011	Informal justice	Training of informal justice providers	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Chora
Development Alternatives Inc.	DAI	2009	Construction, education, capacity building	Road construction, rehabilitation and upgrade, construction skill and literacy training, home economics and basic literacy classes for women	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Chora, Chenartu
Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH	GIZ	2008	Construction, technical assistance	Uruzgan Provincial Development Project: Tirin-Kot Chora road, support for the rural economy, training for district and provincial level government employees, infrastructure	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud and Chora
GRM International	GRM	2009	Capacity-building (project design, management expertise and technical assistance)	Capacity-building to Ministry of Water and Power, Ministry Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock.	Tirin Kot
Louis Berger Group	LBG	End of 2010	Construction	Headquarters in the PRT in Tirin Kot, no projects in Tirin Kot at the moment. Bridge construction in the centre of Char China	Only Char China


No longer active: DAI, ARD

Table 22: UN and International Organizations in Tirin Kot

Name of UN Agency	Acronym	Working in province since	Field	Signature Project(s) in Tirin Kot District	Also active in
Food and Agriculture Organization	FAO	2008	Agriculture	Agricultural livelihood project; distribution of improved wheat seeds and fertilizer (partners AHDS, ANCC, ARPD, SADA)	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Chora (distribution in all districts)
International Committee of the Red Cross	ICRC	1996	Health, monitoring, and capacity-building	Prison inspection, ambulance for wounded combatants and non-combatants, first aid training for security and military professionals	Tirin Kot
International Organization for Migration	IOM	2008	Afghan Civilian Assistance Program	Distribution of assistance packages: small business, education support, tailoring tools, literacy, home kits, staple food items, agricultural kit, livestock kit, winterization kit, rural livelihood	Unknown
United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan	UNAMA	2009	Coordination, Human Rights Monitoring		Tirin Kot
United Nations International Children's Education Fund	UNICEF	2008	Health	Use implementing partner ARPD to store 200 family kits and other non-food materials for 1500 families	Tirin Kot


Name of UN Agency	Acronym	Working in province since	Field	Signature Project(s) in Tirin Kot District	Also active in
World Food Program	WFP	End of 2006	Nutrition	Food for work programme (canal cleaning) implemented by ARPD and ANCC, School feeding and literacy programs	Tirin Kot, Deh Rawud, Chora, Chenartu, Khas Uruzgan
World Health Organization	WHO	End of 2009	Health	Ensure access to essential community maternal and child health services for those communities affected by conflict through the expansion of the community health workers (CHW) network (AHDS supports 295 CHWs in Uruzgan)	Community health workers (CHW) in all districts




Appendix II: Changes in Education 2006-2011

	July 2006	June 2010	Increase/Decrease	Changes as of September 2011
Gizab	?	38 Schools Total 26 Elementary (11 girls, 5 mixed) 9 Secondary (3 girls, 1 mixed) 3 High Schools (1 girls)	+ 14 	52 Total (51 Schools and 1 Madrassa) 36 Elementary (14 girls, 2 mixed) + 7 newly open (3 girls) + 3 reopen → 2 Mixed ES becomes boys → 1 Mixed ES becomes girls → 1 Girl's ES becomes boys 5 Secondary (2 girls, 1 mixed) + 1 reopens - 5 upgraded to high schools (1 girls) 10 High Schools (2 girls) + 2 reopen + 5 upgraded from secondary (1 girls) 1 Madrassa + 1 newly opens

	July 2006	June 2010	Increase/Decrease	Changes as of September 2011
Tirin Kot	9	<p>41 Total (38 Schools and 3 Madrassa) 27 Elementary (1 girls)</p> <p>5 Secondary (1 mixed)</p> <p>6 High Schools (1 girls/1 mixed)</p> <p>3 Madrassa (1 community)</p>	<p>+ 13</p> <p>↑↑</p>	<p>54 Total (47 School and 7 Madrassa)</p> <p>32 Elementary (3 girls, 1 mixed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 4 newly open (1 mixed) + 6 reopen (2 girls) + 1 SS becomes ES - 2 upgraded to secondary - 2 close - 2 merge into one - 1 wrongfully reported as operating in 2010 (still closed) <p>6 Secondary (1 girls)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 1 reopens + 2 upgraded from elementary - 1 upgraded to high school - 1 downgraded to elementary → 1 mixed becomes girl's only <p>9 High Schools (1 girls/1 mixed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 1 technical HS newly opens + 1 reopens + 1 upgraded from secondary <p>7 Madrassa (2 girls) (1 community)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 3 newly open (one girls, one not part of MoE curriculum) + 1 reopens (girls)

	July 2006	June 2010	Increase/Decrease	Changes as of September 2011
Chora	4	<p>13 Total (12 Schools and 1 Madrassa)</p> <p>7 Elementary (1 mixed)</p> <p>3 Secondary</p> <p>2 High Schools (1 mixed)</p> <p>1 Madrassa</p>	<p>+ 12</p> <p>↑↑</p>	<p>25 Total (22 Schools and 3 Madrassa)</p> <p>16 Elementary (1 girls)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 10 newly open (1 girls) + 1 reopens - 1 upgraded to secondary - 1 wrongfully reported as operating in 2010 (still closed) → 1 Mixed ES becomes boys <p>4 Secondary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 1 upgraded from elementary <p>2 High Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 1 Mixed high school becomes boys only <p>3 Madrassa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 2 newly open
Char China	1	<p>1 Elementary Total</p>	<p>+ 8</p> <p>↑↑</p>	<p>9 Total (8 Schools and 1 Madrassa)</p> <p>7 Elementary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 6 reopen <p>1 Secondary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 1 reopens <p>1 Madrassa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 1 newly opens

	July 2006	June 2010	Increase/Decrease	Changes as of September 2011
Khas Uruzgan		48 Total (45 Schools and 3 Madrassa) 22 Elementary (6 girls, 1 mixed) 16 Secondary (4 girls) 7 High Schools (2 girls/2 mixed) 3 Madrassa (2 were community madrassa)		50 Total (46 Schools and 4 Madrassa) 24 Elementary (3 girls, 1 mixed) + 3 newly open + 2 reopen (1 girls) + 3 secondary downgraded to elementary - 3 upgraded to secondary (one girl's) - 1 upgraded to high school (girls) - 1 girls primary merges with girl's secondary - 1 closes (girls)
	<12		+ 2 	14 Secondary (5 girls) + 3 upgraded from elementary (one girls) - 1 closes - 3 downgraded to elementary - 1 upgraded to high school 8 High Schools (3 girls) - 1 closes + 1 upgraded from secondary + 1 upgraded from primary (girls) → 2 mixed HS becomes boys 4 Madrassa (2 are community madrassa) + 1 newly opens

	July 2006	June 2010	Increase/Decrease	Changes as of September 2011
Deh Rawud	< 8	18 Total (17 Schools and 1 Madrassa) 11 Elementary 3 Secondary 3 High Schools 1 Madrassa	+ 8 	26 Total (25 Schools and 1 Madrassa) 16 Elementary + 7 reopen - 2 upgraded to secondary 4 Secondary + 1 reopens + 2 upgraded from elementary level - 2 upgraded to high schools 5 High Schools + 2 upgraded from secondary 1 Madrassa
Chenartu	Un-known	9 Schools Total 7 Elementary 1 Secondary 1 High Schools	- 2 	7 Total (6 Schools and 1 Madrassa) 4 Elementary - 1 closes - 1 wrongfully reported as operating in 2010 (still closed) - 2 merged into one 1 Secondary 1 High Schools 1 Madrassa + 1 newly opens
TL	<34	168 Total (160 schools/8 Madrassa)	+ 55 	223 Total (205 Schools and 18 Madrassa)

Appendix III: Provincial Council Members

Name	Tribe/Place of Origin	Current Occupation/Position in the Community
Amanullah Khan (Hotaki) Chair	Babozai , resident of Dewana Warkh village in Deh Rawud.	During the jihad years, he was a child and during the Taliban regime he was jobless. He has a twelfth grade education and is the son of a malik.
Jan Mohammad Deputy PC	Popalzai , resident of Loy Karez in Chenartu.	A tribal elder and former farmer; with allegedly no particular accomplishments until elected into the PC. Some do say he mediates conflicts, which gave him some status. He was Haji Amanullah Khan's replacement.
Hajji Mohammad Naeem Khan Clerk of PC	Nurzai , originally from Oshay in Char China	<p>He was young and jobless during the <i>jihad</i> era, and during the Taliban regime lived in Pakistan. He is uneducated. His father is Haji Ghulam Hayder Khan, who is from an influential traditional tribal elite family in Oshay. His father was a <i>jihadi</i> commander for Ittehad-e Islami faction, and battled with PDPA leaders over the leadership of the Dawudzai tribe in Oshay. When the <i>mujahideen</i> came to power, he ruled the Helmand Nawa area of Char China. He later opposed the Taliban and was later forced to flee to Pakistan. He was the first district governor of Char China in 2002 and later district governor of Deh Rawud until he resigned when the district was overrun by Taliban and insurgents kidnapped two of his sons (brothers of Haji Naeem) in Shah Wali Kot, they were later freed. He ran unsuccessfully for the Wolesi Jirga in 2005 and 2010.</p> <p>Mohammad Naeem is an active representative in the PC and an influential elder of his tribe.</p>
Haji Mohammad Ibrahim (Akundzada) Member	Popalzai , resident of Mayando village in Deh Rawud.	From a respected family, with father being a respected Popalzai elder. During the <i>mujahideen</i> time he was a commander with the Harakat-e-Inqilab-e Islami faction, allegedly under Malim Rahmatullah (previous head of the DoE). He had no job during Taliban regime, is uneducated but well respected and active on the PC.
Jan Mohammad Member	Popalzai , resident of Deh Rawud markaz	Does not come from an important family nor is a big landowner. He was a regular fighter with the Taliban during their regime. His brother, Shah Mohammad, however, was the Head of the Afghan Security Guards (ASG) that work for Special Forces. People allege that this helped the family to wealth. He also

Name	Tribe/Place of Origin	Current Occupation/Position in the Community
		allegedly received help from the late JMK and MK for winning the PC elections.
Mohammadullah Member	Popalzai , resident of Kohna Kala in Chenartu	His grandfather was a key tribal elder, but his father was not able to keep the leadership of his tribe, as he was allegedly imprisoned for 18 years for murder in Tirin Kot jail. Mohammadullah allegedly was also not considered influential until he won the 2009 PC elections, allegedly with the support of Commander Akhtar Mohammad, the Chief of Police of Chenartu district.
Abdul Ali Member	Hazara , resident of Khas Uruzgan.	He was a schoolteacher during the <i>mujahideen</i> and Taliban regimes. He has a twelfth grade education. He is an active PC member and people respect him because of his history as a schoolteacher. He is particularly influential in Hazara areas.
Marjana Member	Malakheil (Kuchi) tribe of Arjistan district of Ghazni province, resident of Tirin Kot for the last 8 years	During the <i>mujahideen</i> and Taliban regimes, she was jobless at home. She is uneducated and did not have a job before joining the PC. Like Hilla, her lack of previous political experience substantially limits her influence.
Haji Amanullah Senator	Popalzai , resident of Yaklinga village in Tirin Kot.	During the <i>mujahideen</i> time he was a trader. Like the others, he was unemployed throughout the Taliban regime. He has a ninth grade education, and his father, Haji Abdul Azim, was a tribal elder. He is an active Senator and he has a lot of influence with his tribe and in his village.
Hilla 'Acheckzai' Senator	Ahmadzai (Paktia) , resident of Poti Qala village in Tirin Kot.	She was married to an Acheckzai from Khas Uruzgan, who was killed by the insurgency; since then she adopted the last name Acheckzai. Her eldest son was injured at the same time. Before being elected onto the PC and later into the Senate, she worked with NGOs. People point to her lack of political experience and broad support base; hence she is seen as not very influential outside of her work in the Senate.

Appendix IV: Approximate Levels of Government Control: 2006, 2010 and 2011

District	Change	2006	2010	2011	Areas of Government Control	Areas of Taliban Control
Deh Rawud	↑	20%	85%	95%	Most of the district, with new gains made around the Chutu bridge.	Tangi manteqa is the only area with strong Taliban presence. Some light local insurgent activity exists in Dezak, Shinghula and Myando.
Tirin Kot	↑	30-40%	75%	80-90%	Mehrabad is now under the control of government. This area stretches from Sinaan village up to the border of Chenartu. Garmab has a light insurgency presence near the border with Chenartu and Shah Wali Kot of Kandahar.	The Baluchi Valley (Darafshan): Sajaawal, Ghulam Haidar, Abas Ali, Abdullah Khan, Qala-e Qala, Niazai, Chenarak, Dolanday, Khakbad, Chaghar and Zyarat China.
Gizab	↑	0 %	50%	60-70%	The government is present in Gizab centre, Tamazan, as well as the predominantly Hazara areas of Zin Durmai, Biri, and Tamazan Manteqas.	The eastern part from the centre is completely under Taliban control.
Char China	↑↑	2%	2%	50-55%	Khod and Helmad Nawa Manteqa's are completely under government control, as well as three villages in Tagab manteqa. Char China (65%): Major areas of Shah Mashad, Spir Ku, Garmab, and Kashta Do Aan, Oshay, Sakhar, Regaka, Yakhdan and half of Sarsina and Khod are under	Char China: A major problem is Tagab (Durji, Zamburay Sanginak), especially areas in its north (Yawmanay, Husi Kalay, Owbeh, Serkay and Karkara Villages). Lawar Do Aan, Kakraka, Anar Joy, Lawar Ghwarghin and Kashta Ghwarghin are also under Taliban control, and Khod partially so. The border with Kajaki district in Helmand has some Taliban presence.

District	Change	2006	2010	2011	Areas of Government Control	Areas of Taliban Control
					<p>government control.</p> <p>Sarab (50%): Kakraka, Monar Wiala, Keshay, Pir Jawata, and Sarab are all under government control.</p> <p>Segzai is self-controlled and there is also some IED Taliban team</p>	<p>Sarab: Sarki, Oba, Zanbury, Siya Sang, Tagab, Kand, Shiri Stan, Baghi Yousef, Langar, and Kadi are under Taliban control</p>
Chora	↑	20%	45%	50%	<p>The government is present between the borders with Darafshan in the southwest to the village of Sarab.</p>	<p>Kamissan, Nuri and Telba have strong Taliban presence, while Khwaja Khadir Manteqa and Ashizai Ghara only light.</p>
Chenartu	↑	<i>part of Chora</i>	20-30%	35%	<p>Charmestan, Masud, Khas Chenartu, Hawas and Faiz Mohammed Manteqa's are completely under government control.</p>	<p>The southern Part from Abdullah Kalay Village up to Charkh Zamin Village is Taliban controlled and the eastern part goes from Faiz Mohammed Manteqa to Khas Uruzgan.</p>
Khas Uruzgan	↓	30%	15%	12-15%	<p>The government presence is restricted to the district centre, everything else is insurgency.</p> <p>Hazara areas of Sere, Syah Baghal and Palan Manteqas are self controlled.</p>	<p>Big portions of Shale Nawa, Sultan Mohammad Nawa, Siya Chu, Guli Khar, Bitimor, Kalatak, Siya Baghal, and Talan, and parts of Feroz Nawa and Syachoob Manteqa are under Taliban control.</p>