



NATIONAL DEFENSE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

- CHILD POLICY
- CIVIL JUSTICE
- EDUCATION
- ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
- HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE
- INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
- NATIONAL SECURITY
- POPULATION AND AGING
- PUBLIC SAFETY
- SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
- SUBSTANCE ABUSE
- TERRORISM AND
HOMELAND SECURITY
- TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE

This PDF document was made available from www.rand.org as a public service of the RAND Corporation.

[Jump down to document](#) ▼

The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit research organization providing objective analysis and effective solutions that address the challenges facing the public and private sectors around the world.

Support RAND

[Purchase this document](#)

[Browse Books & Publications](#)

[Make a charitable contribution](#)

For More Information

Visit RAND at www.rand.org

Explore [RAND National Defense
Research Institute](#)

View [document details](#)

Limited Electronic Distribution Rights

This document and trademark(s) contained herein are protected by law as indicated in a notice appearing later in this work. This electronic representation of RAND intellectual property is provided for non-commercial use only. Permission is required from RAND to reproduce, or reuse in another form, any of our research documents.

This product is part of the RAND Corporation monograph series. RAND monographs present major research findings that address the challenges facing the public and private sectors. All RAND monographs undergo rigorous peer review to ensure high standards for research quality and objectivity.

Aid During Conflict

Interaction Between Military and
Civilian Assistance Providers in
Afghanistan, September 2001–
June 2002

Olga Oliker, Richard Kauzlarich, James Dobbins,
Kurt W. Basseuner, Donald L. Sampler, John G. McGinn,
Michael J. Dziedzic, Adam Grissom, Bruce Pirnie,
Nora Bensahel, A. Istar Guven

Prepared for the Office of the Secretary of Defense
and the U.S. Agency for International Development

Approved for public release, distribution unlimited



NATIONAL DEFENSE RESEARCH INSTITUTE



The research described in this report was sponsored by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and the U.S. Agency for International Development. The research was conducted in the RAND National Defense Research Institute, a federally funded research and development center supported by the OSD, the Joint Staff, the unified commands, and the defense agencies under Contract DASW01-01-C-0004.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Aid during conflict : interaction between military and civilian assistance providers in Afghanistan, September 2001–June 2002 / Olga Oliker ... [et al.].

p. cm.

“MG-212.”

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-8330-3640-8 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Afghan War, 2001—Civilian relief. I. Oliker, Olga.

DS371.415.A36 2004

958.104'7—dc22

2004013220

The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit research organization providing objective analysis and effective solutions that address the challenges facing the public and private sectors around the world. RAND's publications do not necessarily reflect the opinions of its research clients and sponsors.

RAND® is a registered trademark.

© Copyright 2004 RAND Corporation

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form by any electronic or mechanical means (including photocopying, recording, or information storage and retrieval) without permission in writing from RAND.

Published 2004 by the RAND Corporation

1700 Main Street, P.O. Box 2138, Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138

1200 South Hayes Street, Arlington, VA 22202-5050

201 North Craig Street, Suite 202, Pittsburgh, PA 15213-1516

RAND URL: <http://www.rand.org/>

To order RAND documents or to obtain additional information, contact

Distribution Services: Telephone: (310) 451-7002;

Fax: (310) 451-6915; Email: order@rand.org

Summary

International assistance efforts in Afghanistan were broadly successful during the initial stages of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), from September 2001 to June 2002. A major humanitarian catastrophe was averted by the hard work of many actors, governmental and nongovernmental, civilian and military. The early Afghanistan experience also involved problems and challenges, however, which may be seen as lessons for future operations.

Critical Issues

In some ways, humanitarian and humanitarian-type assistance operations in Afghanistan were unlike any in the past. Lack of an international peacekeeping mandate beyond the city of Kabul, a tightly limited in-country military footprint, and security-dictated restrictions on movement of U.S. government (USG) civilians were important new features. Since the initial period of OEF was the most intense phase of military operations, this report focuses primarily on the military aspects of civil-military operations (CMOs) in Afghanistan. Some of the critical issues, both positive and negative, identified by this study are summarized below.

Strategic Level

- The absence of an integrated interagency political-military plan from the early stages of the campaign contributed to confusion about roles and missions.
- There was extended uncertainty regarding whether U.S. military humanitarian-type assistance activities would be “wholesale” (limited to logistics outside Afghanistan) or “retail” (also including direct provision and coordination activities inside Afghanistan).
- Coordination between the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Department of Defense (DoD) was good.
- Liaison between U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and international organizations (IOs), including the United Nations (UN) specialized agencies, proved useful.

Field Level

- There were difficulties in establishing effective CMO coordination bodies and requesting and deploying civil-affairs units.
- Operational-level coordination between military personnel and NGOs and IOs was often poor.
- Differing views of the role of the U.S. military in providing humanitarian-type assistance and of appropriate terminology contributed to tensions between military personnel and civilian assistance providers from contractors, NGOs, and UN agencies. Particular tensions emerged over the forms of assistance provided and the question of whether military personnel should wear uniforms when providing assistance.
- USAID personnel were unable to travel to unsecured areas and had difficulty accessing project funds quickly.

Given the immense time pressures, an unsettled international environment following 9/11, and new challenges stemming from the

USG's status as a "belligerent" in the eyes of some actors, it is perhaps surprising that CMOs were as successful as they were in Afghanistan. While some challenges were unique to the Afghan campaign, others are likely to be repeated. In addition, some problems experienced in earlier operations emerged here as well.

Recommendations

USG Civil-Military Operations

- **Conduct early political-military planning.** An integrated political-military planning process should precede future interventions and should explicitly incorporate the role of humanitarian-type assistance in achieving the military and political end-states:
 - Clearly define and communicate USG policy within the USG and to other assistance providers.
 - Establish clear CMO chains of command. Decisionmakers should consider naming a single person as the coordinator for all in-theater USG agency assistance programs.
 - Institutionalize mechanisms for transitioning from military to nonmilitary humanitarian and humanitarian-type assistance processes.
- **Conduct joint political-military planning.** There is a need for better integration of USAID, the State Department, and DoD in developing and implementing the overall political-military plan. Decisionmakers should consider a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-type structure to plan and coordinate USG humanitarian-type assistance.
- **Provide security for humanitarian assistance and reconstruction.** It is important for the USG to develop an integrated capacity—civilian, military, and international—to establish public security in the aftermath of high-intensity conflict. U.S. military forces should not be expected to shoulder these burdens single-handedly, but neither, in many cases, can indigenous forces,

civil agencies, and international elements be expected to successfully establish public security without significant U.S. military participation.

- **Create a structure for rapid assistance.** The USG should examine Britain's Department for International Development's (DFID's) cooperation with the British armed forces to see how USAID's disaster assistance response teams (DARTs) might interact more directly with U.S. military assistance operations.

Improving Interaction with IOs and NGOs

- **Coordinate at the strategic level.** CENTCOM liaisons during the initial stages of OEF facilitated unprecedented communication between the military and IOs and NGOs. We recommend that this process be further institutionalized.
- **Coordinate at the field level.** NGOs, UN agencies, and independent IOs are reluctant to coordinate with U.S. forces engaged in combat operations. USAID/DART should act as the formal coordinating point with the NGO/IO world.
- **Simplify the information flow.** Afghanistan reinforced the need for an information management strategy and infrastructure. A formal system recognized by all the players (government and nongovernment alike), with full interoperability across different databases, should be established. This will require a major effort to overcome the problem of classification restrictions.

Turning Lessons Learned into Lessons Applied

We recommend that decisionmakers take the following actions to apply lessons learned:

- **Incorporate lessons into doctrine and training requirements for DoD and USAID.** The Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and USAID Policy and Program Coordination (AID/PPC) could incorporate the lessons for USAID. The National Defense University (NDU), the National Foreign

Affairs Training Center (NFATC), and USIP could play a similar role for the USG interagency process as a whole.

- **Encourage the development of a common NGO and IO doctrine.** IOs and NGOs should focus on developing a baseline doctrine for CMOs. The existence of such a framework, even if it were not universally endorsed, would enable greater cooperation with the U.S. and other professional militaries. Canada’s Pearson Peacekeeping Center and USIP could perhaps facilitate this effort, providing a neutral venue for engagement.
- **Develop joint doctrine for humanitarian-type assistance.** In the same way that joint doctrine was necessary for the U.S. military, an integrated doctrine for complex contingency operations (CCOs) on the USG’s civilian side, including CCOs undertaken in connection with combat operations, is required.
- **Integrate civilian-military planning.** The USG should develop a standing National Security Council (NSC)–centered mechanism for interagency coordination of complex operations, including those undertaken as part of combat operations, that would apply to future situations in the war on terror.
- **Create a “reserve” civilian reconstruction force.** A civilian reconstruction force with cadre personnel on retainer for rapid deployment would help establish USG civilian efforts in CCOs.
- **Integrate CMO/humanitarian-type assistance strategies into military doctrine.** If the Afghanistan experience is likely to be a model for future efforts, the structures used in Afghanistan (the Coalition Joint Civil-Military Operations Task Force [CJCMOTF], coalition humanitarian liaison cells [CHLCs], and provisional reconstruction teams [PRTs]) should be examined in light of new doctrine that takes lessons from this experience.
- **Develop guidelines for conduct of CCOs.** Military/USAID/NGO/IO cooperation in developing CCO guidelines informed by the experience in Afghanistan—and in exercising them—would encourage a more cooperative environment.