

# Lessons Learned from Stabilization Initiatives in Afghanistan: A Systematic Review of Existing Research

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RAND Labor & Population

WR-1191

June 2017

This paper series made possible by the NIA funded RAND Center for the Study of Aging (P30AG012815) and the RAND Labor and Population Unit.

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# Lessons Learned from Stabilization Initiatives in Afghanistan: A Systematic Review of Existing Research

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April 11, 2017

This research was conducted by the Empirical Studies of Conflict Project (ESOC) at Princeton University. The authors and ESOC are grateful for the support provided by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United States Institute of Peace (USIP). USIP convened and chaired several Advisory Board meetings on this project, and the inputs and guidance provided by independent Advisory Board members is gratefully acknowledged. USAID helped organize interviews and provided unprecedented access to internal data. Funding was provided through an interagency research agreement from the Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs at USAID and USIP. All errors are our own.

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## Acronyms

ACSOR	Afghan Center for Socio-Economic and Opinion Research
AGE	Anti-Government Elements
AIMS	Aid Information Management Systems
AISCS	Afghanistan Infrastructure and Security Cartography System
ALLI	Alternative Licit Livelihoods Initiatives
ANDP	Afghanistan National Development Program
ANQAR	Afghanistan Nationwide Quarterly Assessment Research
ANSO	Afghanistan NGO Safety Office
ANVIL	Name of survey (not an acronym)
ASI	Afghanistan Stability Initiative
BINNA	Name of survey (not an acronym)
CBSG	Community Based Stabilization Grants
CCI	Community Cohesion Initiative Project
CDP	Community Development Program
CERP	Commander's Emergency Response Program
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSO	Central Statistics Organization
DFID	Department for International Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
DOD	Department of Defense
DTEM	Digital Terrain Elevation Map
ESOC	Empirical Studies of Conflict Project
FOB/COP	Forward Operating Base/Combat Outpost
FOGHORN	Name of survey (not an acronym)
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISVG	Institute for the Study of Violent Groups
LGCD	Local Governance and Community Development Project
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MISTI	Measuring the Impact of Stabilization Initiatives Project
MRRD	Ministry for Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NRVA	National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
NSP	National Solidarity Program
NTMA	NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan
OAPA	USAID Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs
OTI	USAID Office of Transition Initiatives
PAP	Pre-Analysis Plan
SIGACTS	Significant Activities (e.g., violent events)
SIKA	Stability in Key Areas Project
STAY	Skills Training for Afghan Youth
UNDSS	United Nations Department for Safety and Security
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
USIP	United States Institute for Peace

## Executive Summary

This report summarizes findings from a review of 89 studies on development and stabilization programming in Afghanistan. These findings inform answers to the following six research questions that were identified before conducting the research review:<sup>4</sup>

**R1:** What did stabilization projects achieve in terms of key outcomes, including: security; popular support for the government; popular support for anti-government elements (AGE); community cohesion and resilience; health of the Afghan people; economic well-being of the Afghan people; and conflict events?

**R2:** Over what time horizon is these effects apparent and how quickly do any gains or losses fade?

**R3:** How does the presence of the military impact the outcomes of stabilization projects?

**R4:** What types of synergies and confounding factors exist between stabilization programs by different actors (other parts of the United States Government (USG), other countries, the Afghan government, international organizations like the World Bank, etc.)?

**R5:** Are impacts of stabilization programs amplified or reduced when considering specific aspects (size, contract type, etc.) or sectors (agriculture, infrastructure, skills, etc.) of projects?

**R6:** What commonalities exist when looking across a number of successful or unsuccessful stabilization projects between different actors and different sectors?

This report summarizes the high-level findings that cross-cut these six questions as well as the specific evidence related to each of the questions. For each of the 89 studies, we applied three criteria identified in a pre-analysis plan, which helped make the analysis systematic and reduced bias: internal validity of causal claims; scope of coverage; and stabilization indicators. We established these assessment criteria before beginning to review these studies in order to focus the analysis on the most relevant issues and findings using unbiased standards to compare sources. The motivations of our study are to identify the key factors that contributed to the success or failure of stabilization programs in Afghanistan and formulate recommendations for the design, implementation and evaluation of future efforts in Afghanistan and other conflict-

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<sup>4</sup> These questions were modified slightly during the course of the project to address feasibility constraints from the existing data and literature. These changes were detailed in an addendum to the Pre-Analysis Plan (PAP).



affected areas.

Across the literature, we find some evidence of near-term gains in security, health access, and economic activity (R1). The small, short-term improvement in local security varied considerably across region and program and there are notable examples where security did not improve and even worsened. In all cases, the estimated effect was small, especially relative to the overall rates of violence. This variation is a common theme across a number of the outcomes. Support for the Afghan government and AGE varies substantially across different programs making it difficult to draw a unified conclusion across the literature. Much of the variation in those attitudes appears driven by perceptions of government corruption. There was no evidence to suggest universal belief that insurgents were better at governance or that support was zero-sum with Afghan Government. The evidence on community cohesion in the existing literature was too limited to draw a conclusion and in many studies was not even considered. There was some evidence of improved health services (both actual and perceived access) but few measures of actual health improvement to indicate whether this improved access translates into improved well-being.<sup>5</sup> There was also evidence of consistent economic gains. Some of this may have been short-lived due to increased spending and activity during the project.

The evidence that any of these projects had a long-term impact is even more limited (R2). This is in part because few studies were designed with prospective or retrospective design to estimate sustainability. Some projects had unrealistic goals and mechanisms to facilitate sustainable outcomes (e.g., depended on continued spending or international support) and others suffered from institutional limitations (e.g., corruption, lack of capacity) and were unlikely to see sustained gains. There is also some evidence that military forces played a key role in facilitating basic operations (R3). However, military and civilian implementers had different timelines and objectives making coordination challenging. There was also a core set of scholars who worried that the presence of the military as an implementer, or even simply providing security, “militarized” aid provision; thus inhibiting it from achieving social welfare objectives. In contrast, there were few evaluations on how to achieve successful coordination between international donors. However, multiple studies noted the importance of coordination between different countries and the host nation in ensuring success (R4).

Overall, the most important program feature that could enable success was program size (R5). The literature consistently found that small-scale programs produced near-term impact on at least some of the key indicators. However, because of their limited size and scope, these programs could not address key drivers of instability and thus were often not associated with longer-term

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<sup>5</sup> This includes a broad range of health care services measures from the literature. We note that this differs from the more limited measure of perceived access to health care discussed in detail in the Iyengar, Shapiro, Mao, and Singh (2017) paper.

changes. However, large-scale programs created unrealistic expectations and were more subject to corruption and targeting by insurgents, undermining their near-term effectiveness. The literature is also very informative on key enabling factors (R6). Key factors that enabled success include: host-nation coordination and commitment, limiting the extent of corrosive corruption, ensuring baseline levels of security to facilitate basic implementation and oversight, and ensuring appropriate staffing, both in terms of skills and in terms of longevity of deployment were all associated with programmatic success.

Looking across the 89 studies, there were four key themes that cross-cut the six analytic questions. First, most stabilization programs will have – at best – modest impact (less than 0.1 standard deviation when measured quantitatively and typically described as small in qualitative analysis). Based on the Afghanistan experience, policy makers and implementers should not expect to generate either large or persistent effects. From well-designed experimental and quasi-experimental approaches (e.g., Beath, Fontini and Enikolopov, 2013; MSI, 2014) to government-initiated qualitative reviews (Bohnke, Koehler and Zurcher, 2014; Bohnke and Zurcher, 2013 (1b); Norad, 2012) to historical accounts (Goodhand, 2002) the evidence consistently indicates stabilization programming has small, generally transitory, impacts (both positive or negative). Programs such as the Commander’s Emergency Response Program (CERP) (Chou, 2012; Sexton, 2015) or some of the Afghanistan Stabilization Initiative (ASI) programs (Altai, 2012 (1)) that have been “successful” may have short-term positive impacts, but they do not appear to generate large shifts in security, attitudes, or capacity. This is relevant for both managing expectations for what stabilization programs may accomplish and for considering how to design measurement and evaluation efforts to detect relatively small effects.

Second, smaller may be better. A number of studies (Altai, 2012 (7); Chou, 2012; Child, 2014; Goodhand, 2002; Gordon, 2011; Kapstein and Kathuria, 2012; Nagl, Exum and Humayun, 2009) highlight the intuition that smaller projects can be targeted at important, specific gaps and seem less likely to fuel instability. Small projects have a variety of beneficial features: they are often easier to manage by staff on the ground; they are less likely than large infrastructure projects to attract attention from corrupt officials or to become targets for enemy sabotage; and outputs are small and less likely to become a source of conflict. The literature does not provide evidence of increasing returns from a cost-effectiveness perspective: small projects do not appear to have a differential impact on outcomes such as violence or support for the government relative to larger-scale projects (see Child, 2014). Additionally, Afghans reacted positively to large-scale programs that are populated by small, community driven projects such as the Afghanistan National Solidarity Program (NSP) at least in part because the funding dispersed was too small to be siphoned off by powerful interests, though it still did provide meaningful benefits to communities (Gordon, 2011). This is also important for minimizing the risk of unintended negative outcomes. For instance, any corruption that affects community-driven, local projects is

by its nature smaller in scale and thus less likely to delegitimize the national government (Kapstein and Kathuria, 2012).

Third, stabilization efforts should be designed in ways that make it hard for destabilizing forces to target or claim credit for programs (Altai, 2012 (1-3); Carbonnier, 2014; IMU, 2015 (2)). This insight is particularly important for interpreting the variation in outcomes when small projects have both small, positive effects (Beath, Fontini and Enikolopov, 2013 (1a)) and some small, negative impacts (e.g., MSI, 2014). There are two important mechanisms that can generate negative impacts from otherwise potentially effective programs: one, programs can be deliberately targeted and de-legitimized by insurgents (e.g., Altai, 2012 (5); Lyall, 2016; Sexton, 2015); or, two, AGE may take credit for positive effects or seek bribes and revenue from the programs; this tends to raise perceptions of corruption, for which Afghans almost automatically blame the national government, thereby reducing its legitimacy and increasing support for AGE (e.g., MSI, 2014; ICG, 2011). Programs must therefore not only be able to effectively address short-term drivers of instability, but also must be properly credited to the government or local leaders without attracting violence or other negative attention from AGE. One effective strategy, successfully employed by the ASI program, is to ensure local government and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are visibly central to project implementation (Altai, 2012(7)).

Fourth, and finally, while we have systematically compiled the evidence from the existing literature, almost none of the ideas presented in this review are new. Many of the studies included in this analysis noted findings based on the evidence available several years ago – but few of those recommendations have been implemented. Many of our findings regarding development impacts based on studies through 2016 are also highlighted in ICG (2011), which argued: “The impact of international assistance will remain limited unless donors, particularly the largest, the U.S., stop subordinating programming to counter-insurgency objectives, devise better mechanisms to monitor implementation, adequately address corruption and wastage of aid funds, and ensure that recipient communities identify needs and shape assistance policies.” Of particular note is the repeated, widespread recommendation for improved monitoring and evaluation, which is succinctly summarized by Bohnke, Koehler and Zurcher (2014) as follows: “...if the international community is serious about rigorous impact evaluations, it must pressure donors and implementing actors for much higher standards for recording and sharing data!” Many of these recommendations could be achieved through adopting the improvements and changes suggested in Department of State (2011).

We must note here that it is unsurprising that many programs did not accomplish the desired outcomes; few were designed, implemented or modified to take into account existing recommendations that might have improved their chances for success. We acknowledge the

pervasive impact of environmental factors in Afghanistan (e.g., security, corruption) on program success. However, it is precisely because stabilization efforts in complex and difficult environments are inherently dynamic processes that future efforts should focus on not simply implementing projects but on ensuring a mechanism for effectively integrating evidence-based recommendations and, when appropriate, modifying policy and strategy to account for empirical findings.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

While there are multiple studies on the effects of specific stabilization programs in Afghanistan, there is no study that systematically reviews the full range of studies on stabilization and development programming in the country. Such a review is useful because while any individual study may have specific limitations, common themes identified across the range of studies are likely to be broadly accurate. In particular, since each study uses a slightly different methodology and is done by different organizations with varying views and methods, looking across studies effectively cancels out biases and should reveal more reliable patterns. This is the core logic behind meta-analysis in the sciences and it applies in this setting as well.

This document summarizes key findings from program evaluations, government documents, the academic literature, and policy studies, on the efficacy and impact of stabilization efforts in Afghanistan. Specifically, this review compiles and analyzes evidence on the following six research questions:

**R1:** What did stabilization projects achieve in terms of key outcomes: security; popular support for the government; popular support for anti-government elements (AGE); community cohesion and resilience; health of the Afghan people; economic well-being of the Afghan people; and conflict events?

**R2:** Over what time horizon is these effects apparent and how quickly do any gains or losses fade?

**R3:** How does the presence of the military impact the outcomes of stabilization projects?

**R4:** What types of synergies and confounding factors exist between stabilization programs by different actors (other parts of the USG, other countries, Afghan government, international organizations like the World Bank, etc.)?

**R5:** Are impacts of stabilization programs amplified or reduced when considering specific aspects (size, contract type, etc.) or sectors (agriculture, infrastructure, skills, etc.) of projects?

**R6:** What commonalities exist when looking across a number of successful or unsuccessful stabilization projects between different actors and different sectors?

The rest of this document summarizes the methodological approach and key findings for each of

these six questions. The final section summarizes key cross-cutting findings relevant for policy makers and provides some recommendations for future policy and research regarding stabilization programs in conflict-affected areas.

## 2 APPROACH

### 2.1 Study Selection

The literature reviewed for the study was identified through the research team’s search of the academic and think tank literature on the impact of aid programs in Afghanistan, which was supplemented by government reports recommended by USAID and documents cited and referenced in the research reviewed. The research team prioritized studies with a specific focus on USAID stabilization efforts in Afghanistan in the last decade; a secondary priority was on literature assessing Afghanistan stabilization programming implemented by other USG agencies and international donors. Comparative studies of stabilization initiatives in countries other than Afghanistan were included if they addressed the main relevant themes of the research review.

In total, the research team examined 110 studies and selected a total of 89 for inclusion in the review. Of these studies, 36 focus explicitly on analyzing USAID or Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) administered programs. Another 11 studies focus on other USG activities, such as US military stabilization programs under the Commander’s Emergency Reconstruction Program (CERP) and operations of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). We then identified about 25 additional documents based on citations and references in the research reviewed. The team excluded several studies that were theoretical or “think pieces” and were not intended to serve an evaluation function. We also excluded pieces that only tangentially addressed Afghanistan (e.g., those with a focus on Iraq or the Philippines), but retained reports that included Afghanistan as a substantive case even if other countries were included in the analysis.<sup>6</sup>

To structure our review, we organized the literature into four broad categories<sup>7</sup>:

1. **Program Evaluation.** Comprehensive review of USAID-commissioned studies of the impact and effectiveness of its stabilization programs in Afghanistan (to include specialized thematic evaluations of these programs, specific to gender, ethnicity, region etc.). Examples include:

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<sup>6</sup> The findings and analysis are based on the review presented in Appendix A, which provides a detailed summary of each study included. Each study is assigned a unique ID for cross-reference between the Summary Report and Reference Table. This report uses these unique IDs to reference any findings and conclusions.

<sup>7</sup> These categories were included in June 2016 pre-analysis plan provided to and approved by USAID OAPA.

- a. Social Impact. February, 2016. *Final Performance Evaluation of the USAID/OTI Community Cohesion Initiative*.
  - b. Management Systems International. February, 2015. *Afghan Civilian Assistance Program II: Final Performance Evaluation*.
  - c. The Measuring the Impact of Stabilization Initiatives Project (MISTI) Stabilization Trends and Impact Evaluation Survey.
2. **Government Documents.** Official USG and foreign government reviews or assessments of the efficacy of stabilization assistance programs in Afghanistan. Examples include:
    - a. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR). March, 2011. *Afghanistan's National Solidarity Program Has Reached Thousands of Afghan Communities, but Faces Challenges that Could Limit Outcomes*.
    - b. UKAID Stabilisation Unit. November, 2010. *Stabilisation Case Study: Infrastructure in Helmand, Afghanistan*.
3. **Academic Literature.** Review of social science scholarship (books and peer-reviewed journal articles) on aid and stabilization in Afghanistan published in the last decade. Examples include:
    - a. Gordon, Stuart. 2014. "Afghanistan's Stabilization Program: Hope in a Dystopian Sea?" in Robert Muggah, ed. *Stabilization Operations, Security and Development: States of Fragility*. New York: Routledge.
    - b. Sexton, Renard. 2015. "Aid as a Tool against Insurgency: Evidence from Contested and Controlled Territory in Afghanistan." *American Political Science Review*.
4. **Policy/Think Tank.** Independent studies of aid and stabilization in Afghanistan with a policy-centered orientation. Examples include:
    - a. Viehe, Ariella, Jasmine Afshar and Tamana Heela. December, 2015. *Rethinking the Civilian Surge: Lessons from the Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan*. Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.
    - b. Kapstein, Ethan and Kamna Kathuria. December, 2012. *Economic Assistance in Conflict Zones: Lessons from Afghanistan*. Washington, DC: Center for Global Development.

These categories served two key functions. First, they enabled the research team to compare studies that were similar in purpose and design. For instance, we could compare program evaluations to other evaluations rather than to more qualitative think tank reports. This comparison allowed us to assess and evaluate both methods and findings in the broader context of the purpose and audience of the report. Second, this allowed us to collate and integrate information within and across study types to provide a more holistic review of the findings. These categories are not intended to provide any ranking or normative weight on the relative value of any specific type of study. Our subsequent analysis found studies that were classified as

carefully designed and effective evaluations in each of the four categories of studies.

## **2.2 Defining Stabilization**

The study explicitly posits no normative definition of stabilization. This is because there is a substantial degree of variation in this definition and we did not want to inadvertently exclude certain research or analysis through the initial definitional choice. Thus, the research team instead allowed the definition to emerge from an analysis of stabilization indicators in policy documents, program evaluations and academic literature. Some of the most common types of aid labelled “stabilization programming” that we encountered in our review include:

- Efforts to improve local government capacity for service delivery to increase legitimacy and strengthen ties with local communities
- Community-led small infrastructure projects to improve community cohesion and resilience to conflict
- Youth training and education to increase positive engagement with the community and reduce susceptibility to violent extremism
- Agricultural development to provide alternatives to poppy cultivation
- Short-term employment generation efforts often called “cash for work” programs.

Across these studies, we found nearly 200 different indicators used in various combinations to measure and track implicit or explicit definitions of stabilization. Based on these indicators, we developed a classification system of eight broad factors associated with stabilization. These were the key factors and associated indicators that occurred regularly throughout the literature and analyzing along these dimensions allowed us to compare findings between studies with common themes but different specific measures or metrics. The factors are: attitudes towards the Afghan government (including government at any level and civil society attitudes broadly such as support for voting, government-run institutions, and views on national identity); attitudes towards anti-government elements (AGE), including criminal and insurgent groups; attitudes towards foreign actors (e.g., military forces, development implementers); economic well-being; government capacity; health and social well-being; infrastructure improvement; and social cohesion. The most common indicators were security, government capacity, and attitudes towards the Afghan government. Less common indicators were infrastructure improvements and attitudes towards AGE. Rarely were either economic well-being or health and social well-being included as indicators.



**Table 1. Number of Studies with Key Indicators**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Count of Studies</b>
<b>Government Capacity</b>	57
<b>Attitudes Towards Afghan Government</b>	41
<b>Security</b>	41
<b>Social Cohesion</b>	26
<b>Attitudes Towards AGE</b>	11
<b>Economic Well-Being</b>	10
<b>Attitude Towards Foreign Actors</b>	9
<b>Infrastructure Improvements</b>	9
<b>Health and Social Well-Being</b>	5

A compilation of stabilization indicators included in the Reference Table (attached as an appendix) highlights an underlying theme of this review: in the complex and fraught environment aid implementers encountered in Afghanistan, defining stabilization - much like designing and implementing stabilization programs - was a variable, sometimes vague, and highly dynamic process. As such, the research team coded the nature of indicators used in each of the studies and then assessed studies across these measures without judgement as to whether one definition of stabilization (and associated combination of indicators) was preferable to another.

### **2.3 Assessment Criteria**

Every study included for analysis was assigned a classification for three assessment criteria: the internal validity of the causal claims made; the scope of coverage (both temporal and geographic) offered; and the framework of stabilization indicators employed.<sup>8</sup> The categories for these criteria can be found in Table 2, below.

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<sup>8</sup> These categories were included in June 2016 pre-analysis plan provided to and approved by USAID OAPA.

**Table 2. Research Review Assessment Criteria**

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Effective</b>	<b>Potentially Effective</b>	<b>Insufficient Evidence</b>
Internal Validity of Causal Claims	Experimental: random selection of treatment and control groups; robust estimates of causal effects; defensible and scope for generalizability clearly discernible	Systematic: purposive or random sampling or observations; data collection is systematic; plausible attribution of causal effects based on research design; thorough exploration of correlations	Anecdotal: no strong methodology; data collection is opportunistic; unreliable or idiosyncratic impressions; unable to establish causal effects
Scope of Coverage	Complete geographic coverage of program area; multiple waves of data collection; baseline data employed and outcomes in control areas measured	Complete or nearly complete geographic coverage of program area; examines a single time period and/or is quantitative or qualitative only (not mixed method); no baseline data	Partial geographic coverage of program area; examines a single, relatively short time period
Stabilization Indicators	Rigorous framework of stability indicators	Plausible definition of stability indicators	Missing or vague definition of stability indicators

It is important to note that these assessment criteria do not exclude or negatively code qualitative studies. Qualitative studies with well-defined research questions, defined indicators or measures, and a careful interview or document review design were coded as high quality. Ultimately, our review includes both quantitative studies that lack the rigorous and systematic approach needed to provide credible estimates, as well as well-designed qualitative studies that provide credible evidence on the effects of programs and critical insights that could not be collected through quantitative measures.

We utilize these criteria to enable a more nuanced assessment of each study’s utility. For example, a study found to be “Effective” in terms of analytical rigor, but with “Insufficient

Evidence” related to its scope of coverage may provide a highly credible, but potentially highly localized assessment of stabilization programming impact, with findings that are not readily generalizable to broader environments or contexts.

In addition to the pre-specified criteria, we developed a coding for “classification of practical findings or recommendations” to highlight some of the studies’ more practical suggestions on the design and implementation of stabilization programs. This category has three broad dimensions: information can be characterized as having limited value for current planning or insufficient practical application; some useful findings or recommendations; or useful findings or recommendations. For each of these categories, we separated the findings into four areas: program design, program implementation and oversight, measurement and evaluation, and civil-military coordination.

### 3 KEY FINDINGS

Many of the 89 studies reviewed relied wholly or in part on quantitative data. Many studies also included interviews with government officials in Afghanistan, civilian personnel from ISAF nations, military personnel from ISAF nations, and Afghan civilians. The studies were largely conducted independently from each other, often without reference to each other in different fields and for different audiences.

The rest of this chapter details the findings from the reports on six specific research questions:

**R1:** What did stabilization projects achieve in terms of key outcomes: security; popular support for the government; popular support for anti-government elements (AGE); community cohesion and resilience; health of the Afghan people; economic well-being of the Afghan people; and conflict events?

**R2:** Over what time horizon is these effects apparent and how quickly do any gains or losses fade?

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**R6:** What commonalities exist when looking across a number of successful or unsuccessful stabilization projects between different actors and different sectors?

The evidence presented in each section highlights areas where there is broad consensus based on effective evidence (“current knowns”); widely held ideas that are not supported by effective evidence (“current assumptions”); research questions or topics raised in the literature for which empirical evidence does not exist (“current gaps”); and issues for which the literature offers competing or contradictory findings due to differences in, for example, research approach, methods, or data sources (“current conflicts”).

### 3.1 Stabilization Programs Impact on Key Outcomes

The first research question (R1) focused on whether USAID stabilization projects, specifically, and stabilization projects more generally, achieved improvements in the key outcomes of security and conflict events; popular support for the government and for anti-government elements (AGE); community cohesion and resilience; health of the Afghan people; and, economic well-being of the Afghan people. Overall, we found consistent evidence of a small, short-term reduction of violence in some areas and limited evidence for any other effect. We also found some gaps in the existing research regarding the importance of addressing underlying economic conditions when seeking to increase stability in conflict-affected areas and almost no evidence on the types of activities that are needed to ensure the sustainability of key outcomes.

#### 3.1.1 Security

There is substantial evidence in the literature that USAID stabilization programming in Afghanistan had a small, but positive, short-term impact on local security (that is, violence was reduced and/or a higher proportion of the population reported that they felt secure), with considerable regional variation. Evaluations of specific programs provide evidence of micro-level impacts, largely in terms of changes in popular perceptions of their local security environment. The robustness of this evidence is mixed, ranging from the fully representative random probability surveys of the Measuring Impact of Stabilization Initiatives (MISTI) program to qualitative case studies to more anecdotal reviews of existing programs.

However, as is the case in assessing nearly all outcomes of stabilization programming, there are significant gaps in our understanding of how sustainable these impacts are in the medium- to long-term. The academic literature on stabilization aid highlights the ambiguity in the effects of development assistance – which is typically more long-term both in execution and in impact – on conflict and security. Recent empirical analyses suggest development assistance may exacerbate or prolong civil conflict, either by incentivizing insurgent groups to employ greater violence to derail projects that may weaken their position or by increasing all combatants’ uncertainty about the other side’s relative strength (Narang, 2015).

The literature indicates the impact of aid on security is highly dependent on levels of government control and insurgent presence in the districts where projects are implemented: stabilization aid only reduces violence when administered in districts already controlled by pro-government forces (Fishstein and Wilder, 2012; Sexton, 2015). The fact that physical security itself is a key *determinant* to successful program implementation and sustainability makes it difficult to assess the impact of development aid on security as an *outcome*. (Derleth and Alexander, 2010; GIRoA, 2010; MSI, 2013 (2)). This is further complicated by the integration of potential insurgents in local communities. Indeed, broader studies on programs with scope beyond stabilization (e.g., development programs, long-term capacity building initiatives) find that humanitarian assistance

in conflict settings does not have uniform effects and the impact of violence on changes in civilian attitudes depends on whether the perpetrator is viewed as part of their in-group (Lyall, 2016; Lyall, Blair and Imai, 2013).

### *3.1.2 Support for Government and Anti-Government Elements*

We find largely inconsistent evidence on the relationship between stabilization programs and support for either government or anti-government elements. In many cases, the degree to which these programs influenced attitudes was driven by activities outside of the programs' control (see, for example, Altai, 2012 (2) or Altai, 2012 (3)). A key factor in how programs related to attitudinal changes was the degree to which projects were implicated in government corruption. This evidence feeds the broader set of assumptions that the fundamental conflict drivers in Afghanistan are inherently political in nature (e.g., ethnic grievances, inter- and intra-tribal disputes). It is clear that a considerable proportion of Afghan citizens believe the main cause of insecurity to be their own government, which is perceived to be massively corrupt, predatory and unjust. Stabilization programs that rely on using aid to win the population over to such a negatively perceived government face an uphill struggle (Carter, 2013; Fishstein, 2012). There is not sufficient evidence to justify the claim that the Taliban or other AGE were perceived as more effective in addressing the people's highest priority needs of security and access to justice. The evidence is conflicting as to whether individuals viewed support for the Afghan government or the Taliban as zero sum and the extent to which such support can be won through the actions of external actors (Wilton Park Conference, 2010).

### *3.1.3 Community Cohesion and Resilience*

The literature was surprisingly sparse in explicitly defining or assessing social cohesion. Some studies explore this topic by defining impact of conflict on social cohesion through measuring disrupting social engagements and activities (e.g., AIR, 2013; Counterpart, 2005). The degree to which social and community cohesion is important for well-being and stability remains an important gap in the existing research.

Based largely on a handful of project evaluations (e.g., MISTI, ASI), the literature highlights the degree to which there is regional variation in the impact of stabilization programs on community cohesion and resilience. Social capital and local leader satisfaction indices from the final wave of the MISTI evaluation survey indicate perceptions of resilience are strongest in southern districts targeted by the Stability in Key Areas-South (SIKA-S) project, where respondents are most likely to say their community is able to work together to solve problems that come from outside their village. Respondents in SIKA-S districts are also most likely to believe the interests of ordinary people and the interests of women are considered when local leaders make decisions that affect their village/neighborhood. Although Kandahar Food Zone (KFZ) districts are also in the south, those living in KFZ districts perceive the lowest levels of community resilience and

cohesion. Since KFZ districts were selected for inclusion in USAID stabilization programming because of high rates of poppy cultivation, the corrosive effects of the drug trade may explain some of the lack of community resilience and cohesion (MISTI, 2015 (3)). The analyses do not explicitly rule out, however, that differences in reported cohesion could be due to differences in specific aspects of the projects themselves rather than geographic or other sources of variation in the people responding to the surveys.

#### *3.1.4 Health and Economic Well-Being*

The very limited evidence on the effect of stabilization programs on health and economic outcomes remains a significant gap in the literature. In part, this is because there were few studies which included economic and/or health indicators explicitly, as shown in Table 2. A handful of other studies, listed below, discuss health outcomes but did not include explicit indicators to evaluate health improvements. A number of studies focused on improvement in health services (AIR, 2013; Beath, Fontini and Enikolopov, 2013 (1a); Child, 2014; MSI, 2013 (2)), but contained limited evidence on whether improvements in access were sustained and on the extent to which such access improved actual health outcomes.

Regarding economic outcomes, there is limited evidence of slight improvements in economic conditions during the implementation of stabilization programs (Altai, 2012 (4), Beath, Fontini and Enikolopov, 2013 (1a); MSI, 2013 (2)). In most cases, this appears to be driven by the direct creation of jobs (Felbab-Brown, 2012; Altai, 2012 (2)), but in some cases job-training programs also had a positive impact (IMU, 2015 (1)). The literature remains conflicted on whether this focus on economic outcomes is desirable. While some research suggests that lack of economic opportunity is a source of some frustration among the general population and ensuring stable economic conditions for Afghans is a critical prerequisite for stabilization (MFA Denmark, 2012; Social Impact, 2016; MSI, 2013 (2)), others argue that focusing on economic conditions distracts attention from the political and social issues that are fundamental to generating grievances and driving conflict (Ellwood, 2013; Gordon, 2011). Absent empirical evidence linking economic conditions to instability and conflict in these settings, it remains ambiguous whether addressing economic conditions should be a necessary element of stabilization programs.

### **3.2 Time Horizon of Effects**

The second research question (R2) was focused on the time horizon over which any effects were apparent. In many cases, programs focused on generating rapid effects within a very short window (3-6 months). Other programs were focused on the medium-term (6-18 months) or long-term (18+ months).<sup>9</sup> Some stabilization programs also considered the impact on key indicators

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<sup>9</sup> We note that these time horizons are only medium and long term in the context of “stabilization” programs.

over an even longer timeframe--3-5 years from implementation. Very few impacts were seen over this longer time horizon for two reasons. First, and unavoidably in conflict-affected settings, the dynamic nature of the environment makes it hard to find any effects from programming after more than a year. Too many other inhibiting and amplifying factors are changing along with independent but confounding drivers of instability. In such conditions, the signal to noise ratio is typically quite low after more than six months.<sup>10</sup> Second, program outcomes are not typically designed to be measured years after implementation is complete; programs do not often include this in their budgets. We also did not find retrospective studies on the effects of major programs after program implementation had concluded.

### *3.2.1 Limited Evidence of Short-Term Impact*

Nearly all well-designed studies, including experimental and quasi-experimental quantitative approaches (e.g., Beath, Fontini and Enikolopov, 2013 (1b); MSI, 2014 (7)), government-initiated evaluations (Bohnke, Koehler and Zurcher, 2014; Bohnke and Zurcher, 2013; Norad, 2012), qualitative reviews (Fishstein, 2012), and historical accounts (Goodhand, 2002) consistently indicated that any stabilization program effects (whether positive or negative) were short-term at best. This appears to be true of both US and international civilian-led programs, such as the ASI programs (Altai, 2012 (1)) or NSP (Beath, Fontini and Enikolopov, 2013 (1b)), and military-led programs, such as CERP (Chou, 2012). It also applies to the stabilization efforts of non-USG foreign donors, such as Norway (Norad, 2012), Germany (BMZ, 2010), and the UK (DFID, 2009). While several of these programs generated shifts in the security environment, government capacity or reported attitudes, there is no evidence that these shifts were sustained after the programs concluded.

The literature is divided on the desirability of short-term or long-term stabilization aid. On the one hand, some reports emphasize that a focus on short-term objectives is essential to help the host nation get off life support and on a sustainable path to recovery (Cole and Hsu, 2009; Narang, 2015; SFRC, 2011). Proponents of a short-term focus argue that quick-impact gains address specific, pressing needs and build the foundation for other, longer-term activities (by either the Afghan government or other international actors). The critique of a short-term focus centers on the assertion that rapid gains or “quick wins” result in outcomes that are unsustainable without continued foreign support, ultimately breeding dependency and resentment among the Afghan population (Brown, 2014; Felbab-Brown, 2012; ICG, 2011; Miakhel, 2010). Specifically, Felbab-Brown (2012) notes that the focus on short-term gains does not address structural drivers of instability (especially in rural Afghanistan) and, as a result, quick-impact

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Development programs, for example, would operate and expect impact over much longer time horizons.

<sup>10</sup> In impact evaluations in conflict zones, this is a general problem for most any outcome other than basic demographics among geographically stable populations.



oriented programs, such as CERP-funded projects, have tended to replace government capacity rather than grow it. Taylor (2010), in particular, argues that the donor community should shift its focus from “quick wins” to sustainability. While logically appealing, there is limited evidence that empirically validates this assertion.

### *3.2.2 Gaps in Understanding Long-Term Impact*

While the short-term and transitory nature of stabilization program impacts appears to be well-documented, at least for some key indicators, their longer-term impacts are less understood. The research on lack of long-term outcomes largely focuses on the reasons for lack of sustainability. These reasons include: projects were explicitly designed to achieve short-term stability, rather than long-term sustainability (Carter, 2013; Cole and Hsu, 2009); many projects had unrealistic goals and mechanisms to facilitate sustainable outcomes (DFID, 2009; Felbab-Brown, 2012); some projects were not focused on key drivers or issues relevant for change (Brown, 2014); and specific factors that had pervasive effects on program implementation (e.g., corruption, personnel turnover) created barriers for sustainable outcomes (DFID, 2009; Gordon, 2014; ICG, 2011; Miakhel, 2010; MSI, 2015 (1)).

In addition to the programmatic reasons for lack of longer-term and sustainable impact, most efforts for monitoring and evaluation were focused on oversight and implementation and did not continue to assess outcome changes after program completion. This was especially true for the experimental and quasi-experimental evaluations of stabilization programming in our review. In large part, this is because assessing outcome changes after program completion is costly and it risks the inclusion of other confounding factors, which could make any results difficult to interpret. The environment in Afghanistan specifically, and many conflict-affected areas generally, is dynamic given the social turmoil and many government and international activities that may affect measurable indicators. When evaluating an individual program many years after its completion, other programs and sources of turmoil can confound and bias estimates of the impact of the specific program in question. This lack of measurement also impacted the design and evaluation of longer-term programs conducted with more traditional development objectives (UNDP, 2014).

### **3.3 Impact of Military Presence**

Given the prominence of the military and its expanded role in stabilization program operation and execution, it is critical to consider the interactive effects between the military and civilian activities. In particular, we focused on how the presence of the military impacted the outcomes of stabilization projects (R3). On the whole, the literature suggests that the military played an important role in providing baseline levels of security to facilitate program operation and that some of the military’s programs—namely CERP—were important stabilization programs in their

own right. However, the differences in objectives, timelines, and cultures resulted in inefficiencies and sometimes limited the effectiveness of operations. At a more strategic level, there remains an active, ongoing debate on the degree to which assistance programs should be supported or executed by the military.

### *3.3.1 International Military Forces have a Role in the Basic Execution of Stabilization Programs*

At a purely tactical level, much of the literature recognizes the importance of military presence during program execution to assist in providing the basic level of security needed for program execution (DoD JCOA, 2006; Felbab-Brown, 2012; ICG, 2011; Kapstein and Kathuria, 2012; Sexton, 2015; Taylor, 2010). Absent this support (and sometimes even with it), the security situation inhibited even basic tasks needed for program operation (see, for example, Altai, 2012 (5)). This vital function was acknowledged even among those critical of the military's role in the stabilization context. As noted by Taylor (2010): "security is still the major issue inhibiting project implementation in stabilization contexts. Donors need to find more innovative, effective and varied ways to deal with security issues in aid delivery." Thus while the military may have been instrumentally useful in allowing basic operations, that support did not negate the potential inhibiting effect of poor security.

### *3.3.2 Civilian and Military Implementers Have Conflicting Objectives*

Although the military played an important and well-recognized role in supporting stabilization efforts, the differences between civilian and military objectives (Gordon, 2014), timeframes (Davids, Rietjens and Soeters, 2010), and culture (Altai, 2012 (4)) resulted in a range of inefficiencies and conflicting activities. While the empirical evidence of problems resulting from a lack of civil-military cooperation is largely qualitative, it is robust, widespread, and consistent.

A range of studies consistently identified these issues and noted the military's role in affecting successful outcomes. In particular, ICG (2011) noted that "in their haste to demonstrate progress, donors have pegged much aid to short-term military objectives and timeframes. As the drawdown begins, donor funding and civilian personnel presence, mirroring the military's withdrawal schedule, may rapidly decline, undermining oversight and the sustainability of whatever reconstruction and development achievements there have been." Moreover, many strategic plans and policy documents did not fully recognize different objectives pursued by civilian representatives and the military leadership, resulting in uncoordinated and sometimes conflicting efforts (Viehe, Afshar and Heela, 2015).

### *3.3.3 The Securitization of Development Aid is a Controversial Concept*

An important and ongoing conflict in the literature is the degree to which the impact of the military on stabilization outcomes should be analyzed in the context of a wider debate over the

securitization of development aid. While much of the evidence related to this controversy stems from papers that lack rigorous research designs, their anecdotal and experience-informed insights do center on a common theme. According to one of the first academic studies of the role of international aid in Afghanistan, “maximalists” argue aid should be consciously used as an instrument of peace building, while “humanitarian minimalists” contend the implementation of aid to support military objectives leads to a distortion of traditional mandates, especially neutrality and impartiality (Goodhand, 2002). The implementation of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) framework highlighted both the potential benefits and implicit tensions in civilian-military development collaboration (McNerney, 2006; Waldman, 2008).

More broadly, Howell and Lind (2009) note that “the convergence of military and development objectives and the subordination of the latter to the former has co-opted civil society into stabilization and state-building strategies in Afghanistan as a way of strengthening the state and has undermined the legitimacy of civil society and contributed to negative popular attitudes toward NGOs.” While these concerns directly contradict the stated need for the military to serve a security function for program execution, there is limited evidence to either support or reject the notion that securitizing development assistance is problematic.

### **3.4 Synergies and Confounding Factors with Other Donors**

Motivated in part by the degree to which the military presence affected stabilization programs, we next reviewed the evidence on the synergies and confounding factors that may exist between stabilization programs by different actors (other parts of the USG, other countries, Afghan government, international organizations like the World Bank, etc.) (R4). There is very limited evidence in the literature on what types of synergies beyond the civil-military partnership were effective. However, several articles highlighted the importance of coordination between different countries and the host nation (e.g., Afghanistan) in ensuring success (Ellwood, 2013; MSI, 2014 (2); Altai, 2012 (7); Goodhand, 2002; Gordon, 2012; Taylor, 2010; Viehe, Afshar and Heela, 2015; Waldman, 2008). Ellwood (2013) summarized this by noting that “despite the scale of international aid that has been poured into the country (estimated to be some \$430 billion), conflicting agendas, poor coordination, lack of overall ownership, an absence of regional economic strategies, and an ignorance of local requirements have led to time, effort, and finances wasted on an industrial scale.” Despite the repeated observations on these issues, there is limited evidence on the specific ways to design or ensure international donor and/or implementer coordination that would enable or inhibit success. As noted in greater detail in the recommendation section, this issue could be addressed by future monitoring and evaluation efforts, which would focus on identifying programmatic features as well as overall impact.

### **3.5 Impact of Specific Project Aspects**

We next turn to the programmatic features that could amplify or inhibit the impact of stabilization programs, including the size and type of contract used to facilitate implementation, as well as the sectors (agriculture, infrastructure, skills, etc.) in which projects operate (R5).

#### *3.5.1 Small-Scale Programs Produced Quick Impact Results, but Did Not Address Drivers of Instability*

A number of studies (Altai, 2012 (7); Chou, 2012; Child, 2014; Goodhand, 2002; Gordon, 2011; Kapstein and Kathuria, 2012; Nagl, Exum and Humayun, 2009) highlight the intuition that smaller projects can be targeted at important, specific gaps and seem less likely to fuel instability. We note that these small projects are small in the scale of any individual project; the programs which fund such projects may be quite large including in many instances nationwide in scope. Small projects have a variety of beneficial features: they are easier to manage; they are less likely than large infrastructure projects to attract attention from corrupt officials or to become targets for enemy sabotage; and outputs are small and less likely to become a source of conflict. For each of three reconstruction programs included in our analysis (NSP, LGCD, CERP), project spending was not associated with statistically significant reductions in violence. The one exception was small-scale development aid that was conditional on information sharing by the community; this incentivized approach did appear to be somewhat effective in reducing violence (Chou, 2012). The literature does not provide evidence of increasing returns from a cost-effectiveness perspective; small projects do not have a different impact on outcomes, such as violence or support for the government, relative to larger-scale projects (see Child, 2014). Additionally, Afghans reacted positively to large-scale programs that are populated by small, community driven projects such as NSP because the funding dispersed was too small to be siphoned off by powerful interests while still providing meaningful benefits to communities (Gordon, 2011). This is important for minimizing the risk of unintended negative outcomes as well. For instance, any corruption that affects community-driven, local projects is by its nature smaller in scale and thus less likely to delegitimize the national government (Kapstein and Kathuria, 2012).

However, Felbab-Brown (2012) noted an important caveat: small-scale stabilization programs do not address the structural deficiencies of the rural economy in Afghanistan, such as inadequate infrastructure, lack of economic opportunities, and motivations for many lower-level grievances. Moreover, small-scale programs tended mostly to replace government capacity rather than to grow it, further exacerbating the periphery-center divide. As such, while small-scale projects may be effective at impacting short-term outcomes, they are unlikely to have more permanent, sustainable impacts.

### *3.5.2 Large-Scale Programs Created Unrealistic Expectations and Experienced Higher Levels of Corruption and Targeting*

Larger programs – often related to construction – were problematic for several reasons and were less likely to have significant impacts. Based on the Afghanistan experience, stabilization programming is unlikely to generate large or persistent effects. From well-designed experimental and quasi-experimental approaches (e.g. Beath, Fontini and Enikolopov, 2013 (1b); MSI, 2014 (7)) to government-initiated qualitative reviews (Bohnke, Koehler, Zurcher, 2014; Bohnke, Zurcher, 2013; Norad, 2012) to historical accounts (Goodhand, 2002), the evidence consistently indicates stabilization programming has small, generally transitory, impacts (either positive or negative). Programs such as CERP (Chou, 2012; Child, 2012; Sexton 2015) or some of the ASI programs (Altai, 2012 (1)) that have been “successful” do not generate large shifts in security, attitudes, or capacity, though they may have short-term, positive impacts. This is relevant for both managing the expectations of what stabilization programs may accomplish and for considering how to design measurement and evaluation efforts to detect relatively small effects. For example, expectations of positive program outcomes among the Afghan population, when unmet, resulted in disappointment and disillusionment when these programs, in their view, did not deliver on their promises (Gordon, 2012). That disappointment could underlie the continued dissatisfaction among Afghan people with international forces and/or the Afghan Government, making it increasingly difficult for future programs to gain local support.

Second, large programs appeared to be much more susceptible than their smaller counterparts to negative forces, such as corruption and violence. This was especially true in the construction sector, which Afghans tended to view as low quality, corrupt and highly criminalized (Gordon, 2012; Sud, 2013). Moreover, these large projects were subject to criminal and insurgent targeting for violence and other attacks (SIGAR, 2011 (1)). Many large contracts also involved subcontracting that most Afghan respondents regarded simply as a legalized form of corruption (Gordon, 2012).

### **3.6 Summary of Commonalities across Successful or Unsuccessful Projects**

Based on the existing evidence, there were a number of commonalities that we identified when looking across a variety of successful or unsuccessful stabilization projects at different times, with different implementers, in a range of different sectors (R6). Many of these commonalities relate to external conditions or factors which influence success. Thus, rather than focusing on which underlying drivers of instability (e.g., ethnic tension, poverty) may have been most relevant for the specific setting, we find the literature is most instructive in identifying relevant enabling and inhibiting factors (e.g. political will), regardless of the specific driver or source of instability. These factors include: host nation coordination and commitment, limiting the extent of corrosive corruption, ensuring baseline levels of security to facilitate basic implementation

and oversight, and ensuring appropriate staffing, both in terms of skills and in terms of longevity of deployment.

We note an important caveat in this analysis: in many cases the absence of such key factors is itself what drives instability; but, of course, not in all cases. As noted by Mikulaschek and Shapiro (2016): "...there is no reason to expect the same correlation between a given cause (e.g., poverty) and both the onset of conflict and sub-national variation in its intensity." Thus the presence or absence of these factors can occur in areas with varying degrees of stabilization and may directly affect the programmatic success as well as the overall level of stabilization in a given area. This is relevant in the Afghan context – as well as when applying these findings to other conflict settings – in managing expectations on what may and may not work.

### *3.6.1 The Afghan National Government's Commitment to Reform is a Fundamental Prerequisite for Success*

As noted above, coordination with the host-nation is critical for effective implementation. However, beyond simple coordination, a real commitment to building capacity and reforming ineffective processes is critical to building a responsive, legitimate government (Cole and Hsu, 2009). A regularly noted limiting factor was the lack of capacity and willingness to reform by the Afghan government at both local and national levels.

### *3.6.2 Impact of Corruption is Pervasive and Corrosive*

Not surprisingly, a wide variety of studies noted that corruption was a key--if not the single most important--issue affecting support for the Afghan government, support for insurgents, and attitudes towards foreign forces (AIR, 2013; Altai, 2012 (1); Altai, 2012 (3); Ellwood, 2013; Felbab-Brown, 2012; Fishstein, 2012; Gordon, 2012; Miakhel, 2010; MSI, 2013 (2); Viehe, Afshar and Heela, 2015). As Fishstein (2012) summarized: "while respondents...did report some short-term benefits of aid projects, it appears that corruption, tribal politics, and the heavy-handed behavior of international forces neutralized whatever positive effects aid projects might have delivered." Gordon (2012) similarly noted that Afghans consistently described development projects negatively; not only were projects failing to build support for government among civilians but they were increasing perceptions of corruption and distrust in government.

### *3.6.3 Security is a Key Determinant of Program Success and Sustainability*

As noted in Section 3.3, the military plays a key role in providing basic security for program implementation and execution. More broadly, security is an important factor in creating the preconditions for program success (AIR, 2013; Davids, Rietjens and Soeters, 2010; IMU, 2015 (2)). This is distinct from suggesting security itself is sufficient to produce programmatic success, as noted in a number of critiques on the securitization of development assistance.

Nevertheless, most Afghans, when surveyed, noted security as an important factor when considering the effectiveness of development projects in their communities (BMZ, 2010). However, in many cases, even though those surveyed had not themselves experienced violence, the perception of violence was an important determinant of attitudes towards the Afghan government (IMU, 2015 (4)). Thus, when planning for programs, attention must be paid to not only how to establish security in an area but also what factors affect public perceptions of security among the local population.

#### *3.6.4 Employing Competent, Long-term, and, Ideally, Local Staff are Essential Elements of Successful Projects*

Even the best designed programs cannot be effectively implemented and achieve the desired impact without appropriate staffing. A range of audits and evaluations found consistent, substantial negative effects on program effectiveness due to lack of adequate staff. This included understaffing for key programs (DFID, 2009), lack of appropriately trained staff (DoD JCOA, 2006), rapid turnover of staff (MSI, 2014 (2)), restrictions on the mobility of staff (OIG, 2015), and the underuse of capable local staff (Miakhel, 2010). As a result, programs were often not implemented as intended and could not be modified and adapted to meet requirements. Moreover, absent sufficient staff in the field, stabilization programs lacked the appropriate oversight and feedback to even identify when such modifications might be necessary. Programs in which staff were in the field and accessible, especially smaller programs such as OTI's CCI programs, were better able to achieve modest program goals (IMU, 2015 (3)).

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall findings of this report can be summarized as follows: manage expectations because big changes in any outcomes are unlikely, smaller programs are more likely to achieve modest outcomes, security and corruption must be addressed to enable success, and appropriate staffing is critical for implementation.

These findings are supported by a systematic compilation of evidence from the available literature through late-2016. We must highlight the fact that almost none of these key points are new. Although many of the studies included in this analysis noted key points from evidentiary base at the time that are reflected in our report as well—few of those points were heeded after publication. Many of our findings about the impact of development programming based on studies through 2016 were made in ICG (2011), which argued that: “The impact of international assistance will remain limited unless donors, particularly the largest, the U.S., stop subordinating programming to counter-insurgency objectives, devise better mechanisms to monitor implementation, adequately address corruption and wastage of aid funds, and ensure that recipient communities identify needs and shape assistance policies.”

Of particular note is the repeated, widespread recommendation for improved monitoring and evaluation in order to improve future program performance. This recommendation is succinctly summarized by Bohnke, Koehler and Zurcher (2014) as follows: “...if the international community is serious about rigorous impact evaluations, it must pressure donors and implementing actors for much higher standards for recording and sharing data!” Improved monitoring, evaluation, and learning could be achieved through adopting the improvements and changes suggested in Department of State 2011, including addressing key gaps such as: “USAID does not follow a uniform approach to the conduct of evaluations;” “the number of evaluations conducted by USAID is very small;” “most interventions are not evaluated;” and “although USAID mandates that each major intervention should be evaluated at least once, the mandate appears not to have been followed.” Key improvements that were recommended at that time include the need for more detailed statements of work to ensure appropriate, feasible data collection and evaluation plans; the importance of methodologically sound and clearly documented evaluation designs; and clear, explicit and publicly available presentation of data, findings, and recommendations from these evaluations. Should a future contingency entail a large, international, multi-year stabilization effort, programs and evaluations should be designed, implemented and modified to take into account these recommendations to improve the chances for success.



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na	na	na	na	na	Historical Review	Meta-Analysis	Lessons Learned	Qualitative review	na	USAID	To examine key principles of aid strategy and assess the effectiveness of this approach.	Service Providers: Move from maximal inputs to a more restrained delivery focused on predictability and reliability that acknowledges the institutional nature of politics, justice, and sectoral services in the eyes of the local population. Previous approaches limited by bureaucratic and chain-of-command issues worked to create an environment where the priority was "just make stuff happen" as quickly as possible on the ground. To often provided confused the mission to create recurring services (as a means of improving state-society relations) with the reality of launching a "collection of discrete, unconnected, and often unsustainable projects." Projects were also often launched without a comprehensive underlying assessment of the services' demand. "Progress" was often defined by the services' Evaluators and Donors: Review the way they define, discuss, and measure local governance progress toward capturing longer-term changes on the ground. International community needs to realize the way it measures "progress" by capturing changes to structures and incentives on the ground, and avoid "over-producing" feelings of optimism that are wholly enabled by short-term foreign inputs.	Limited evidence on projects but very important for process and implementation insights. In particular, focused on key issues of implementation from fragmented, overly ambitious approaches.	useful findings or recommendations (program design)	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence			
Brown, 2014	Rethinking Afghan Local Governance	Frances Brown (USP)	Aug 2014	2014	Policy/Think tank	na	na	na	na	USAID	To examine key principles of aid strategy and assess the effectiveness of this approach.	Service Providers: Move from maximal inputs to a more restrained delivery focused on predictability and reliability that acknowledges the institutional nature of politics, justice, and sectoral services in the eyes of the local population. Previous approaches limited by bureaucratic and chain-of-command issues worked to create an environment where the priority was "just make stuff happen" as quickly as possible on the ground. To often provided confused the mission to create recurring services (as a means of improving state-society relations) with the reality of launching a "collection of discrete, unconnected, and often unsustainable projects." Projects were also often launched without a comprehensive underlying assessment of the services' demand. "Progress" was often defined by the services' Evaluators and Donors: Review the way they define, discuss, and measure local governance progress toward capturing longer-term changes on the ground. International community needs to realize the way it measures "progress" by capturing changes to structures and incentives on the ground, and avoid "over-producing" feelings of optimism that are wholly enabled by short-term foreign inputs.	Limited evidence on projects but very important for process and implementation insights. In particular, focused on key issues of implementation from fragmented, overly ambitious approaches.	useful findings or recommendations (program design)	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence			
Carbontier, 2011	Humanitarian and Development Aid Stabilization: Blurring the Lines and Broadening the Gap	Carbontier	2011	2014	Academic Literature	na	na	Historical analysis of the evolving interaction between humanitarian assistance, development aid, and stabilization/COIN operations	na	N	na	The emphasis on stabilization may be overstated and result in a distraction in the long run. Recipient countries and host communities are, or risk, rejecting the liberal peace and development enterprise altogether when turning against the military dimensions of stabilization. Humanitarian practitioners and experts argue that the access of humanitarian organizations in the field has been made more difficult and dangerous as a result of stabilization and COIN strategies and tactics. Stabilization blurs the line between humanitarian assistance, development aid and military objectives. Armed groups and insurgents increasingly seek to sever all ties between aid workers and local communities by attacking those providing assistance. Progressive sharing of these between military protection, humanitarian action, and development aid intensifies divisions in humanitarian community between those organizations that adamantly adhere to impartiality, neutrality and independence and others that support and cooperate in Western-led stabilization strategies. Asymmetry between military and development aid budgets creates an obviously unbalanced relationship among each of the three. (Development, diplomacy, defense) of the "Security-development nexus. Security objectives tend to prevail over stabilization is conceptually dependent on the "liberal peace" thesis which asserts that fragile states pose threats to international security and that poverty is the principle cause of conflict and radicalization. In developing stabilization programming, there is an inherent tension between humanitarian assistance, development aid and military objectives. While the same conceptualization seen in the literature review of stabilization definitions. The reconstruction and introduction of services is viewed as a means of trust-building for formal political processes. Assistance is viewed as a temporary "state substitute" and development projects were intended to help shift support away from the Taliban toward the Afghan state. Potential problems with this current approach include increased destabilization resulting from efforts to shift power away from local powerbrokers towards the formal state, competing incentives between counterinsurgency efforts and long-term stabilization goals, the establishment of a state of peace which is not sustainable, and not addressing the root causes of conflict.	Provides some historical context for the current forms of stabilization settings which are active conflicts that are neither humanitarian nor counterinsurgency work. The piece seems to argue humanitarian and development aid is more effective when implementing agencies refuse to participate in stabilization and statebuilding efforts (citing the example of Mercy Corps' agricultural livelihoods program in five districts in Helmand and Kandahar). However, there is limited evidence to support the claims of success.	limited value for current planning or sufficient practical application	NA	NA	NA			
Carter, 2013	War, Peace and Stabilization: Critically Conceptualizing Stability in Southern Afghanistan (UK PRIGRAM)	Carter	Jun 2013	2013	Academic Literature	na	na	UK Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU) Provincial Reconstruction Teams	na	N	Assess the stabilization program as viewed by practitioners operating in Helmand Province (where the British forces operated predominantly)	Primary data collected through unstructured interviews with 15 stabilization practitioners in the UK and Afghanistan with experience in the Helmand Province. Identification of the narratives and meta-narratives in the stabilization paradigm of Helmand through discourse analysis.	1. Reconstruction and temporary service provision 2. Reduction or cessation of violence 3. Winning consent of local population 4. Repairing the war-torn fabric of society 5. Enhancement of the citizen-state "social contract". These indicators were provided by PRT team members, but the author views these as ineffective in resolving conflict.	Detailed discussion based on practitioners interviews interesting but focuses too much on their assertions on impact rather than other evidence of impact or details on process and implementation. In such, there is limited evidence to support claims and no way to contextualize the Helmand experience in the broader Afghan context	NA	Potentially effective	Potentially effective	Effective		
Child, 2014	Hearts and minds cannot be bought: Ineffective reconstruction in Afghanistan	Child	May 2014	2014	Academic Literature	na	na	Economic testing. Analysis of violent incidents, measured using geocoded data from Worldwide Incidents Tracking System (WITS) and stories located using ERP World Gazer and digital mapping software, composed of non-civilian casualties. A total of 3,509 incidents of violence. Analysis of CERF spending, measured by data from NATO C3 Agency's Afghanistan Country Stability Picture (ACSP). A total of 6,533 projects totaling USD 2.2 billion from 2002 to 2009, coincides with USD 1.64 billion appropriated to CERF between 2004-2010. Unit of observation is district-month. Reconstruction spending is calculated for a district-month by summing of daily totals, calculated as the sum of mean daily expenditure over existing projects. Violence levels are obtained by summing all incidents over respective period; violence is computed as incidents per 1 million inhabitants. CERF spending is on per capita basis.	Decrease in violent incidents involving non-civilian actors. Article also discusses community support as a criterion for stability used by US forces, but does not test changes in support in response to CERF.	MIL	Assess the impact of US military stabilization program (CERF) on violence levels.	The article reviewed the impact of grants provided by Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) in reducing instances of violence. Other empirical evidence of the effectiveness of reconstruction spending in reducing violence is extremely limited. Evidence of CERF in Afghanistan in reducing violence was statistically indistinguishable from zero. Spending on small projects does not appear to affect violence differently than spending on large projects. Study suggests that either reconstruction work is unrelated to violence or that programming impacts insurgency in a way that increases it. No other stabilization indicators are considered but health services or public infrastructure.	Useful economic design that finds limited impact on violence. But no other stabilization outcomes are used and there is a limited extent to which the study deals with the coincidence of violence and areas where CERF was applied. Given this, the findings suggest a limited impact on violence but with little discussion on how best to interpret this. No other stabilization indicators are considered but authors note CERF may impact other outcomes.	NA	Potentially effective	Potentially effective	Potentially effective			
Chou, 2012	Does development assistance reduce violence? Evidence from Afghanistan	Chou	Aug 2012	2012	Academic Literature	na	na	NSP, LGCD, CERF Humanitarian assistance Governance Community development	NSP: 116 of Afghanistan's 398 districts LGCD: data limited to projects in the South and East regions CERF nationwide (usable data for four months in 2009-2010 only)	USAID	Assess the impact of development assistance from both civilian and military providers on conflict-related outcomes	Limited impact on violence except for very small programs. For each of three reconstruction programs (NSP, LGCD, CERF) project spending did not, statistically, reduce the level of violence. However, small-scale CERF development aid made available conditionally to a certain extent. Limited impact on info sharing. Development projects provided independent of community cooperation/information-sharing conditionally have no effect on violence because they are available to the community regardless of whether the government or rebels are in control and therefore cannot induce information sharing on the margin.	Very thoughtful discussion of why Afghanistan and Iraq differ in the impact of assistance with particular focus on aid conditionality. They claim that conditionality is an essential, but understudied, prerequisite for stability-enhancing development. So when they discuss why CERF spending not appear to be effective in reducing insurgent activity in Afghanistan when it did so in Iraq they offer 3 reasons: 1) aid conditionality is unenforced 2) connection between spending and services provided (and therefore effectiveness of inducing information-sharing) may be tenuous in an institutionally weak environment like Afghanistan 3) a dynamic model non-combatants would consider future wellbeing, and development would increase support for the government only if it signaled a permanent shift in improved governance. In the Afghan context the mismanagement of development funds might be signaling the opposite.	NA	Effective	Effective	Potentially effective			
Cole, Huu, 2009	Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction	Cole, Huu	2009	2009	Policy/Think tank	na	na	Comprehensive review of major strategic policy documents from state ministries of defense, foreign affairs, and development along with major intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that work in war-torn shattered landscapes around the globe.	Purpose-based end states A safe and secure environment: cessation of large-scale violence; public order; legitimate state monopolies over the means of violence; physical security, territorial security The rule of law: just legal frameworks; public order; accountability to the law; access to justice; culture of lawfulness Stable governance: cessation of essential violence; new leadership of state resources; political moderation and accountability; civic participation and empowerment A sustainable economy: macroeconomic stabilization; control over the illicit economy and economic-based threats to peace; market economy sustainable; employment generation Social well-being: access to and delivery of basic needs services; access to and delivery of education; return and resettlement of refugees and IDPs; social reconstruction	N	Document review of strategic approach to stabilization	Focuses on host nation outcomes, not programmatic inputs or outputs. It is focused primarily on what the host nation and international actors are trying to achieve, not how they are trying to achieve it at the tactical level. It is not about how to conduct an election or disarm war-torn parties—it is about the outcomes that these activities suggest. This manual deals with missions that involve helping a country move from violent conflict to peace. The principles apply from the moment the need for an intervention is first recognized through the time when the host nation can sustainably provide security and basic services to its population. Due to these deliberate boundaries, the manual does not attempt to address the development challenges that state builders encounter. The focus Note that there is on that unclear, periodic stage where everything must be viewed through the lens of conflict. A focus on short-term objectives is essential to help the host nation get off life support and on a sustainable path to recovery. But to ensure coherence, these objectives must be nested within longer-term development goals.	Limited evidence and mostly focused on strategic documents	limited value for current planning or sufficient practical application	NA	NA	NA			
Counterpart_2015	Assessment: Initiative to Promote Civil Society Assessment (IPACS)	Counterpart International	Jun 2015	2015	Program Evaluation	na	na	Civil society capacity building 2005	January-April 2005	N	Assess the impact of IPACS on civil society organizations (CSOs) in Afghanistan	IPACS: 116 of Afghanistan's 398 districts LGCD: data limited to projects in the South and East regions CERF nationwide (usable data for four months in 2009-2010 only)	NSP, LGCD, CERF Humanitarian assistance Governance Community development	Assess the impact of development assistance from both civilian and military providers on conflict-related outcomes	Limited impact on violence except for very small programs. For each of three reconstruction programs (NSP, LGCD, CERF) project spending did not, statistically, reduce the level of violence. However, small-scale CERF development aid made available conditionally to a certain extent. Limited impact on info sharing. Development projects provided independent of community cooperation/information-sharing conditionally have no effect on violence because they are available to the community regardless of whether the government or rebels are in control and therefore cannot induce information sharing on the margin.	Very thoughtful discussion of why Afghanistan and Iraq differ in the impact of assistance with particular focus on aid conditionality. They claim that conditionality is an essential, but understudied, prerequisite for stability-enhancing development. So when they discuss why CERF spending not appear to be effective in reducing insurgent activity in Afghanistan when it did so in Iraq they offer 3 reasons: 1) aid conditionality is unenforced 2) connection between spending and services provided (and therefore effectiveness of inducing information-sharing) may be tenuous in an institutionally weak environment like Afghanistan 3) a dynamic model non-combatants would consider future wellbeing, and development would increase support for the government only if it signaled a permanent shift in improved governance. In the Afghan context the mismanagement of development funds might be signaling the opposite.	NA	Effective	Effective	Potentially effective
Daivets, 2010	Measuring Progress in Afghanistan	Christian Daivets, Sebastian Riegers, Joseph Sotters	Jan 2010	2010	Academic Literature	na	na	Review Afghanistan Country Stability Picture database which contains 6,000 projects completed in Afghanistan between 2002-2008. The research also consisted of interviews, briefings and participation in meeting with NATO officials in Kandahar from July-Nov 2007. Secondary interviews conducted with different NATO officials in Kabul and Kandahar in January 2009. Final dataset was composed of 6222 projects from 2002-2007. They were compared according to 8 variables: start date, end date, region, cost, status, sector, implementing partner, days completed per project, turnover per project per day. Additional information was conducted on the security of each region (capital, north, east, west, south), using 16 polls from 2006-2008 (N=3650). Regions coded according to a security classes: insecure (low), medium secure (east, west), and relative secure (north and capital). ACSP variable were validated with graphs and descriptive statistics to identify outliers and erroneous data.	Review of data included in the Afghanistan Country Stability Picture (ACSP), compares project information of 45 countries and various international/humanitarian organizations. It is a management control system that can be used by a given organization to manage and control progress and performance.	USAID	Review of data included in the Afghanistan Country Stability Picture (ACSP), compares project information of 45 countries and various international/humanitarian organizations. It is a management control system that can be used by a given organization to manage and control progress and performance.	In spite of a tumultuous history, there is a diverse and ever-growing civil society sector in Afghanistan. The key factors that will influence IPACS or other similar efforts in program implementation are: -The constant proliferation of civil society organizations (CSOs) in Afghanistan for project implementation purposes; -The relatively low level of institutional maturity of the civil society sector; -The large sums of money and responsibility that very mature organizations have available; -The relatively high credibility that traditional groups enjoy compared with the newer entities. -CSOs play a vital role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan, strengthening infrastructure development projects and providing social services to communities throughout the country. While institutional capacity is clearly low, there is only a limited recognition by the CSO sector of their capacity building needs, with the exception of the need to develop fund-raising skills. The CSO sector's development is hindered by the legal enabling environment in which it operates. This enabling environment is still weak with many areas of confusion and lack of clarity, exacerbated by the speed with which new organizations are being created by donors in the absence of a clear framework of topology.	Many claims in this article appear to be unsubstantiated by empirical work. But it does provide detailed summaries of project information in Afghanistan. Of particular note is what factors are missing in the tracking and management database used to measure these programs	Potentially effective	Potentially effective	Insufficient evidence				
Demmy, 2012	For Stabilization	Demmy	2012	2012	Academic Literature	na	na	Author argues that international interventions labeled as stabilization must focus primarily on political threats or threats that can only be ameliorated through political processes. The threats that would be of concern to stabilization will primarily be intra-state conflicts because there are inter-state political issues. The current focus of stabilization programming is on local development, local stability stems from the way in which local political elites are structured, the manner in which they co-opt or control the state (and vice versa) and the way in which the population is treated over the medium term. Stabilization is not simply about trying to help states address threats within their territories; when properly conceived of it allows those states to grow, change and establish an equilibrium between their political class, the state and the population in a manner which is consistent with fundamental basic human rights.	This article contends that there are various definitions of stabilization and those directed at a sub-national level. This has been useful as it clarifies stabilization activity with other forms of intervention. Stabilization interventions can address political threats at a sub-state level in a manner which preserves or maintains a situation to provide the opportunity for longer term social, economic and political evolution. The current tools and conceptions of stabilization mostly do not provide clarity in the aims and objectives of interventions. Current interventions are not coherently monitored, many projects are incorrectly labeled as stabilization. Sub-national stabilization intervention which aimed at addressing a political threat might involve both military and development actors; the intervention must be led by a civilian with executive authority who is able to use the interventions to pronounce stability rather than undermine it. It should not be used to maintain an unjust status quo.	N	Review the framework to information stability operations and how that can be applied in practice	Stabilization is a new term that has been applied to many old practices, but it has been incoherently used suggesting that it is both a practice for national level interventions and those directed at a sub-national level. This has been useful as it clarifies stabilization activity with other forms of intervention. Stabilization interventions can address political threats at a sub-state level in a manner which preserves or maintains a situation to provide the opportunity for longer term social, economic and political evolution. The current tools and conceptions of stabilization mostly do not provide clarity in the aims and objectives of interventions. Current interventions are not coherently monitored, many projects are incorrectly labeled as stabilization. Sub-national stabilization intervention which aimed at addressing a political threat might involve both military and development actors; the intervention must be led by a civilian with executive authority who is able to use the interventions to pronounce stability rather than undermine it. It should not be used to maintain an unjust status quo.	Historical discussion of definitions and concepts related to stabilization	NA	NA	NA				
Department of State, 2011	A Meta-Evaluation of Foreign Assistance Evaluations	Office of the Director of Foreign Assistance, Department of State	Jun 2011	2011	Government Documents	na	na	Analysis of the reports of 56 evaluations of USAID projects issued in 2009. These evaluations came from the P2020 Performance Plan and the findings appear not to have been followed. Foreign Assistance. Focus: 1) The quality of the Statement of Work (SOW); 2) the use and composition of evaluation teams; 3) evaluation methodology; 4) presentation of findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons as reflected in the reports. Checks of 46 items composed the core of the evaluation, coded or assessed with narrative comments. Two categories of evaluations: formative (process) undertaken during an intervention, or summative conducted at or near the end. 30 formative and 26 summative were reviewed.	Review how foreign assistance programs are designed and executed	USAID	Review how foreign assistance programs are designed and executed	USAID does not follow a uniform approach to the conduct of evaluations. The number of evaluations conducted by USAID is very small. Most interventions are not evaluated. Although USAID mandates that each major intervention should be evaluated at least once, the mandate appears not to have been followed. US Needs Improvements in SOW requirements: Only 22 out of 56 evaluations included SOWs. Only 19 were judged to have budgeted adequate resources for an evaluation. 34 had some adequate resources. The difficulty of data collection in non-core environments was often underestimated in the SOWs. Evaluation managers tend to have limited knowledge and little experience in conducting evaluator research. For high threat environments, summative evaluations tend to be overly ambitious and insufficient time is budgeted for data collection. Better Evaluation Methodology: 25 percent of evaluations used statistical and quasi-experimental designs. Group interviews and focus group discussions were used to include interview professionals but not topics covered in discussion. 75 percent were judged to have used appropriate data collection methods. Only 26 percent were found to have directly or indirectly used or referred to the underlying conceptual framework or model to evaluate performance or impacts. Clear and Explicit Presentations of Data, Findings, Recommendations, Lessons: A third of the evaluations were deficient in some aspect of data presentation. 88 percent of evaluation reports did not offer alternative explanation of their findings. 54 of the 56 evaluations included recommendations. 75 percent of the reports provided recommendations which followed logically from their findings.	Interviews of authors, managers, and other stakeholders of evaluations were NOT conducted. Evaluations fell under 5 program objectives: Peace and Security, Governance, Investing in People, Economic Growth, Humanitarian Assistance. The majority of authors discussed were in Africa. This could in theory limit applicability to Afghanistan but findings may be relevant in context.	useful findings or recommendations (M&E)	na	na	na			
Delzell, Alexander, 2010	Stability Operations: From Policy to Practice	James Delzell, Jason Alexander	2010	2010	Policy/Think tank	na	na	Presents the District Stabilization Framework (DSF) as a "comprehensive framework that allows civilian and military practitioners to identify local sources of instability, create activities to mitigate them, and measure the effectiveness of the activities in stabilizing the area."	Theoretical instability results when the factors fostering it overwhelm the ability of the government or society to mitigate them. A standardized methodology is necessary to identify the sources of instability. Local population perceptions must be included when identifying causes of instability. Measures of effect (impact) are the only true indicators of success. District Stability Framework (DSF) stability indicators in use in Afghanistan: -civilian right road movement -government legitimacy -population seeing security as an issue -population movement from insecurity -energy related attacks on government security forces -civilian casualties -acts of intimidation against government officials.	N	Review the framework to information stability operations and how that can be applied in practice	Many of the problems with stabilization programming in Afghanistan stem from the fact that traditional strategies and practices deemed effective in stable environments were applied in an unstable environment. The District Stabilization Framework was designed by practitioners to help practitioners mitigate challenges to improving effective stability operations. Consequently, the use of the DSF is intended to improve the ability of practitioners to conduct stability operations by enabling them to distinguish among needs, priority, giving resources, and sources of stability. Improving programming to prioritize activities based on their relevance to stabilizing an area, measuring stability, improving continuity, empowering field personnel, reducing staff time and resources devoted to planning, and improving strategic communications. Cases the Wilson Park Conference findings which looked at the effectiveness of development aid in Afghanistan, practitioners from numerous development agencies concluded that aid seems to be losing, rather than winning, hearts and minds in Afghanistan. Of particular importance is that this is more than just aid that is destabilizing. Aid, donors should differentiate between stabilization and development objectives. [cf. Wilson Park Conference, 2010]	Too focused on the specific DSF which has limited applicability and no evidence to support its effectiveness. Nevertheless, discussion of how and why to focus on the underlying sources of instability is useful.	some useful findings or recommendations (program design)	na	na	na			
DFID, 2009	Evaluation of DFID's Country Programmes for Afghanistan 2002-2007	Bennett, Alexander, Selvarajah, Philipson, Marsden (DFID)	May 2009	2009	Government Documents	na	na	Humanitarian relief State building Economic management Interim Strategy and aid effectiveness (2005-2006) Livelihoods assistance Partnership Arrangement	October 2005	N	Review the framework to information stability operations and how that can be applied in practice	DFID placed a strong emphasis from the outset on management of the economy. The aim was to create a strong public finance system to implement the National Development Framework and enable the government of Afghanistan to manage the coordination of development activities. The quality of technical assistance (TA) has been high, but there are drawbacks in terms of scope and sustainable results. DFID is keenly aware of the difficulties of assessing and demonstrating impact in the Afghan context. The lack of good national or provincial data and security constraints on access to beneficiaries (for DFID staff and partners) impedes the measurement of progress or decision making. DFID's practice of putting its aid funds through common systems adds to the usual problems of attribution in development aid.	Useful piece on issues with evaluation. DFID explicitly notes "Impact assessment has been difficult, partly due to the weakness of the project level results framework, but also due to the inherent difficulties of measuring impact in an insecure environment." DFID is keenly aware of the difficulties of assessing and demonstrating impact in the Afghan context. The lack of good national or provincial data and security constraints on access to beneficiaries (for DFID staff and partners) impedes the measurement of progress or decision making. DFID's practice of putting its aid funds through common systems adds to the usual problems of attribution in development aid.	NA	Insufficient evidence	Potentially effective	Potentially effective			
DoD JCDA, 2006	Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan: An Interagency Assessment	DoD JCDA USAID	Jun 2006	2006	Government Documents	na	na	Interviews with key officials and others with recent experience in Afghanistan. Three-week, in-country assessment, interviews with over 100 U.S. Embassy, USAID, USAF, USA, CDF, TR, S&F, UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), GDA, international donors, and NGOs. Visits to PRTs in Gardez, Ghazni, Kandahar, and Mazar-e-Sharif, as well as Regional Command South and battalion task forces in Chunar and Paktia.	Assess PRTs effectiveness from the DoD perspective	MIL	Assess PRTs effectiveness from the DoD perspective	PRTs have been an effective tool for stabilization in Afghanistan, strengthening provincial and district-level institutions and empowering local leaders who support the central government. In many locations, PRTs have helped create conditions that make increased political, social, and economic development possible. The U.S. Embassy and Combined Arms Command Afghanistan (CAC) need to reinvigorate an in-country interagency coordinating body that articulates how national programs and PRT efforts fit into broader U.S. foreign policy objectives. Guidance must be strengthened to direct U.S. PRT commanders to incorporate non-Department of Defense (DoD) representatives into PRT strategy development and decision making. otherwise, PRTs will fall short of their goals. To fully use U.S. PRT positions and better achieve assignment objectives, civilian agencies need to further develop policies and incentive structures. In the short term, funding should be provided USAID for more direct hire staff. Military and civilian personnel four lengths should be aligned to ensure team development, and personnel must have appropriate experience and training for PRT duties. U.S. PRT management and information systems that support civilian representatives need to be strengthened. U.S. PRT access to funds and capabilities needs to be improved to support the operational center-of-gravity movement to the provinces. USAID needs to recomplete the Quick Impact Project (QIP) funding mechanism to draw in implementing partners that can operate more effectively in unstable provinces. USAID representatives need access to multilateral funding, as should representatives of any civilian agency who serve on PRTs. The USG needs to develop team training for all PRT personnel. PRTs are most appropriate where there is a mid-range of violence, i.e., where instability still precludes heavy governmental organization (NGO) involvement, but where it is not so acute that combat operations predominate. PRT security measures need to be periodically reviewed and adapted to local conditions. If PRTs are replicated in other countries, their initial focus should be on mapping causes of conflict and developing targeted programs that respond to conditions underlying instability.	Useful but very tactical review of how to improve operations of PRTs when integrating USAID/civilian personnel in military context. Most of the evidence is anecdotal but well sourced and detailed.	some useful findings or recommendations (civil-military coordination)	Potentially effective	Potentially effective	Insufficient evidence			

Author	Title	Year	Organization	Country	Methodology	Findings	Conclusions	Impact	Notes	Relevance	Quality	Usefulness	Reliability	Validity							
DOD_2015	Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan	2015	Government	USA	Qualitative Review Case Study	AMEX provides extensive list of "indicators of effectiveness" for Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior. Outcome effectiveness is based on the "subjective assessment of the essential function lead."	AMEX provides extensive list of "indicators of effectiveness" for Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior. Outcome effectiveness is based on the "subjective assessment of the essential function lead."	AMEX provides extensive list of "indicators of effectiveness" for Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior. Outcome effectiveness is based on the "subjective assessment of the essential function lead."	AMEX provides extensive list of "indicators of effectiveness" for Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior. Outcome effectiveness is based on the "subjective assessment of the essential function lead."	AMEX provides extensive list of "indicators of effectiveness" for Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior. Outcome effectiveness is based on the "subjective assessment of the essential function lead."	AMEX provides extensive list of "indicators of effectiveness" for Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior. Outcome effectiveness is based on the "subjective assessment of the essential function lead."	AMEX provides extensive list of "indicators of effectiveness" for Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior. Outcome effectiveness is based on the "subjective assessment of the essential function lead."	AMEX provides extensive list of "indicators of effectiveness" for Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior. Outcome effectiveness is based on the "subjective assessment of the essential function lead."	AMEX provides extensive list of "indicators of effectiveness" for Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior. Outcome effectiveness is based on the "subjective assessment of the essential function lead."							
na	na	na	na	na	Methods Review	na	Guidelines	MPICE provides a system of metrics that can assist in formulating policy and implementing strategic and operational plans to transform conflict and bring stability to war-torn societies. These metrics provide the context for baseline operational and strategic level assessments allowing policymakers to diagnose potential obstacles to stabilization prior to an intervention.	State-imposed Stability Drivers of violent conflict persist, requiring the active and robust presence of external military forces, in partnership with a stable international civilian presence, to perform vital functions such as imposing order, reducing violence, delivering essential services, moderating political conflict, and instituting an acceptable political framework pursuant to a peace accord. State-imposed Stability Drivers of violent conflict have been reduced to the extent that they can be largely managed by local actors and indigenous institutions (formal and informal). This permits the reduction of outside military intervention and civilian assistance to minimal levels that can be sustained by the intervening parties over the long term. State-imposed Stability Drivers of violent conflict are able to cope effectively with residual drivers of violent conflict and resolve internal disputes peacefully without the need for an international military or civilian administrative presence.	State-imposed Stability Drivers of violent conflict persist, requiring the active and robust presence of external military forces, in partnership with a stable international civilian presence, to perform vital functions such as imposing order, reducing violence, delivering essential services, moderating political conflict, and instituting an acceptable political framework pursuant to a peace accord. State-imposed Stability Drivers of violent conflict have been reduced to the extent that they can be largely managed by local actors and indigenous institutions (formal and informal). This permits the reduction of outside military intervention and civilian assistance to minimal levels that can be sustained by the intervening parties over the long term. State-imposed Stability Drivers of violent conflict are able to cope effectively with residual drivers of violent conflict and resolve internal disputes peacefully without the need for an international military or civilian administrative presence.	MPICE provides a system of metrics that can assist in formulating policy and implementing strategic and operational plans to transform conflict and bring stability to war-torn societies. These metrics provide the context for baseline operational and strategic level assessments allowing policymakers to diagnose potential obstacles to stabilization prior to an intervention.	na	na	na	na						
Diadic, Sofrin, Agaglia_2010	Measuring Progress in Conflict Environments: Diadic, Sofrin, Agaglia_2010	2010	Policy/Think tank	USA	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Policy Proposal	MPICE provides a system of metrics that can assist in formulating policy and implementing strategic and operational plans to transform conflict and bring stability to war-torn societies. These metrics provide the context for baseline operational and strategic level assessments allowing policymakers to diagnose potential obstacles to stabilization prior to an intervention.	State-imposed Stability Drivers of violent conflict persist, requiring the active and robust presence of external military forces, in partnership with a stable international civilian presence, to perform vital functions such as imposing order, reducing violence, delivering essential services, moderating political conflict, and instituting an acceptable political framework pursuant to a peace accord. State-imposed Stability Drivers of violent conflict have been reduced to the extent that they can be largely managed by local actors and indigenous institutions (formal and informal). This permits the reduction of outside military intervention and civilian assistance to minimal levels that can be sustained by the intervening parties over the long term. State-imposed Stability Drivers of violent conflict are able to cope effectively with residual drivers of violent conflict and resolve internal disputes peacefully without the need for an international military or civilian administrative presence.	State-imposed Stability Drivers of violent conflict persist, requiring the active and robust presence of external military forces, in partnership with a stable international civilian presence, to perform vital functions such as imposing order, reducing violence, delivering essential services, moderating political conflict, and instituting an acceptable political framework pursuant to a peace accord. State-imposed Stability Drivers of violent conflict have been reduced to the extent that they can be largely managed by local actors and indigenous institutions (formal and informal). This permits the reduction of outside military intervention and civilian assistance to minimal levels that can be sustained by the intervening parties over the long term. State-imposed Stability Drivers of violent conflict are able to cope effectively with residual drivers of violent conflict and resolve internal disputes peacefully without the need for an international military or civilian administrative presence.	MPICE provides a system of metrics that can assist in formulating policy and implementing strategic and operational plans to transform conflict and bring stability to war-torn societies. These metrics provide the context for baseline operational and strategic level assessments allowing policymakers to diagnose potential obstacles to stabilization prior to an intervention.	na	na	na							
Elwood_2013	Stabilizing Afghanistan: Prospects for Improving Security, Governance and the Economy	2013	Policy/Think tank	USA	Historical Review	Meta-Analysis	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Qualitative policy review and recommendations	Improved security Improved governance Economic development and reconstruction	Improved security Improved governance Economic development and reconstruction	Improved security Improved governance Economic development and reconstruction	Improved security Improved governance Economic development and reconstruction	Improved security Improved governance Economic development and reconstruction	Improved security Improved governance Economic development and reconstruction							
Felbab-Brower_2012	Stip Sliding on a Yellow Risk Road: Stabilization Efforts (Briefs) in Afghanistan	2012	Policy/Think tank	USA	Historical Review	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Policy Proposal	Qualitative review of stabilization efforts. Interviews with USAF officials in Kabul. Interviews with "Afghans from walks of life" in Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, and Bamyan. Interviews with US and Canadian government officials and representatives of the international development companies charged with economic stabilization programs in Kandahar and Herat.	Views "governance" issues (not specifically defined) as key to stabilization efforts. Decreasing/eliminating corruption is fundamental to successful stabilization efforts.	Views "governance" issues (not specifically defined) as key to stabilization efforts. Decreasing/eliminating corruption is fundamental to successful stabilization efforts.	Assess CEPF and other stabilization in Afghans in Afghanistan based on interviews with Afghans and some US/Canadian officials	Methodology is ad hoc and lacks a systematic approach to interviews or question focus. Overall the findings are consistent with broad views on Afghanistan but without sufficient evidence to justify claims	na	na	na					
Fishstein_2012	Winning Hearts and Minds in Uruzgan Province	2012	Policy/Think tank	USA	Impact Evaluation	Historical Review	Effectiveness	Qualitative Review Case Study	Qualitative interviews and focus group discussions with a range of respondents in key institutions and communities were used to elicit views on the drivers of insecurity, characteristics of aid projects and aid implementers (including the military), and effects of aid projects on the popularity of aid actors and on security. Excluding Helmand (where a slightly different methodology was used), 574 people were interviewed, including 340 Afghan and 234 international respondents. In Uruzgan, 120 people (54 Afghan and 66 international) were interviewed. In addition, secondary sources were drawn upon for historical information and background to aid projects. To reduce or eliminate the likelihood of respondent bias, the methodology used multiple visits, triangulation of responses, flexible interview guides that encouraged spontaneous responses within specific themes, and the fielding of teams with extensive local experience.	This article does not explicitly state or review any methodology in the insecure provinces (Helmand, Pakia, Uruzgan, the two secure provinces (Balkh and Faryab) and the city of Kabul. Consistent methodology was used in all provinces except Helmand due to the security situation. In the four provinces (except Helmand) and Kabul, there were 574 respondents (340 Afghan and 234 international), whose responses were recorded during individual interviews or focus groups. The respondents included former government officials, donors, diplomats, international military officials, PRT military and civilian staff, UN and aid agency staff, tribal and religious leaders, journalists, traders, businessmen and community members. 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This data collection took place from June 2008 - February 2010. In Helmand, the methodology mixed qualitative data from interviews conducted February - March 2008 and quantitative data from polling done in November 2008.	Uruzgan provided ample evidence of the destabilizing effects of aid projects. Given the characterization of aid projects as monopolized by people who were crucial and unjust, there was skepticism about the extent to which aid projects could contribute to security. In the context of the Dutch handover and the 2014 Transition, the research also raises the question of whether relying on individuals to deliver security is consistent with the professed objective of strengthening the state.	Uruzgan provided ample evidence of the destabilizing effects of aid projects. Given the characterization of aid projects as monopolized by people who were crucial and unjust, there was skepticism about the extent to which aid projects could contribute to security. 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Gilboa_2010	Joint Evaluation of the Paris Declaration Phase 2: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	2010	Government Documents	USA	Performance/Process	Meta-Analysis	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Assess implementation of Paris Declaration phase	Blended evaluation synthesis and Meta evaluation, including more na delivery, internal post conflict and, in certain instances, successful outcomes. Afghanistan aid and development scenario and play significant roles in shaping donor aid policies and approaches which affect both the relevance and effectiveness of aid projects. Over the characterization of aid projects as monopolized by people who were crucial and unjust, there was skepticism about the extent to which aid projects could contribute to security. In the context of the Dutch handover and the 2014 Transition, the research also raises the question of whether relying on individuals to deliver security is consistent with the professed objective of strengthening the state.	Blended evaluation synthesis and Meta evaluation, including more na delivery, internal post conflict and, in certain instances, successful outcomes. Afghanistan aid and development scenario and play significant roles in shaping donor aid policies and approaches which affect both the relevance and effectiveness of aid projects. Over the characterization of aid projects as monopolized by people who were crucial and unjust, there was skepticism about the extent to which aid projects could contribute to security. In the context of the Dutch handover and the 2014 Transition, the research also raises the question of whether relying on individuals to deliver security is consistent with the professed objective of strengthening the state.	Blended evaluation synthesis and Meta evaluation, including more na delivery, internal post conflict and, in certain instances, successful outcomes. Afghanistan aid and development scenario and play significant roles in shaping donor aid policies and approaches which affect both the relevance and effectiveness of aid projects. Over the characterization of aid projects as monopolized by people who were crucial and unjust, there was skepticism about the extent to which aid projects could contribute to security. In the context of the Dutch handover and the 2014 Transition, the research also raises the question of whether relying on individuals to deliver security is consistent with the professed objective of strengthening the state.	Assess implementation of Paris Declaration phase	High level government document reviewing barriers to improvement with limited evidence or little substantial discussion to understand variation across Afghanistan	na	na	na					
Goodhand_2002	Aiding violence or building peace? The Role of International aid in Afghanistan	2002	Academic	USA	Historical Review	Meta-Analysis	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Evaluation of styles or eras of development/humanitarian assistance and maps this onto a theory of the case of Afghan aid programs	Key discussion point is that we need a sense of proportion about aid's ability to influence conflict and peace dynamics; aid providers should be more modest about the influence they hope to exert on conflict. Questions about aid coordination, technical standards, program quality and implementation are important but essentially second order. First order issue is political will in donor countries AND locally. In the absence of a meaningful peace process, aid investments in protected, regulated, insecurity, which has expanded and escalated in Afghanistan, contributes to not only difficulties of data collection for assessing development results but it also impedes appropriate utilization of aid and achievement of development results. Lack of stable effective governance: Most of the local institutions, infrastructure and capacity having been destroyed during the three-decade long war and civil strife, the required systems and procedures to specify absorb development finances are still in the process of being reconstructed. Corruption: prevalent in many developing countries, is perceived to be especially predominant in post conflict societies, which have weak rule of law regimes, is another factor that prevents donors from fully complying with the PD principles. Political complexities: at various levels of the local partner government, especially at the central government level, are often necessary in post-conflict situations. But it must also be acknowledged that such features also tend to reduce international community's confidence on the local partner government, thus impeding adoption of the PD principles by the donors. Lack of community engagement: inadequate participation of the people in the country's development process, along with a complex and stratified governance and administrative structure at sub-national levels without clear definition and demarcation of roles and responsibilities of the various units, ensuring their interactions and cooperation with each other and with the central government, negatively affect donor willingness to comply with PD principles. Less than adequate capacity to address complex issues in the immediate post-conflict period exacerbates these problems.	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Useful analysis of the three-stage evolution of aid in Afghanistan, but is more prescriptive than predictive. Lack of empirical impact studies at the time limit of the article. For instance, the article notes that "empirical data, where they exist, are of questionable reliability and because the context is so variegated and changeable, generalizations have limited validity," but does not specifically cite evidence to bolster this claim.	na	na	na						
Goodhand, Sebra_2010	Who owns the peace? Aid, reconstruction, and peacebuilding in Afghanistan	2010	Academic Literature	USA	Historical Review	Meta-Analysis	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	This paper examines how aid policies and programs have become part of a complex bargaining game involving international actors, domestic elites, and societal groups.	The authors note that "Afghan models" of aid must involve an optimal blend of top down (e.g. capacity building, counter-narcotics) and bottom up (e.g. livelihood support, education) strategies. They also highlight that the conflict is not unresolvable. It is unclear how international donors' stated commitment to transparency and partnership translates in fragile state or "post-conflict" settings. The very notion of ownership is inherently contested in Afghanistan and donors have to negotiate with, and choose between, competing claims. The developmentalist principles outlined in the 2005 Paris Declaration may carry little meaning in such contexts and their application can have paradoxical effects that impede the emergence of broad-based ownership. The limitations of, and alternatives to, developmentalist approaches in fragile states, are explored here with reference to donor policies and practices in Afghanistan. Focusing on the period following the 2005 Bonn Agreement, it argues that international donors' failure to appreciate or engage sensitively and strategically with these bargaining processes, which combined competition, intervention, negotiation, and control, has contributed to the steady unraveling of a fragile war. Development projects were consistently described negatively by Afghans, not only were projects failing to build support for government agencies but they were increasing perceptions of corruption and distrust in government. Key complaints: (1) insufficient in their quality and quantity, unevenly distributed geographically, politically, socially, and that there was extensive corruption, particularly in subcontracting was used. (2) Insecure areas, aid served to destabilize by fueling corruption which legitimized government, creating conflict over the control of aid resources, and introducing an incentive to maintain an insecure environment in order to continue receiving aid. (3) Too much focus on the economic drivers of conflict at the expense of political drivers, spending too much money too quickly, not paying enough attention to the political economy of aid, focusing too much on insecure regions when they would be more effective in secure regions where oversight is feasible, not introducing a method of accountability or way to measure impact, and too often linking development work to security when positive results could be seen as such as social environment and infant mortality. Overall: The aid community in Afghanistan generally agrees that expectations were raised unrealistically high for the impact of aid and as a result, many Afghans feel that nothing is not enough has been done. The construction sector was viewed as the most corrupt and highly criminalized. Sub-contracting was viewed as a legalized form of corruption by most Afghan respondents. Aid was described as all processes fragmented and poorly implemented. Short term personnel rotations (PRT) led to a short-term orientation for projects. NSP received positive reviews by Afghans because the amount dispersed was too small to be	The authors note that "Afghan models" of aid must involve an optimal blend of top down (e.g. capacity building, counter-narcotics) and bottom up (e.g. livelihood support, education) strategies. They also highlight that the conflict is not unresolvable. 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Short term personnel rotations (PRT) led to a short-term orientation for projects. NSP received positive reviews by Afghans because the amount dispersed was too small to be	Largely a think piece with little practical applicability but some insights into the limitations of assistance in Afghanistan	na	na	na							
Gordon_2011	Winning Hearts and Minds? Examining the Relationship between Aid and Security in Afghanistan's Helmand Province	2011	Policy/Think tank	USA	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Interviews and focus groups with members of key institutions operating in three insecure provinces (Helmand, Pakia, Uruzgan), two secure provinces (Balkh and Faryab) and the city of Kabul. Consistent methodology was used in all provinces except Helmand due to the security situation. In the four provinces (except Helmand) and Kabul, there were 574 respondents (340 Afghan and 234 international), whose responses were recorded during individual interviews or focus groups. The respondents included former government officials, donors, diplomats, international military officials, PRT military and civilian staff, UN and aid agency staff, tribal and religious leaders, journalists, traders, businessmen and community members. This data collection took place from June 2008 - February 2010. In Helmand, the methodology mixed qualitative data from interviews conducted February - March 2008 and quantitative data from polling done in November 2008.	Interviews and focus groups with members of key institutions operating in three insecure provinces (Helmand, Pakia, Uruzgan), two secure provinces (Balkh and Faryab) and the city of Kabul. Consistent methodology was used in all provinces except Helmand due to the security situation. In the four provinces (except Helmand) and Kabul, there were 574 respondents (340 Afghan and 234 international), whose responses were recorded during individual interviews or focus groups. The respondents included former government officials, donors, diplomats, international military officials, PRT military and civilian staff, UN and aid agency staff, tribal and religious leaders, journalists, traders, businessmen and community members. 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This data collection took place from June 2008 - February 2010. In Helmand, the methodology mixed qualitative data from interviews conducted February - March 2008 and quantitative data from polling done in November 2008.	Development projects were consistently described negatively by Afghans, not only were projects failing to build support for government agencies but they were increasing perceptions of corruption and distrust in government. Key complaints: (1) insufficient in their quality and quantity, unevenly distributed geographically, politically, socially, and that there was extensive corruption, particularly in subcontracting was used. (2) Insecure areas, aid served to destabilize by fueling corruption which legitimized government, creating conflict over the control of aid resources, and introducing an incentive to maintain an insecure environment in order to continue receiving aid. (3) Too much focus on the economic drivers of conflict at the expense of political drivers, spending too much money too quickly, not paying enough attention to the political economy of aid, focusing too much on insecure regions when they would be more effective in secure regions where oversight is feasible, not introducing a method of accountability or way to measure impact, and too often linking development work to security when positive results could be seen as such as social environment and infant mortality. Overall: The aid community in Afghanistan generally agrees that expectations were raised unrealistically high for the impact of aid and as a result, many Afghans feel that nothing is not enough has been done. The construction sector was viewed as the most corrupt and highly criminalized. Sub-contracting was viewed as a legalized form of corruption by most Afghan respondents. Aid was described as all processes fragmented and poorly implemented. Short term personnel rotations (PRT) led to a short-term orientation for projects. NSP received positive reviews by Afghans because the amount dispersed was too small to be	Thoughtful discussion on key findings, which compares along three key dimensions: small vs. large projects, secure vs. insecure areas, governance vs. construction projects. Qualitative insights provided are useful and cross-referenced with quantitative data to bolster claims.	na	na	na						
Howell_2009	Manufacturing Civil Society and the Legitimacy of Civil Society after 9/11 in Afghanistan	2009	Academic	USA	Historical Review	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Qualitative review of the impact of the securitization of aid on civil na society development in Afghanistan	Increased security Extension of accountable government beyond Kabul Improved delivery of government services Increased government accountability Greater protection for civilians from predatory government practices	Increased security Extension of accountable government beyond Kabul Improved delivery of government services Increased government accountability Greater protection for civilians from predatory government practices	Increased security Extension of accountable government beyond Kabul Improved delivery of government services Increased government accountability Greater protection for civilians from predatory government practices	International community's political stabilization model initially assumed Afghanistan was essentially a post-conflict state, priority goal was to support emergent government institutions and district levels. Presumed the most appropriate role for international donors was to develop the capacity of Kabul's central institutions first and support their gradual extension and reach to provincial and district levels. Fundamental assumption underlying initial approach was that there was sufficient human capacity and political will (Afghan and international) to make model viable. Key consideration was that instability in Afghanistan was the product of a peculiarly complex "ecosystem." Four key drivers of increasing cycles of instability and violence: 1) Corruption and crime in the government, elites and international assistance effort, which enables and encourages 2) government and elite abuse of power, which creates 3) popular rage and disaffection, which empowers the insurgency 4) counterinsurgency creates opportunities for corruption and criminality, driving the cycle forward. Post-2009 US military plan focused on improving Afghan government technical capacities, while civilian strategy focused on improving Afghan confidence in their government through improved service delivery, greater accountability and protection from predatory practices. PRTs had difficulty linking formal governance programs, and institutions with tribal structures reflected prevalent international community assumption that strong customary social organizations were inimical to state formation and democratic values (e.g. elections, women's rights).	International community's political stabilization model initially assumed Afghanistan was essentially a post-conflict state, priority goal was to support emergent government institutions and district levels. Presumed the most appropriate role for international donors was to develop the capacity of Kabul's central institutions first and support their gradual extension and reach to provincial and district levels. 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CEPF case study off-budget expenditure modality (bypassing Afghan government) is more flexible, rapid and ensures more financial and programmatic control. However, it creates accountability relationships between recipient communities and the international community NOT the Afghan government, and therefore does little to improve the government's capacity for resource control and service delivery. Off-budget approaches are also less sustainable, with no provision for maintenance after drawdown. Clear lack of evidential base to measure and classify CEPF's impacts.	na	na	na			
na	NSP is briefly discussed	2001-2009	Government	USA	Historical Review	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Qualitative review of the impact of the securitization of aid on civil na society development in Afghanistan	Increased security Extension of accountable government beyond Kabul Improved delivery of government services Increased government accountability Greater protection for civilians from predatory government practices	Increased security Extension of accountable government beyond Kabul Improved delivery of government services Increased government accountability Greater protection for civilians from predatory government practices	Increased security Extension of accountable government beyond Kabul Improved delivery of government services Increased government accountability Greater protection for civilians from predatory government practices	International community's political stabilization model initially assumed Afghanistan was essentially a post-conflict state, priority goal was to support emergent government institutions and district levels. 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na	na	2001-2010	Nationwide	Historical Review	Meta-Analysis	Lessons Learned	Historical review of aid efforts in Afghanistan	na	USAID	After a decade of major security, development and humanitarian assistance, the international community has failed to achieve a politically stable and economically viable Afghanistan. Despite billions of dollars in aid, donors remain frustrated and unable to provide good governance, deliver basic services to the majority of the population or guarantee human security. <b>Key findings:</b> The impact of international assistance will remain limited unless donors, particularly the largest, the U.S., stop subordinating programming to counter-insurgency objectives, develop better mechanisms to monitor implementation, vigorously address corruption and wastage of aid funds, and ensure that recipient communities identify needs and shape assistance policies. <b>Civilians surge without oversight risks further problems during drawdown:</b> The 2009 U.S. troop surge, aimed at urgently countering an expanding insurgency, was accompanied by a similar increase in U.S. civilian personnel – attempting to deliver quick results in the same areas as the military surge, but without rigorous monitoring and accountability in their haste to demonstrate progress, donors have pegged much aid to short-term military objectives and timetables. As the drawdown begins, donor funding and civilian personnel presence, mirroring the military's withdrawal schedule, may rapidly decline, undermining oversight and the sustainability of whatever reconstruction and development achievements there have been. <b>Limited capacity despite drawdown timeline:</b> NATO allies have set a timetable for gradually transferring authority to the Afghan government and plan to hand over full responsibility for security by the end of 2014. Yet, the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP), despite receiving more than half of total international aid – about \$20 billion between 2002 and 2010 – have thus far proved unable to enforce the law, counter the insurgency or even secure the seven regions identified for full Afghan control by mid-year. <b>Aid has largely failed:</b> Did fulfill the international community's pledges to rebuild Afghanistan. Poor planning and oversight have affected projects' effectiveness and sustainability, with local authorities lacking the means to keep projects running. Layers of subcontractors reducing the amounts that reach the ground and aid delivery further undermined by corruption in Kabul and bribes paid to insurgent groups to ensure security for development projects. <b>Sustainability is virtually impossible:</b> Donors have largely bypassed Afghan state institutions, for years channeling only 20 per cent of aid directly through the government. At the Kabul conference in July 2010, they committed to raise this to 50 per cent, in a bid to ensure Afghan ownership over aid. Some 40 per cent of these funds, as yet, are dedicated to the state's development programs. Equally important, the central government should develop greater fiscal and political authority to the provinces, particularly through provincial development plans, to enable local authorities to implement development projects.	Largely strategic level insights on how Aid and Conflict Strategy (or lack thereof) provides useful history and analysis but limited practical application	NA	Potentially effective	Potentially effective	Insufficient evidence							
ICG_2011	Aid and Conflict in Afghanistan	International Crisis Group	Aug	2011	Policy/Think Tank																	
IMU_2015_1	IMU Case Study: Youth Programming in South, East, North and West Afghanistan	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Jan	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Small scale development projects (IMU-based Training in tailoring, embroidery, carpentry, computers and cooking, educational classes in English-language, journalism, music, drawing and poetry, athletic training in football and cricket, and additional classes in livestock training, maternity/childbirth workshops and disaster response	Not stated	Two districts each	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Focus groups with project participants in 30 provinces where the selected projects were implemented (total of 24), with 11 youth associations (half of whom had worked with CCI), five additional focus groups with female youth in the North, ten focus groups with widens and religious scholars in the communities and 11 interviews with district government officials to gain knowledge of CCI programming across the ten provinces. Of the 39 focus groups with youth, 12 were with women.	Improved relations between youth and their communities and government	USAID	Assess impact of CCI programs on youth												
IMU_2015_2	IMU Case Study: The Effectiveness of Infrastructure Projects in Increasing Incomes Between Local Populations and Government	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Mar	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	Not stated	Two districts each	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Focus groups with Project Oversight Committee (POC) members (or the local equivalent where official POCs were not formed) in Herat, Kunar, Kandahar, and Helmand. Government Officials. Survey of twenty three (23) individual community members living nearby the infrastructure projects. Desk review of implementing partner (IP) documents, IMU reports, IMU Spring Matrix classifications of project success	Increased interaction/linkages between government and communities	USAID	Assess impact of CCI programs on attitudes towards government and overall governance												
IMU_2015_3	IMU Case Study: GRIAs Perspectives on DFID/CCI Programming	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Nov	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2003-2015	Saighi, Balikh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Kabul, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Interviews with 50 government officials at provincial and district levels across six provinces in the North and West where CCI worked from 2003-2015. In total, it spoke to representatives from 11 provinces that would presumably have had some oversight of CCI projects and activities (this represented between 70% and 90% of Line Directorates in these districts). In addition, it spoke to four Kabul level Ministry officials with general oversight of key Ministry activities in these provinces. Limitations: – Hawthorne Effect: A threat to the validity of qualitative data collection was the risk that interviewees might alter what would otherwise be their response in order to "please the interviewer" or give an answer they thought the interviewer wanted to hear. – No Provincial Governors were interviewed: When Provincial Governors were solicited for interviews, they generally delegated the interview to someone on their staff with knowledge of CCI. However, no Provincial Governors' perspectives are included in this case study. – Government officials are political representatives and it is therefore in their interest to represent GRIAs in the best possible light. This bias towards government programs and ability to implement programs similar to CCI may be a result of their positions as government officials.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess impact of CCI on attitudes towards Afghan government												
IMU_2015_4	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_5	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_6	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_7	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_8	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_9	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_10	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_11	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_12	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_13	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_14	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_15	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_16	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_17	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_18	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_19	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_20	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts. At least one focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted per district where WFP distributions took place. Two focus groups were conducted exclusively with women. Focus groups were complemented by individual interviews from 75 separate WFP distributions. The 28 WFP distributions were chosen randomly, stratified by district. A total of 206 of the individual respondents were female (54) while the remaining were male (24). In addition, the IMU spoke to 11 of the 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees by phone for the case study to solicit their perspectives.	Increased cohesion within and between communities, peaceful and legitimate governance processes and Counter violent extremism; Strengthened community capacities to mitigate conflict; Increased citizens' trust and confidence in their government; Strengthened the capacity of legitimate community groups and organizations; Increased positive engagement of youth in their communities	USAID	Assess the impact of a total of 468 individual winter package recipients from 17 districts were interviewed by CCI's Independent Monitoring Unit. An additional 11 of 17 government members of Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were also interviewed.												
IMU_2015_21	IMU Case Study: Winter Preparedness Package	Independent Monitoring Unit (Babam Safi Consulting)	Dec	2015	Program Evaluation																	
CCJ	Infrastructure	2011-2015	Balkh, Farah, Herat, Jawjan, Samangan	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness Lessons Learned	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a total of 468 people across 17 districts.															



MSI ID	ACAP II	Humanitarian relief	Sep 2011-Sep 2014	Ghani, Helmand, Herat, Kandahar, Moxot, Kunar, Kunduz, Logar, Nangarhar	Impact Evaluation	Quantitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness	Qualitative: FGI and depth interviews with randomly selected program beneficiaries	Improved local governance capacity building Small business creation Community grievances resulting from civilian casualties addressed	USAID	Final review of ACAP program	Overall, ACAP II accomplished stated goals and objectives. Tailored (TA) was most effective. Coordination with the Afghan government, particularly MoLSAMID improved incident verification, beneficiary selection and IA distributions. Coordination with other organizations (AIHRIC, EA, GAALO) contributed to effectiveness. ACAP II's contract does not include government capacity building; thus the program was disallowed from training, assisting and mentoring local government officials to ensure long-term impact on governance. Contractually limited in scope and not obligated to implement transition to more sustainable long-term assistance/stabilization	Provides additional details on ACAP but claims that it met its goals seem to be overstated relative to evidence provided in the overall MSI review	NA	Insufficient evidence	Potentially effective	Potentially effective
MSI_2015_1	ACAP II Final Performance Evaluation	MSI	Feb 2015														
MSI_2015_2	Kandahar Food Zone Mid-Term Performance Evaluation	MSI	Mar 2015						Reduced poppy cultivation Increased effectiveness and legitimacy of national and sub-national administrations	USAID		KFZ has performed well, but significantly hindered by factors outside the program's control. Scope, timeframe, and funding do not reflect realities on the ground. Inadequate Afghan government political will to conduct counter-narcotics/eradication. Alternative livelihood programs remain mostly unimplemented. KFZ was tasked with building capacity of MCN's Alternative Livelihoods Directorate, which has no programming component. Lack of strategic communications component. Unable to conduct meaningful mitigation activities due to limited budget.	Discussion of issues related to impacted.	Some useful findings (program design)	Insufficient evidence	Potentially effective	Potentially effective
MSI_2015_3	MSI Stabilization Trends and Impact Evaluation Survey Analytical Report, Wave 5: Sep 28 - Nov 3, 2014	MSI	Nov 2015						Perceptions of governance Service provision by district government Security Rule of law Support for GIHA Support for ADR	USAID		The first four waves of the survey data, as captured by the impact evaluation, showed many positive impacts from stability programming and NSP took place, the positive impact was maintained during Wave 5. In addition, the endorsement experiment research showed that support for the GIHA was stronger than support for the Taliban across all five survey waves. The research also showed that stabilization programming reduced support for the Taliban through the spring of 2014. Within this broader context of positive impact from stability programming, Wave 5 found an unexpected increase in support for the Taliban for the single period of spring to autumn of 2014. However, this finding was mainly the result of a large average increase in support for the Taliban in a group of five villages. Survey data collectors reported that these five villages were under Taliban control at the time of the Wave 4 Survey. These five villages then received project activities before Wave 5 interviews were conducted. These five villages were not representative of the large majority of villages where stabilization programming took place between 2012 and 2014. We do not know for certain what other external factors may have influenced the observed increase in support for the Taliban in Afghanistan. Key to building relationships between Kabul and local communities, the NSP is seeing a positive trend. The Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) disburses modest grants to village-level elected organizations called Community Development Councils (CDCs), which in turn identify local priorities and implement small-scale development projects. A limited number of domestic and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) then seek the CDCs. Once a CDC agrees on a venture, \$200 per family (with a ceiling of \$60,000 per village) is distributed for project execution. Afghans contribute 10 percent of project costs through cash labor, or other means. Buttressing the Afghan government's legitimacy – and the governance and development efforts that underpin it – is the fundamental coalition objective in Afghanistan today. The United States and its allies face a long and difficult road in Afghanistan, not only because of the Taliban and the Islamic State, but also because of the complex and often conflicting interests of the various stakeholders. From 1989 to 2008, increased levels of humanitarian assistance lengthened civil wars, particularly those involving rebels on the one side and the government on the other. More scholarship on the effect of humanitarian aid on conflict underscores causal mechanisms and takes place largely through case studies. This study uses a bargaining framework to argue that aid can inadvertently increase each combatant's uncertainty about the other side's relative strength, thereby prolonging civil war. Dynamic bargaining models of conflict treat war as a costly learning process in which opponents fight in order to reduce uncertainty in a less-manipulable forum than the bargaining table. It follows that the less costly war becomes, the larger crises will be marked by uncertainty. Humanitarian assistance is explicitly designed to mitigate the costs of war. This suggests that greater levels of humanitarian aid may cause conflicts to last longer. Empirical support: quantitative analyses of civil wars since 1945 indicate increasing humanitarian aid is negatively correlated with the likelihood of the civil war ending. The effect is mitigated to uncanny accuracy by the advantage gained from relief. If sides can directly observe how aid mitigates cost of fighting, they factor this into settlement offers over time and reach an agreement as quickly as if no aid were provided. General tendency for humanitarian aid to prolong war will be more acute under conditions in which the provision of aid is itself uncertain, e.g. humanitarian aid may be especially prone to prolonging war in conflicts with weak central governments (like Afghanistan) that lack capacity to observe where insurgents operate. The tendency for aid to prolong conflict is far from an absolute empirical law and the broader policy implications of these findings are not straightforward. Given the short-term consequences of not providing aid are often more predictable (and disastrous) than its future influence on conflict duration, the imperative to immediately reduce suffering may take precedence. Also, determining whether the provision of aid is in balance a cost negative Norway's policy and interventions match closely with the international agenda for Afghanistan and within that framework its development agenda is certainly relevant. Norway has managed to navigate a position, which reflects its policy to clearly separate military strategy on the one hand and human and development strategy on the other. The focus on governance, gender equality, education and community development has been consistent over the years, just as consistent as the choice of channels and partners. However, it is the question whether this consistency is sustainable in itself. Alignment with Afghan priorities has always been high on the Norwegian agenda and has been realized to the extent possible. However, Afghan priorities are still to a large extent defined by the international community. Limited participation of Afghans undermines genuine local ownership. This is for example the case for gender equality. Through its support to UNIFEM (in Norway Norway has contributed to national policies related to women such as the National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan. However, there are clear indications that Afghan ownership of this agenda is still limited. However, there is still limited evidence of concrete outcomes. Exceptions are improved access to services (such as midwifery) and enhanced pedagogy skills of teachers. But the overall quality of newly constructed schools is poor, literacy remains low and school dropout rates are high, gender remains poor and gender equality is still far from reality. Some explanatory factors that affect effectiveness are a rigid separation of civil-mil leading to an ethnically skewed distribution of beneficiaries and thereby possible implications for the conflict analysis in operationalization of plans, limited results-based management, responses to risk mainly at an ad-hoc basis at the level of individual projects, rather than at the level of the Farjab portfolio. Sustainable peace, after various years of deteriorating security, remains elusive. The necessary political solution is unlikely to be realized in the foreseeable future. Main features are: Governance is still poor and no signs of real improvement are visible. Poverty has been reduced for some people, but has deteriorated for others especially in the face of deteriorating security across the whole country.	See separate discussion of this study)	NA	Effective	Effective	Effective
MSI_2015_3	MSI Stabilization Trends and Impact Evaluation Survey Analytical Report, Wave 5: Sep 28 - Nov 3, 2014	MSI	Nov 2015						Perceptions of governance Service provision by district government Security Rule of law Support for GIHA Support for ADR	USAID		The first four waves of the survey data, as captured by the impact evaluation, showed many positive impacts from stability programming and NSP took place, the positive impact was maintained during Wave 5. In addition, the endorsement experiment research showed that support for the GIHA was stronger than support for the Taliban across all five survey waves. The research also showed that stabilization programming reduced support for the Taliban through the spring of 2014. Within this broader context of positive impact from stability programming, Wave 5 found an unexpected increase in support for the Taliban for the single period of spring to autumn of 2014. 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Some explanatory factors that affect effectiveness are a rigid separation of civil-mil leading to an ethnically skewed distribution of beneficiaries and thereby possible implications for the conflict analysis in operationalization of plans, limited results-based management, responses to risk mainly at an ad-hoc basis at the level of individual projects, rather than at the level of the Farjab portfolio. Sustainable peace, after various years of deteriorating security, remains elusive. The necessary political solution is unlikely to be realized in the foreseeable future. Main features are: Governance is still poor and no signs of real improvement are visible. Poverty has been reduced for some people, but has deteriorated for others especially in the face of deteriorating security across the whole country.	See separate discussion of this study)	NA	Effective	Effective	Effective
Nagl, Exam, Humayun_2009	A Pathway to Success in Afghanistan: The National Solidarity Program	Nagl, Exam, Humayun	Mar 2009						Buttressing Afghan government legitimacy Strengthening local-level institutions	N	Discuss the success of NSP	The NSP has become one of the government's most successful rural development projects. Under the program, the Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) disburses modest grants to village-level elected organizations called Community Development Councils (CDCs), which in turn identify local priorities and implement small-scale development projects. A limited number of domestic and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) then seek the CDCs. Once a CDC agrees on a venture, \$200 per family (with a ceiling of \$60,000 per village) is distributed for project execution. Afghans contribute 10 percent of project costs through cash labor, or other means. Buttressing the Afghan government's legitimacy – and the governance and development efforts that underpin it – is the fundamental coalition objective in Afghanistan today. The United States and its allies face a long and difficult road in Afghanistan, not only because of the Taliban and the Islamic State, but also because of the complex and often conflicting interests of the various stakeholders. From 1989 to 2008, increased levels of humanitarian assistance lengthened civil wars, particularly those involving rebels on the one side and the government on the other. More scholarship on the effect of humanitarian aid on conflict underscores causal mechanisms and takes place largely through case studies. This study uses a bargaining framework to argue that aid can inadvertently increase each combatant's uncertainty about the other side's relative strength, thereby prolonging civil war. Dynamic bargaining models of conflict treat war as a costly learning process in which opponents fight in order to reduce uncertainty in a less-manipulable forum than the bargaining table. It follows that the less costly war becomes, the larger crises will be marked by uncertainty. Humanitarian assistance is explicitly designed to mitigate the costs of war. This suggests that greater levels of humanitarian aid may cause conflicts to last longer. Empirical support: quantitative analyses of civil wars since 1945 indicate increasing humanitarian aid is negatively correlated with the likelihood of the civil war ending. The effect is mitigated to uncanny accuracy by the advantage gained from relief. If sides can directly observe how aid mitigates cost of fighting, they factor this into settlement offers over time and reach an agreement as quickly as if no aid were provided. General tendency for humanitarian aid to prolong war will be more acute under conditions in which the provision of aid is itself uncertain, e.g. humanitarian aid may be especially prone to prolonging war in conflicts with weak central governments (like Afghanistan) that lack capacity to observe where insurgents operate. The tendency for aid to prolong conflict is far from an absolute empirical law and the broader policy implications of these findings are not straightforward. Given the short-term consequences of not providing aid are often more predictable (and disastrous) than its future influence on conflict duration, the imperative to immediately reduce suffering may take precedence. Also, determining whether the provision of aid is in balance a cost negative Norway's policy and interventions match closely with the international agenda for Afghanistan and within that framework its development agenda is certainly relevant. Norway has managed to navigate a position, which reflects its policy to clearly separate military strategy on the one hand and human and development strategy on the other. The focus on governance, gender equality, education and community development has been consistent over the years, just as consistent as the choice of channels and partners. However, it is the question whether this consistency is sustainable in itself. Alignment with Afghan priorities has always been high on the Norwegian agenda and has been realized to the extent possible. However, Afghan priorities are still to a large extent defined by the international community. Limited participation of Afghans undermines genuine local ownership. This is for example the case for gender equality. Through its support to UNIFEM (in Norway Norway has contributed to national policies related to women such as the National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan. However, there are clear indications that Afghan ownership of this agenda is still limited. However, there is still limited evidence of concrete outcomes. Exceptions are improved access to services (such as midwifery) and enhanced pedagogy skills of teachers. But the overall quality of newly constructed schools is poor, literacy remains low and school dropout rates are high, gender remains poor and gender equality is still far from reality. Some explanatory factors that affect effectiveness are a rigid separation of civil-mil leading to an ethnically skewed distribution of beneficiaries and thereby possible implications for the conflict analysis in operationalization of plans, limited results-based management, responses to risk mainly at an ad-hoc basis at the level of individual projects, rather than at the level of the Farjab portfolio. Sustainable peace, after various years of deteriorating security, remains elusive. The necessary political solution is unlikely to be realized in the foreseeable future. Main features are: Governance is still poor and no signs of real improvement are visible. Poverty has been reduced for some people, but has deteriorated for others especially in the face of deteriorating security across the whole country.	Strong assertions on the success (and utility) of NSP without much reference to existing quantitative information. More useful to read the NSP evaluations directly.	Insufficient value for current planning or sufficient practical application	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence
Narang_2015	Aiding Uncertainty: How Humanitarian Aid can Inadvertently Prolong Civil War	Narang	2015						Cessation of civil conflict Alleviation of suffering during and in the aftermath of emergencies	N	Assess aid in Afghanistan and the relationship to civil in-state conflict	Little effort to disentangle the selection effect of higher levels of aid into more complex and protracted conflicts. Also, limited discussion of how to conceive of counterfactuals of no (or more) aid (depending on the case). Limited external validity	NA	Potentially effective	Effective	Potentially effective	
Noraz_2012	Evaluation of Norwegian Development Cooperation with Afghanistan 2001-2011	Noraz Evaluation Dept	2012						Cessation of civil conflict Alleviation of suffering during and in the aftermath of emergencies	N	Evaluate norwegian development/stabilization programs	The data collection methods combined document analysis and interviews in Kabul and Faryab. A preparatory phase in October 2011 was used to refine the key evaluation questions and to meet stakeholders including the Embassy in Kabul to discuss expectations and limitations. The main phase took place between November 2011 and January 2012, during which field visits were carried out and a first draft report was submitted.	Study largely summarizes reasons why Norway's impact was limited due to a variety of external factors. Limited applicability to US or larger donor programs	NA	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence
OGI_2015	Audit of USAID/Afghanistan's Strategy for Monitoring and Evaluating Programs Throughout Afghanistan	OGI	Dec 2015						Cessation of civil conflict Alleviation of suffering during and in the aftermath of emergencies	USAID	Audit of M&E for USAID Afghanistan programs	The drawdown in U.S. forces, however, has created significant challenges for the Agency. The United States reduced the number of troops from roughly 100,000 in 2011 to around 80,000 in 2015. In addition, USAID lost access to regional facilities from which the staff directly observe activities in the field. In addition, the number of Agency employees was scheduled to drop from 387 in 2012 to about 100 by the end of 2015. These reductions, in conjunction with ongoing fighting with the Taliban, have reduced the ability of USAID officials to travel to project sites and made monitoring the Agency's work in Afghanistan extremely difficult. Despite USAID's intent, monitoring data were not in Afghan hands because the system did not have a place to enter. Instead, the system was limited to storing documents, such as quarterly performance reports and agreements, added by mission and partner officials. Out of 127 awards—contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements—for project activities as of September 2014, the mission could provide information to show how only 1 used MTM as described. Recommend that USAID/Afghanistan: 1. Implement written standards for what constitutes effective, sufficient oversight, including the amount of monitoring deemed necessary for an activity to continue, the relative contributions of the five tiers, and potential events that warrant a decision on the status of the activity. 2. Implement written procedures for having mission managers decide whether to continue an activity if standards are not met or if such future events occur. 3. Propose a written determination to add a module to capture and analyze monitoring data in Afghan info, or establish a different system to store centralized monitoring data for analysis and set a deadline for making any design changes. 4. Implement procedures to periodically reconcile awards listed in Afghan info with records held by the Office of Acquisition and Assistance, the Office of Program and Project Development, and technical offices, including those based in Washington D.C., and update Afghan info as necessary. 5. Adopt a policy of reviewing Mission Order 303 02 or any subsequent order on monitoring as its quarterly monitoring review meetings to make sure all staff are aware of the requirement to promptly verify and approve reports submitted in Afghan info. 6. Implement a strategy to analyze project performance information and make recommendations to mission leaders in light of anticipated staffing reductions and travel restrictions. 7. Develop procedures to verify that annual monitoring plans required under Mission Order 203 02 or any subsequent order on failure to understand the impact of Afghan variations of the conflict has contributed to informal posturing, leading to Western policies that are either not as effective as they could be, or worse, inadvertently exacerbating existing problems. So long as these perceptions continue to be ignored, Western policies on issues ranging from reconciliation, to rehabilitation and reintegration, to civilian protection, to Afghan government membership will operate based on fundamentally mistaken assumptions about how Afghan actors will react to these initiatives. Sustainable conflict resolution must be based on a base of trust, something the international military and policy community currently do not have given the record of the last nine years. The analysis in this policy brief suggests many local Afghans see the international community, particularly the international military, as an entity that they are forced to interact with while they engage with a trusted partner. This does not engender productive or sustainable resolution of differences, but simple politicking for position among groups prioritizing immediate survival followed by short- to medium-term power grabs. While statistics show that insurgents are responsible for most civilian casualties, many are interviewed accused international forces of directly killing the conflict and causing as many, if not more, civilian casualties than the insurgents. Many were even suspicious that international forces were directly or indirectly supporting insurgents. These suspicions, in turn, have fed into broader shifts toward framing international forces as occupiers, rather than as a benefit to Afghanistan. Today, each incident of abuse, whether caused by international forces or insurgents, reinforces these negative perceptions and further undermines any remaining Afghan trust. By offering Afghan perceptions of the international community as propaganda or conspiracy theories alone, policymakers have often failed to understand how much these negative perceptions may be distorting their policies and efforts. The international community needs the trust and cooperation of Afghan communities for many of its most vital policies to succeed, including:	Detailed audit of USAID programs with useful and specific suggestions but limited insight into the impact of individual or collective programs	Useful findings or recommendations (M&E)	Potentially effective	Potentially effective	Insufficient evidence
OSF_2010	The Trust Deficit: The Impact of Local Perceptions on Open Society Foundations	OSF	Oct 2010						Cessation of civil conflict Alleviation of suffering during and in the aftermath of emergencies	N	External review of MSTI methodology	MSI evaluation is well-designed to measure direct effects of USAID programming, but it is less clear whether it is able to provide credible estimates of the impact on perceptions of stability. It takes a variety of change for each stabilization program to explain how these programs would influence perceptions of stability. The tools to measure perceptions of stability (the stability index and endorsement experiment) are viewed as unlikely to accurately measure either stability or relative support for the Taliban. The stability index is poorly defined, combining elements that do not form a clear construct for defining stability. There are problems in data collection regarding measuring support for the Taliban, wording appears variable and could elicit different responses depending on location and moment in time. Other confounding variables include the education level of participants and length of survey. There are potential difficulties in identifying which village in the MSTI household survey received USAID programming; this leads to misclassification of treatment and control status. Implementing partners were not prepared to support an impact evaluation. Errors included procedural data that did not match other pieces of data in a village; locational data that did not match the type of project being implemented in a village that some projects which impacted more than one village only listed a single location, and that location information did not always refer to a populated area. Potential issues in the "survey-assessment" methods used, no evidence to show how matching approaches for villages successfully identify appropriate control groups. MSTI does not account for the impact of all past programming on the relative effectiveness of current efforts. External validity: Unsure whether the treatment and control villages are representative of the overall populations of interest. Additionally, unsure whether the programming studied is representative of what is and what will be carried out. Four main challenges in applying conventional M&E frameworks in stabilization interventions: (1) stabilization interventions tend to unfold, with a wide range of often concurrent activities that have different underlying logic; (2) the different time horizons and pressures for measuring progress that apply to the actors and activities in a given stabilization intervention; (3) the limited capacities (e.g. organizational culture and technical skills) of actors involved in stabilization for undertaking M&E activities, owing to time pressure and the lack of training in M&E; (4) the complexity of the environment in which stabilization takes place: what you are trying to measure is often intangible, which has an impact on M&E processes such as data collection and the interpretation of data. For instance, the assessment of whether progress has been made and whether objectives have been achieved has to be clearly informed by the perceptions and behavior of local individuals and organizations. Their views on progress and behavior are more relevant than external views on progress. Perception data are often difficult to interpret in terms of establishing a baseline or trends. As such, they require additional corroboration from other sources of information.	heavily focuses on mistaken assumptions from the "western" perspective. Likely the assessment is fair but largely subjective in nature (though probably mostly incorrect/wrong meta settings).	Insufficient evidence	Potentially effective	Insufficient evidence	
RAND_2014	Peer Review of the RAND Survey and Evaluation Methodology	RAND	Sep 2014						Reduction in risk of normal political processes becoming violent Improved perceptions of government and corruption Sustained and consistent movement towards non-violent conflict resolution	USAID	External review of MSTI methodology	MSI evaluation is well-designed to measure direct effects of USAID programming, but it is less clear whether it is able to provide credible estimates of the impact on perceptions of stability. It takes a variety of change for each stabilization program to explain how these programs would influence perceptions of stability. The tools to measure perceptions of stability (the stability index and endorsement experiment) are viewed as unlikely to accurately measure either stability or relative support for the Taliban. The stability index is poorly defined, combining elements that do not form a clear construct for defining stability. There are problems in data collection regarding measuring support for the Taliban, wording appears variable and could elicit different responses depending on location and moment in time. Other confounding variables include the education level of participants and length of survey. There are potential difficulties in identifying which village in the MSTI household survey received USAID programming; this leads to misclassification of treatment and control status. Implementing partners were not prepared to support an impact evaluation. Errors included procedural data that did not match other pieces of data in a village; locational data that did not match the type of project being implemented in a village that some projects which impacted more than one village only listed a single location, and that location information did not always refer to a populated area. Potential issues in the "survey-assessment" methods used, no evidence to show how matching approaches for villages successfully identify appropriate control groups. MSTI does not account for the impact of all past programming on the relative effectiveness of current efforts. External validity: Unsure whether the treatment and control villages are representative of the overall populations of interest. Additionally, unsure whether the programming studied is representative of what is and what will be carried out. Four main challenges in applying conventional M&E frameworks in stabilization interventions: (1) stabilization interventions tend to unfold, with a wide range of often concurrent activities that have different underlying logic; (2) the different time horizons and pressures for measuring progress that apply to the actors and activities in a given stabilization intervention; (3) the limited capacities (e.g. organizational culture and technical skills) of actors involved in stabilization for undertaking M&E activities, owing to time pressure and the lack of training in M&E; (4) the complexity of the environment in which stabilization takes place: what you are trying to measure is often intangible, which has an impact on M&E processes such as data collection and the interpretation of data. For instance, the assessment of whether progress has been made and whether objectives have been achieved has to be clearly informed by the perceptions and behavior of local individuals and organizations. Their views on progress and behavior are more relevant than external views on progress. Perception data are often difficult to interpret in terms of establishing a baseline or trends. As such, they require additional corroboration from other sources of information.	Provides a counter-perspective to the MSTI report and highlights why the findings may not be externally valid or representative)	NA	NA	NA	NA
RAND_Europe_2011	Monitoring and Evaluation in Stabilization Interventions	van Stolk, Ling, Heide, Bradford (RAND Europe for UK Stabilisation Unit)	2011						Reduction in risk of normal political processes becoming violent Improved perceptions of government and corruption Sustained and consistent movement towards non-violent conflict resolution	N	Commissioned by UK Stabilisation Unit to analyze and improve M&E of stabilization interventions.	Very useful layout of key theories of the case: individual change theory: stabilization comes through the transformative change of knowledge, attitudes, behaviors and skills from a critical mass. Healthy relationships and connections theory: stabilization comes from breaking down isolation/polarization/bias between groups. Withdrawal of the resources of war theory: If the supply of people and goods is disrupted, the war-making system will collapse. Reduction of violence theory: stabilization results from a reduction in the level of violence perpetrated by combatants. Root cause/justice theory: stabilization can be achieved by addressing the underlying issues of injustice, oppression, exploitation, etc. Institutional development theory: stabilization is secured by establishing social institutions that guarantee democracy. Political elites theory: stabilization comes about when it is in the interest of political (and other) leaders to take the necessary steps. Economic theory: Stabilization is achieved by changing the economic gains/losses associated with war. Public attitudes theory: war and violence are partly motivated by prejudice, misperceptions and intolerance of difference. Stabilization is achieved by changing public attitudes to build greater tolerance in society.	Useful findings or recommendations (implementation and oversight)	NA	NA	NA	NA
Sanderfur, Dylstra, Kenny_2014	Development Aid & Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan	Sanderfur, Dylstra, Kenny	Mar 2014						Decrease in military and civilian deaths Improved perception of central government's performance Decreased sympathy for armed opposition groups Improved household welfare (income and assets)	N	Examine the impact of development aid on economic welfare, political attitudes, and violence in a panel of Afghan districts from 2007 to 2011.	Development and security objectives were in direct tension from a targeting perspective, and we show that aid donors overwhelmingly prioritized wealthier, violence-prone districts over poorer, more peaceful districts. Comparing changes over time, regressions suggest a large impact of aid on development outcomes, a small positive impact on support for both the Kabul government and insurgents, and no effect on violence. These results may be biased toward finding positive effects as aid was frequently allocated to areas with good development prospects, e.g., in part via a "new, hold, and build" strategy. Instrumental variables estimates show mixed results for development outcomes, and little or no impact on political opinions or civilian casualties. Results suggest that aid increased asset accumulation, but there is no sign in a district-level fixed effects regression that asset accumulation itself is significantly associated with any shift in public opinion away from the insurgency, much less any decrease in violence. Interestingly, fluctuations over time in public opinion for or against the Kabul government and the insurgency) are significantly associated with fluctuations in violence against both NATO troops and civilians. Find statistically significant effects of aid on both economic and violence outcomes, but the overall context from which data is taken is one of a massive scale-up in international development assistance on an almost unprecedented scale, combined with a strong secular rise in violence and very limited improvements in public perceptions of the central government, placing bounds on the impact of military aid and a high dependence of government control and insurgent presence in the districts where aid administered. Previous studies typically ignore the strategic implications of aid distribution by government forces, namely that rebel groups should resist the implementation of aid projects that would undermine their position. Insurgents strategically respond to counterinsurgency aid as contested districts by resisting through both violent and non-violent means. Results indicate that civilian aid only reduces insurgent violence when distributed in districts already controlled by pro-government forces; when allocated to contested districts, aid in fact causes a significant increase in insurgent violence. Results also indicate that the effect of counterinsurgency aid on violence varies by project type, and can be overwhelmed by macro-level strategic changes in the conflict. Type of counterinsurgency aid project matters to the strategic interaction that occurs between insurgents and government forces. Projects that boost the fighting and defense capacity of the government and pro-government forces are healthy and widely targeted by insurgents. Humanitarian projects that are less visible in the short term and do not raise the fighting capacity of the government do not result in any change in violence. Finally, projects that aim to raise the governance capacity of the government result in national targets being attacked by insurgents, rather than interventionist USAID stabilization strategy assumes short term aid promotes stability (CON operations and wins "hearts and minds" by improving security, enhancing legitimacy and reach of central government and drawing support away from Taliban. Assumes international community and Afghan government have shared development, governance, etc. objectives—which may not be correct. The evidence that stabilization programs promote stability in Afghanistan is limited. Some research suggests the opposite, and development best practices question the efficacy of using aid as a stabilization tool over the long run. The unintended consequences of pumping large amounts of money into a war zone cannot be underestimated. Aid assumptions do not account for the fact that not all causes of insecurity differ by province and district. US stabilization efforts have raised expectations and changed incentive structures	NA	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	
Sexton_2015	Aid as a Tool Against Insurgency: Evidence From Contested and Controlled Territory in Afghanistan	Sexton	Nov 2015						Conflict reduction	N	Assess effectiveness of development/stabilization assistance as a counterinsurgency tool	relies on CSR data which is questionable and may have limited impact overall but findings appear consistent with other CSR studies. Generalizability remains questionable.	NA	Effective	Effective	Potentially effective	
SFRIC_2011	Evaluating U.S. Foreign Assistance to Afghanistan: A Majority Staff Report Prepared for the Use of the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate	SFRIC Majority Staff	Jun 2011						Improved security, enhanced legitimacy and reach of central government, reduced support for Taliban.	MIL	Background document	US stabilization strategy assumes short term aid promotes stability (CON operations and wins "hearts and minds" by improving security, enhancing legitimacy and reach of central government and drawing support away from Taliban. Assumes international community and Afghan government have shared development, governance, etc. objectives—which may not be correct. The evidence that stabilization programs promote stability in Afghanistan is limited. Some research suggests the opposite, and development best practices question the efficacy of using aid as a stabilization tool over the long run. The unintended consequences of pumping large amounts of money into a war zone cannot be underestimated. Aid assumptions do not account for the fact that not all causes of insecurity differ by province and district. US stabilization efforts have raised expectations and changed incentive structures	prepared as a background document for staff and highlights the risks of spending NA sums of money. Not intended to be a formal assessment and lacks evidence or method to support explicit analysis.	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	

IGAR ID	IGAR Title	IGAR Author	IGAR Date	IGAR Type	Country	Topic	Phase	Review Case Study	Effectiveness	Lessons Learned	Findings	Recommendations	Implementation	Overnight	Findings	Recommendations	Implementation	Overnight				
SGAR_2011_1	Commander's Response Program in Laghman Province Provided Some Benefits, but Oversight Weaknesses and Sustainability Concerns Led to Questionable Outcomes and Potential Waste	SGAR	Jan 2011	Government Documents	AFG	Humanitarian assistance	July-December 2010	Laghman	Audit	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness	Lessons Learned	Evaluation of 60 CERP projects in Laghman Province approved in fiscal years 2008-2010 and reviewed for \$50,000 or greater. Analysis of contract and disbursement data. File reviews for 60 projects and site visits for 36.	Increased security Increased government accountability Greater protection for civilians	MIL	To assess to what extent (1) expended costs were allowable, allocable, and reasonable; (2) performance oversight, monitoring, and evaluation systems have been implemented; and (3) progress has been made toward program outcomes	In Laghman Province CERP project costs and outcomes were mixed. About \$2 million was obligated and 19 projects had generally positive outcomes. However, about \$2 million was obligated for 27 projects that at risk or have resulted in questionable outcomes. Most large-scale CERP projects in Laghman (e.g., asphalt road construction) were at risk. These projects were approved without adequate assurance that GRIHA had the resources needed to operate and maintain them. CERP oversight officials in Laghman were not in compliance with applicable requirements (lacked regular reviews and sufficient documentation to substantiate payments) raising risk of questionable outcomes or potential waste. CERP oversight officials' turnover frequently and lack of training for implementing large-scale projects. Better oversight and assurances that GRIHA can sustain projects are essential. Coordinated, results-oriented approach for evaluating the effectiveness of CERP projects must include goals that are objective, quantifiable, and measurable.	Audit type analysis of oversight practices—not useful or intended to assess impact.	Useful findings or recommendations (implementation and oversight)	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence
SGAR_2011_2	Afghanistan's National Solidarity Program Has Reached Thousands of Afghan Communities, but Faces Challenges that Could Limit Outcomes	SGAR	Mar 2011	Government Documents	AFG	Community development	April 2010-January 2011	Kabul, Parwan	Audit	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness	Lessons Learned	Analysis of funding data and documentation. Interviews with key stakeholders at World Bank, MRRO, NSP, implementing partners, and other donors. File review of 62 randomly selected NSP projects.	Improved local governance	N	While NSP has reported meeting or exceeding most of its quantitative targets (outputs), it lacks data and reporting on one of its primary objectives (outcomes) and performance. Without regularly measuring improvements in this area, it is difficult to determine the extent to which NSP has succeeded. Implementation of NSP has been uneven. Performance local facilitating partners' ability to "buy" ready implementation capacity for organizations with established community linkages, provides continuous presence, provides access to insecure areas. Future role of Community Development Councils (CDCs) as official local government bodies remains uncertain. Key challenges include: delayed disbursement of block grants, late payments to implementing partners, expansion to insecure areas in Afghanistan. Expansion into less secure areas increases the level of risk and potentially limits or dilutes ability to achieve intended outcomes.	Highlights lack of data on local governance but does not address the reasons why lack of data exists.	Limited value for current planning or sufficient practical application	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	
SGAR_2012_1	USAID Spent Almost \$400 Million on an Afghan Stabilization Project Despite Uncertain Results, but Has Taken Steps to Better Assess Similar Efforts	SGAR	Apr 2012	Government Documents	AFG	Governance community development	March 2006-March 2011	Nationwide	Audit	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness	Lessons Learned	To examine cost and outcomes of the USGCO project, interviewed officials from USAID headquarters in Washington, D.C., USAID/Afghanistan in Kabul, Afghanistan; and the two construction contractors, MDO and DDC, reviewed the task order document for the period October 2006 through August 2010. To further assess whether USGCO was achieving its principal objective of improving stability, assessed reporting by a variety of governmental and non-governmental organizations, including the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, U.S. Government Accountability Office, the U.S. Army National Ground Intelligence Center, and a series of studies undertaken by Tufts University's International Center. To examine oversight, reviewed USAID policies and procedures detailing oversight responsibilities and its Federal Managers Financial Integrity Act reporting. Examined USAID contract files, and analyzed USAID/Afghanistan supplied examples that fulfilled activity manager monitoring reports and interviewed the contractors.	Improved provincial and municipal capacity to deliver services and address citizen needs Greater community participation and stronger ties between communities and local government bodies that are responsible for provincial development	USAID	To assess to what extent (1) expended costs were allowable, allocable, and reasonable; (2) performance oversight, monitoring, and evaluation systems have been implemented; and (3) progress has been made toward program outcomes	USGCO's implementation raises important questions about USAID's significant investment in stabilization efforts in Afghanistan. USGCO's conclusion by both the contractors and independent entities indicate that USGCO had, at best, mixed results. Notwithstanding these challenges and little clear evidence of success, USAID chose to significantly increase funding for the program and extend its life. In programs like USGCO, the U.S. government accepts a certain amount of risk because of its ability to assure that contractor costs are appropriate (a typically limited by the size and geographic scope of the program, coupled with logistical and security challenges that limit travel). Given this risk, the absence of a requirement in the USGCO task order for contractor cost transparency for activities is problematic. Unless USAID institutes stronger requirements, it will continue to hamper CDR's ability to conduct thorough oversight of ongoing and future contracts.	Some detailed information based on OIG regression analysis, which found that improved health, increased work opportunities, rises in monthly income, and land ownership were all unrelated to stability. The analysis concluded that while most of USGCO focused on short-term cash-for-work projects, long-term employment generated by improved conditions for agriculture is more effective in improving stability and should be the greater focus for counterinsurgency and development efforts. However, it lacked any credible discussion of whether these results were feasible or sustainable given other issues discussed in the report.	Useful findings or recommendations (program design)	Potentially effective	Potentially effective	Potentially effective
SGAR_2012_2	Progress Made Toward Improved Stability under USAID's Afghanistan Stabilization Initiative-East Program but Transition to Long-Term Development Efforts Not Yet Achieved	SGAR	Jun 2012	Government Documents	AFG	Infrastructure economic development	June 2009-June 2012	Nangarhar, Kunar, Wardak, Pakтика	Audit	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness	Lessons Learned	To determine if incurred project costs were allowable, allocable, and reasonable, examined invoices, evaluated timekeeping and billing policies and procedures related to internal controls. To determine whether performance oversight, monitoring and evaluation systems had been implemented, examined the task order document for the reporting requirements, interviewed USAID officials in Kabul, Afghanistan and the contracting officer in Washington, DC to determine the reports that were being sent and received and compared them to the reporting requirements. Interviewed the contracting officer and CDR in Washington, DC to determine how they provide oversight to the program.	Improved allegiance and confidence between local communities and the GRIHA in target regions and districts. The intended outcome is to achieve immediate employment generation, improve the community's infrastructure, and increase access to public services with the overall goal of improving community engagement capacity and public support for GRIHA.	USAID	To assess to what extent (1) expended costs were allowable, allocable, and reasonable; (2) performance oversight, monitoring, and evaluation systems have been implemented; and (3) progress has been made toward program outcomes	SGAR found that although incurred costs under the ASI East task order were generally allowable, allocable, and reasonable, certain cost-related issues need to be addressed. These issues included program spending that was marked by high operating costs, more than the \$500,000 in questionable monitoring, and a limited number of program teams and billing deficiencies, which increase the risk of inappropriate charges. DAI implemented a range of program oversight, monitoring, and evaluation systems; however, final program results remain to be determined. Key areas program monitoring and evaluation centered on the three-tier system called for by the DSI methodology. Preliminary results indicate that ASI East activities have been successfully implemented and that the impact of the program on stability at the district level has been positive, but overall stability remains poor across ASI East's 10 programming districts based on seven leading indicators of stability developed by DAI and its monitoring and evaluation subcontractor. Despite nearly 3 years of program efforts, none of ASI East's target districts have transitioned to the "Solid" phase of the CONI strategy, which is designed to solidify the gains during the "Build" phase of CONI operations. OIG has only recently established district-level disengagement criteria. An exit strategy for OIG programming in Afghanistan remains to be developed under the follow-on task order for ASI. These efforts will need to be integrated with planned improvements and evaluations of the DSI methodology. SGAR recommends that USAID OIG (1) review the balance between project spending costs resulting from the application of the DSI methodology to ASI East programming decisions, (2) address identified timekeeping and billing deficiencies, (3) review the questioned costs identified by SGAR, (4) include outcome indicators under the DSI, (5) produce a lessons learned summary of ASI East's implementation of the DSI, and (6) develop approved district-level disengagement criteria and a related exit strategy for OIG programming in Afghanistan. When preparing the final report, SGAR considered comments from USAID, USAID generally concurred with the recommendations and noted the address it had taken or will take to address SGAR's recommendations. Based on USAID's comments, SGAR revised recommendations four and five to also address the Stabilization	Provides very specific recommendations for rebalancing portfolio	Some useful findings or recommendations (implementation and oversight)	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence
Social Impact, 2016	Final Performance Evaluation of the USAID/OTI Community Cohesion Initiative in Afghanistan	Social Impact	Feb 2016	Program Evaluation	AFG	Community development	March 2012-December 2015	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Performance/Process Review Case Study	Effectiveness	Lessons Learned	135 interviews with local stakeholders in eleven CCI districts (133 female, 102 male) 19 interviews with current and former USAID and USAID/OTI officials 23 interviews with IP senior management from Creative, IDMI, RSI, and ISIP 57 interviews with IP staff from Creative, IDMI, and RSI responsible for implementation in the districts 20 interviews with USIP grantees responsible for implementation in the districts 23 FGDs to collect data from project stakeholders. Three FGDs—one with male elder participants, one with female elder participants, and one with male youth participants—were conducted in each of the eleven districts where CCI implemented programming	Increased community cohesion Strong ties between local actors, customary governance structures and GRIHA officials Increased resilience to insurgent exploitation	USAID	CC programming made important contributions to the political and security transitions in Afghanistan. During the 2010-2014 transition period, there was a significant risk of state collapse and civil war. CCI activities that linked rural villagers to GRIHA successfully demonstrated the durability of government presence and the uncertainty around whether GRIHA was capable of taking over security responsibility from international military forces. Amid threats of civil war during the cross after the second round of voting in the 2014 presidential election, CCI's quick mobilization of international observers for the audit of the vote count was important for creating time and space for the two sides in the election dispute to reach a power-sharing agreement and avert state collapse by eventually establishing a new unity government. Changes to objectives and sub-objectives in 2013 and 2014 helped clarify the program's intent, but the program goal of Community cohesion remained well understood by local staff and stakeholders. Interviews with local staff revealed weak understanding of the concepts of resilience and resiliency, mainly because these terms have no direct translation in local languages, and their English meanings that complicated explanation. CCI documents used the term resilience vaguely to describe influential individuals, the abilities of local people to cope with shocks arising from violence and economic exigencies and/or natural phenomena, linkages between communities and GRIHA, and resistance to the insurgency by local communities. The extent to which CCI could realize its strategy for transition was constrained by the orientation of the program towards CONI, which was determined both by the mission of much of the implementation team. Despite changes in CCI's objective, the mission's lack of clarity regarding the aid mission's purpose has delayed recent stabilization efforts. Especially in Afghanistan, clearly articulating a public vision makes it more likely that civilian and military entities will work together effectively to achieve common goals. Focus on sustainability not "quick wins": Many quick-impact projects pursued under urgent circumstances did not work, had unanticipated negative consequences in some and unsustainable. With some exceptions, aid projects should fit into a broader longer-term strategy and civilian experts should have input on development projects. Formalize military role in stabilization programming: The role of military in delivering aid has not been sufficiently formalized. The ad hoc, uncoordinated nature of most military interventions often leads to conflicting civilian/military purposes resulting in, thus hampering civilian/military cooperation and making it harder to achieve common goals. Improve coordination with host country: Develop the capacity of the host country to coordinate, manage and implement aid programs. Host country led efforts have a better chance of success and sustainability. Security issues still the major issue inhibiting progress implementation in stabilization contexts. Donors need to find	Highlights aspects which allowed and inhibited adaptation of CCI's mission	Some useful findings or recommendations (program design)	Potentially effective	Effective	Effective		
Taylor_2010	Civilian Military Cooperation in Achieving Aid Objectives: Lessons From Recent Stabilization Contexts	Margaret Taylor (CFR)	Apr 2010	Policy/Think tank	AFG	na	na	na	Historical Review	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness	Lessons Learned	na	na	N	Assess how the military provides aid in stabilization context in Afghanistan	Some useful lessons learned and most of the findings center on the importance of sustainability. But there is almost no evidence provided to justify any of the assertions	Some useful findings or recommendations (civil-military coordination)	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	
UKAID_2010	Stabilization Case Study: Infrastructure in Helmand, Afghanistan	UKAID Stabilization Unit	Nov 2010	Government Documents	AFG	Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) UK Helmand Province	2008-2010	Helmand	Impact Evaluation	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness	Lessons Learned	Not stated	Substitution requires external, joint military and civilian support, a focus on improving the legitimacy and capabilities of the state, and providing tangible benefits to the population. Infrastructure delivery can help improve the relationship between the state and the people and act as a gateway for dialogue, but can undermine stabilization efforts if poorly delivered and can become a target for insurgents.	Key not best practices for stabilization focused on Helmand Province where the British forces and DfID operated most heavily.	Some useful findings or recommendations (implementation and oversight)	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence			
UNDP_2014	Assessment of UNDP Independent Office National Institution Building Project (NIBP) National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP)	UNDP Independent Office	Jul 2014	Government Documents	AFG	Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTF) Afghanistan Peace and capacity building	2012-2013	Nationwide	Impact Evaluation Performance/Process Review Case Study	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness	Lessons Learned	Data collection triangulated the results of multiple evaluation techniques, including document reviews, group and individual interviews, telephone interviews, direct observations during field visits, and a survey commissioned to review the results achieved at the district level.	na	N	Assessment of Development Results (ADR)	Largely focuses on UNDP specific management and oversight issues as the reason for very limited, and non-sustainable impact. It also highlights the danger of a strategy that relies on a permanent presence for expansion.	Useful findings or recommendations (implementation and oversight)	Insufficient evidence	Effective	Insufficient evidence	
Heita_Afghanistan_2015	Rethinking the Civilian Surge: Lessons From the Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan	Heita, Mahar, Heita	Dec 2015	Policy/Think Tank Study	AFG	Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)	2005-2014	na	Historical Review	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness	Lessons Learned	Online surveys and interviews (in-person and by phone) with U.S. civilian representatives and current/former Afghan officials. 120 civilians were contacted. 76 completed full responses. Respondents included individuals from all 12 U.S. led PRTs from 2005-2014, members of three non-U.S. PRTs in Badkhis, Ghur and Kunar, and two District Support Teams. Transcript of interviews conducted by USIP were used to gain information about U.S.-led PRTs from 2005-2006. Results were compared to secondary source data from other sources.	List of objectives for U.S. civilian representatives in Afghanistan. The first 3 are explicit, while the last 4 are derived from the interviews conducted with respondents: 1. Improve security 2. Implement reconstruction 3. Promote democratic principles 4. Build trust among and with Afghan S. Promote democratic principles 5. Provide oversight, intelligence and reporting 7. Demonstrate commitment to the Afghan government and buy political time.	N	Focus on the role of civilian representatives in PRTs to understand the role they played in stabilization efforts	Role of civilian representatives: In the short-term, civilian representatives were able to reduce local conflicts by developing civilian projects which helped encourage the resolution of local disputes. Civilian representatives were not able to produce sustainable, nationwide changes because success was often undermined by lack of coordination with larger, systemic political shifts. Civilian representatives needed to be incorporated into nationwide efforts, connecting their work to the actions of the Afghan government. Different objectives by different agencies: Policymakers did not fully recognize different objectives pursued by civilian representatives and the military. U.S. agencies should acknowledge and define the strategic reasoning behind and purpose of civilian representatives. Civilian representatives were asked to use governance and economic development to improve security, but it was not clear whether security objectives were short or long term. No metrics: The PRT program had few metrics to measure its impact. Projects can create conflicts: While the projects did not resolve local conflicts by themselves, civilian representatives stated that they offered more opportunities for dialogue between conflicting parties. Lack of sustainable projects: Civilian representatives are concerned that their activities raised the expectations of local Afghans, which the local government could not meet post-withdrawal of the PRT. 80 percent of U.S. civilian representative respondents stated that the PRT project was not sustainable. Resources were not appropriately aligned: Civilian representatives did not have sufficient resources to build relationships with the Afghan government. Representatives report that local knowledge and relationships were critical to producing projects that provided development work of variable quality and impact. Although a capable necessary in highly insecure areas, PRTs have in many cases undermined development of effective governance (institutions) by diverting resources from civilian development activities. PRTs contributed to blurring of distinction between military and civilian aid, which undermines perceived neutrality of civilian agencies. Aid that bypasses Afghan government (estimated at 2/3 of all aid) undermines efforts to build effective state institutions. Efficiency is compromised by contractor (implementer) overhead and donor agency bureaucracy. Significant lack of coordination among international donors. Afghan government claims it has no info on how 1/3 of all assistance since 2001 was spent; results in a lack of alignment between assistance programs and Afghan national and provincial government planning.	Important insights on oversight. For instance, a number of civilian representatives said there was a need for more personnel and oversight to develop better, more sustainable projects. There were horizontal and vertical conflict of objectives, between agencies and between the field and headquarters. Some discussion on program impact but with limited evidence. Claims that there was minimal correlation between governance, PRT projects, and reductions in violence or increases in stability but limited data to support. Similarly, civilian representatives claimed that over the long term, there were few sustainable differences in the perceptions of Afghans towards government but with limited evidence to corroborate.	Useful findings or recommendations (civil-military coordination)	Potentially effective	Potentially effective	Potentially effective
Waldman_2008	Falling Short: Aid Effectiveness in Afghanistan	Waldman	Mar 2008	Policy/Think tank	AFG	Focus on emergence of governance	2001-2007	Nationwide	Historical Review	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness	Lessons Learned	Advisory component of the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR) Afghanistan Post Participatory Poverty Assessment (APPPA). Qualitative review of amount and impact of aid spent in Afghanistan.	MIL	Study the effect of PRTs to determine overall effectiveness	Broad coverage and focus on PRTs provides a useful focus. However, evidence included is limited and many of the issues are raised without sufficient supporting quantitative or qualitative support.	Limited value for current planning or sufficient practical application	Insufficient evidence	Effective	Insufficient evidence		
Wilton Park Conference_2011	Winning Hearts and Minds in Afghanistan: Assessing the Effectiveness of Development Aid in COIN Operations	Wilton Park Conference 2012	Mar 2010	Policy/Think tank	AFG	na	na	na	Conference Proceedings	Various	Effectiveness	Lessons Learned	na	na	N	Research findings presented at the conference aimed at discussing common assumptions underpinning COIN stabilization strategies, including that key drivers of insecurity are poverty, unemployment and/or radical ideas; economic development and "modernization" are stabilizing aid projects "win hearts and minds" and help legitimize the government, extending the reach of the central government leads to stabilization and development projects are an effective means to extend this reach, and the international community and the Afghan government have shared objectives when it comes to reviewing development, good governance and the rule of law.	Thoughtful discussion by practitioners of key issues. Limited evidence on effectiveness of key programs but an important need for those seeking to develop "theory of the case" or "logic model" to inform aid/assistance strategies	Useful findings or recommendations (program design)	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Zaiberg_2013	The Use and Abuse of the "Dutch Approach" to Counter-Insurgency	Zaiberg	2013	Academic	AFG	na	na	na	Historical Review	Qualitative Review Case Study	Effectiveness	Lessons Learned	Historical analysis of the development and use of the so-called "Dutch approach" to COIN	na	N	Research findings supporting the existence of the often-praised, and allegedly subtle and successful "Dutch approach" to stabilization and counter-insurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Proving that the relatively positive developments in Dado areas of operations can actually be attributed primarily to a uniquely national approach turns out to be extremely complex. The evidence for its existence is thin, main drivers in the establishment of a myth of a so-called "Dutch approach" had everything to do with context: a seemingly lucky hand in picking an area of operations in Iraq and to a certain extent also in southern Afghanistan, which facilitated a more subtle approach; an inclination among Dutch political and military leaders to avoid the time-consuming for political reasons, but nevertheless to "them" stick from traditional counter-insurgency theory and	Useful in summarizing the lack of evidence on the Dutch approach but limited information on what approaches or even efforts at measurement and evaluation may work at what settings.	Limited value for current planning or sufficient practical application	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence	