Contextually-Appropriate Institutional Development in Fragile States
Lessons from Policy Implementation in Afghanistan

Dissertation Research Report

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Abstract

This research analyzed institutional development and policy implementation in Afghanistan, a so-called fragile (or "failed") state to identify factors to be considered by foreign and local actors interested in strengthening good governance in such states. Its purpose was to analyze the extent to which the effectiveness of policy implementation initiatives was associated with the degree to which they were contextually-appropriate, that is, endogenous and compatible with the contexts in which they were being carried out.

Six policy initiatives were analyzed: two focused on gender equity issues; one was in the early stages of creating a national monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system; two dealt with subnational government, and one established a mechanism for citizen involvement in municipal governance. Analysis drew from theories linked to governance, fragile state analysis, policy implementation, institutional development, anthropology, cross-cultural psychology, chaos theory, capacity building, adult education, organizational development and other fields.

The findings indicated that although the two gender policies were the least effective in terms of full incorporation in the government's operations, there were positive impacts from these seemingly failed efforts. The national M&E initiative seemed to be proceeding well toward implementation. One of the subnational governance initiatives, establishing district-level councils, was reported as being relatively effective due largely to an extensive participatory and politically-sensitive development process, but its implementation was halted because the new government changed its strategy in this area. The other, a new subnational governance policy, was in the early stages of being developed to replace its predecessor. The President wanted this new policy to be "Afghanized" – which was not clearly defined, but was consistent with the focus of this research. The municipal government policy had been in operation for over two years, a successful example of hybrid governance (Boege, Brown, & Clements, 2009) that incorporated a blend of so-called traditional and modern state elements to provide citizen input to their municipal administration.

Among other frameworks, two contrasting institutional development approaches – labeled *decisional* and *dialogical* by Linder and Peters (1994) were used to analyze some of the factors involved in these initiatives. While the latter multi-stakeholder participatory strategy is often described as producing more effective policies, the Municipal Advisory Board case was an anomaly in that it used a small-group decisional strategy to design and implement an effective policy. The incorporation of traditional neighborhood representatives (*Wakili Gozars*) in this system indicated that appropriate contextualization may be able to overcome some of the difficulties often associated with the less participatory decisional approach.

The research indicated that effectiveness of policy initiatives is linked to the extent to which they are contextually-appropriate. The study also commented on the relevance to fragile states such as Afghanistan of the models often used to analyze policy implementation and institutional development, noted several contributions to the literature, and identified areas for further research.

Research Ethics

This thesis was deemed exempt from UCD's Ethics Review inasmuch as all informants were government officials or development advisors and consultants speaking in their professional capacity.

Declaration

While some of work on this thesis was conducted while I was employed as a technical advisor for the German aid agency GIZ – and they approved of my doing this research alongside my job – the research was not a direct part of my consultancy work, with two exceptions: 1) The section on policy implementation contributed to preparation of the concluding chapter in a Monitoring & Evaluation Policy Framework which was submitted to the Office of the President; and 2) the Policy section also contributed to my input on the development of the government's subnational governance policies. These inputs are noted in the body of the thesis.

This thesis is all my original work, and no part of this thesis has been published elsewhere.

Although much of this research was carried out while I was working with GIZ and other aid agencies, the opinions expressed are my own and do not reflect the official positions of my employers or any organizations or individuals mentioned herein.

Preface

Why analyze institutional development in fragile states?

International development is a massive enterprise which according to the World Bank spent over US$30B in 2012, about 22% of which was on Afghanistan. The global scale of the enterprise is significant. For example, the German development agency GIZ is considered the third-largest bilateral donor, after USAID and DFID, and it has some seventeen thousand employees in Germany and around the world. There are in addition other large and small German agencies involved in various aspects of the international development field. This is just one country's operations – others, including multilateral agencies such as UNDP, are larger. There are questions about the effectiveness of the entire field, making it a worthy subject of analysis.

One of the key assumptions of this research is that it is useful to try to strengthen governance in a context as turbulent and troubled as Afghanistan, and to better understand what is involved in this effort. In spite of an on-going insurgency, wide-spread corruption, disunity and predatory elite capture of the institutions of state, and in a donor-dependent rentier state that produces some 90% of the world's opium and continues to be the site of others' proxy wars, governance activity is taking place and well-intentioned leaders and officials are doing what they can – with international support – to improve the government's performance and foster stability. This thesis is a small contribution to analyzing these efforts.

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Special thanks to GIZ for supporting this work.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the people of Afghanistan and the many other so-called fragile states who want little more than to live in a society that works.

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List of Acronyms and Terms

ACSI	Afghanistan Civil Service Institute
ADB	Asia Development Bank
ADM	Assistant Deputy Minister
AfDB	African Development Bank
AG	Attorney-General
ASI	Adam Smith International
AOP	Administrative Office of the President
ASOP	Afghanistan Social Outreach Program
CapDev	Capacity Development (also "CD")
CAST	Conflict Assessment System Tool
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CERP	Commanders' Emergency Response Program
CG	Centre of Government
CIMIC	Civilian-Military Coordination
COIN	Counter-Insurgency
CoM	Council of Ministers
CoS	Chief of Staff
CPIA	Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (World Bank)
DCC	District Coordination Councils
DDA	District Development Association
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DG	District Governor
DM	Deputy Minister
DoWA	Department of Women's Affairs (Provincial level)
FCAS	Fragile and Conflict-Affected States
FCS	Fragile and Conflict Affected Situations
FFP	Fund for Peace
GDCLCA	General Directorate of Coordination for Local Council Affairs
GDMA	General Directorate of Municipal Affairs
GI-GO	Garbage In, Garbage Out
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit
Gozar	Neighborhood
HRM	Human Resource Management
IARCSC	Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDA	International Development Association (World Bank)
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
LMs	Line Ministries
LICUS	Low Income Countries Under Stress
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAB	Municipal Advisory Board
MAC	Municipal Advisory Council
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Livestock
Malik	Traditional head of village or town council
Mirab	Traditional manager of irrigation system
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoEc	Ministry of Economy

MOF	Ministry of Finance
MoH	Ministry of Health
MOLSAMD	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled
MORE	MOWA Organizational Restructuring and Empowerment Project
MoUD	Ministry of Urban Development
MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MPQ	Multicultural Personality Questionnaire
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
Mustofiat	Provincial Office of Ministry of Finance
NAPWA	National Action Plan for the Advancement of Women in Afghanistan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NSP	National Solidarity Program
NUG	National Unity Government
OAA	Office of Administrative Affairs
OD	Organizational Development
ODG	Office of Democracy and Governance (USAID)
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OoP	Office of the President
OPAF	Open Policy Advisory Fund
PAR	Public Administration Reform
PC	Provincial Council
PCPI	Post-Conflict Performance Indicators
PDP	Provincial Development Plan
PG	Provincial Governor
PGO	Provincial Governor's Office
PO / PMO	Project Office (also Project Management Office) in AOP
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
PSGs	Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals
RCDF	Regional Capacity Development Fund
RS	Resolute Support (NATO's Successor to ISAF)
Shura	Consultative gathering of elders or influential persons
SMAF	Self-Reliance Mutual Accountability Framework
SNG	Subnational Governance
SNGP	Subnational Governance Policy
TAF	The Asia Foundation
Tashkeel	Staffing Chart
UK	United Kingdom
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
Wakili Gozar	Traditional neighborhood representative
WB	World Bank

Chapter 1. Introduction

This dissertation research report has the following sections:

1.1. Project Summary

This research analyzed institutional development and policy implementation in so-called fragile[1] (or "failed") states (World Bank, 2012; Ghani & Lockhart, 2009) to identify factors to be considered by foreign and local actors interested in strengthening good governance[2] in such states. The two elements – policies and institutions – are related, in that policy implementation often creates or changes institutions (Linder & Peters, 1994; Cairney, 2012a). The research drew from analysis of policy implementation and institutional development in Afghanistan, which has features similar to other fragile states[3]. Its basic purpose is to analyze the extent to which the effectiveness of policy implementation initiatives – as indicated by their incorporation into the operations of institutions of state – is associated with the extent to which they are compatible with the contexts in which they are being carried out. It also identifies other factors associated with implementation effectiveness.

The need to strengthen institutions has long been recognized as especially important in fragile contexts. The World Bank, OECD, Paul Collier and others have linked weak institutions to problematic factors such as poverty, transnational crime, the drug trade, corruption and social unrest – see, for example, (World Bank, 1999; World Bank, 2008; World Bank IEG, 2008; OECD, 2003; Collier, 2007; Mansfield, 2016; Chayes, 2015).

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[1] The classification "fragile states" is a contested concept – see, for example, (Grimm, Lemay-Hebert, & Nay, 2014; Boege et al., 2009; Nay, 2014; Stepputat & Engberg-Pedersen, 2008). The term is used in this study for convenience to identify approximately fifty states that have been identified by the UN, OECD, the World Bank, and others as having weak or poorly-performing governments. Other than describing some of what is meant by the concept, this study does not engage in the debate on the appropriateness of the term.

[2] Principles of good governance include responsiveness, accountability, legitimacy, equity, participation, fiscal probity, performance, effectiveness, efficiency, transparency and more – see, for example, (Institute on Good Governance, 2014; Grindle, 2007; OECD, 2015a; Plumtree & Graham, 1999; Weiss, 2000).

3 Afghanistan ranks below Haiti, the DRC and Yemen on the World Bank's 2013 list of "fragile situations" (World Bank, 2013c).

In so-called developed states, some policy initiatives seem to proceed more smoothly and rapidly toward implementation and operationalization than others, for complex reasons that can be difficult to discern (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984; Rist, 2000). In international development in fragile states the situation is considerably more complex, as there can be major gaps and contradictions in the countries' policy frameworks that need to be addressed to improve government performance (Deputy Minister of Finance Afghanistan, 2013). Also, there usually are both domestic and foreign agents involved, who often operate within quite different policy and institutional contexts, and these differences can influence the effectiveness of policy implementation (Bourguignon & Sundberg, 2007; Andrews, 2013; Brinkerhoff, 1996). The research examined the role of domestic and foreign agents in the selected policy implementation initiatives.

The research used a case study approach (Yin, 2006; Flyvbjerg, 2006) and a semi-structured questionnaire to interview key informants in the Afghan government and foreign technical advisors to analyze policy implementation initiatives that seemed to have differing levels of effectiveness. It applied development-oriented institutional design theories (Nielson & Tierney, 2003; Pritchett & Woolcock, 2002; Goodin, 1996) and other models to study these varied initiatives and identified factors – such as local priorities, power structures and decision-making processes – to be considered by agents interested in effective and contextually-appropriate institutional development as part of nation-building in fragile states.

Six policy initiatives were analyzed: two focused on gender equity issues; one was in the early stages of creating a national monitoring and evaluation system; two dealt with subnational government, and one established a mechanism for citizen involvement in municipal governance.

The findings indicated that although the two gender policies were the least effective in terms of full incorporation in the government's operations, there were positive impacts from these seemingly failed efforts. The national M&E initiative seemed to be proceeding well toward implementation. A similar strategy was subsequently launched to develop a much-needed national policy management framework, which was in its very early stages so was only partially included in this research. One of the subnational governance initiatives, establishing district-level councils, was reported as being relatively effective due largely to an extensive participatory and politically-sensitive development process, but its implementation was halted because the new government changed its strategy in this area. The other, a new subnational governance policy, was in the early stages of being developed to replace its reportedly ineffective predecessor. The President wanted this new policy to be "Afghanized" – which was not clearly defined. This research analyzed the strategy used by officials in their attempt to accomplish this. The municipal government policy had been in operation for two years, a successful example of hybrid governance (Boege et al., 2009) that incorporated a blend of so-called traditional and modern state elements to provide citizen input to their municipal administration.

Among other frameworks, two contrasting institutional development approaches – labeled *decisional* and *dialogical* by Linder and Peters (1994) were used to analyze some of the factors involved in these initiatives. The former involves a relatively

small group of senior officials and "experts" in tightly-controlled preparation of policies that receive high-level approval, and which others are then expected to implement. The latter is a more open, participatory, politically messier and unpredictable process that engages a broad range of stakeholders in contributing to the design of the policy that they then are expected to implement. Although the more participatory approach is usually associated with effective implementation, both approaches were evident in the policies analyzed, and, interestingly, the relative effectiveness of the initiatives was not neatly divided between the two approaches. Contextual factors played a role in these differences.

The research found that effectiveness was related to the extent to which the initiatives were endogenous and contextualized, i.e.: contextually-appropriate – that they emerged from and were compatible with the underlying social and political context. Also, the role of external agents – foreign technical advisors – influenced the effectiveness of the policy initiatives. A number of factors were identified for consideration by local and external actors in nation-building efforts in fragile states. Also, the research commented on the relevance of institutional development and policy implementation theory in nation-building in fragile states, and indicated areas for further research.

Rationale for Selection of Afghanistan as a Case Study

Afghanistan was selected as a case study for at least two reasons. One was that I was somewhat familiar with the context and had access to it: I first worked on a development assignment there in 1998 and more frequently since 2005, and I had years of experience with a variety of donor-supported governance and public sector reform projects. More importantly, however, was the fact that Afghanistan is one of the most challenging environments in which to carry out international development and governance work: see, for example, (World Bank, 2008; World Bank, 2013d), and the field could benefit from analysis of development efforts in this context.

As stated in the Preface, one of the key assumptions of this research is that it is useful to try to strengthen governance in a context as turbulent and troubled as Afghanistan, and to better understand what is involved in this effort. In spite of an on-going insurgency, wide-spread corruption, disunity and predatory elite capture of the institutions of state, and in a donor-dependent rentier state that produces some 90% of the world's opium and continues to be the site of others' proxy wars, governance activity is taking place and well-intentioned leaders and officials are doing what they can – with international support – to improve the government's performance and foster stability. This thesis is a small contribution to analyzing these efforts.

Lessons learned from analysis of governance efforts in Afghanistan may have application in some of the other 40 or 50 states described as "fragile" by the World Bank and others. These efforts could improve the livelihoods of affected populations and contribute to global security – worthy objectives indeed.

1.2. Overview of the Issue/Topic

While this study focuses on analysis of policy implementation and institutional development in Afghanistan, the issues explored in this research seem similar to challenges in other troubled countries. For example, when I was in Sana'a in 2012 working on an evaluation of a large donor-funded governance project, I had a conversation with Yemen's Deputy Minister of Planning in which we discussed possible solutions for a number of major challenges facing the country. At one point I asked the Deputy if they had the ability to translate the general concepts we were discussing into policies, laws, regulations, budgets, strategic plans, staffing charts, recruitment and supervision systems, administrative procedures and results-based performance management and evaluation processes to implement programs to address the issues in question. He looked at me with the saddest expression on his face, and said, "No, unfortunately we do not" (Deputy Minister of Planning Yemen, 2012).

I asked if there was an organization in his country that could help his officials learn to do this. He said there was an administrative sciences educational institution that might be suitable, but that its faculty seemed to be more interested in personal academic pursuits than in helping the government function better. He seemed to know exactly what I was asking, and it pained him to admit they could not do what he knew was necessary to provide good governance for the country.

The Deputy could conceptualize solutions to the many problems facing his country, but he could not readily draft and implement the policies he needed, or develop the institutions and organizations that could carry out the necessary nation-building initiatives. His situation was similar to that of many of his counterparts in the approximately 40 to 50 states labeled as "fragile" by agencies concerned with international development – see, for example, (World Bank, 2013c; OECD, 2007).

International development organizations such as the World Bank, UNDP, USAID, DFID, GIZ, OXFAM, CARE International, the Agha Khan Foundation and many others provide assistance to these countries with the intention of helping them better address the needs of their populations. Their efforts are having mixed results for a variety of reasons, some of which are explored in this research (Kaufmann, 2009; Kharas & Linn, 2008; Naudé, 2012; Rakner & Wang, 2007; Roberts, 2010).

Many of these challenges are related to problems with institutional development and policy implementation to improve government performance. Analysis of this work by Matt Andrews and others indicates that ineffective programming is associated with an inadequate linkage with the context in which it is taking place. (Andrews, 2013; Agborsangaya-Fiteu, 2009; Grindle, 2007). Also, donor-supported policy implementation strategies that are based primarily on models that are relatively effective in OECD-type states seem to not be as well-suited to the situations in which many fragile states find themselves. This is a major problem in international development, where a form of institutional ethnocentrism is evident in the design of donor-funded projects intended to strengthen governance in recipient countries (Brinkerhoff, 1996; Khan, 1995; OECD, 2007).

While many well-intentioned donor-supported policy initiatives are ineffective, there are some efforts that seem to be relatively successful, in terms of translating senior officials' awareness of problems that need to be dealt with into programs that address governance and service delivery challenges. This research analyzes examples of these various levels of policy implementation effectiveness, and identifies factors that need to be considered by domestic and foreign agents supporting nation building in fragile states.

1.3. Research Questions

This research focuses on the efforts of foreign and domestic actors to design and implement policies to strengthen the institutions of state, and seeks to identify factors related to different levels of effectiveness of these activities. It does so by analyzing selected policy initiatives in the Afghan government, and examines the relationship between contextual appropriateness (defined below) and the effectiveness of policy initiatives in this environment. For the purpose of this research "effectiveness" is indicated by the extent to which an initiative strengthens the government's policy development and implementation capacity, and whether the initiative has been – or seems likely to become – incorporated into the operations of the institutions of state.

Given the mixed results of international development efforts – see, for example, (Kaufmann, 2009; DFID, 2012; Bourguignon & Sundberg, 2007; Brautigam & Knack, 2004) – there is much to be learned to improve the effectiveness (and hence the sustainability) of nation-building efforts in fragile states.

Central Research Premise and Questions

International development efforts to strengthen governance in fragile states are, by their very nature, an encounter between insiders and outsiders – a combination of *endogenous* and *exogenous*[4] processes. This research examines the premise that the effectiveness and sustainability of such efforts are related to the extent to which an intervention can be owned by, emerge from, or take root in, the context of the host society's systems: in other words, the extent to which it is contextualized and endogenous, while also reflecting principles of good governance.

The central premise of this research, therefore, is:

> *The effectiveness of institutional development and policy implementation initiatives in fragile states such as Afghanistan – as indicated by their incorporation into the operations of the state – is associated with the extent to which they are contextually appropriate.*

Two related questions are:

[4] Sample definition (Merriam-Webster): *endogenous*: produced or synthesized within the organism or system. The term is often paired with its opposite, *exogenous:* from an outside organism or source.

1. *To what extent are contextualization and endogenization associated with the effectiveness of policy implementation and institutional development to strengthen good governance in Afghanistan?*

2. *What other factors may be associated with the effectiveness of policy implementation and institutional development in Afghanistan?*

The research also reviewed selected features of the models used to analyze policy implementation and institutional development, and comments on the relevance of these models to the conditions of fragile states such as Afghanistan.

A note on the four key items in the first question: *contextualization* and *endogenization*, and *policy implementation* and *institutional development.* These four actually combine into only two broad areas of inquiry. The two in the first pair are complementary parts of a single concept – contextual appropriateness, as noted below in my definition of the term. The two in the latter pair are also complementary, in that policy implementation is often associated with institutional development: policy initiatives often create or change institutions. In fact, to the extent that institutions can be seen as conceptual social structures that influence behavior, or as defined by (North, 1991) as "the rules of the game," in some respects a policy – which defines purpose, structures, relationships and actors' roles and responsibilities – can be seen as an integral component of an institution, and vice-versa. The two concepts are distinct, yet they also bleed into each other, and some institutional analysts such as Paul Cairney (Cairney, 2012a) use both terms together, as is evident in the literature review below.

The main objective of the research – exploring the extent to which contextual appropriateness is associated with effective policy implementation – requires some elaboration to clarify what is meant by *context*, *contextualization*, *contextually-appropriate institutional development,* and also *endogenization,* and how these may be linked to the relative effectiveness of policy initiatives in the Afghan government.

What is "Contextually-Appropriate" Institutional Development?

This section discusses key terms – *context* and *contextually-appropriate* as they are used in this thesis.

Definition of "Contextually Appropriate" Governance Initiatives

An on-line search for "contextually appropriate" found numerous references in linguistics and language learning, mainly relating to the proper use of terminology in a stream of discourse, but relatively few dealing with international development. Examples of the latter include (English, 2013; MacDonald, Ali, Syed Imran, & Hall, 2013; Wessells, 2009) – but these also have no clear definition of the term. The focus of their work was mainly on describing how the design and implementation of an intervention was sensitive to and incorporated features of the host environment.

For the purposes of this research I see a need to go further than being sensitive to and incorporating features of the host environment in an effective nation-building

initiative. To be sustainable and integrated into the host system's operations, the effort needs to be largely a local initiative, and to be owned by, emerge from, or be able to take root in, the host environment – the "locals" mentioned above have a major role to play in this process. To be effective it also needs to be consistent with generally-accepted principles of good governance. I propose the following definition of contextual appropriateness in effective nation building initiatives in fragile states:

> *"Contextually appropriate" refers to the extent to which key elements of an initiative to increase governance effectiveness are compatible with local conditions and endogenous patterns of thought and behavior.*

This definition addresses concerns about potentially problematic endogenous factors such as corruption[5], and includes the possibility that the level of contextual appropriateness can be on a continuum from high to low, and the various components of a complex multi-stage policy implementation and institutional development initiative may be at different points on this local-to-foreign continuum.

The definition supports Robert Goodin's notion that institutional development is an organic process (Goodin, 1996), and lends itself to analysis using models such as Linder and Peters' (1994) *decisional* and *dialogical* approaches, described in the literature review below.

It is also consistent with core elements of organizational change and community development theory as defined by Edgar Schein, Peter Senge, Chris Argyris, Batten & Batten, Ward Goodenough and others who stress the importance of host system ownership of change processes (Schein, 1991; Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith, & Kleiner, 1994; Argyris, 1993; Batten & Batten, 1967; Goodenough, 1963). It is interesting to note that the international development literature does not often mention the well-known and evidence-based work of these and other practitioners who have decades of experience promoting the introduction of innovation in communities and complex organizational systems, features of which may be only partially understood by the external agents who are charged with helping them improve their operations.

A foreign technical advisor on an international development project working with a host government's systems is in much the same position as a community development agent or management consultant working with members of a public-sector or private-sector organization in the industrialized world. While there may be marked differences in the two sets of contexts, the core principles behind the intervention strategy are essentially the same: contextualized and endogenous initiatives are usually more successful and sustainable than those designed, owned and driven by external actors and forces. In international development the marked differences in actors' foreign and domestic contexts make it all the more important that local factors be appropriately incorporated in institutional development processes. This research explores some aspects of how this is done.

[5] Corruption exists to varying degrees in all societies – see, for example, Transparency International's assessments (Transparency International, 2012).

"Context" in International Development

There are numerous references to the importance of "context" in the development literature, some of which are reviewed later in this thesis in the sections on institutional development and policy implementation, drawing from the works of international development analysts such as Andrews (2013), Brinkerhoff & Crosby (2002) and others. However, there is no clear definition of "context" or "contextually appropriate" in these works.

Although the term "context" is widely used in the international development literature, it is rarely defined beyond a few generalities, perhaps because there can be many variables due to factors such as geography, culture, social and economic conditions and more, and it is relatively difficult to describe in a clear and generalizable manner.

Matt Andrews uses an iceberg analogy to describe a deeper and largely invisible dimension in a society that plays a major role in reforms that are part of the nation building process. He does not define the content of this deeper dimension of the recipient society beyond generalities – using terms such as norms, values, preferences, and others. These concepts do not provide an operational level understanding of how these elements function in a recipient society, nor do they compare them to the comparable deeper and largely hidden dimensions of western development organizations and their workers' own emotional, cognitive and analytical processes.

In organizational development interventions in most western societies the importance of understanding and working with the host system's context is a common theme – see, for example, (Dimock, 1993; Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith, & Kleiner, 1994; Hofstede, 1994; Argyris, 1993; Schein, 1991). These analysts consider factors such as leadership styles, formal and informal corporate cultures and patterns of influence, value systems, incentive schemes, finances, relations with the broader environment, planning and performance issues, human resource management practices, and more in their interventions. Organizational development practitioners often form teams of "insiders" and "outsiders" to carry out their interventions. Insiders have explicit and implicit knowledge of their own contexts, and are able to provide advice to outsiders on what is likely to work or not in their systems, and collaborate with the outsiders to design interventions to strengthen their organizations. Community development workers use a similar approach to identify formal and informal leaders and patterns of influence in a context, and help align the social energy in the various parts of the community to foster its movement along a constructive trajectory[6]. These processes are relatively easy to manage when internal and external agents are all members of the same broader society.

In international development, however, there are agents from widely different societies, and the term "context" alludes to a range of elements in both the domestic and donor systems that may be only partially understood by local and foreign actors. Foreign technical advisors may have explicit and implicit awareness of how their own

[6] For a discussion of this process see the section on *System Theory in Development* in Chapter 5 – *Intervention Strategy and Methods,* in *Warriors and Nation Builders: Development and the Military in Afghanistan* (Tamas, 2009:81-110).

organizations function, but usually see only the surface of how local systems operate. They are, nonetheless, charged with doing what they can to help improve conditions in local systems that they can only partially understand. Likewise, while local counterparts may have similarly explicit and implicit understanding of their own society and systems, they often have difficulty seeing the inner workings of the donor organizations with which they work to help improve their own. The inner operations – the contexts – of each participant's systems are an almost completely opaque "black box" for the other.

What locals can relatively easily sense, however, is the extent to which foreign-supported interventions are compatible with the way their own society operates: like the "insiders" on an organization development team, they can see – or feel – whether foreign initiatives are likely to fit or not with local ways of doing things. This is in part a function of the manner and extent to which locals are involved in the initiation, design and control of key parts of the process, and the adaptive behavior of the foreign advisors with whom they are working. This compatibility is addressed by analysts such as David Booth who says that foreign development agents need to "work with the grain" of local systems if they are to be effective (Booth, 2011). This research examined some of what this contextualization process actually entailed in the cases analyzed.

Also, both sets of actors are in a "cultural broker" role, as intermediaries on a type of bridge connecting foreign and local contexts, each bringing what they can to the interaction to produce a mutually-beneficial result. This cultural broker role is discussed at length in the cross cultural organizational development literature by analysts such as Geert Hofstede and others (Hofstede, 1991; Peterson, 2014), and is part of the literature review below.

An Example: Contextualization in Cross-Cultural Education

The practice of contextualization in the field of cross-cultural education offers a useful example of how two quite different systems interact to produce a beneficial outcome. Curriculum designers who work effectively with students from societies that are different from their own – such as urban-based school systems serving rural aboriginal communities in North America – have found they need to work with local experts to analyze the curriculum and distinguish central theoretical principles from the methods, examples or analogies used to convey concepts to learners. Together they "unpack" the curriculum to see its various parts more clearly. They then collaborate to identify appropriate analogies or examples from within the learners' own frames of reference that can be used to illustrate the core principles in the curriculum, in a manner that learners can more readily comprehend and absorb – they contextualize the curriculum *methods* to achieve desired learner outcomes (Barnhardt, 1977). In so doing they also need to remain true to the core elements in the curriculum, to maintain the integrity of its key principles and concepts. When compared with traditional un-altered "mainstream" urban-based education, the result of this contextualization of curriculum is a higher level of academic achievement among students whose cultures differ from those managing the education system (Mouraz & Leite, 2013).

The benefit of contextualization of instructional design was evident in discussions in mid-2016 with two Afghan officials in Kabul who were involved in public administration graduate programs. One had studied in the UK, while the other was in an Afghan-based program taught by Iranian professors. The former said he had some difficulty applying the European-based theoretical principles and case examples to analyzing the Afghan context, while the latter said he had no problems seeing how the analytical frameworks he was learning related to his home environment. Unlike the UK-based faculty, the Iranian professors were working with curriculum that assumed a relatively common Islamic underlying conceptual framework and were drawing their analogies and case examples from societies somewhat similar to the student's context. The fact they were working in the local language also had a beneficial impact on learning outcomes (Saeed, 2016; Afzali, 2016).

Contextualization and Governance

While contextualization has been a factor in education for decades, it has received less detailed attention in analysis of international development efforts to strengthen governance. There is frequent mention in the literature on the need for well-intentioned development initiatives to be adapted to local realities if they are to be effective – see, for example, (Grindle, 2011; Vazquez-Barquero, 2006; Brautigam & Knack, 2004; Lemay-Hebert & Mathieu, 2014; Schmeidl, 2009; Wiarda, 1981). However, there is less on how this is actually done. It is like a principle – a good idea – that seems to not have been regularly put into practice by larger development agencies such as USAID, the World Bank and others.

Unlike the Iranian-based public administration program described above, many of the policy initiatives in the Afghan government were first written in English by expatriate technical advisors, and subsequently translated into local languages. Their conceptual frameworks were rooted in foreign, rather than local, soil, which contributed to problems with implementation. This dynamic is part of the focus of this research.

As in education, the core principles of good governance can take many forms, but what we often see in donor-supported nation building efforts in fragile states is a type of institutional ethnocentrism in which the foreign structure or form is presented – often by foreigners and sometimes by local agents, often foreign-trained – as the right way to organize and operate the instruments of state. For example, policies written for the Ministry of Finance in Afghanistan are almost a direct copy of manuals used in the US Treasury offices in Washington (Hussaini, 2016). In some cases US Treasury document file numbers are visible on the pages, indicating an incomplete job of doing cut-and-paste as they were transferred to the Afghan system. Core governance concepts, such as ways of ensuring accountability and legitimacy, are rarely separated from these outward forms and re-cast in ways that are more compatible with local patterns of thought and behavior. The result is that few of these foreign models take root in the underlying context of the culture and history of the society, and as such often are not effective or sustainable (Wood et al., 2011; Suhrke, 2013; Scoones, 2009; Cookman & Wadhams, 2010).

This process of adaptation to local realities is easier to describe than to actually do, as there can be considerable differences in the two sets of actors' thought processes and approaches to governance. For example, the very notion of a "policy" – as a higher-

order document near the top of a taxonomy that guides strategies, operations and officials' behavior – is a common feature of government in most western states. It derives from a particular way of seeing the world, and may differ from other types of cognitive systems and ways of organizing collective goal-oriented behavior in a society. A foreign technical advisor often is unaware of these differences, which are part of what is in the local partner's "black box" discussed above, and locals often have difficulty clearly identifying and expressing these issues to their foreign advisors. These differences can extend to the respective administrative-structural elements such as organizational patterns, power relationships, decision-making processes, institutional structures, and more, and often are implicit rather than explicit to both parties.

These differences include communication practices. Anthropologist Edward Hall uses the term "context" to describe two types of cultures and modes of communication – high-context and low-context – and places societies on various points along this continuum (Hall, 1976). He sees middle-eastern, collectivist societies as being relatively high-context, and western individualist societies as low-context. Communication protocols in high-context societies assume actors know a lot about the situation being discussed and can use relatively little effort to share relevant information about an issue. Low-context communication, on the other hand, does not assume shared knowledge of the situation or its background, and requires considerably more effort to get an idea across.

These differences in world views and communication styles (which are relatively independent of the language spoken) are part of "context" and can exert considerable influence on development initiatives. Cross-cultural institutional development work is often at the low-context end of Hall's continuum where relatively little shared knowledge of each other's systems can be assumed – as per the "black box" analogy noted earlier. Considerable effort is required to ensure the parties are able to work effectively with each other: this can be a challenge.

There is much more to context and contextualization than is being described here: the foregoing comments are a small part of Hall's and others' analysis – these concepts are discussed in greater detail later in this thesis.

Endogenization of Governance Initiatives in Fragile States

Contextualization is one of the factors in effective institutional development: a related factor is *endogenization.* The term *endogenous* normally refers to something that emerges from within an organism, rather than being *exogenous*, something that is imported from outside the system. An endogenous development initiative, then, has its roots in, and is owned by, members of the society in which it is taking place. While the concept is fairly well known, there seems to be a lack of clarity and consistency on how the term is used in the international development literature.

A 2003 OECD report on institutions and development (OECD, 2003) reverses the relationship described above – endogenous institutions are said to be associated with "modern" state structures, while exogenous institutions are part of the so-called traditional, informal sector of the host society, which is seen as undergoing evolution to become part of the so-called formal modern system. It is as if the report's authors

see the international development initiative as the host, the mainstream, and the recipient country's traditional practices as the external actor, the periphery. I find this rather strange to say the least, since it is the temporary and relatively recent development initiative that is the newly-arrived external actor which is attempting to foster changes in part of the host society's long-standing ways of operating. Development work is essentially the introduction of innovation in pre-existing host country contexts (Rogers, 1983; Goodenough, 1963). This latter perspective is the stance taken in this research.

The 2003 OECD report also analyzes the impacts that institutions have on development, but not the reverse – development's impacts on institutions. I think they impact on each other, and this would be a more useful focus of analysis. The OECD approach is consistent with what I see as a donor-centric view of development, which is a problem in aid effectiveness in states such as Afghanistan, and is discussed further in the literature review below.

In 2008 OECD published a 57-page report on principles for good international engagement in fragile states, focusing on Afghanistan, in which the word "endogenous" appears only once (in reference to the 2003 paper noted earlier) – even though much of the report stresses the importance of working with the host country's context (OECD, 2008b).

Where the term *endogenous* appears in the international development literature it is often associated with economic development, which stresses that strategies for sustainable financial growth emerge from within a society, rather than being imported from outside – see, for example, (Vazquez-Barquero, 2006).

These examples indicate that *endogenization* may not be a clearly defined concept in the international development literature on governance and institution-building, an issue that this research helps to address.

Summary

To summarize: The central premise of this thesis is that the effectiveness of institutional development efforts in fragile states is linked to the extent to which related policy initiatives are contextually-appropriate. This term was defined as combining contextualization and endogenization, which were described as essential features of effective cross-cultural education strategies and core components of community development and organizational development theory, much of which seems to have been overlooked in international development practice.

The thesis questions explored the extent to which effectiveness of institutional development was linked to contextual appropriateness and other factors. Six policy initiatives (described below) were selected for analysis, using concepts from theories linked to governance, fragile state analysis, policy implementation, institutional development and other fields, which are addressed in greater detail in the *Literature Review* and *Methodology* sections that follow.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Introduction

This research identifies factors related to contextually-appropriate institutional development in fragile states, which includes the contextualization and endogenization[7] of efforts to strengthen effective governance in such states, drawing on lessons learned from analysis of policy implementation in Afghanistan.

The challenges posed by fragile states with weak governments are well-known and do not need to be elaborated at length here. Insecurity, poverty, pandemics, waves of illegal migrants, trans-national crime, terrorism, and the drug trade are a few of the major local and global problems associated with such states – see, for example, (Weiss & Wilkinson, 2015). Viewed through the lens of General System Theory (von Bertalanffy, 1968), these challenges have increased in range and complexity as the globalization process inexorably opens the many types of relatively closed boundaries that previously held the diverse parts of the human family in their separate and quite different cultural, socio-economic and geographic enclaves. The process has made it possible for a broad range of constructive and destructive influences to flow ever more freely across the face of the earth. As humanity moves toward a more integrated and interdependent global framework, what some call a new world order (Valaskakis, 2001), the quality of governance of its constituent parts increasingly becomes a matter of common concern. Good governance, particularly in fragile war-affected states, is associated with national-level well-being and a harmonious world order, and is receiving concerted attention from a variety of analysts – see, for example, (Fukuyama, 2004; Cooper, 2004; North, 2009; Dobbins, Jones, Crane, & DeGrasse, 2007; Collier, 2009; Del Castillo, 2008; Grindle, 2007).

Assessing and improving the performance of a government is a complex matter indeed – a partial description of what is known about how this is done in fragile states is illustrated in this research report. It is seen as an important issue – the funds involved indicate its significance – the World Bank's list of aid recipients shows that in 2012 "fragile and conflict affected states" received $30,482,720,000, with Afghanistan, the largest single recipient country, receiving $6,725,930,000, or about 22% of all aid provided to the approximately 40 or 50 states identified as fragile or failed (Silva, 2011; OECD, 2013; World Bank, 2014c). The controversial question of where all this money was actually spent – in Afghanistan to benefit its people, or in donor countries to support their development agencies and businesses – is an interesting matter that is not dealt with in this thesis.

This research examines two inter-related core elements of governance – policy implementation and institutional development – in a fragile state that is a recipient of considerable international development assistance. The general objective of this assistance is to strengthen the institutions of state and support the country's efforts to achieve stability and self-reliance so it can take its rightful place in the family of nations (GIRoA, 2014a). With the overall objective of development assistance in

[7] Brief definitions of key terms: *contextualization* – placed in context; *endogenization* – produced from inside the system.

mind, this literature review begins with a partial summary of governance as seen in international development, and then proceeds to explore the main categories in this research.

The literature review is in two main categories – the first, with four sub-categories, explores relevant sections of the international development and academic literature; the second focuses on the Afghan context. It also lists factors present in Afghanistan and many other fragile states that are not dealt with in most of the policy and institutional development literature.

1. Good Governance in International Development
2. The Context: a Fragile State
3. Institutional Development and Context
4. Policy Implementation in Fragile States
5. Afghanistan as a Fragile State – a Selective Review
6. Relevance of Established Analytical Models

The review explores the literature to the extent required to locate the study within these fields and provide the conceptual tools to analyze and report on its research findings.

Although much has been written about international development, personal reflection on decades of first-hand field experience in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen and elsewhere indicates that much of the literature is analytically useful but is also incomplete. There are processes within these states which contribute to their fragility – their institutions' poor performance – which are not adequately addressed in most of this analysis. The OECD's 2015 publication, *States of Fragility,* for example, says much about what the international community is doing and how much it is spending, but says little about what the elites and governments of the recipients of these inputs are doing to address the needs of their populations (OECD, 2015b). Much of the official development literature is curiously silent on the behavior, values or moral frameworks of recipient country leadership, and also says little about addressing the well-known problems of predatory elite capture of the institutions of state in many aid-dependent countries. Domestic factors have a significant impact on institutional development in these states.

Foreign inputs are part of the problem in some of these states – Ahmed Rashid's *Descent into Chaos* and Carlotta Gall's *The Wrong Enemy* chronicle the destructive effects of external supports to warlords and others in misguided efforts to buy peace and thus entrench nasty actors in positions of influence (Rashid, 2008; Gall, 2014). While Paul Collier speaks of "misaligned incentives" and others mention "political factors" in their soft-pedaled efforts to explain problems with host country governance, few are as blunt as Sarah Chayes in her *Thieves of State* in naming names and calling a spade a spade, or a crook a crook (Collier, 2009; Chayes, 2015).

Also, there is little mention of the internal struggles between high-minded, moral local reformers and self-interested predators in these states, and how external inputs contribute to one side or the other's advantage in these struggles. Working with a number of reform-minded senior officials has provided privileged opportunities to gain a glimpse of the stresses under which they operate. For example, in late 2015 the

head of a newly-centralized National Procurement Authority in Kabul briefly mentioned the intense pressures he received from government leaders and other influential actors to bend the rules so they could continue to benefit from the skimming of contracts his office was struggling to clean up. He had enemies both within and outside the government and was concerned about being targeted for assassination or kidnapping. Politics is a brutal game in places like Afghanistan, and this official, and others who were trying to operate properly, were doing so at great risk to themselves and their families. Many sought assistance in moving their families to more secure countries so they could work without fear for the safety of their wives and children. Most of this profoundly disturbing dynamic is simply absent from mainstream international development literature, yet it has tremendous impact on government performance. This type of omission is troubling to say the least.

This literature review documents some of what is available in the description of governance and institutional development in fragile states – readers should know that there is more, much more, going on beneath the surface than is summarized in the following sections.

Academic and Development Literature

This part of the literature review summarizes relevant sections of the international development and academic literature.

2.1. Good Governance in International Development

This section is a summary of principles of good governance and an overview of the literature on governance in international development.

Governance and government are two closely-related terms that are often used interchangeably – there is, however, a distinction: a simplistic explanation of the relationship is to see the former as an *activity*, something people *do*, while the latter is a *thing* – usually an institution or organization[8] – an entity that carries out governance activities[9]. The entities that do what can be called governance are not all necessarily part of the official organs of state (Rhodes, 2007), particularly in the many relatively young countries that have been formed since the beginning of the 20th century, and more so in the new nation-states that emerged after the end of the colonial era (Boege et al., 2009). These themes are discussed in greater detail in the several sections of this literature review, after a brief description of principles of good governance, and governance in international development.

Principles of Good Governance

There is a large body of literature on what constitutes "good governance." Principles of good governance include responsiveness, accountability, representativeness, authority, control, legitimacy, equity, participation, fiscal probity, performance,

[8] These are two different things: the distinction is discussed later in this thesis.

[9] This could be a much longer discussion – it is compressed here for convenience and to make the point that governance activities can be carried out by both state and non-state entities – a major theme in this research, which is discussed later in this thesis.

effectiveness, efficiency, transparency and more – see, for example, (Institute on Good Governance, 2014; Grindle, 2007; OECD, 2015a; Plumtree & Graham, 1999; Weiss, 2000). These can be manifested in many forms, and are relatively well known, in general terms.

For example, there are many ways the governance concepts of legitimate representation and accountability can be manifested, with secret ballot elections being one well-known method. In Afghan municipalities there are other ways to achieve this result, which is illustrated in one of the policy initiatives analyzed in this research. A detailed description of each governance concept is not necessary at this point – relevant principles will be discussed in greater detail in the *Findings* section below, which will describe how they were incorporated in the institutional development and policy implementation examples analyzed in this research.

Governance in International Development[10]

In the international development field there is no single definition of governance, as is evident in a 2009 OECD-DAC report (OECD, 2009) which lists some 17 definitions used by donor governments and multilateral agencies. A few examples serve to illustrate this diversity:

Canada	Governance encompasses the values, rules, institutions, and processes through which people and organizations attempt to work towards common objectives, make decisions, generate authority and legitimacy, and exercise power.
France	Art of governing, articulating the management of public affairs at various levels of territories, regulating relationships within society and co-ordinating the interactions of the various actors.
Germany (GTZ)	Good governance implies effective political institutions and the responsible use of political power and management of public resources by the State. Essentially, it is about the interaction between democracy, social welfare and the rule of law. Good governance thus extends beyond the public sector to include all other actors from the private sector and society. Good governance is guided by human rights and by the principles of the rule of law and democracy, such as equal political participation for all.
Ireland	Governance is essentially understood as the way in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development.
United Kingdom	Governance is about the use of power and authority and how a country manages its affairs. This can be interpreted at many different levels, from the State down to the local community or household. Governance analysis considers all the mechanisms, processes, relationships and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests and exercise their rights and obligations. It concerns the way that people mediate their differences, make decisions and enact policies that affect public life and economic and social development.
United	Governance issues pertain to the ability of government to develop an efficient,

[10] This section of the literature review is adapted from a 2010 presentation on strengthening governance in fragile states at a US-Canadian military conference in Kingston, Canada (Tamas, 2010a).

States (USAID)	effective, and accountable public management process that is open to citizen participation and that strengthens rather than weakens a democratic system of government.
Asia Development Bank	Among the many definitions of "governance" that exist, the one that appears the most appropriate from the viewpoint of the Bank is "the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development." On this meaning, the concept of governance is concerned directly with the management of the development process, involving both the public and the private sectors. It encompasses the functioning and capability of the public sector, as well as the rules and institutions that create the framework for the conduct of both public and private business, including accountability for economic and financial performance, and regulatory frameworks relating to companies, corporations, and partnerships. In broad terms, then, governance is about the institutional environment in which citizens interact among themselves and with government agencies/officials.
UNDP	Governance is the system of values, policies and institutions by which a society manages its economic, political and social affairs through interactions within and among the State, civil society and the private sector. It is the way a society organizes itself to make and implement decisions — achieving mutual understanding, agreement and action. It comprises the mechanisms and processes for citizens and groups to articulate their interests, mediate their differences and exercise their legal rights and obligations. It is the rules, institutions and practices that set limits and provide incentives for individuals, organizations and firms. Governance, including its social, political and economic dimensions, operates at every level of human enterprise, be it the household, village, municipality, nation, region or globe.
World Bank	Governance refers to the manner in which public officials and institutions acquire and exercise the authority to shape public policy and provide public goods and services.

A number of these definitions are consistent the Westphalian principle of a government exercising authority with the consent and participation of its people, who in turn receive benefits from the government, and who presumably see this as a legitimate arrangement. Some of the views are relatively state-centric, focused on the institutions of state. However, the UK and UNDP definitions are noteworthy in that they recognize that governance includes far more than managing or controlling a country's affairs or the services provided by a state to its citizens. Many of the other definitions imply a central authority acting on a relatively passive population, rather than a society organizing itself at multiple levels to address its needs. This distinction is important in that it addresses the level of participation, engagement and sense of agency in the various actors involved.

The variety of definitions would lead one to think that only some countries' aid programming would regard contextualization and endogenization of the institutional development process as pertinent factors, or would consider them relevant elements to incorporate in the design of their initiatives. During decades of working in the field there has been little evidence of project descriptions in which the terms (or equivalents) were used – many seemed to assume they knew the context and what the society needed, which can lead to problems with project implementation. For example, ISLA, a large ($62M) USAID project designed to strengthen subnational governance in Afghanistan, included a brief baseline study – which was carried out well after the

project was designed, contracts awarded, and work had already begun (USAID, 2015). This it not unusual, and is an interesting line of inquiry that merits further research.

Also, in many fragile states several development agencies are likely to be operating at the same time, sometimes in the same sectors, such as strengthening subnational governance, promoting gender equity or improving financial management systems, with considerable differences in their modes of operation.[11]

In a fragile conflict-affected state many of the broader society-wide administrative mechanisms found in OECD-type countries are dysfunctional or entirely absent, with the state seen by citizens as having limited legitimacy (a complex issue discussed at greater length below) – this is part of why such states are considered to be fragile (OECD, 2011b). This weakness in state functioning does not mean that there is no structured organizational activity (or "governance") providing public goods in the society: people seem to manage to work together and provide for themselves even in the most trying and chaotic of circumstances – otherwise they likely would have died off as a result of the turmoil. Villages, neighborhoods and extended families usually have some self-organizing social and economic capability even when a government does not manage the people's affairs or provide services. These context-based capacities are part of the society's governance processes, assets that could be incorporated in contextually-appropriate institutional development efforts.

It is relevant to consider such local initiatives in analyzing the functionality of the state during post-conflict reconstruction. A 2009 study of governance in Northern Uganda by Dr. Peter Tamas found that the government was overlooking these efforts:

> The lack of interest in engagement with the local may be a manifestation of the overall framework within which the expansion of government services was conducted in Northern Uganda. All of the documents read and discussions held for this review were framed in terms of increasing the ability of the GOU (Government of Uganda) to deliver services to the population of the North. This is consistent with the notion that the legitimacy of a state is predicated on its ability to provide those it wishes to be its citizens with services. This is the output model of state legitimacy.
>
> States are also produced as legitimate when people are enrolled as citizens through vehicles such as taxation, school management committees digging in the school field and collaboration between the police and clan heads. Post-conflict recovery efforts tend to weight output legitimacy over input legitimacy. Despite GOU insensitivity, and perhaps hostility, to inputs, we found substantial evidence of citizen inputs both in the education and justice sectors.

The author summarized his comments as follows: "If you deliver outputs, people may perceive a government as legitimate. However, if you structure citizens' inputs, they may produce a legitimate government. Bottom-up as well as top-down efforts are required. Most projects focusing on strengthening governance and increasing the capacity of public administration are blind to locally-initiated dimensions of fostering

[11] In 2015 there were three major donors active in strengthening subnational governance in Afghanistan – GIZ, USAID and UNDP – and the differences in their approaches caused considerable difficulty for the relatively weak government agency responsible for subnational governance.

state legitimacy." Nation-building activities can take many forms rooted in the way a society operates, and only some of these may be designed and managed by the government of the day (Tamas, 2010b).

This brief comment on good governance in international development and challenges involved in nation-building concludes the first section of the literature review on governance, fragile states and international development. It is a partial analysis, as it does not mention the stresses noted earlier which are faced by reformers struggling to improve governance in systems which have experienced predatory elite capture of the institutions of state, and the potentially violent internal dynamics which are rarely mentioned in the international development literature.

What this section does indicate is that the very concept of governance varies widely from one society to another, calling for a contextually-appropriate approach to ensure that nation-building efforts are compatible with local perceptions and practices of managing a society's collective affairs.

The several themes in this brief introduction to governance in international development are further elaborated later in this review, after the next section describing selected characteristics of fragile states.

2.2. The Context – a Fragile State

What is a Fragile State?

The international development literature devotes considerable attention to nation-building and strengthening governance in fragile states – see, for example, (Dobbins, Jones, Crane, & DeGrasse, 2007; Collier, 2007; ODI, 2012; OECD, 2006; OECD, 2007; OECD, 2008a; UNDP, 2006; UNPAN, 2010; World Bank, 2012). The term "failed state" is often used as well (Ghani & Lockhart, 2009; Silva, 2011). Much of this literature focuses on the functional or performance dimension of the institutions of state, which influences the population's perception of state legitimacy, a key factor linked to state fragility.

Lemay-Hebert and Mathieu (Lemay-Hebert & Mathieu, 2014) assert that a functionalist or performance-based approach is consistent with a Weberian-influenced institutional view of the state. They say this view is complemented by an alternate Durkheim-influenced sociological approach that is linked to a psychological factor, the population's perception of the legitimacy of the state. These two approaches effect each other: performance influences perception of legitimacy, and the institutions behind the state's performance must be rooted in the society, and "…not be established in isolation from the historical and cultural context of each country," and further that, "…state building is (at least partially) an endogenous process." (Lemay-Hebert & Mathieu 2014:240). Their call for a contextually-appropriate institutional development approach is a central element of this dissertation.

A strategy to address one of the most extreme symptoms of state fragility, the active insurgency in Afghanistan, reflects both the functionalist and sociological approaches.

Part of the campaign to counter the efforts of the Taliban focused on increasing the perception of the state's legitimacy. The US Army's 2006 *Counterinsurgency* manual states: "Victory is achieved when the populace consents to the government's legitimacy and stops actively and passively supporting the insurgency" (US Army, 2006). It is noteworthy that this military definition of "victory" is described largely in social, psychological, economic and governance terms, and focuses on the population's behavior and attitudes more so than on warfighting or defeating an enemy.

A complementary effort, the District Delivery Program, a largely exogenous initiative which was supported by both USAID and DFID, sought to help the Afghan government to quickly establish functioning public sector operations in areas cleared of insurgents, in an effort to increase the population's perception of the legitimacy of the state (Tamas & Dunn, 2012). These were initially successful in increasing stability and the perception of the legitimacy of the state, but the inability to sustain these efforts was associated with increased insurgent activity and heightened state fragility (Governor of Kandahar, 2012). Problems in either the functional or sociological dimensions of governance can contribute to state fragility.

The policy initiatives analyzed in this research had both functional and sociological dimensions – they were dealing with issues linked to state performance, and doing so with varying degrees of endogenization and contextualization, which impacted on their legitimacy and effectiveness.

Legitimacy, Governance and State Fragility

Legitimacy is a major issue in governance in fragile states, particularly when an active insurgency threatens the viability of the government. Insurgencies require some support from the population (Kilcullen, 2006), and as noted above, the US Army (2006) considers that "victory" in a counterinsurgency campaign is based on the population's perception of the legitimacy of the state – it has little to do with warfighting.

In a critique of the literature, Vivien Schmidt identifies three types of legitimacy: input, throughput, and output. The public's perception of the state (and hence its level of fragility) is linked to all three, which she describes as follows:

- ***Input legitimacy*** is judged in terms of the government's responsiveness to citizen's concerns as a result of participation *by* the people.
- ***Throughput legitimacy*** is judged in terms of the efficacy, accountability and transparency of … governance processes along with their inclusiveness and openness to consultation *with* the people.
- ***Output legitimacy*** is judged in terms of the effectiveness of the (government's) policy outcomes *for* the people (Schmidt, 2013:2) emphasis in original).

She asserts that relatively little attention is given in the literature to throughput legitimacy. She refers to a form of system theory in her discussion, which she says has three main components: inputs, throughput, and outputs. Throughput addresses

how the state functions, makes decisions, and manages its operations. Others may call this *process* legitimacy – referring to the way the state goes about its business, this being a category separate from but linked to the other two types of legitimacy. The public may have elections to select its leaders and make its will known to them, and these elected officials may provide adequate levels of service to the population. However, if the public does not judge that the *way* the government is making decisions is appropriate, its legitimacy may be in question.

This matter bears directly on the focus of this thesis: the manner in which a policy implementation and institutional development initiative is planned and carried out will have an effect on the perception of its legitimacy – both within the various parts of the government and with the public – which, in turn, will impact on effectiveness of the policy process, and the government's level of fragility.

Legitimacy can be linked to contextual appropriateness: a contextualized and endogenous institutional development initiative is likely to be seen as more legitimate than a process which transplants organizational forms from another society with little regard as to whether they will take root in the host society. The Afghan policy initiatives that are analyzed later in this study have different levels of effectiveness, part of which may be linked to their legitimacy. This is further discussed in the *Findings* section below.

Fragility Calculation: Sample Technical Information

There is no consensus on the precise characteristics, number and classification of fragile or failed states, with several different scales or indices in use that identify as many as 40 to 50 states considered to be in the category (Silva, 2011; OECD, 2015b). This diversity is evident in three examples – prepared by the Fund for Peace, the World Bank, and OECD – which are summarized in detail below. This section also includes additional references to related work by USAID, the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and others.

Although the term is widely used, as noted earlier the classification "fragile state" is a contested concept – see, for example, (Grimm et al., 2014; Boege et al., 2009; Nay, 2014; Stepputat & Engberg-Pedersen, 2008). The term is often used to define a number of unstable poorly-governed conflict-prone countries with low indicators of well-being, such as low literacy levels and GDP, high maternal mortality rates, and others, in an unfavorable comparison with countries considered to be "developed" – mainly in the industrialized west. Examples of how "fragility" is calculated are described in the following sections.

This section provides a small sample of the large body of technical information used by the Fund for Peace and the World Bank to calculate state fragility. It gives readers some insight into the complexity of the processes involved in analyzing the condition of a state. It is also the subject of considerable controversy.

Even though there are numerous critiques of the process, some of which are included later in this section, it is significant and noteworthy in that the results of these analyses – however questionable and contested they might be – contribute to

decision-making related to allocation of funds that many states depend upon to implement policies and develop institutions that are essential in the operations of their governments.

Fragile States Index – Fund for Peace

A "Fragile States Index" – one of several similar scales in the international development literature – was compiled by the Fund for Peace organization and published on-line by Foreign Policy magazine in July, 2014[12]. It was the tenth year the Fund prepared this index, which was previously called the "Failed State Index." In recent years the Fund considered the term "fragile" more appropriate and changed their terminology (Fund for Peace, 2014b). It is presented here as an overview of elements considered by the Fund to be related to state fragility. The methodology used by the Fund is summarized below: details of an equivalent World Bank scale are included later in this section for comparison purposes.

The Fund lists the following factors as indicators of the relative fragility of states:

1. ***Demographic Pressures:*** Concerns related to population, such as food scarcity, population growth, and mortality rates.
2. ***Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons:*** Concerns associated with population displacement and refugees.
3. ***Group Grievance:*** Tensions and violence among groups within the state.
4. ***Human Flight and Brain Drain:*** Levels of migration out of the country including, but not limited to, the flight of refugees and educated individuals.
5. ***Uneven Economic Development:*** Disparities in development among different ethnic and religious groups and among regions within the state.
6. ***Poverty and Economic Decline:*** Poverty rates and economic performance.
7. ***State Legitimacy:*** Corruption and other measures of democratic capacity, such as government performance and electoral process.
8. ***Public Services:*** Provision of education, health care, sanitation, and other services.
9. ***Human Rights and Rule of Law:*** The protection and promotion of human rights.
10. ***Security Apparatus:*** Internal conflict and the proliferation of nonstate armed groups.
11. ***Factionalized Elites:*** Conflict and competition among local and national leaders.
12. ***External Intervention:*** Levels of foreign assistance as well as imposed interventions, such as sanctions or military invasion.

The following table lists the ten most fragile states in the Fund's index, and includes several other states with lower (i.e. better) scores for comparison purposes. In this

[12] The on-line version is available at: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/fragile-states-2014#rankings

survey, Afghanistan was the seventh most fragile (106.5), and Finland had the lowest level of fragility (18.7).

Table 1
Sample Fragile States Index (Fund for Peace, 2014)

RANK	NAME	TOTAL	DEMOGRAPHIC PRESSURES	REFUGEES AND IDPS	GROUP GRIEVANCE	HUMAN FLIGHT	UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT	POVERTY AND ECONOMIC DECLINE	LEGITIMACY OF THE STATE	PUBLIC SERVICES	HUMAN RIGHTS	SECURITY APPARATUS	FACTIONALIZED ELITES	EXTERNAL INTERVENTION
1	SSudan	112.9	9.1	10	10	6.8	8.9	8.8	9.7	9.9	9.9	9.9	10	9.9
2	Somalia	112.6	9.5	10	9.3	8.9	8.7	9.1	9.1	9.6	9.8	9.4	10	9.2
3	CAR	110.6	8.7	10	9.5	7	9.4	7.8	9.5	9.7	9.5	9.9	9.7	9.9
4	DRCongo	110.2	9.4	9.9	9.6	7.2	8.5	8.2	9.3	9.4	10	9.4	9.5	9.8
5	Sudan	110.1	8.6	9.7	9.9	8.7	8.2	8.1	9.3	9.1	9.3	9.6	10	9.6
6	Chad	108.7	9.6	9.8	8.5	8.3	8.8	7.7	9.4	10	9.5	9.1	9.8	8.2
7	Afghanistan	106.5	8.8	9.3	8.7	7.8	7.5	8.3	9.5	9	8.3	10	9.4	9.9
8	Yemen	105.4	9.1	9	9.3	7.3	7.8	9.1	8.9	8.5	9	9.5	9.4	8.5
9	Haiti	104.3	8.7	8.5	7	9.1	9.3	9.4	8.9	9.5	7.5	7.5	9.1	9.8
10	Pakistan	103	8.8	8.8	10	6.9	7.6	7.5	8.5	7.6	8.6	9.9	9.5	9.3
27	Cameroon	93.1	8.1	7.6	7.8	7.5	7.5	5.9	8.2	8.5	8.3	7.7	9.5	6.5
39	Burkina Faso	89	9	7.6	5.3	6.6	8.1	7.4	7.8	8.8	6.5	6.9	7.3	7.7
79	Ecuador	77.3	5.9	5.7	7.5	6.5	7.1	5.6	6.9	6.6	5	6.4	8.2	5.9
102	Paraguay	71.6	5.8	2.7	6.2	4.9	8.7	5.4	7.4	6.4	6	6.2	7.8	4.1
121	Botswana	64.5	8	5.5	5.1	5.3	7.8	6.4	4.1	6.3	4.6	3.2	3.3	4.9
141	Hungary	48.3	2.8	2.8	4.4	3.6	4.6	5.6	6	3.2	4.1	2.6	4.9	3.7
159	United States	35.4	3.3	2.4	4.5	1.2	4.5	3.1	2.4	2.5	3.5	2.7	4	1.3
168	Canada	27.4	2.7	2.3	3.4	2.2	3.2	2.1	1.2	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.5	1.3
170	Ireland	26.1	2.5	1.4	1.6	3.1	2.7	4.2	1.8	2.2	1.2	2.1	1.3	2
178	Finland	18.7	1.8	1.5	1.3	2.2	1.3	3.5	0.8	1.4	1.2	1.3	1.1	1.3

Calculating Fragility – Fund for Peace Method

The Fund uses a complex procedure, called the Conflict Assessment System Tool (CAST), "a methodology developed by FFP for assessing the vulnerability of states to collapse. It measures this vulnerability in pre-conflict, active conflict and post-conflict situations. The methodology uses both qualitative and quantitative indicators, relies on public data sources, and produces quantifiable results" (Fund for Peace, 2014a).

They regularly survey some 11,000 sources of information on conditions in countries around the world, and analyze this information to produce their fragility scales. For each of the twelve categories noted above, they have a number of questions or statements which span from high to low incidence of the feature being explored. An example from their *Legitimacy of the State* category is included here for illustrative purposes.

State Legitimacy – Sample

The scores and factors used to calculate the Fund's *Legitimacy* scale are as follows:

10	The government on all levels is considered completely illegitimate, and violent opposition exists. Corruption is endemic
9	High-level government is considered completely illegitimate and criminal, and violent national opposition exists
8	Government is considered highly illegitimate and criminal, and violent regional opposition exists
7	Government is considered illegitimate and criminal, and opposition exists on some level but is not violent
6	Corruption is a major issue but not endemic. Some levels of government may be working on addressing it
5	Corruption is a major issue but strong policies and programs have been put into place and are having some success
4	Corruption in government is sporadic and there are some questions regarding legitimacy of some actors within government
3	Corruption in government is sporadic and oversight mechanisms should be made stronger
2	Corruption in government is rare but oversight mechanisms should be stronger
1	Corruption in government is rare and proper oversight mechanisms exist
0	There is no corruption in government, there are strong oversight mechanisms and the legitimacy of the government is never questioned

Factors affecting state legitimacy can include:

- Massive and endemic corruption or profiteering by ruling elites.
- Resistance of ruling elites to transparency, accountability and political representation, revealed by scandals, investigative journalism, criminal prosecution or civil action.
- Widespread loss of popular confidence in state institutions and processes, e.g., widely boycotted or flawed elections, mass public demonstrations, sustained civil disobedience, inability of the state to collect taxes, resistance to military conscription, rise of armed insurgencies.
- Growth of crime syndicates linked to ruling elites.

Additional Questions

- *Armed Insurgents:* Are there reports of armed insurgents and attacks?
- *Suicide Bombers:* Have there been suicide bombings and how likely are they?
- *Corruption of Federal Officials:* Is there evidence of corruption on the part of federal officials?
- *Accusation of Corruption of Officials:* Are federal and/or local officials considered to be corrupt?
- *Perception of Elections:* Are elections perceived to be free and fair?

- *Monitoring of Elections:* Have elections been monitored and reported as free and fair?
- *Confidence in Government:* Does the government have the confidence of the people?
- *Makeup of Government:* Is the government representative of the population?
- *Most Recent Leadership Transition:* Have there been recent peaceful transitions of power?
- *History of Leadership Transitions*: What is the longer term history of transition of power?
- *Political Rights:* Do political rights for all parties exist?
- *Political Assassinations:* Are there reports of politically motivated attacks and assassinations?
- *Riots & Uprisings:* Have riots occurred?
- *Peaceful Demonstrations:* Have peaceful demonstrations occurred?

Equivalent questions and statements are used in each of the other eleven categories the Fund studies. It uses its CAST database system to compile the Fragility Index illustrated in the table above, a massive data collection and analysis process.

World Bank List of "Fragile Situations"

Another analysis in the field is the World Bank's list of what they call "fragile situations," (World Bank, 2014a), an index that is based on the Bank's "Country Policy and Institutional Assessments" (CPIA).

> The Bank defines ***fragile states*** or ***fragile situations*** as countries that have a harmonized average CPIA country score of 3.2 or less … or where there has been a UN and/or a regional peace keeping or peace building mission during the last three years (World Bank, 2011b: (emphasis in original).) (emphasis in original).

Part of the index is shown in the table below, which combines scores from similar assessments by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

The index is used to determine funding allocations by the IDA (International Development Association). This is the part of the World Bank that helps the poorest countries, and complements the Bank's original lending arm, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). It lends money on concessional terms, with zero or very low interest rates, with long repayment terms (25 to 40 years), with a five to ten year grace period. It also provides grants to fragile and conflict-affected states (World Bank, 2013b).

Table 2
World Bank Harmonized List of Fragile Situations 2014

Country	WB CPIA Score	ADB/AfDB CPIA Score	Harmonized Average
Somalia	-	1.18	1.2
Eritrea	2.08	1.88	2
South Sudan	2.12	2.27	2.2
Sudan	2.32	2.66	2.5
Comoros	2.78	2.48	2.6
Guinea-Bissau	2.62	2.79	2.7
Marshall Islands	2.68	2.78	2.7
Micronesia, FS	2.69	2.8	2.7
Central African Republic	2.71	2.95	2.8
Afghanistan	2.68	3.03	2.9
Chad	2.51	3.2	2.9
Haiti	2.9	-	2.9
Kiribati	2.88	2.98	2.9
Tuvalu	2.77	3.05	2.9
DRC	2.71	3.21	3
Yemen	2.99	-	3
Cote d'Ivoire	3.07	3.15	3.1
Madagascar	3.04	3.24	3.1
Togo	2.97	3.32	3.1
Congo, Rep	3	3.38	3.2
Malawi	3.16	3.22	3.2
Solomon Islands	2.96	3.38	3.2
Timor-Leste	3.02	3.38	3.2
Burundi	3.24	3.38	3.3
Sierra Leone	3.27	3.4	3.3
Liberia	3.06	3.69	3.4
Kosovo	3.51	-	3.5
Mali	3.38	3.98	3.7
Nepal	3.27	4.15	3.7

Analyzing Fragility – the World Bank's Approach

The Bank's analysis of fragile states – which they came to identify as "Fragile and Conflict Affected Situations" (FCS) (World Bank, 2014b) – has evolved since their first list was published in 2006. Their country ratings before that time were confidential. In 2006 they used the term *Low Income Countries Under Stress (LICUS) List.* In 2010 it became the *Fragile States List,* and in 2011 the *Harmonized List of Fragile Situations,* to reflect increased understanding of the development challenges facing countries affected by violence and instability. The more recent

term also reflected a combination of analytical data from the Bank and its sister organizations, the Asia Development Bank (ADB) and the African Development Bank (AfDB), which all consider countries' CPIA ratings when designing financial and other supports for these states.

The Bank's understanding of these situations changed as experience accumulated. An indication of the factors influencing their evolution in this area was in the Information Note associated with the Bank's 2013 list (World Bank, 2013):

> In 2011, the *World Development Report 2011*: *Conflict, Security and Development* (hereafter WDR 2011) called for a paradigm shift in the development community's work on FCS. The report concluded that violence and other challenges plaguing FCS cannot be resolved by short-term or partial solutions in the absence of institutions that provide people with security, justice, and economic opportunities. This paradigm is based on the following findings: (a) violence takes many forms, is often recurrent, and can mutate over time; (b) successful transitions have involved the creation of "inclusive enough" coalitions and early and convincing "signaling" of intent through concrete and credible actions; (c) building capable and legitimate institutions to deliver citizen security, address injustice, and create employment is key to breaking these cycles of violence; and (d) responding to these priorities requires much greater partnership and discipline by external actors, and revised procedures to permit greater speed, allow for longer engagements, and better manage the inevitable risks inherent in assisting FCS.

The Bank's emphasis on the importance of "building capable and legitimate institutions" that provide people with security, justice and economic opportunities to break cycles of violence is consistent with the focus of this research project.

The Bank considers that the overall purpose of these lists is to better understand and respond to the challenges facing low-income countries with weak policies, institutions and governance. The analysis of these factors is reflected in a country's CPIA rating, which is described in their CPIA 2013 Criteria publication (World Bank, 2013a).[13]

The CPIA is used to assess "the quality of countries' policy and institutional framework. 'Quality' refers to how conducive that framework is to fostering poverty reduction, sustainable growth , and the effective use of development assistance" (ibid: 1). The ratings are used in financial allocation decisions and in other corporate activities.

The CPIA has sixteen criteria, grouped in four clusters:

A. Economic Management

1. Monetary and Exchange Rate Policies
2. Fiscal Policy
3. Debt Policy and Management

B. Structural Policies

4. Trade

[13] Note: The information in this section is adapted from that 2013 publication, which appears substantially similar to lists used in previous years.

5. Financial Sector
6. Business Regulatory Environment

C. Policies for Social Inclusion/Equity

7. Gender Equality
8. Equity of Public Resource Use
9. Building Human Resources
10. Social Protection and Labor
11. Policies and Institutions for Environmental Sustainability

D. Public Sector Management and Institutions

12. Property Rights and Rule-based Governance
13. Quality of Budgetary and Financial Management
14. Efficiency of Revenue Mobilization
15. Quality of Public Administration
16. Transparency, Accountability, and Corruption in the Public Sector

CPIA Criteria – Summary Description

The key factors assessed in each of the sixteen criteria are as follows:

1. Monetary and Exchange Rate Policies
This criterion assesses the quality of monetary/exchange rate policies in a coherent macroeconomic policy framework.

2. Fiscal Policy
This criterion assesses the quality of the fiscal policy in its stabilization and allocation functions.

3. Debt Policy and Management
This criterion assesses whether the country's debt management strategy is conducive to ensure medium-term debt sustainability and minimize budgetary risks.

4. Trade
This criterion assesses how the policy framework fosters global integration in goods and services.

5. Financial Sector
This criterion assesses the policies and regulations that affect financial sector development.

6. Business Regulatory Environment
This criterion assesses the extent to which the legal, regulatory, and policy environment helps or hinders private business in investing, creating jobs, and becoming more productive.

7. Gender Equality
This criterion assesses the extent to which the country has enacted and put in place institutions and programs to enforce laws and policies that: (a) promote equal access

for men and women to human capital development; (b) promote equal access for men and women to productive and economic resources; and (c) give men and women equal status and protection under the law.

8. Equity of Public Resource Use
This criterion assesses the extent to which the pattern of public expenditures and revenue collection affects the poor and is consistent with national poverty reduction priorities.

9. Building Human Resources
The breadth and quality of a country's human capital is a key determinant of its economic growth and social development, including global attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), over half of which relate to human development (HD) outcomes. (Note: education and health are included in this indicator.)

10. Social Protection and Labor
The criterion assesses social protection (SP) and labor policies, namely those engaged in risk prevention by supporting savings and risk pooling through social insurance, protection against destitution through redistributive safety net programs and promotion of human capital development and income generation, including labor market programs.

11. Policies and Institutions for Environmental Sustainability
This criterion assesses the extent to which environmental policies and institutions foster the protection and sustainable use of natural resources and the management of pollution.

12. Property Rights and Rule-based Governance
This criterion assesses the extent to which economic activity is facilitated by an effective legal system and rule-based governance structure in which property and contract rights are reliably respected and enforced.

13. Quality of Budgetary and Financial Management
This criterion assesses the extent to which there is: (a) a comprehensive and credible budget, linked to policy priorities; (b) effective financial management systems to ensure that the budget is implemented as intended in a controlled and predictable way; and (c) timely and accurate accounting and fiscal reporting, including timely audit of public accounts and effective arrangements for follow up.

14. Efficiency of Revenue Mobilization
This criterion assesses the overall pattern of revenue mobilization, not only the tax structure as it exists on paper, but revenue from all sources as they are actually collected.

15. Quality of Public Administration
This criterion covers the core administration defined as the civilian central government (and subnational governments, to the extent that their size or policy responsibilities are significant) excluding health and education personnel, and police. (Health and education are included in Q9 above. Effectiveness of the police is not

measured – the security sector is not overtly included in the assessment. This is discussed further below).

16. Transparency, Accountability, and Corruption in the Public Sector
This criterion assesses the extent to which the executive, legislators, and other high-level officials can be held accountable for their use of funds, administrative decisions, and results obtained.

How the CPIA ratings are determined

The Bank's 2013 CPIA Criteria document describes the complex multi-layered time-intensive process that is used to determine CPIA ratings. The first step uses the sixteen criteria above to define the characteristics of a relatively small "benchmark" group of countries that are generally representative of the mix of the larger group of countries to be assessed. Bank staff with knowledge of these countries analyze their characteristics in each of the criteria areas, and then these benchmark scores are used by Bank staff as a basis for analysis of the relative conditions in the rest of the countries assessed. These analyses may draw on information from sources outside the Bank.

Quality of Public Administration - Sample

Sample categories from Criteria 15 – *Quality of Public Administration*, illustrate part of the assessment process:

1 a. The core administration demonstrates little internal management capacity: major personnel actions, such as recruitment and selection, promotions, and dismissals rarely reflect merit and performance; terms of employment, and pay are insufficiently attractive to ensure that the public administration can compete effectively for any scarce skill sets it requires without resorting to externally financed top-ups for favored positions; the public sector pay regime is unable to motivate effort within the public service

b. The core administration demonstrates little capacity to ensure quality in policy and regulatory management: Cabinet decisions, presidential or ministerial policy announcements are often dropped or otherwise not implemented, or explicitly reneged on or reversed during the term of a government; the institutional responsibilities for data collection, analysis and reporting in the sectors are weak or unclear; and the bodies with responsibility for sector regulation (infrastructure, transport, etc.) are not regarded as independent in practice and have weak regulatory quality management arrangements in place.

c. The core administration demonstrates little capacity to coordinate the broader public sector HRM regime outside of the core public sector: (i) merit is rarely the predominant factor in obtaining appointments or promotion; and (ii) the aggregate public sector wage bill is not fiscally sustainable.

3 a. The core administration demonstrates modest internal management capacity: major personnel actions, such as recruitment and selection, promotions, and dismissals sometimes reflect merit and performance; terms of employment, and pay are barely sufficiently attractive to ensure that the public administration can

compete reasonably effectively for any scarce skill sets it requires; the public sector pay regime is sometimes unable to motivate effort within the public service.

b. The core administration demonstrates modest capacity to ensure quality in policy and regulatory management: Cabinet decisions, presidential or ministerial policy announcements are occasionally dropped or otherwise not implemented; the institutional responsibilities for data collection, analysis and reporting in the sectors are occasionally weak or unclear; and the bodies with responsibility for sector regulation (infrastructure, transport, etc.) are occasionally not regarded as independent in practice and few have adequate regulatory quality management arrangements in place.

c. The core administration demonstrates modest capacity to coordinate the broader public sector HRM regime: (i) merit is the predominant factor in obtaining appointments or promotion in many entities; and (ii) the aggregate public sector wage bill is at some risk of unsustainability.

5 a. The core administration demonstrates adequate internal management capacity: major personnel actions, such as recruitment and selection, promotions, and dismissals always reflect merit and performance; terms of employment, and pay are sufficiently attractive to ensure that the public administration can compete effectively for any scarce skill sets it requires; the public sector pay regime is able to motivate effort within the public service

b. The core administration demonstrates strong capacity to ensure quality in policy and regulatory management: Cabinet decisions, presidential or ministerial policy announcements are almost never dropped or otherwise not implemented; institutional responsibilities for data collection, analysis and reporting in the sectors are clear; and the bodies with responsibility for sector regulation are regarded as independent in practice with adequate regulatory quality management arrangements in place.

c. The core administration demonstrates adequate capacity to coordinate the broader public sector HRM regime outside of the core public sector: (i) merit is the predominant factor in obtaining appointments or promotion in all entities; and (ii) the aggregate public sector wage bill is at no risk of unsustainability.

6. Criteria for "5" on all three sub ratings are fully met. There are no warning signs of possible deterioration, and there is widespread expectation of continued strong or improving performance.

Bank staff in each country conduct assessments of the government's operations using their professional judgment guided by resources available for each of the sixteen criteria. The analysis of country characteristics focuses on actual policy *outcomes* rather than on *intentions* – for example, while the passage of legislation may be noted, what is measured is the results of the implementation of that legislation.

The Bank's CPIA criteria documentation makes no mention of involvement of host country officials in this analysis. Information from sources outside the Bank may be used in the analysis.

Scores are calculated and averaged in accord with detailed instructions, and their results are compiled and reviewed by the Bank's Chief Economist in that region

before being posted for that year's CPIA assessment. It is a massive annual analysis, consultation and data management process involving hundreds of World Bank staff familiar with the countries that are (or may be) receiving specific types of financial assistance from the Bank.

Comparing Lists: Fund for Peace and World Bank

Relevant sections of fragile state lists from Fund for Peace and the World Bank CPIA index are shown here for comparison purposes.

Table 3
Comparing Fragile States Lists

Fund for Peace			World Bank			
Rank	Name	Total	Country	WB CPIA Score	ADB/AfDB CPIA Score	Harmonized Average
1	SSudan	112.9	Somalia	-	1.18	1.2
2	Somalia	112.6	Eritrea	2.08	1.88	2
3	CAR	110.6	South Sudan	2.12	2.27	2.2
4	DRCongo	110.2	Sudan	2.32	2.66	2.5
5	Sudan	110.1	Comoros	2.78	2.48	2.6
6	Chad	108.7	Guinea-Bissau	2.62	2.79	2.7
7	Afghanistan	106.5	Marshall Islands	2.68	2.78	2.7
8	Yemen	105.4	Micronesia, FS	2.69	2.8	2.7
9	Haiti	104.3	Central African Republic (CAR)	2.71	2.95	2.8
10	Pakistan	103	Afghanistan	2.68	3.03	2.9
11	Zimbabwe	102.8	Chad	2.51	3.2	2.9
12	Guinea	102.7	Haiti	2.9	-	2.9
13	Iraq	102.2	Kiribati	2.88	2.98	2.9
14	Cote d'Ivoire	101.7	Tuvalu	2.77	3.05	2.9
15	Syria	101.6	DRC	2.71	3.21	3
16	Guinea Bissau	100.6	Yemen	2.99	-	3
17	Nigeria	99.7	Cote d'Ivoire	3.07	3.15	3.1
18	Kenya	99	Madagascar	3.04	3.24	3.1
19	Ethiopia	97.9	Togo	2.97	3.32	3.1
19	Niger	97.9	Congo, Rep	3	3.38	3.2
21	Burundi	97.1	Malawi	3.16	3.22	3.2
22	Uganda	96	Solomon Islands	2.96	3.38	3.2
23	Eritrea	95.5	Timor-Leste	3.02	3.38	3.2

There are 24 countries on each list (two are tied at 19 on the Fund for Peace list). All of the first 9 on the Fund's list are also on the Bank's list, albeit with different rankings. Afghanistan is ranked 7 on one, and 10 on the other. Each list has eleven countries that do not appear on the other.

Differences in scoring methods and objectives can account for the different rankings: the Bank focuses more on public finance and public administration, and on countries receiving particular types of financial assistance. Some of the countries on the Fund's

list may not be receiving those Bank funds so are not included in the Bank's analysis. The Bank has other indexes which are not public on which other countries are listed – they were not included here.

Unfortunately, the aggregation and scoring process used to produce both lists does not clearly identify the many possible sources of fragility that would assist with focusing attention on specific aspects of administrative capacity, such as accountability mechanisms, legislative reform, economic development, legitimacy, or other sub-components of governance.

The Fund's criteria include security issues that were not highlighted in the Bank's CPIA list: if security were to be included in the Bank's analysis, more of the countries on the Fund's list – such as Iraq, Syria, Pakistan and Nigeria – might also be on the Bank's list.

It is noteworthy that security and the capacity of related institutions (military, police, intelligence services, criminal justice system, corrections, etc.) are not overtly assessed in the Bank's CPIA scale – these systems bear directly on fragility, maintenance of stability and performance of the country's government and its economy. No reason for this exclusion was evident in the documentation studied for this review. However, some of these issues are dealt with in a related set of World Bank assessments – their Post-Conflict Performance Indicators (PCPI).

World Bank Post-Conflict Performance Indicators (PCPI)

The World Bank uses a special assessment[14] – Post Conflict Performance Indicators (PCPI) – for a small number of countries experiencing or recovering from conflict. This is similar to the CPIA (above), but focuses more closely on factors related to stability, conflict and security, areas that the CPIA does not directly assess.

The objective of the PCPI is to assess "the quality of a country's policy and institutional framework to support a successful transition and recovery from conflict and to foster sustainable growth, poverty reduction, and the effective use of development assistance. Its objective is to inform the allocation of resources to countries that are eligible for IDA's exceptional allocations" (World Bank, 2011b:1). Again, policies and institutions are at the centre of the assessment.

PCPI Methods and Scales

The PCPI structure and process is similar to that used for the CPIA. It analyzes somewhat different criteria and places greater emphasis on security related dimensions of governance. It also focuses on a smaller number of countries: in 2013 these were Burundi, Cote D'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, South Sudan, and Afghanistan – see table below.

The PCPI framework assesses twelve dimensions, grouped in four clusters, as follows:

[14] The information on the PCPI in this section is adapted from (World Bank, 2011b).

Cluster A: Economic Management and Structural Policies

1. Macroeconomic management
2. Debt management
3. Functioning of public administration
4. Business environment

Cluster B: Social Inclusion and Human Development

5. Human resource building
6. Vulnerable groups, gender, and social cohesion

Cluster C: Governance

7. Capacity of public administration
8. Rule of law
9. Accountability and transparency

Cluster D: Post-conflict Risk (for post-conflict countries only)

10. Security
11. Management of conflict and recovery
12. Peace-building

Criteria are defined as follows:

Q1. Macroeconomic Management
This criterion assesses the conduct of monetary, fiscal, and exchange rate policies to address macroeconomic imbalances characterized by high inflation and large fiscal and current account deficits, and to ultimately achieve a stable macroeconomic framework.

Q2: Debt Management
This criterion assesses debt sustainability issues and the effectiveness of the debt management.

Q3. Functioning of Budget Administration
The criterion covers two dimensions. The first assesses the strength of tax administration. The second focuses on the mechanisms for budget formulation, the extent to which fiscal operations are covered in the budget document, and the adequacy of reporting and monitoring systems and of audit procedures.

Q4. Business Environment
This criterion covers three key areas: foreign trade, financial sector, and the regulatory framework for private sector development.

Q5. Human Resource Building
This criterion focuses on the quality and coverage of the provision of health and education services, including the extent to which vulnerable groups (e.g., the elderly, minorities, and the poor) have access to such services.

Q6. Vulnerable Groups, Gender, and Social Cohesion
The criterion assesses the extent to which a country has taken steps to put in place policies and enforce laws that address issues of (a) equality, (b) protection, and (c)

social cohesion, and that also cover inclusion issues that are gender-related or specific to vulnerable groups.

Q7. Capacity of Public Administration
This criterion has two components. The first covers the delivery of basic public services such as power, communications, and water and sanitation. The delivery of education and health services is covered in Q5 (Human Resource Building). The second assesses the extent to which the public administration is capable of coordinating its policies, and civil servants are hired and promoted by merit, and adequately remunerated.

Q8. Rule of Law and Personal Security
This criterion assesses countries' progress in reestablishing the rule of law, defined broadly as the extent to which citizens and the state are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced, and independently adjudicated.

Q9. Accountability and Transparency
This criterion assesses the effectiveness of efforts to increase transparency and accountability and to reduce corruption. The criterion covers three areas: (a) voice, access to information, and transparency; (b) management of natural resources; and (c) corruption.

Q10. Security
Three dimensions are assessed in this criterion: (a) the general state of security; (b) crime and violence; and (c) security reform.

Q11. Management of Conflict and Recovery
This criterion assesses the resiliency of the state to overcome the root causes of conflict.

Q12. Peace-building
This criterion assesses the efforts to support peace-building through deliberate political and institutional processes that promote reconciliation and address grievances. It also assesses the extent to which the media, including new forms of social media, support peace-building.

Sample Assessment Criteria

A selection of statements from ***Q9. Accountability and Transparency***, serves to illustrate the criteria used in the PCPI.

1. a. There is no functioning central or local government, or the general public has no voice in selecting its members or influencing its policies. Public access to information on government activities is nonexistent or actively suppressed.
   b. The exploitation of natural resources and the management of natural resource revenues are a source of conflict and are not subject to domestic or external accountability mechanisms.
   c. Corruption (e.g., diversion of funds, bribe-seeking, nepotism) is endemic and mechanisms to deter it are, by and large, absent.

3. a. The general public has limited voice in selecting the central and local government and influencing its policies. The government withholds information needed by the public and civil society organizations to judge its performance.
   b. The exploitation of natural resources and management of natural resource revenues continue to be contentious. These revenues are subject to limited domestic or external accountability mechanisms, but begin to be reflected in the budget documents.
   c. Corruption continues to be endemic as public officials are not sanctioned for receiving bribes, conflict of interest abound, and laws and policies are biased toward narrow private interests. Some public debate on the need to curb corruption is taking place, and some anticorruption measures are being considered.

6. a. The public selects the central and local government and influences its policies, through an electoral process that is reasonably fair and produces an effective check on government power through representation of the opposition in the legislative body. Civil society can access moderate amount of information on government activities. The government attempts to distribute relevant information.
   b. Management of natural resource revenues is subject to oversight and scrutiny by the media and civil society, and the government has nearly achieved compliance with EITI or similar external accountability mechanisms. The budget fully reflects fiscal scenarios based on projections on natural resource production and revenues.
   c. Corruption remains a problem, but anticorruption mechanisms (e.g., conflict of interest and ethics rules) and institutions (e.g., inspector-general, ombudsman) exist, are adequately funded, and have the authority to have some impact in deterring it. Corruption cases are frequently prosecuted, and are not limited to low-level officials or members of the political opposition.

Calculating the PCPI Special Allocation Index

The PCPI rating for each country is determined through a complex time-consuming consultation among Bank staff using a process similar to the CPIA (above), without the benchmarking process in the first step of the CPIA. Local government officials may be consulted during the assessment, but this engagement is not to be seen as a negotiation. Other information sources may be used as well. Each sub-statement in the questions have equal weight. The numbers in the table below were compiled by averaging the scores assigned to each of the questions in the twelve dimensions of country performance assessed.

Table 4
2013 IDA Special Allocation Index (ISAI)
Post-conflict Countries

Country	A. Economic Management & Structural Policies					B. Social Inclusion and Human Development			C. Governance				D. Post-conflict risk				
	1	2	3	4	Average A	5	6	Average B	7	8	9	Average C	10	11	12	Average D	
	Macroeconomic Management	Debt Management	Function of Public Administration	Business Environment		Human Resource Building	Vulnerable groups, Gender & Social Cohesion		Capacity of Public Admiration	Rule of Law & Personal Security	Accountability & Transparency		Security	Management of Conflict & Recovery	Peace-building		IDA Special Allocation Index (ISAI)
Burundi	4.5	5.0	4.0	4.0	4.4	5.5	3.5	4.5	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.2	4.0	4.0	3.0	3.7	3.9
Cote d'Ivoire	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.0	4.4	4.0	3.0	3.5	4.5	4.0	3.5	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
DRC	5.0	4.5	4.0	3.5	4.3	4.0	2.5	3.3	3.5	3.0	2.5	3.0	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	3.3
Liberia	5.0	5.5	4.5	4.0	4.8	4.0	3.5	3.8	3.0	3.5	4.5	3.7	4.0	5.5	4.0	4.5	4.3
South Sudan	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	3.0	2.5	2.8	2.5	2.0	2.5	2.3	2.0	2.0	1.5	1.8	2.3
Afghanistan	3.5	4.0	3.5	3.5	4.0	4.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	2.0	3.5	3.2	2.0	2.5	3.0	2.5	3.3

The Bank says this scale provides greater "granularity" on conditions in the countries assessed than the CPIA, and contributes to their decisions on allocation of Bank funds and other supports for these conflict-affected states.

It is interesting to note that two of the countries on the Bank's PCPI list do not appear on their CPIA list above (Liberia and Burundi), while Liberia is also absent from the Fund for Peace's list of 24 most fragile states. This indicates that while the various indexing processes used to identify fragile states produce generally similar results, there are some differences in the methods and outcomes of these analyses. This contributes to the diversity of terminology and classification of "fragile states" noted earlier this this report.

It is difficult to understand why the Bank does not overtly include corruption and other factors related to the well known problems of predatory elite capture of the institutions of state in its fragility analysis. An example of how the Bank soft-pedals corruption issues is in Mozambique, where successive Bank representatives progressively minimized their opposition to supporting the government following a very public assassination of a well-known anti-corruption campaigner (Hanlon, 2004). Perhaps these elements are part of the confidential part of their analysis, and are kept in the background because of their political sensitivity. However, the link between corruption and instability described by authors such as Sarah Chayes (2015), Carlotta Gall (2014) and Ahmed Rashid (2008) makes the Bank's silence on the corruption-security-fragility relationship difficult to comprehend.

Other Fragile State Analyses and Approaches

Several other organizations are involved in analyzing and supporting fragile states. Their work often refers to fragile states and situations, as they acknowledge that fragility and conflict can occur in contexts other than states – in a region, for example,

or in part of an otherwise relatively stable country. Uganda, Colombia and Nigeria are examples of the latter, where conflict and instability occur in parts of these countries.

The Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) have published materials on their work with fragile states and contexts.

OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

The OECD has the following definition of state fragility:

> A fragile region or state has weak capacity to carry out basic governance functions, and lacks the ability to develop mutually constructive relations with society. Fragile states are also more vulnerable to internal or external shocks such as economic crises or natural disasters. More resilient states exhibit the capacity and legitimacy of governing a population and its territory. They can manage and adapt to changing social needs and expectations, shifts in elite and other political agreements, and growing institutional complexity. Fragility and resilience should be seen as shifting points along a spectrum (OECD, 2013:16).

The OECD also notes that fragility is not necessarily related to the level of a country's income. Their list shows that almost half of fragile states are in the middle-income category.

Table 5
OECD List of Fragile States

Low-Income Fragile States (LIFS)	Middle-income fragile states (MIFS) or economies	
	Lower-middle-income	Upper-middle-income
Afghanistan*	Cameroon	Angola
Bangladesh*	Congo, Rep.	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Burundi*	Côte d'Ivoire	Iran, Islamic Rep.
Central African Republic*	Georgia	
Chad*	Iraq	
Comoros*	Kiribati*	
Congo, Dem. Rep*	Kosovo	
Eritrea*	Marshall Islands	
Ethiopia*	Micronesia, Fed.Sts.	
Guinea*	Nigeria	
Guinea-Bissau*	Pakistan	
Haiti*	Solomon Islands*	
Kenya	South Sudan	
Korea, Dem. Rep.	Sri Lanka	
Kyrgyz Republic	Sudan*	
Liberia*	Timor-Leste*	
Malawi*	West Bank And Gaza	
Myanmar*	Yemen, Rep. *	
Nepal*		
Niger*		
Rwanda*		
Sierra Leone*		
Somalia*		
Togo*		
Uganda*		
Zimbabwe		

Note: * denotes a fragile state that is also defined as a least developed country (LCD).

They cite as their sources of data identifying such states the World Bank's Harmonized List of Fragile and Post-Conflict Countries for the year 2012 – the year preceding the World Bank list above, the Fund for Peace Failed States Index for 2011, and the World Bank income classification list of 2012 (ibid.: 17).

The OECD work seems to be more concerned with strategies to strengthen these states than in carrying out their own analysis of state fragility to produce their equivalent of the tables published by the World Bank and the Fund for Peace. They

have prepared a number of publications on working with such states and situations: see, for example (OECD, 2006; OECD, 2007; OECD, 2008a; OECD, 2010; OECD, 2011b; OECD, 2012; OECD, 2013), the last of which was the source of the table above.

DFID – UK Department for International Development

The UK's Department for International Development describes its approach to working in fragile states in its 2012 publication, "Results in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States and Situations" or FCAS (DFID, 2012). In this publication they note that the method of defining and classifying such countries is contested, and refer to an OECD definition: a situation where "governments lack the political will and/or capacity to fulfill the basic conditions for poverty reduction, development, security and human rights" (OECD, 2007). For their programming they draw on a combination of three widely accepted frameworks, two of which were described earlier – the Fund for Peace Fragile States Index and the World Bank's CPIA – and also the Uppsala Conflict Database (ibid:3), described below.

While they devote considerable attention to effective interventions in fragile states (as defined by others), they do not describe an indexing or definition system of their own.

Uppsala Conflict Database

The Uppsala conflict database (Uppsala University, 2013) focuses on cataloguing various types of conflicts and their characteristics (power, ceasefires, deaths, conflict actors, etc.) and devotes little attention to governance issues or analyzing the level of functionality of the government. Terms such as fragile state, policy, governance and stability are not prominent in their list of definitions. They mention "state" as the entity that is exercising sovereignty over a territory, "government" as the entity that has control of at least the country's capital, and quality of governance only in relation to conflict:

> The UCDP is concerned with who is controlling power in practice (de facto). We are not concerned with who is the rightful holder of the power (de jure). UCDP uses control of the capital as an indicator of the de facto government. This is not the same as saying that we are interested in whether the current government is a functional government. The government may control the capital and very little else but we still treat that party as the government. Almost by definition, if an armed conflict is occurring in a country, the government is not likely to be fully functional.

There is no definition of state fragility in their readily available primary documentation.

USAID – US Agency for International Development

USAID has long been concerned with the quality of governance in countries in which it works, but it has produced few publications comparable to the Fund for Peace and

World Bank fragility index scales. Three publically-available documents that address measurement of state fragility are (Goldstone, Haughton, Soltan, & Zinnes, 2003; USAID, 2005) and (USAID, 2006). The preface of the 2006 document states: "The objective is to identify a concise set of widely available indicators that can be used to evaluate state fragility." They describe criteria for assessing levels of state fragility, drawing largely from analyses carried out by organizations such as Transparency International, UNHCR, the World Bank, UNDP and others.

Development contractors were hired to produce fragility indicators. Excerpts from one of their reports follow.

> To assist in the analysis of fragility, USAID identifies four categories of outcomes, or domains, that are particularly salient: political, security, economic, and social. Considering each of these domains in terms of effectiveness and legitimacy produces the State Performance Outcomes Matrix (below). The overarching objective of this exercise is to identify indicators that capture the essence of each of the eight cells. (USAID 2005:2):

Table 6
USAID State Performance Outcomes Matrix

	EFFECTIVENESS	**LEGITIMACY**
POLITICAL	Well-functioning political institutions and processes that ensure accountability and timely allocation of resources to address citizen needs	Political institutions and processes that are transparent, respect societal values, and do not favor particular groups
SECURITY	Provision of military and police services that secures borders and limits crime	Military and police services that are provided equitably and without violation of civil rights
ECONOMIC	Economic institutions that provide for economic growth (including jobs), shield the economy from external shocks, and ensure adaptability to economic change	Equitable distribution of the benefits and costs of economic growth and change
SOCIAL	Provision of legal protections and social services, in particular to meet the special needs of vulnerable and minority groups	Tolerance for diversity, including opportunities for groups to practice customs, cultures, and beliefs

These were expanded to produce a set of outcome indicators:

Table 7
USAID PROPOSED OUTCOME INDICATORS

	EFFECTIVENESS	LEGITIMACY
POLITICAL	1. Quality of public service/ government effectiveness 2. Number of coups d'état in last five years 3. Government revenues, as percentage of GDP	4. Nature of political participation (absence or presence of factionalism) 5. % of population experiencing political discrimination 6. Extent of citizen participation in selecting government 7. Asylum requests, as % of population
SECURITY	8. Intensity of most severe ongoing armed conflict 9. Size of displaced population 10. Proportion of area affected by ethnic or revolutionary war	11. State use of political terror 12. Extent of state repression of citizens 13. Presence/change in support for militant groups
ECONOMIC	14. Three-year change in real GDP (PPP) per capita 15. Change in foreign investment 16. Poverty rate (% of population living on <$2 [PPP]/day) 17. Primary commodity exports/total exports 18. Three-year inflation rate	19. % of population experiencing economic discrimination 20. Corruption 21. Extent of rule of law/protection of property rights 22. Number of days to start a business
SOCIAL	23. Infant mortality rate 24. Youth literacy rate 25. Change in % of population living with HIV/AIDS 26. DPT and measles immunization rates 27. % of population with access to improved water supplies/ sanitation	28. Male/female literacy ratio 29. Male/female life expectancy ratio 30. % of GDP spent on military 31. Deviance from GDP-predicted infant mortality 32. Deviance from GDP-predicted primary school completion rate 33. Cultural and religious freedoms

The USAID documents that provided the information in this section were published in 2003, 2005 and 2006. There is no publically available documentation indicating the Agency actually implemented this proposed assessment scheme. A search of the readily available literature found no more recent USAID publications specifically focusing on defining and assessing state fragility in a manner comparable to the indexes produced annually by the World Bank and the Fund for Peace (described above). As USAID normally makes its documentation freely available on the web, it may be an indication that the agency turned its attention away from this line of analysis and there are no such documents. The reason for this apparent loss of interest in continuing to work on analyzing and indexing fragile states is unclear. Efforts to obtain more information about this work from contacts within USAID were unsuccessful.

The information presented thus far in this section describes several approaches to determining how a state's capacity is assessed, the complexity of the process, and some of the factors related to the variety of views of what constitutes a fragile state.

These assessments are more than a simple performance analysis of a country's government – there is a lot riding on them. The World Bank uses its analysis in determining the level of support recipient countries will receive: it is a high-stakes process with significant impacts on fragile state income. For example, in 2010 about 75% of the Afghan government's revenue came from the international community (Cortright, 2011), and as with its support for other "fragile situations" the Bank's assessment of Afghanistan's governance played a major role in making these funds available.

The foregoing illustrates part of the challenge in clearly specifying precisely which states are "fragile," what a "fragile state" actually is and where to focus attention to improve their performance.

A widely-accepted definition of a fragile state is provided by DFID, the UK's development agency, which asserts that its classification of fragile states "covers those where the government can not or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor." These core functions include "territorial control, safety and security, capacity to manage public resources, delivery of basic services, and the ability to protect and support the way the people sustain themselves" (DFID, 2005:7). Afghanistan has major challenges in all of these areas.

The process is not without its critics, however – several are noted next.

Critiques of the World Bank's Assessments and OECD Reports

Critiques of World Bank's Assessments

There is considerable literature critiquing the World Bank's CPIA index – three examples are provided here: by Nancy Alexander of a US-based NGO, the Heinrich Boell Foundation; an analysis by Isabel Rocha de Siqueira based on observations of World Bank operations in Timor-Leste, and from within the Bank itself, a report by its Independent Evaluation Unit.

Nancy Alexander's summary of her critique of the CPIA (Alexander, 2010) highlights the following:

- **An Unproven Premise.** There is little evidence to show that the CPIA serves its intended purpose: to help improve policies and institutional performance in order to achieve growth, poverty reduction and aid effectiveness.
- **One-size-fits-all Design.** The CPIA assumes that the same set of policies will advance aid effectiveness, poverty reduction, and growth in all countries.
- **Undercutting Democratic Practice.** By promoting one set of policies, the CPIA poses a risk to globalization and democracy because it shrinks national governments' capacity to respond to the policy preferences of their electorates.
- **Lack of Responsiveness to Africa's Unique Priorities.** The CPIA does not adequately address issues that are vital to Africa's future, including: economic vulnerability to powerful exogenous shocks; MDGs; agriculture; manufacturing; and environmental challenges (e.g., mitigation of and adaptation to climate change).
- **Double Standards: The West and the Rest.** The richest countries in the world have been unable to achieve many of the "ideal" policies specified by the CPIA. If the World Bank used the CPIA to rate the financial and economic management performance of the US and many European governments, these countries would receive the CPIA's lowest possible rating (e.g. for risk management, oversight and supervision of the financial sector; budget imbalances; and debt levels).

- **Double Standards: The IBRD vs. IDA.** The Bank treats IBRD countries differently than IDA countries in two ways. The CPIA scores of IBRD countries are not publicly disclosed or used for allocation purposes, as they are for IDA countries[15].
- **Subjective Rating Process**. The African Development Bank (AfDB) and the World Bank use the same CPIA criteria to assess the performance of the same African countries. Yet, the country ratings of the AfDB are higher than those of the Bank for most of the 16 CPIA criteria.
- **Aid Concentration.** Two-thirds of IDA's assistance to Africa goes to only six countries. … Also, assistance to fragile states is highly concentrated in a few countries – the "donor darlings."
- **Complexity and Lack of Transparency.** The IDA allocation system is complex, with eight factors that, in addition to the CPIA, determine a country's IDA allocation. …Given this complexity and the fact that the CPIA is built on confidential data, it is not possible for outsiders to verify the results. This undermines the credibility of the allocation process (ibid.: 4-5).

While the points she raises seem pertinent, one might question an assertion made early in her article which implies that the main problems faced by African countries are due to their being "innocent victims" of natural disasters and economic shocks attributed to the global economy (ibid.:4). Although these factors may indeed be linked to their troubles, she makes no mention of issues such as predatory elite capture of the institutions of state as contributing to the countries' problems, as described in works such as Collier's *Wars, Guns and Votes – Democracy in Dangerous Places* (Collier, 2009). Also, no suitable recipient could be found for three years out of six for the substantial prize awarded by the Mo Ibraham Foundation to retiring African national leaders demonstrating good governance (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2014). This speaks volumes about the nature of leaders' values and incentive systems, and indicates there may also be domestic factors as well as external shocks involved in the challenges facing fragile states.

An analysis by De Siqueira of the process used in preparing the World Bank's fragile states index, based on experience in Timor-Leste, identified several problems with the procedure that results in its annual CPIA index (De Siqueira, 2014). She asserts that the early developers of the mechanism said it was never intended to produce the index that is now widely used. The scales took on a life of their own and became an established feature of the international development field, with major impacts on donor priorities and resource allocations, which was more than its originators intended. As the numbers were used and reproduced in development bureaucracies and by populations that referred to them to try to hold their governments to account, they acquired a power of their own, which risked simplifying, supplanting and obscuring the complex social realities they were originally intended to portray.

She asks questions common in studying any statistical analysis and reporting mechanism: "how are the indicators chosen? How are data collected and by whom? Are conceptual guideposts provided for subjective assessments, and how are they

[15] IBRD (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) and IDA (International Development Association) are both parts of the Bretton Woods Institutions that provide loans and grants to developing countries. They have quite different procedures and impacts on the countries they support – issues which are beyond the scope of this study to address.

used?" (ibid: 271). This information was not readily evident, raising questions about the validity of the results. The process relies on the Bank's personnel to carry out assessments of conditions in the states they serve to contribute to the scale. Some Bank personnel work in as many as thirteen countries, and she questions their ability to accurately reflect this broad a range of conditions in their analysis, and implies that from a research science point of view the methodology is suspect.

Another critique was based on attribution problems due to the number and range of actors involved in the process – in some cases Bank staff worked with host country officials on the assessments, resulting in a merging of information and diffusion of attribution for the results that makes it impossible to clearly identify key actors, accountabilities, selection and analysis criteria or data sources.

Yet another critique of the Bank was linked to unrealistic expectations of host government analytical capacity, making demands of a "fragile nation" that it could not meet itself. In spite of having worked in Timor-Leste for over a decade with some 26 donors the Bank was incapable of producing cross-sectorial reports that it expected local officials to provide (ibid: 277).

A significant critique of the World Bank's CPIA comes from within the Bank itself, from its Independent Evaluation Unit (World Bank IEG, 2009b). Its observations and recommendations are summarized as follows:

> The content of the CPIA broadly reflects the determinants of growth and poverty reduction identified in the economics literature, but some criteria need to be revised and streamlined and one criterion added. The literature offers no evidence to justify any particular set of weights on the four clusters used for IDA allocation, or the way the criteria are clustered (such as having social sectors and environment in one cluster). The literature offers only mixed evidence regarding the relevance of the content of the CPIA for aid effectiveness broadly defined—that is, that it represents the policies and institutions important for aid to lead to growth. However, the CPIA is associated with aid effectiveness defined more narrowly—the better performance of Bank loans. But there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the most heavily weighted CPIA cluster associates better with loan performance than the other three clusters.
>
> The CPIA ratings are in general reliable and correlate well with similar indicators, but it is difficult to establish an empirical link between the CPIA and growth outcomes….
>
> IEG makes four recommendations. First, disclose the ratings for IBRD countries in the interest of accountability and transparency. Second, remove accounting for the stage of development in the rating exercise to reduce subjectivity. Third, undertake a thorough review of the adequacy of each criterion, including a review of experience and the literature, and revise as necessary, based inter alia on the findings of this evaluation. Fourth, consider not producing an overall CPIA index while continuing to produce and publish the separate CPIA components. (ibid: ix)

These recommendations are similar to those made by Nancy Alexander in her critique noted above. From the description of the 2013 Fragile States summary (above) it is difficult to determine the extent to which the Bank incorporated these 2009 IEG recommendations in subsequent years' CPIA calculations. The Bank's operations

seem to be resistant to change even when the need is identified by its own internal evaluation unit. It demands changes in the operations of recipient countries but does not make needed changes in its own functions.

Critiques of OECD Approach

OECD with its Development Advisory Committee (OECD-DAC) is one of the world's most prolific and influential producers of knowledge about development generally, and especially in regard to fragile states. It has commissioned research and produced dozens of reports – many of which are referred to elsewhere in this study – that are read by development policy and program specialists in government and non-government agencies in most major donor and aid recipient countries.

There are some, however, who question the organization's work with fragile states. For example, a commentary on the OECD approach to analysis of fragile states by Lemay-Hebert and Mathieu critiques the organization's methodology, which they say produces a relatively closed and self-perpetuating epistemic community that controls the range of discourse to support dominant donor state political interests (Lemay-Hebert & Mathieu, 2014). It limits expression of marginal views, "especially those voices affiliated with institutions and countries labeled 'fragile' by most indexes" (ibid: 246).

This approach has been the subject of considerable comment and criticism, some of which is summarized in the following section.

Critical Views of the Fragile State Concept

It is noteworthy that the assessments of state fragility by the World Bank, the Fund for Peace, OECD, DFID and others described in the previous section have all been based primarily on outsiders' views of conditions in the countries involved. These external analyses reflect a process where agents of the "developed north" analyze and pass judgment on the "underdeveloped south" and design their support for these countries on the basis of these perceptions.

There are numerous critiques of the fragile state concept, some of which are mentioned in this section. Seth Kaplan, for example, (Kaplan, 2016) criticizes the way fragility is defined in much of the development literature. He says that most of the indicators focus on symptoms (violence, corruption, poor government performance, etc.) rather than on causal factors. He includes elements such a lack of social cohesion, "defined as the quality of relationships between groups" as a causal factor. He has several similar elements in two main categories – societal and institutional – and asserts that most externally-driven remedial efforts fail because they do not address these underlying causal issues.

Some observers may have trouble with the concept of a "fragile" state, which assumes it is something that can be broken or shattered, like a glass dropped on the floor. This is far from the case, since even the most "fragile" of these states, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, South Sudan or Yemen, seem to be able to remain fairly intact as Westphalian-

type entities, even when plagued by war, poverty and other destructive forces. The international community plays a role by recognizing their boundaries, acknowledging their leadership (however unsavory its members might be), and assigning seats in the UN. Even if their machinery of government is woefully ineffective, they are entities with an existence that persists even when they are almost completely dysfunctional.

Some analysts who do not like the "fragile" label because of its negative connotation, use more positive asset-based concepts such as "resilience" (OECD, 2008a; g7+, 2013), which may be not much more useful than "fragility", since it seems also to be based on presumptions of the state as having been functional at an earlier point and bouncing back or recovering from a shock of some sort, for much of its analysis[16]. A useful alternative may be the term "persistence" – in that it highlights a society's assets and its ability to survive and continue to function at some level even in very difficult circumstances. Notwithstanding this possible alternative, for convenience purposes the term "fragile" is used in this thesis.

Critics of the deficit-based "fragile" concept assert that even in the poorest troubled countries there are often so-called informal or traditional institutions that are providing order and services to the population, strengths on which it is possible to build more effective systems of governance that are compatible with their contexts and can also be consistent with the features of a modern state. They assert that the use of the term – which focuses on weaknesses – can lead external and internal observers to overlook these often long-standing and relatively sustainable assets as they work to improve conditions in these states. They also are critical of much of the well intentioned but misguided efforts of international development agencies to strengthen governance and improve conditions in these states, often citing the lack of contextual appropriateness as a factor in these problems – see, for example, (Boege et al., 2009; g7+, 2011; Ghani, 2016). In some cases what Boege calls "hybrid political orders" merge so-called "modern' and "traditional" processes which can be used to support contextualized policy development initiatives that strengthen the state – some are in the case examples in this thesis.

To exercise agency and counter the tendency of the donor community to act on recipient countries in a controlling manner, in 2011 a number of self-proclaimed fragile states took the initiative in defining their relationships with donors and the international community (g7+, 2011). They also devised their own assessment process that they say more accurately reflects conditions in their countries and is better suited to their development needs (g7+, 2013).

This section describes the g7+ initiative, goes on to a critique of the fragile state concept itself in Call's *Fallacy of the Failed State* (Call, 2008), and concludes with an overview of the hybrid governance approach defined by Boege et al., with comments by Schmeidl, Mallett and Beall & Ngonyama (Boege et al., 2009; Schmeidl, 2009; Mallett, 2010; Beall & Ngonyama, 2009).

[16] This could be a longer discussion which is beyond the scope of this thesis to pursue.

g7+ New Deal and Fragility Spectrum

At the 2011 OECD-sponsored Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in Busan, Korea, a group of fragile states and international development agencies, called the "International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding," presented the gathering with a document, *A New Deal for engagement in fragile states* (g7+, 2011). This slim four-page paper, which was prepared by leaders of a number of self-identified fragile states with some assistance from international donors, was accepted by the Busan High Level Forum – see section 26 of the Forum's final communiqué (OECD, 2011a). In this communiqué the international community undertook to support the g7+ initiative:

> We welcome the New Deal developed by the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, including the g7+ group of fragile and conflict-affected states. Those of us who have endorsed the New Deal will pursue actions to implement it and, in doing so, will use:
> a) The Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs) – which prioritize legitimate politics, people's security, justice, economic foundations and revenues and fair services – as an important foundation to enable progress towards the MDGs to guide our work in fragile and conflict-affected states.
> b) FOCUS – a new country-led and country-owned way of engaging in fragile states.
> c) TRUST – a set of commitments to enhance transparency; manage risk to use country systems; strengthen national capacities; and improve the timeliness and predictability of aid – to achieve better results.

The Busan conference was one of a series of high level global gatherings on international development which included the 2005 conference that produced the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Commitments made by leaders at Busan have an equivalent level of international endorsement.

Determining whether these commitments actually influence donor behavior is an interesting question that is unfortunately well beyond the scope of this research project. There have been evaluations of the impact of the Paris Declaration – see, for example reports by (Stern et al., 2008) and (Wood et al., 2011) – which basically say that the global leaders' good intentions in 2005 when they signed the declaration have had only limited effect on the operations of the international development system since that time.

I have seen little evidence of meaningful donor coordination in my work in Afghanistan, Iraq or Yemen – each donor plans and executes their own development projects independently, with their national foreign policy priorities and foreign aid program procedures driving their separate designs and operating schedules. Where coordination exists it is often at the local level when field staff and project managers meet to share information in efforts to minimize duplication, overlaps and reduce gaps where possible. It is common to hear development project staff say that the Paris Declaration is a good idea but it is not put into practice at the country program or project level.

Attempts by host country officials to influence donor inputs to match domestic priorities have had limited success due in part to the complexity of the project design

process. In one example I was asked by a senior official of Afghanistan's Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) to help them secure control over an about-to-be-launched $62M USAID subnational governance project. Over two years earlier I had worked with USAID on an evaluation of this project's precursor, and saw how their staff planned the successor from within their compound in Kabul. I tracked the process through the design and Request for Proposal process, and ultimately the award of a contract to a US-based international development consulting firm. My Afghan partners said that if the US wanted to spend that amount it would be better to give it to IDLG as they could make better use of it than by running it through an expensive high-overhead contractor. I agreed with them, but as I was working with the German development agency GIZ when I received the request, I said I could do little to help them with this initiative. I knew that the funds were already committed to be spent in accordance with USAID's rather rigid contracting provisions, and also that as an agent of the German government I needed to stay friends with the Americans and could not be part of a struggle for control in the name of responsive donor coordination to support locally driven programming. I was unable to operate in the spirit of the Paris Declaration.

It is possible that the Busan Declaration may have a similar fate, but it might not be a useless exercise – the notion of "talking the talk" as a precursor to actually "*walking* the talk" may apply here. It is therefore instructive to analyze such efforts in the context of a steadily evolving understanding of how international development works. The N*ew Deal* and its associated efforts may be an example of a theme highlighted decades ago in Bjorn Hettne's 1982 analysis of the evolution of development theory (Hettne, 1982), in which he describes the *indigenization of development theory* as an emerging feature of the international development field at the time. This is a process whereby the conceptualization, design and operation of international development initiatives steadily shift from a Eurocentric model to new approaches that are influenced by increasingly capable analysts and agents who are rooted in the contexts in which development work takes place.

The *New Deal* document's opening paragraph describes the situation as its authors saw it:

> The current ways of working in fragile states need serious improvement. Despite the significant investment and the commitments of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), results and value for money have been modest. Transitioning out of fragility is long, political work that requires country leadership and ownership. Processes of political dialogue have often failed due to lack of trust, inclusiveness, and leadership. International partners can often bypass national interests and actors, providing aid in overly technocratic ways that underestimate the importance of harmonizing with the national and local context, and support short-term results at the expense of medium- to long-term sustainable results brought about by building capacity and systems. A New Deal for engagement in fragile states is necessary.

The document continues to say that "a new development architecture and new ways of working better tailored to the situation and challenges of fragile contexts are necessary to build peaceful states and societies." The plan has the following three main components:

PSGs: The document describes five Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs):

- ***Legitimate Politics*** – Foster inclusive political settlements and conflict resolution
- ***Security*** – Establish and strengthen people's security
- ***Justice*** – Address injustices and increase people's access to justice
- ***Economic Foundations*** – Generate employment and improve livelihoods
- ***Resources & Services*** – Manage revenue and build capacity for accountable and fair service delivery

Focus: The group's plan has a focus as part of a "country-led one vision and one plan, a country compact to implement the plan, and using the PSGs to monitor progress and support inclusive and participatory political dialogue" involving an engaged public and civil society to ensure accountability. This focus will consist of:

- ***Fragility Assessments,*** including a "fragility spectrum"
- ***One vision, one plan*** – a national strategy to transition out of fragility
- A ***Compact*** that will ensure harmonization and donor coordination, reduce duplication, fragmentation and programme proliferation
- ***Use the PSGs*** to monitor progress, and
- ***Support*** political dialogue and leadership – for credible and inclusive political dialogue

Trust: the group commits to build mutual trust by providing aid and managing resources more effectively and aligning resources for results. In so doing they agree to "enhance transparency, risk management to use country systems, strengthen national capacities and timeliness of aid, improving the speed and predictability of funding to achieve better results." (New Deal op.cit. 1-3 – emphasis in original).

The group agreed to work together to pilot the initiative in "self-nominating countries, including Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Timor Leste, and with self-nominating donor partners on those countries" (ibid 4).

The 2011 *New Deal* document was followed in 2013 by a more detailed report describing a "Fragility Spectrum" (g7+, 2013), which approaches the state fragility issue in a manner that is quite different than that of the World Bank, OECD and other international organizations. The material in the rest of this section is from this 2013 *Fragility Spectrum* document.

The opening paragraph of the *Note on the Fragility Spectrum* document succinctly states the group's purpose: "The main objective of the g7+ is to share experiences and learn from one another, and to advocate for reforms to the way the international community engages in conflict-affected states." The report describes the "rationale and benefits of a 'spectrum approach' to fragility, and the purpose and use of country-specific fragility spectrums (sic) and indicators (developed through fragility assessments)." It defines fragility as follows:

> A state of fragility can be understood as a period of time during nationhood when sustainable socio-economic development requires greater emphasis on complementary peacebuilding and statebuilding activities such as building inclusive political settlements, security, justice, jobs, good management of resources, and accountable and fair service delivery.

This definition was chosen because it captures the g7+ nations' diverse experiences with state fragility, and covers the key areas where their countries need to be strengthened, but does not prescribe what weaknesses in those areas look like.

The document goes on to discuss the challenge with blanket definitions, stating that each country has its unique combination of fragility-related factors:

> More specific definitions of fragility can be developed at the country level, to capture the ways in which fragility manifests differently in different contexts. Indeed, in many countries, the term 'fragility' is itself highly controversial, and many prefer to focus on 'resilience' as the positive inverse of fragility. Given this, the g7+ definition of fragility is intended as a marker to make clear how we perceive the challenges we face, but is not a binding prescription.

The g7+ states contrasted the negative term "fragility" with "resilience" – a positive characteristic that is the end-point towards which fragile states are working. They define it as follows:

> Resilience refers to the ability of social institutions to absorb and adapt to the internal and external shocks and setbacks they are likely to face. Fragility thus implies that the consolidation of nationhood, and the safety, security and well being of the citizens are at risk of a relapse into crisis or violent conflict. This risk is gradually reduced as the institutions develop the necessary ability to cope with the type of threats they are exposed to.

The group criticized challenges they want to avoid in contemporary approaches to fragility:

> A key concern of the g7+ is the measurement and categorization of fragile states according to donor monitoring frameworks, which try to assess the nature of their situations with a standard yardstick. Furthermore, difficulties around data collection in fragile states mean donors often rely on out of date statistics. Misrepresentations can result, which fail to provide an accurate picture of the progress that states are making. There is also an issue of creating overly ambitious international targets and goals for fragile states that do not take into account the low base from which fragile states are starting, and thus 'set countries up to fail' against these measures. Finally, indicators determined by international actors do not draw on the true experts on fragility – the citizens of fragile states themselves.

They see these measures as contributing to pubic disillusionment and to problems with state-society relations and negative public perceptions of state effectiveness. They prefer to measure small steps in the right direction that help 'set countries up to succeed' and strengthen confidence and trust between citizens and the government.

They say there is a need for monitoring frameworks that are more consistent with the realities of fragile contexts and take account of the state of fragility a country is

experiencing. They assert that fragile states themselves are in the best position to develop these frameworks due to their familiarity with their own strengths and weaknesses. It is a bottom-up approach that avoids the "ideal type" conditions developed by experts that often do not reflect realities in fragile states.

The intent of the fragility spectrum, which was developed by fragile states themselves, is to put these states – their governments and civil society – in the drivers' seat in defining what fragility looks like and how to move toward the next stage of resilience.

In 2012, after considerable discussion and experimentation, it was decided that the best way to generate descriptions of the various stages of fragility was to conduct pilot assessments at the country level – blank fragility spectrum tables (see table 13) would be filled in providing content in a bottom-up rather than a top-down manner. Five g7+ members participated: DRC, Liberia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Timor-Leste. They were to provide descriptions of what fragility looked like that were country-owned and country-led and rooted in their own contexts.

Table 8
Sample Blank Country-Specific Fragility Spectrum Table

	Stage 1 Crisis	Stage 2 Rebuilding and Reform	Stage 3 Transition	Stage 4 Transformation	Stage 5 Resilience	Indicators to measure progress
PSG1 Inclusive Politics	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country Indicators
PSG 2 Security	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country Indicators
PSG 3 Justice	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country Indicators
PSG 4 Economic Foundations	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country Indicators
PSG 5 Revenues & Services	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country description	Country Indicators

Participating countries were helped to fill out their own fragility spectrum tables. In reality, they usually provided information in only three of the five stages: 1) the crisis stage; 2) the country's current condition; and 3) what they thought the 'resilience' stage would look like.

This process was further refined in a meeting in 2013, and the indicators identified by the five countries were consolidated into a long list of approximately 300 indicators. The group recognized that it would be difficult to generalize from a small sample of only five countries, and they intend to help more countries prepare their own fragility spectrum tables, which will be integrated in a manner that makes it possible to better understand the similarities and differences across fragile states. This process was intended to provide information that countries can use to more precisely understand and address specific factors to address to strengthen resilience in their systems.

The spectrum results and indicators are seen as information sharing tools and not as prescriptive measures in the fragility assessment process. The group sees there is a

risk that this qualitative instrument may be seen by international partners as a quantitative tool. The group says it is not intended to rank countries at a particular level – the strength of the process is that it assesses the different dimensions and illustrates linkages among them. These benefits would get lost if the process were reduced to a numerical ranking exercise. The process is intended to help moderate the expectations of development partners in understanding what realistic progress looks like as countries progress from fragility toward resilience.

The consolidated fragility spectrum is intended to be a resource, not a blueprint, since the way any particular country experiences a transition from one phase to the next will be unique to that context. The approach is intended to help each country think in terms of stages and of matching country-specific indicators to the stage in which it finds itself.

The spectrum process acknowledges that these transitions may not be linear – there may be relapses and stages may not necessarily be sequential, and countries may be trapped at a particular stage for a long time. The spectrum approach is intended to be a way to visualize these stages, not as an instrument to penalize or punish countries for relapses and lack of progress for some time.

The stages of fragility were described as follows:

- **Stage 1: Crisis** – A situation of crisis can refer to the period where there is acute instability in a country, with increased levels of violent conflict, the potential for a lapse into more generalized violent conflict, or where there has been a natural or manmade disaster.
- **Stage 2: Rebuild and Reform** – During this phase, renewed efforts towards political dialogue to resolve political differences may be in evidence. However, there is often inequitable power sharing between groups. Some progress can be seen on disarmament processes, but security issues remain a challenge for the country's stability.
- **Stage 3: Transition** – This stage is often associated with the signature of agreements and an overall situation of stability. There is more space for formal dialogue between parties, which leads to the creation of institutions to support the dialogue process, including the existence of electoral institutions.
- **Stage 4: Transformation** – In the transformation stage, a country may have increased resilience within society, and conflicts are more often resolved peacefully. There is often a hosting of credible, non-violent and democratic political processes. Civil society begins to play an active role in political and societal debates, and increasingly good governance principles are adhered to. However, in this period there may also be a lack of public understanding of good governance principles.
- **Stage 5: Resilience** – Resilience can be understood as the capacity of a society to deal with its challenges and to absorb shocks without relapsing into crisis. Every stage in the Fragility Spectrum represents growing resilience, but at this stage the resilience of the society has been institutionalized in its social customs, cultural practices, social contract and formal state institutions to the degree that a relapse into crisis is so unlikely that the country in question can no longer meaningfully be considered to be a post-conflict country.

This *Fragility Spectrum* process is seen as providing country-led and country-owned assessments of their specific progress along the trajectory from fragility toward resilience. It is quite different from the mechanisms used by the World Bank, the

Fund for Peace, OECD and others described earlier, in that it is a self-assessment process rather than an external view of its conditions, uses different categories of analysis, and is carried out by people who have intimate knowledge of the current conditions of their own societies. The extent to which the vested interests that are present in any society may influence these assessments was not discussed in the g7+ documents, so the accuracy and validity of results is uncertain.

This type of uncertainty may also apply to the World Bank and Fund for Peace external assessments – however, the process of host country ownership of the analysis process is likely to have considerable impact on the participants and acceptance of its results by key actors in the societies involved. Its intent is to put fragile states in the driver's seat, which moves toward a more collaborative and contextually-appropriate relationship than one based on external assessments of a country's circumstances.

It could be instructive to compare the results from the five-state pilot internal assessment to the external analyses produced by the World Bank, Fund for Peace and OECD. Unfortunately, the sort of information required for a meaningful comparison was not available when this report was written. It is doubtful that it will be available, since as noted earlier, the purpose is not to provide a rating or ranking scale similar to those used by the Bank or the Fund for Peace.

A progress report published by the g7+ International Dialogue group in June, 2014 indicated that while some progress was being made in implementing the *New Deal* initiative, there were disappointing results on both sides – in the behavior of recipient countries and also in international donor states and agencies (International Dialogue Secretariat, 2014).

The report highlights achievements and challenges:

- Results of surveys conducted by participating governments were taking considerable effort to analyze in part due to disaggregated data – what was clear was that the surveys had not yet yielded necessary information from partners, particularly quantitatively.
- Since it was launched at the Busan Conference in 2011 the New Deal helped improve consultation among government officials, donors, and civil society at the global and country level – it helped make aid more transparent and supportive of peacebuilding and statebuilding goals and provided a framework for integrating donor financing.
- Progress on the ground needs to intensify – requiring leadership in both the g7+ countries and partners in what is essentially a political exercise. The process needs to move beyond the ministries of planning or finance and bilateral aid agencies, engage all parts of government, and be more institutionalized in aid agencies to improve linkages between donor headquarters policy and their field operations.
- All New Deal partners need to put the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs) at the centre of their dialogue, planning, monitoring and therefore mutual accountability – this has not yet been the case.
- Governments need to collaborate with other national stakeholders (civil society organizations, others) to forge a consensus on a few key priorities to achieve over the short term.

In summary, the report states that the "New Deal has yet to influence the way the international community deals with violent crises. Partners need to work together to link emergency operations to efforts on creating a feasible political settlement, while laying down the groundwork for a new financing architecture and the building blocks of governance. The New Deal's potential is still untapped." (ibid 2-4).

The report's mention of problems extending the New Deal framework beyond a limited circle within the government and a few aid agencies is consistent with my observations of government operations in Afghanistan. Since the Busan Conference in 2011 I have been involved in numerous discussions with representatives of major aid organizations, including participation in donor coordination meetings, and with senior government officials who one might expect to have some familiarity with the New Deal, the PSGs and other elements of the initiative. Even though the June 2014 progress report devotes several pages to Afghanistan's progress with initiatives that are consistent with the New Deal, the g7+ documentation's concepts and vocabulary have not been evident in my many contacts with officials active in the country's development scene. Nor were the PSGs mentioned in the November, 2014 Afghan Government submission to the donors' conference in London that December. They also were not mentioned in the London conference's final communiqué (GIRoA, 2014a; GIRoA, 2014b) nor in its presentation to the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) the following September (GIROA, 2015a). The PSGs also were not overtly mentioned in President Ghani's opening speech to the g7+ 4th Ministerial Meeting in Kabul in March, 2016, although the core concepts in previous g7+ documentation were forcefully articulated in the speech (Ghani, 2016). It remains to be seen whether they are in Afghanistan's new national development plan that was beginning to be drafted at about the same time.

This indicates that there are many layers and modes of activity in the international development field, even within one country, and although there may be compatible activities in some of these various sectors, what may be significant and well-known in one part of a system may not be current knowledge and practice in others. This diversity of agendas among the many actors engaged in nation building contributes to the challenges of aligning such efforts into a coherent, coordinated program.

The Fallacy of the Failed State & Beyond the Failed State

While the g7+ group seemed content to work with the "fragile state" concept, albeit in a manner quite different than the World Bank and other international agencies, there are some who question the utility of the concept itself. One of these is Charles Call of the US Institute for Peace, who has written extensively on what he considers to be problems with the failed state concept – see (Call, 2008; Call, 2010).

While he readily acknowledges there are states that are unstable and have serious problems, he criticizes the concept primarily because he thinks it merges states with a great diversity of conditions together into one category, termed failed, fragile, troubled, etc. He criticizes the Fund for Peace Index, for example, because it labels states such as Colombia and DRC as fragile, mainly due to both experiencing armed conflict, and does not account for the great differences in the capacities of their

respective central governments. He says the concept is so generalized that it is of limited utility as an analytical tool, and that more focused categorizations are necessary to properly understand and compare the varied conditions of troubled states.

In his 2010 paper he identifies several alternative categories of analysis:

- A *capacity gap* exists where states are incapable of delivering – or ensuring and regulating the delivery by non-state entities – of minimal public goods and services to the population;
- A *security gap* exists where states do not provide minimal security in the face of organized armed groups;
- A *legitimacy gap* exists within a state when a significant portion of its political elites and the broader population reject how the state is exercising power and the accumulation and distribution of wealth;
- *Territorial variation* of these gaps can occur in some states – the extent of the territory affected by a gap can vary. Security gaps, as for example in the Philippines, can be confined to only a part of the country, while in others they can cover the entire territory (ibid 306-308).

Near the end of the paper he acknowledges the limits of the utility of his argument, saying these are "blunt categories" that "suffer from many of the deficiencies of the failed state concept" in that they "impose an external lens on culturally-specific institutions" and aggregate even more discrete characteristics (ibid 316).

One of the issues he includes in his analysis is the need to consider the various contexts of the states being analyzed, a theme which is consistent with the central focus of this research.

In so doing, however, he says little about the agency of recipient country governments – the extent to which they take initiative in the development process, for better or worse. Most of his comments address external interveners' issues, and do not reflect how host country actors participate in the interaction with international development agents or their roles in the assessment process and subsequent interventions in their government's operations. This is quite different than the g7+ *Fragility Spectrum* approach described above.

Also, as noted in the description of the World Bank and Fund for Peace fragility indices above, the diagnostic data collection process does indeed consider a great variety of factors in each state being analyzed. Although this information is compiled, aggregated and ultimately presented as a number on a scale which tends to mask these variations, when it comes to designing and implementing development interventions, there usually is some effort to relate these to local circumstances. The many fragile state development projects I have worked on or evaluated in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen and elsewhere, for example, attempted – with varying degrees of effectiveness – to relate their interventions to the contexts in which they were operating, and tried to strengthen local institutions with their projects.

While Call's critique may well apply in cases where the fragile state concept is used in a blanket way to view multiple countries through a single homogenizing analytical lens, when it comes to designing and implementing interventions in these countries

local conditions usually do have some influence on how initiatives are planned and carried out. His critique does not adequately address this aspect of international development practice, and the picture is not as black-and-white as he seems to think.

Hybrid Political Orders – Not Fragile States

While Call questions the usefulness of the fragile state concept mainly on the basis of its lack of differentiation and analytical precision for research and programming purposes, there are other authors who question the appropriateness of the concept based on their understanding of how many so-called fragile states actually function. These perspectives are summarized in this section.

In their seminal article, *Hybrid Political Orders, not Fragile States,* Boege, Brown and Clements draw from their considerable experience in the South Pacific and elsewhere to describe the operation of traditional or non-state actors and their modes of decision-making, organization and administration, and the interaction of these systems with the institutions of the modern Westphalian-Weberian state (Boege et al., 2009).

In a response to the article by Boege et al, Susanne Schmeidl poses a few questions about the international community's nation building strategies in light of her experience with peacebuilding in Afghanistan in the years following the ouster of the Taliban in 2001 (Schmeidl, 2009). A review of her comments follows a summary of the hybrid political order approach described by Boege et al.

This is followed by two more comments on the hybrid political orders concept, by Richard Mallett (Mallett, 2010), who discusses Mozambique, and Jo Beall with Mduduzi Ngonyama (Beall & Ngonyama, 2009). The latter two draw from experience with the interaction of state and traditional systems in South Africa.

The article by Boege et al begins with a critique of contemporary approaches to nation building in fragile states and suggests an alternative:

> The concept of state fragility that has gained prominence within the development and security agenda focuses very much on deficiencies and shortcomings of governance in so-called fragile states. In contrast, the concept of hybrid political order takes a more positive outlook by focusing on the strength and resilience of sociopolitical formations that are present on the ground, that work, and that provide public goods for people and communities…Instead of assuming that the complete adoption of Western state models is the most appropriate avenue for conflict prevention, security, development and good governance, we should focus more attention on models of governance that draw on the strengths of social order and resilience embedded in community life of the societies in question and work with the grain of actually existing institutions on the ground (ibid 13-14).

The authors then go on to highlight a number of key issues in their hybrid approach to nation building in fragile states, which can be summarized as follows:

- State fragility is seen by most western development institutions and aid agencies as contributing to problems locally and internationally – this is usually attributed to weaknesses in their governments' institutions.
- Most so called fragile states have poorly performing OECD-Weberian type governments, and are assessed using a deficit-based analysis when compared to western industrialized states.
- Most states in the global south have few of the characteristics of OECD states: they have relatively recently emerged from the colonial era, many are poor, and government institutions such as police and justice systems often do not operate effectively throughout the country, particularly in rural areas.
- Many so-called fragile states have traditional non-state systems and approaches that provide security, order and social goods – these should be seen as assets rather than impediments to development.
- Most development interventions overlook these non-state traditional systems; some see them as spoilers in the development process.
- Rather than seeing traditional systems as impediments to development they should be better understood and regarded as resilience-related assets that can be incorporated in hybrid modes of governance – merged with state functions into different and genuine modes of governance that have their own logics that do not operate in isolation from each other.
- There is a two-way influence: while non-state systems have been impacted and changed by the state and globalization, government institutions have been infiltrated by these traditional systems – they can permeate each other and influence each others' systems.
- There can be negative or positive interactions between these two systems – neopatrimonialism, for example, can interfere with state operations, but it can also enhance the performance of the state by engaging influential actors in government.
- Where the state is unable or unwilling to provide security, non-state actors may do so, negatively effecting the state's monopoly on the legitimate means of violence: government agencies need to learn how to work with non-state actors in these situations.
- Traditional communities often have their own justice mechanisms – the state needs to learn how to work with these to draw on their strengths and also introduce globally accepted principles such as human rights and gender equity.
- Customary leadership can be arbitrary and self serving, but can also be effective and seen as legitimate by their communities.
- Some traditional forms of governance can be effective, participatory and consultative, and responsive to their communities' needs.
- Traditional modes of governance can be inclusive and consensus-based; the introduction of western democratic competitive electoral processes can promote instability and weaken the social fabric.
- In many traditional societies informal systems provide social services and act as a social safety net, especially in poorer states with few resources and limited institutional capacity.

The article concludes with a comment that in working with fragile states, engaging with communities and non-state traditional institutions is as important as working with the agencies of the central government. Recognition of the hybridity of the political order in these states should be an integral part of any efforts that aims at peacebuilding, development, and state-building. The article's closing paragraph clearly defines a hybrid political order, and makes a recommendation for a contextually-appropriate approach to institutional development in fragile states:

> The best outcome of such a novel approach to state formation, based on positive mutual accommodation, would be that new forms of governance emerge: combining state institutions, customary institutions, and new elements of citizenship and civil society in networks of governance that are not introduced from the outside, but embedded in the social structures on the ground (ibid 20).

This closing recommendation is consistent with the overall purpose of this research project.

Response to Boege et al

Susanne Schmeidl's response to the article by Boege et al was drawn largely from her experience with peacebuilding activities in Afghanistan between 2003 and 2009 (Schmeidl, 2009), and her study of the work of a number of other analysts. While she is generally in agreement with the hybrid model, she has considerable difficulty with the top-down statebuilding approach she observed being implemented in Afghanistan, and also with some aspects of the hybrid model.

For most of its history, she asserts, the Afghan state was essentially confined to Kabul and a few other large cities, and the vast rural areas in between were controlled by traditional power holders: "an 'infestation' of what Boege et al. call hybrid political orders accompanied by a mismatch between *de jure* and *de facto* state power…the latter being exercised by localized strongmen." (ibid 68). In so doing she highlighted the difficulty in identifying which parts of the traditional system should be incorporated in the functions of a hybridized state – not all are benign.

She also questioned one of the premises of the international approach to fragile states, which implies that it is engaged in rebuilding institutions that had once been moderately effective. She says this approach "begs the question how the modern state in Afghanistan can be considered to be failing if historically it never really existed outside the country's cities to begin with" (ibid 68).

She wonders if "the source of state failure does not lie within the states (or societies) themselves, but rather in the western-centric Weberian ideal-type *model* of a state, which hardly exists outside the west (or more narrowly the OECD region) but which the international community nevertheless tries to sell to the Global South with a 'prêt-a-porter' mentality" (ibid 69). She called these efforts a "MacDonaldization" of statebuilding, which used a 'fast-food' approach to accomplish what took centuries to establish in the industrialized west.

She was specially critical of Lakhdar Brahimi, the head of the UN mission, for his rush (under intense external pressure) to draft a constitution (2002), conduct presidential elections (2004), and parliamentary elections (2005). She reports that he

apparently later admitted the process was far too rushed and better outcomes would have been seen if they had taken more time to implement these measures.

Her concerns are consistent with later critiques of the concept of "government in a box" that was promoted by US Ambassador Eikenberry in stabilization-related efforts to quickly set up civil service operations in districts cleared by the military. While this USAID *District Delivery Program* showed some positive results in its few years of operation, it was an externally-conceived and unsustainable approach that overlooked key features of its context and indicated how little a former military man and his colleagues understood about the complex business of nation-building in a fragile conflict-affected state (Tamas & Dunn, 2012).

She questions the suitability of the model selected for the Afghan state, which is based on the US presidential system, and the creation of what soon became one of the most highly centralized states in the world, when its diversity would have been better served by a parliamentary system with a more distributed federal structure.

The pattern seemed to her as being similar to the misguided approach seen earlier in statebuilding in East Timor, indicating the international community missed opportunities to learn from its mistakes, contributing to troubled security situations in both countries. These mistakes included "ignoring the existence and functioning of 'traditional' governance institutions and assuming that state-building could start from scratch (only because the Taliban system had been toppled)" (ibid 70). The security problems in both countries were linked to what was seen an antagonistic relationship between democracy and local culture, with democratic processes being questioned by the people because, among other things, it permitted warlords to be elected to parliament. Furthermore, she said that the failing state which the international community propped up was not seen as inherently Afghan, contributing to a resurgence of customary practices that had been suppressed by both the communists and the Taliban. For example, some 80 to 90 percent of all disputes were being resolved through informal mechanisms rather than institutions of state[17].

Schmeidl says she is in general agreement with Boege et al, but worries that the hybrid approach might become a fad, with the pendulum swinging from complete modernization to an uncritical embrace of all things "traditional" – both extremes can be problematic. There also is a concern that the hybrid approach could legitimize warlords and put them in the drivers' seat – an undesirable situation. Before the war tribal leaders gained their influence through strength of character and being supported by communities, but these tribal structures were subsequently damaged and fragmented, and their leaders were steadily replaced by others who gained influence through the power of the gun. These factors place limits on the ability to rebuild the society based on traditional systems.

The Bonn agreement following the ouster of the Taliban in 2001 set out a statebuilding process that relied on strongmen who distributed ministries as war

[17] While this may be accurate, in her analysis she does not address the limited capacity and corruption in the formal justice system as a contributing factor, which has been well documented by others. See, for example, (Katzman, 2014; Nijat, 2014b; Tamas & Austin, 2013).

bounty to different factions, starting a "big tent' approach to government which "inadvertently endorsed hybrid political orders that most ordinary Afghans would have opposed." The statebuilding strategy failed to "systematically engage subnational institutions and bring them back under the authority of the central government, creating an impasse. A vicious circle thus began, where a weak central state relied on co-opting *de facto* power holders to run its affairs in the provinces (largely without checks and balances or any reprimand for human rights violations), allowing these power holders access to development resources that in turn increased their control and status." She goes on to say that the strategy of incorporating warlords in government turned out to be wrong. "In the end, warlords and strongmen seem to have hijacked the international agenda for their own purposes, rendering the embryonic central state powerless" (ibid 72).

Her comments are consistent with conversations I had with Afghan colleagues when I was working with the civil service commission in Kabul in 2005-06. The seemingly well-structured Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) was set up shortly after the Bonn conference to promote merit-based recruitment and increase the capacity of the pubic service. It had begun to work relatively well until its procedures began to interfere with influential leaders' desires to place their cronies in positions that would provide access to contracts and other benefits. At that point (about 2005) the leadership was replaced by a new Chairman (a former warlord) who my colleagues said routinely intervened in selection processes to place his people in positions of influence. I asked the director of the unit in which I was working why the President put the Chairman in that position and did not remove him in accordance with multiple requests from Afghans and the international community to do so because of his flagrant abuse of his position. His response was that the Chairman had sixty friends in Parliament who would make life very difficult for the President if he did – and he chose not to challenge the group and face that threat (Civil Service Training Unit Director, 2005). This is an example of the observation by Boege et al (above) that in hybrid arrangements the formal and informal systems can interpenetrate and influence each other, for better or worse – in this case the latter.

This type of situation raises the question of society's influence over the operations of the institutions of state. Schmeidl says that civil society can take that role *if* it is robust and is permitted to do so by the state. In Afghanistan, civil society organizations were seen as a threat to the prevailing order and often were muzzled by the authorities[18].

In her conclusion, Schmeidl says that, "By ignoring local realities, state-builders in Afghanistan (and elsewhere) are setting themselves up for failure, not only due to unrealistic expectations but also due to models that were never likely to succeed in the first place… However, international actors need to understand that research is crucial for understanding how best to support hybrid state-building, as it would be unwise to uncritically shift from one extreme to the other" (ibid 75). She continues with a comment that the incorporation of hybrid elements in Afghanistan resulted in

[18] Her work reflects the situation during the Karzai regime in power at the time. The next government's 2014 London Conference presentation indicates a more collaborative relationship with civil society organizations.

warlords and others with vested interests capturing the institutions of state and willfully keeping the government weak so they could manipulate the system for their own benefit. Hybridity does not always operate in an ethical manner.

Schmeidl's analysis is instructive, but it misses at least one key point. She seems to presume that external actors – members of the donor community – could exert significant influence on the Afghan state. This was not the case: ultimately, as a sovereign state the Afghan government did what it wished with its institutions. The modern state merit-based recruitment systems that the international community introduced in the civil service commission in an attempt to limit patronage appointments were not able to withstand the undermining effects of traditional networks which sabotaged their best efforts and contributed to Afghanistan's slide to the bottom of Transparency International's corruption index (Transparency International, 2012).

A glaring example was the Karzai government's lack of effort to prosecute the well-known perpetrators of the $900M Kabul Bank embezzlement scandal (Filkins, 2011). It was relatively impervious to donor attempts to improve its governance practices, but was happy to take the international community's money, and the international community seemed powerless to do anything but to knowingly go along with this.

The foregoing analysis indicates that leadership values and ethics are key elements in effective hybrid governance – factors that have not been adequately addressed in the otherwise useful model defined by Boege et al. The problems in Afghanistan that Schmeidl identified in her response to Boege et al's article were rooted in this dimension of governance.

Also, the "country leadership and ownership" called for by the authors of the g7+ *New Deal* documents cited earlier do not always produce effective governments. An example (discussed earlier) is the inability to find suitable recipients in three of the past six years for the Mo Ibrahim Fund's Prize for Achievement in African Leadership (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2014). The fact this prize of $1M and $200,000 a year for life which is awarded annually to a retiring head of state who demonstrated good governance has not been sufficient to produce the appropriate behaviors, indicates the relative strength of the incentive structures involved. It appears that more than a few leaders feel that improving governance and reducing fragility simply does not pay.

In his *Beyond Failed States and Ungoverned Spaces: Hybrid Political Orders in the Post-Conflict Landscape,* Richard Mallet (2013) elaborates on issues with the hybrid governance model. He questions the dualistic organizing concepts in the field ("formal/informal; state/non-state; traditional/modern; local/western; legitimate/illegitimate") and echoes Call's comments noted earlier on the lack of adequate research in the area and its negative consequences for policy implementation in such states (ibid 65).

His paper contributes to a growing body of literature on the concept by using a hybrid political order approach to analyze post-conflict political and institutional arrangements in Mozambique. It explores whether the concept does in fact enrich our understanding of post-conflict governance mechanisms and contemporary

peacebuilding strategies, and indicates that an alternative conceptualization of the so-called failed state is called for.

An example is the focus on the concept of "traditional" practices which seems to be thought of as synonymous with developing countries – as opposed to "modern" institutions of the global north. These OECD-type states are as infused with traditional practices as any society in the global south – the institution of the royalty in the UK is but one of many. He also echoes Schmeidl's comment that the failed state framework seems to presume that the countries involved have descended from a previous higher level of functionality, when in many cases they were never fully functioning states as known in the "developed" world.

These "collapsed" states are expected to rise again in a Weberian-Westphalian democratic model, quickly establishing parliaments, elections and bureaucracies that are similar to structures that took centuries to evolve in the west. However, the international community's efforts to implant *organizations* modeled on western systems overlook the organic nature of *institutions* that are rooted in the history of the countries involved[19]. He states that "organizations cannot simply be replicated from one context to another and expected to function as planned; they are mediated and shaped by a multiplicity of institutions within a given society, and as such take on locally contingent forms" (ibid 72).

He continues with an exploration of the concept of "ungoverned space" which is of concern to many in the security community – they are considered a source of threats to other countries, lawless regions where anything goes. While it may well be the case that a region is not under control of a fully functioning central state, it does not necessarily follow that they lack some form of governance:

> The not-so-tacit implication is that by lacking effective forms of government control, these spaces constitute not just a (threat)… to homeland security and the global borderland, but ahistorical entities devoid of their own politics. However, in such situations when effective state control is not being exercised, does it necessarily translate that the area in question is ungoverned per se? The reality is rather that there are often a number of competing governance mechanisms and localized forms of authority, which might even be connected to the state through complex means. Further, it is entirely possible that, particularly in fragile post-conflict countries, certain localized forms of governance might be more effective at administering an area of territory and enforcing rules than a central state authority. In other words, the notion of any given 'space' being truly ungoverned is both problematic and unlikely. (ibid 74)

He goes on to say that the hybrid state concept challenges dominant understandings of political community, and recognizes "so-called ungoverned space as intrinsically political space…a rejection of narrow models of political community… reinforcing the concept of the state in post-conflict landscapes, … recognizing both the existence of and political functions associated with other actors and institutions." This approach to governance places emphasis on taking note of what actually exists – "…looking at what *is* there, rather than identifying (and subsequently inserting) what

[19] The distinction between organizations and institutions is described more fully in the section on institutional design theory later in this thesis.

is *not"* and recognizing the legitimacy and viability of alternate forms of governance (ibid 76).

In these situations alternate forms of governance may co-exist with varying degrees of conflict and compatibility, with different overlapping rule systems that can blur the distinction between state and non-state actors. These multiple systems can operate at different levels (local, district or provincial, etc.) and have connections which the hybrid approach to political orders reveal and build on in an iterative way to produce adaptive and contextually-compatible institutions that provide governance in a given territory.

The government in South Africa provides numerous examples of these overlapping and co-existing systems, some of which are more controversial and beneficial than others. In an analysis of development in the Greater Durban area, Jo Beall and Mduduzi Ngonyama describe how astute leadership of both the official government and tribal leaders used the collaboration of their respective institutions to defuse violent conflict and improve conditions in their region (Beall & Ngonyama, 2009).

In one situation where what was described as a shady land deal with a Dubai-based developer was being proposed by self-seeking formal authorities, the traditional leadership system acted as a brake on the process and prevented the deal from going through (ibid 23). The two sets of institutions can act as checks and balances on each other – this can be a positive relationship.

On the other hand, a relationship between the state and traditional authorities also made it possible for the apartheid regime to function – the system of separate development and divided governance "depended on the compliance and acquiescence of traditional authorities." This political arrangement was dismantled with the end of the apartheid regime and the victory of the ANC.

The lesson drawn from the South African experience with hybrid political orders is that they are subject to sometimes significant adjustment in response to changing conditions in the society: "*no* political pact howsoever *inclusive* it may be, is ever carved in stone… as new problems and issues are catapulted onto the political horizon, the political pact *will* have to be renegotiated in order to lay down new rules of the game" (ibid 26, emphasis in original).

In their conclusion the authors highlight the complexity, challenges and benefits of the South African experience with hybrid political orders, showing that both sets of institutions changed to enable the country to move forward:

> The accommodation of indigenous institutions and customary authority gave rise to trade-offs both in relation to issues of principle – such as upholding or not the basic tenets of liberal democracy – as well as operational issues – such as having to diverge from tried and tested development principles … in the interests of political expediency…
>
> Within a transitional political context and under conditions of considerable fragility, traditional and other leaders … and the coalitions of which they were a part became a key factor in determining how indigenous institutions evolved and articulated with a plural institutional landscape to accommodate a hybrid political order (ibid 27).

This example highlights some of the complex factors to consider in seeking solutions to working with so-called fragile states – there can be solutions as well as problems when considering hybridity-related strategies to address governance issues in these countries.

To sum up: the term "fragile state" is used in this study for convenience to identify states that have been identified by the UN, OECD, the World Bank, and others, such as Transparency International (Transparency International, 2012), as having weak or poorly-performing governments. Many of these analyses overlook causal factors and the strengths in so-called traditional systems that provide order and public goods in these countries – assets on which to build.

The study does not engage in the debate on the appropriateness of the "fragility" term, nor does it fully explore the diversity and nature of the various analyses of state fragility. The information presented here by the World Bank, the Fund for Peace and OECD and others is sufficient to indicate the meaning of the concept, the complexity of carrying out such assessments, and to identify a variety of factors used to determine components of fragility that are of interest to this study.

This is sufficient to highlight some of the main features of the fragile states literature. The next section is a summary of relevant parts of the extensive institutional development literature, followed by a section on policy implementation.

2.3. Institutional Development and Context

As this research explores factors related to contextually-appropriate institutional development in fragile states, it is useful to provide a summary of relevant parts of the institutional development literature, which will be drawn upon later to analyze the policy implementation processes that are the focus of this research.

The analysis of institutions in some ways resembles the literature on governance and fragile states summarized in previous sections, which illustrates multiple perspectives and definitions of the phenomena included in the concept. The most useful definitions are those that best suit the requirements of the issues being addressed – in this case, the analysis of contextually-appropriate institutional development in the governance of fragile states, with reference to Afghanistan where appropriate.

This section summarizes relevant parts of the institutional development literature as a part of the foundation for this study – it has the following sections:

- What is an institution?
- Institutions and context
- How are institutions developed?
- Dialogue vs. decision in institutional development.
- Moral dimensions of institutional design

- Institutional change – context and culture
- Context, institutions and international development
- Multiple rules, multiple games

The section is followed by a summary of models of policy implementation as related to contexts such as Afghanistan.

What is an Institution?

This question does not have a clear and simple answer, even though the study of institutions has been increasingly the focus of a wide range of theoretical approaches and methods. As Rhodes et al state in the preface of their *Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions,* "Despite the incredible growth in institutional studies in recent decades, we lack a singular definition of an institution on which students of politics can find wide agreement. Indeed, if anything, we have witnessed an even greater diversity of ideas over the period as to what constitutes an institution" (Rhodes, Binder, Sarah, & Rockman, 2006:xiii).

In a chapter on institutions in his *Understanding Public Policy,* Paul Cairney says that while in the past the term may have referred to established organizations – legislatures, courts, and executives – visible buildings or entities to which we can point, the term more recently has come to refer to two related factors: "regular patterns of behavior and the rules, norms practices and relationships that influence such behavior. Institutions are not just the buildings or arenas within which people make policy, they are also the rules of behavior that influence how they make policy" (Cairney, 2012b:69). He goes on to say that the many varied approaches and definitions make identifying institutions a tricky business. Some analysts say that institutions exist in the minds of participants and sometimes are shared as implicit knowledge rather than in an explicit and written form. Further, the rules followed implicitly within organizations may even contradict the rules espoused explicitly in their written statements. "Therefore, while we can perhaps agree that institutions represent sets of rules and norms that guide behavior, this may be where agreement ends." (ibid 76).

While the terms "institution" and "organization" are sometimes considered to mean much the same thing, there are important distinctions – a simplistic and imprecise example helps illustrate the difference. The "institution of marriage" is a conceptual social structure that defines a set of roles, membership, and rules of social interaction, of which there can be many variants. A closely related organization based on that institution – a family – is created when people occupy the roles in the institution of marriage and interact in a manner that may (or may not) be consistent with its rules. The extent to which members agree on the rules and behave accordingly will have an impact on the functioning of the organization.

In the opening chapter of *The Theory of Institutional Design*, Robert Goodin notes that the term "institution" is used in a variety of social sciences – history, economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, and more, each with its own particular flavour. He says that each discipline and subdiscipline focuses on different institutions as paradigmatic and selects different characteristics as their defining

features (Goodin, 1996:1), and then he goes on to describe characteristics of a "new institutionalism" in these various fields.

In keeping with the earlier comment by Rhodes et al, it is noteworthy that while Goodin's work is helpful in gaining some understanding of institutions and their development and is useful for this research, Paul Cairney sounds a cautionary note. He says that "New institutionalism is the term used to describe (a)… focus on rules rather than bricks-and-mortar institutions, and the concern with exploring norms and common understandings as well as statutory rules." He also confirms Rhodes et al's view that while the term is widely used, "no-one is entirely sure what an institution is and what new institutionalism means…It seems to represent an umbrella term or loose collection of approaches rather than a coherent theory" (Cairney, 2012a:70).

With Cairney's caveat in mind it is useful to proceed with a summary of Goodin's analysis, since it is essential for this research project to have some definitions to work with, however imprecise they may be. Goodin says that the major social sciences – history, economics, political science, sociology and others – have an "old" institutionalism that is evolving into a "new" institutionalism, and he describes the transitions in these fields. For the purposes of this thesis it is sufficient to describe two of these: history and political science.

Goodin describes history's old institutionalism as being primarily concerned with the past and its political institutions – kings, courts, wars, and their more recent successors, parliaments, business moguls, and so forth. He says that if there were one word to capture the essence of history's focus, it would be *time*. History's new institutionalism, he says, acknowledges the significance of these macro-level entities, but focuses more on the actual impact of these structures on real people's ordinary lives (ibid 2-3).

The old institutionalism in political science is described as the study of government, the state in its institutional form – organizational charts, agencies, bureaux, public administration quite broadly conceived, and the 'the state apparatus' – branches of national, state, and local governments, political parties, and other social institutions. There has been a major shift of focus from these structures and away from the notion that "form mapped function, to deny that organizational charts and institutional myths were accurate representations of actual practice. What really matters," he says, "is not what people are supposed to do, but what they actually do… It is actual behavior rather than ruling myth that students of real world politics must study." He goes on to say that if it were possible to assign variables within the social sciences, the key variable in political science would be *power.*

He describes *governance* as "the new institutionalist catchphrase within public administration, as nothing less than the steering of society by officials in control of what are organizationally the commanding heights of society." He then says, "of course there are limits to the sorts of commands that might be issued from those commanding heights." (ibid 12-15). This is consistent with Rhodes' (2007:1255) comment (noted in the section on policy implementation below) that senior level government leaders who want to exercise authority often find they have "rubber levers" which often do not produce anticipated results in the lower levels of their

systems. Institutions may be designed to do certain things, but what they actually do may differ from the intentions of their designers.

Institutions and Context

Goodin says there are two main views of the relationship between institutions and their contexts. In a later part of his analysis he discusses the argument posed between liberalism and communitarianism. He says, "liberals are represented as championing Enlightenment models of human agency: individuals are rational, free-thinking, cosmopolitan, universalist, unencumbered. Communitarians point, in contrast, toward the ways in which individuals are inevitably embedded in social relations; when young, we all have to be taught something by somebody; and along the way we all come to acquire various attachments to people and principles and projects growing out of our various social experiences." Communitarians view these experiences as the true sources the self – what can be considered the foundation of one's identity. "In the real world," he continues, "there simply is no completely independent, free-thinking, unencumbered self capable of performing the sorts of heroically universalistic calculations that figure so centrally in liberal Enlightenment just-so stories."

He goes on to say that everyone has been raised in some particular culture or other, with its own distinctive values and concerns. "Everyone has to start somewhere, and where you start and what baggage you bring with you makes it easier to move in some directions than in others." He also says that because we are all socially embedded does not mean that we can never transcend our original upbringing: just because we have prejudices inherited from our childhood context does not mean that we cannot try to achieve "the Archimedean point idealized by the Enlightenment universalism. Liberals would staunchly insist that we can and should try to overcome our particular prejudices and interests in judging what is right and good, both for our own societies and indeed for the world at large."

One way of understanding this is that while individuals are shaped or formed by the contexts in which they live, they also have the ability to exercise agency and, to some extent, change those contexts to reflect what they consider to be right and good.

He goes on to say that in both normative and empirical social theory there is increasing recognition of the importance of blending accounts of social structure and human agency into some larger composite model of the human condition. He says that the New Institutionalism "is at root a reminder of the various contextual settings within which social action is set." (ibid 18-19).

Goodin provides a relatively broad overview of the key features of the various usages of the concept of institutions and their contexts:

1. Individual agents and groups pursue their respective projects in a context that is collectively constrained.
2. Those constraints take the form of institutions – organized patterns of socially constructed norms and roles, and socially prescribed behaviors expected of occupants of those roles, which are created and re-created over time.

3. Constraining though they are, those constraints nonetheless are in various other respects advantageous to individuals and groups in the pursuit of their own more particular projects.
4. The same contextual factors that constrain individual and group actions also shape the desires, preferences and motives of those individual and group agents.
5. Those constraints characteristically have historical roots, as artifactual residuals of past actions and choices.
6. Those constraints embody, preserve and impart differential power resources with respect to different individuals and groups.
7. Individual and group action, contextually constrained and socially shaped though it may be, is the engine that drives social life (ibid 18-20).

In summary, Goodin says that a "social institution is, in its most general characterization, nothing more than a 'stable, valued, recurring pattern of behavior'." And further, that an institution is a social phenomenon – individuals are not themselves institutions (ibid 21). Cairney echoes this theme in saying that institutions represent sets of rules that influence choices, often producing regular patterns of behavior (Cairney, 2012b:80).

March and Olsen offer a more comprehensive definition in their *Elaborating the "New Institutionalism"* (March & Olsen, 2006:3):

> An institution is a relatively enduring collection of rules and organized practices, embedded in structures of meaning and resources that are relatively invariant in the face of turnover of individuals and relatively resilient to the idiosyncratic preferences and expectations of individuals and changing external circumstances... There are constitutive rules and practices prescribing appropriate behavior for specific actors in specific situations. There are structures of meaning, embedded in identities and belongings: common purposes and accounts that give direction and meaning to behavior, and explain, justify, and legitimate behavioral codes. There are structures of resources that create capabilities for acting. Institutions empower and constrain actors differently and make them more or less capable of acting according to prescriptive rules of appropriateness. Institutions are also reinforced by third parties in enforcing rules and sanctioning non-compliance.

Their comment on *structures of meaning* that are *embedded in identities* will be referred to later in discussion of cultural dimensions of institutional change.

Although there is no specific mention of fragile states in this section, the comments above speak to the essential relationship between institutions and their contexts, a factor included in the *contextualization* dimension of institutional development, a key element in the questions driving this research.

How are Institutions Developed?

This thesis is exploring factors related to institutional development, which has been the subject of considerable debate. One of the models Goodin uses to define institutional development is drawn from rational choice theory, which he sees as derived from a view of man labeled *homo economicus,* exemplified in the writing of

Douglass North, whose term "rules of the game" has been widely used in the field (North 1991:98). The underlying concept is that institutions are developed to enable individuals to reduce uncertainty and maximize economic benefit. North's classic paper begins as follows:

> Institutions are the humanly devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interaction. They consist of both informal constraints (sanctions, taboos, customs, traditions, and codes of conduct), and formal rules (constitutions, laws, property rights). Throughout history, institutions have been devised by human beings to create order and reduce uncertainty in exchange. Together with the standard constraints of economics they define the choice set and therefore determine transaction and production costs and hence the profitability and feasibility of engaging in economic activity. (ibid 97)

This is a market-oriented view of the underlying motives of organized and structured collective behavior. The contrasting sociological point of view seems to not be defined with the clarity evident in North's economic analysis. In their article on social preferences and altruistic behavior, Bowles and Gintis state that, "an adequate reformulation of the psychological foundations of the behavioral sciences cannot be accomplished by inventing some new *Homo sociologicus* or *zoon politikon* to replace *Homo economicus* as the epitome of intentional behavior" (Bowles & Gintis, 2004:183). The underlying factors seem to be too varied and complex to be reduced to the questionable simplicity and clarity implied in the label used by North in his comment rooted in rational choice theory.

March and Olsen (2006:4) address this theme in identifying two "broad interpretations of politics. The first alternative is a *rational actor* perspective which sees political life as organized by exchange among calculating, self-interested actors. The second alternative is a *cultural community* perspective which sees political life as organized by shared values and world-views in a community of common culture, experience and values." (emphasis in original). The latter concept is particularly useful in analyzing institutional development in fragile states in which "hybrid political orders" (discussed earlier) combine modern state and traditional systems in contemporary structures of governance.

Whether people are motivated primarily by a desire for economic benefit or other less tangible rewards is an interesting and well-populated line of research, a full exploration of which is well beyond the scope of this thesis. What is pertinent is that institutions are seen primarily as social structures that have their roots in both economic and sociological models, they constrain and also enable social behavior, and that individuals have varying degrees of agency in the face of these structures that shape their lives.

In a vein consistent with the sociological model, anthropologists such as E. T. Hall (Hall, 1968) describe institutions as "extensions" of culture, structured forms of human interaction rooted in the largely invisible underlying sets of rules that shape patterns of behavior and belief in society. This concept and its implications for fragile state governance is discussed in greater detail below in the section on institutions and change.

As noted earlier, institutions can be described as "the rules of the game," and can be found at virtually all levels in society. For example, the well known description of four stages of group dynamics – forming, storming, norming and performing (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977) – indicates that even a small group which exists for only a brief time sets up structured patterns of interaction. The group's norms, or rules, become a type of institution that places limits on members' behavior and also enables them to achieve their objectives.

Goodin (1996) describes three main ways institutions are formed and developed – by accident, evolution, and intention:

> First, social change might occur by accident. There are, on this account, no forces of natural or social necessity at work, no larger causal mechanisms driving things. What happens just happens… purely a matter of contingency.
>
> Second, social change might be a matter of evolution… the initial variation might have occurred utterly at random, as a matter of pure accident and happenstance. But there are… some selection mechanisms at work, usually competitive in nature, which pick out some variants for survival. Those variants which do survive over a protracted period might therefore be said to be somehow "better fitted" to their environment than those that do not.
>
> Third, social change might be a product of intentional intervention… (it) might be the product of deliberate intervention of purposive, goal-seeking agents. Those agents might be either isolated individuals or organized groups. The changes that ensue… may or may not be exactly what was intended…
>
> Any actual instance of social or institutional change is almost certain to involve a combination of all three of these elements. (ibid 24-25).

He goes on to say that intentional institutional design might have unintended outcomes:

> Institutions are often the product of intentional activities gone wrong – unintended by-products, the products of various intentional actions cutting across one another, misdirected intentions, or just plain mistakes… the explanation is still intentional in form, even if the outcome is not intended. An institution can thus be the product of intentional action, without its having been literally the intentional product of anyone's action.
>
> The myth of the Intentional Designer (still less the myth of the Intentional Design) is greatly to be avoided in theories of institutional design. Typically, there is no single design or designer (ibid 28).

The implications of Goodin's analysis for policy development and implementation are obvious – even though a "designer" might set out with a clearly-defined goal, the chances of achieving that specific predetermined outcome are rather slim. This is consistent with the experience analyzed in Pressman and Wildavsky's (1984) classic study of policy processes in the US, discussed in the section on policy implementation below.

Even though an institutional design effort is likely to have unintended outcomes, there is much institutional development with related policy development and implementation work underway, including in fragile conflict-affected states with poorly-functioning governments. Much of this work is being carried out by agents of the international community who are presumably knowledgeable in their areas of

specialization. Many are hired on relatively short term contracts to apply their sectoral expertise to the policy issues at hand. Unfortunately, the results of their work often gathers dust on shelves in ministry offices rather than being incorporated into the organizations' operations. Even if some of these institutional designs are approved by the host country government they often are not operationalized, largely because they were not developed with sufficient input and engagement of local actors (Brinkerhoff & Crosby, 2002; Fynas, 2009). The institutional design process was often driven by external experts without sufficient linkages with the local context. The work was insufficiently contextualized, one of the key areas of interest of this research. This is also the focus of an article by Linder and Peters (Linder & Peters, 1994), which is summarized at some length next.

Dialogue vs. Decision in Institutional Development

Linder and Peters reported on their analysis of the dynamics of effective institutional change related to policy implementation in their contribution to David Weimer's (1994) *Institutional Design*, where they describe two rival traditions of institutional designing – *Dialogue* vs. *Decision*. The former involves wide-ranging consultation and political engagement with an array of stakeholders to link the process to the local context, while the latter is based on a relatively detached "policy elite" making their decisions on technocratic pre-determined grounds without paying much attention to local conditions. This distinction is directly related to the contextually-appropriate institutional development and policy implementation focus of this research

The *decisional* tradition is relatively more conspicuous in the institutional design literature, and "tends to rely on analytical tools and formal (economic) criteria to determine the best "objective" choice, while the latter (the dialogical tradition) relies more on process values and politics as its criteria." Rational choice theory is linked to the decisional model, while critical theory is associated with the dialogical approach.

The contrast between these two approaches is played out in practical politics. While the decisional tradition seems more familiar to people living in "developed" societies, and most policy makers are accustomed to the technocratic style of making policy, the dialogical tradition also has deep roots in those countries. It manifests itself in decision making in religious communities such as the Society of Friends, and also in government and policy making on issues such as environmental regulation, when numerous stakeholders are engaged in consultation on issues of wide-spread concern. The latter tends to focus on a search for consensus more than choosing between winners and losers (ibid 134-137).

At the root of this matter is a debate on the meaning of rationality, with much of the discussion being on the viability of a distinction between local and global conceptions of rationality. "Global conceptions support universal standards for judging authoritativeness or knowledge or method, while local conceptions argue for dependence of such standards on context and social setting." In the global conception, "the judgments of authoritativeness have been increasingly professionalized to the point that some experts can lay claim … to being the sole arbiters of what is rational, with the opinions of the lay public deemed sentimental or contradictory" (ibid 137).

The global conception of rationality is linked to Taylorism and the movement for technocratic planning and management in the pubic sector – it flourished under the scientism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and is still central to liberal moral theory and modernist views of human agency. Global perceptions of rationality are averse to the messiness of localized politics, and in place of contending meanings and categories that local rationality supports, global rationality depends on relatively invariant standards that are presumed to be objectively ascertained.

In international development one often hears of the benefits of "global best practices" in the design of programs to improve conditions in a society – these global best practices often reflect an underlying *decisional* approach to institutional development.

Local conceptions, on the other hand, are not based on generalizable principles or fixed standards – they rely on *dialogue* to promote practical reasoning that is more immediately accessible to the non-expert and is grounded in the values and collective experience of each community – in other words, it fosters an *endogenous* approach that is rooted in the local context. The local conception has been adversarial: opposing Taylorism in the communal writings of Mary Parker Follett; opposing centralized social engineering, and generally offering a vantage point for the populist, communitarian and romantic criticism of our modern technocratic culture and mass politics (ibid 138).

The global versus local debate has been of keen interest to anthropologists who explore issues such as cultural relativism, but it has received less attention from many of the other social sciences. However, actors concerned with strengthening governance in their own fragile states have steadily become more overtly engaged in this localized approach to policy and program design.

The *New Deal* for fragile states proposed by the g7+ group of self-identified fragile states at the Busan Conference in 2011 (g7+, 2011) is a clear example of this shift from a global to a local, endogenous conception of the entire approach to the nation-building agenda. It strives to replace the detached, ostensibly objective global-level analysis of international agencies such as the World Bank and the OECD with locally-driven, contextualized approaches to defining a "fragility spectrum" that reflects local conditions as seen by the populations themselves (g7+, 2013). The lack of any sign of incorporation of the *New Deal* framework in the World Bank's CPIA assessments conducted after it was accepted by world leaders at the Busan Conference seems to indicate a dismissive response by the global agency to this locally-conceived initiative – a stance consistent with the detached expert's global stance noted earlier.

The unresponsiveness of the Bank may be linked to three factors related to the aversion to politics of those who prefer the global conception of rationality. First, global rationality depends on relatively invariant standards rather than the play of contending meanings that local rationality supports. Second, "the communal basis of politics is eschewed in favor of the autonomous, and hence disinterested expert whose judgment is impervious to any ties that bind… Local rationality (on the other hand) incorporates the social and cultural context…(and) deference is paid to the role of collective definition and shared discourse in bringing …socially constituted elements fully to bear on decisions." Third, when application of universal standards is seen as

a technical problem requiring specific expertise, this stifles "the usual political impetus to involve more rather than fewer people and to assume that each can contribute their own values or experience in defining standards."

There have been at least two types of reactions to the technocratic domination of policy by elites – one is the large-scale leftist-inspired public engagement (i.e.: protests) seen in the 1960s and 1970s, and perhaps also in the more recent *Occupy Wall Street* demonstrations. The other has been driven by a right-leaning movement to provide individuals with free choice, as in the voucher program allowing families in the US to pay the school of their choice to provide their children's education. Despite their contrasting ideological foundations, both strive to restrict the power of technical and political elites to dominate the policy making process (Op cit Linder & Peters 138-139).

These two approaches are consistent with two contrasting types of agent involvement in policy implementation – one is the relatively small, tightly-knit *policy communities* and the other is larger, more loosely-organized *issue networks* – both of which are included in the *policy network* model defined by Rhodes and others (Rhodes, 1997). These quite different sets of actors will be further discussed in the section on policy implementation below.

The local conception of technical rationality represents a contingency approach to institutional design, the quality of which depends on an adequate description of the problem context more than on movement toward an externally-defined standard. The process is complicated by the potential variations in context, and also the associated absence of any external basis on which to judge the adequacy of the analysis. This uncertainty is compounded by the demands of the technical side for a best-fitting design, often without a clear idea of what that entails. The designer may have some sort of blueprint, but likely quite different than one drawn under the global conception. In the local context the designer may never know beforehand what should be the right design but proceeds regardless of the uncertainty – this is in keeping with the unpredictability of outcomes stated in Goodin's view noted earlier. Asking people who are familiar with the context may sometimes help, but not always, and some designers may not feel the need to ask (Op Cit Linder & Peters 142).

In working with unpredictable, turbulent high-ambiguity situations it has been found that if there is attention paid to ensuring good *process* it is likely there will be a good outcome – see, for instance, Ralph Stacey's *Managing the Unknowable* and other authors who apply chaos theory to organizational behavior (Stacey, 1992; Kiel, 1994; Wheatley, 1994). A similar method is suggested for the localized approach to institutional development: the way to deal with this uncertainty is to have a well-defined methodology for identifying and engaging the right actors, and obtaining relevant information for locally-appropriate policy development and institutional design. Linder and Peters state:

> In the dialogical tradition …process considerations are the most important for a 'good' policy. The technical quality of the decision is assumed to be guaranteed by the open process, or to be secondary to the inherent social value of that open process.
>
> A local conception of social rationality dispenses with such reassurance by abandoning claims of universality for its organizing principles. There is still

> confidence in the power of collective discourse, but the precondition and contours of the process are left to local judgment. Again, designing is relatively free-wheeling, without benefit of structure (or constraints) imposed by technical treatments of fixed ends. In this instance, however, the process and, by extension, its products represent collective adaptations to context…The contingency approach's problems of finding the best fitting means is resolved by definition, as context effectively filters the means at issue and shapes their adjustment to local ends.

This description of a participatory, contextualized approach closely mirrors the concept of "bounded instability" in the chaos theory based works of Stacey (1992) and others, who note that in the seemingly free-wheeling multi-stakeholder consultative process that has been found effective in decision-making in unpredictable situations, the context provides limits on the range of discourse and potential behaviors of the actors involved. There are built-in self-limiting factors that ensure that the process is not an "anything goes" type of activity.

In a similar vein, Linder and Peters continue their analysis of the participatory, dialogical approach to institutional design:

> The emphasis here is not on the best designs in a technical sense, or even on the best discourse around designing but rather on the normative issues of appropriateness and meaningfulness. The most appropriate designs from this perspective will be those that best suit collective constructions of local purpose; that is, they will be socially rational. The most meaningful designs, however, will not only be appropriate in this sense, but will build on local experience and convey a sense of the community's identity and moral order. (Op Cit Linder & Peters: 143).

The last sentence in the above quote helps take our analysis beyond the instrumental or methodological aspects of institutional design and opens the door to discussion of the moral dimensions of this key component of the nation-building process.

Moral Dimensions of Institutional Design

Institutions have a moral dimension: as noted earlier, they are described by Goodin as "nothing more than a stable, valued, recurring pattern of behavior", and by North as the "rules of the game" – both of which indicate there is more than an instrumental or technical aspect to their operations – they have normative characteristics, valued rules. There is right and wrong – some things are acceptable, others are not. Institutional design can reinforce some values over others, and can be structured with the intention to control deviation from the principles their designers want to see reflected in the institution's operations.

March and Olsen (2006:7) echo this theme when they say that "Institutions give order to social relations, reduce flexibility and variability in behavior, and restrict the possibilities of a one-sided pursuit of self-interest or drives… Rules are followed because they are seen as natural, rightful, expected and legitimate. Members of an institution are expected to obey, and be the guardians of, its constitutive principles and standards."

It is interesting in this light to consider the resistance to establishing a rule-based society that is described in the section below on Afghanistan as a fragile state. This

likely would have an impact on senior level stakeholder engagement in institutional developments that may place limits on the relatively unconstrained ways they have been accustomed to going about their business. Institutional development is likely to place constraints on actors who have been accustomed to changing or ignoring the rules that are at the foundation of a well-ordered society. Dealing with this dynamic is part of the contextualization of stakeholder engagement required for effective institutional development in this society.

In his exploration of institutional morality – whether institutions themselves can be moral or not – Russell Hardin says, "One of the greatest values of institutions is to block many kinds of rotten action. They may or may not succeed in elevating character, but they can often do well with the material they have." (Hardin, 1996:142).

Hardin's general thesis is that while institutions and organizations have the ability to elicit moral behavior from individual members, the institution, as a collective entity, can not itself be considered to act morally – "it would be odd to think of an organization as an intentional being in the sense which a person is an intentional being. The organization may be composed of intentional beings, but is not one itself…The moral theory of institutions and of the behavior of institutional office holders must be derived from the purpose of the institution… We might conclude that institutions are therefore outside the realm of moral discourse. But that would be perverse. Without institutions we can achieve far too few of the moral purposes we have. " (ibid 151-2). While this is a positive interpretation of institutional morality, it is, however, clear that not only can institutions block "rotten action" – they can also carry out some very rotten actions on their own.

Hardin's assertion that institutions can not be considered in the same light as individuals when morality is concerned flies in the face of the legal definition of a business corporation as a person, a device which some say was intentionally created to diffuse accountability and protect individual owners and employees from the consequences of loss or problematic behavior by the organization and its agents. There are significant problems with this device, which the 2003 documentary *The Corporation* explores in considerable detail (Achbar, Abbott, & Bakan, 2003). The *Occupy Wall Street* and other similar protest movements are popular manifestations of public concern about the morality of institutional behavior.

While the morality (or lack thereof) of institutions or organizations – be they corporations or government agencies – is topical, particularly in light of the revelation of the CIA's use of torture following 9/11 (US Senate Committee on Intelligence, 2014), or well-publicized convictions for massive corruption in the financial sector – see, for example, (Taibbi, 2014) – it is well outside the scope of this literature review to pursue the subject in detail. It suffices to maintain a limited focus on the intentions and behaviors of international development agencies and fragile state governments, while acknowledging a host of problems such as predatory elite capture of the institutions of state, a factor contributing to challenges faced by many fragile states (Ibrahim, Wolfowitz, Cardin, Babbit, & Offenheiser, 2010; Tedesco, 2008; Mehran, 2013).

Determining whether the responsibility for problematic behaviors in these cases rests with the structured "rules of the game" (institutions), their inhabited derivatives

(organizations), or with the individuals or groups who occupy roles in these entities may be worthwhile, but is not the primary focus of this research. What *is* relevant is the deeper dimension of morals and values embedded in institutions and how they change.

Linder and Peters (1994) say that institutions are more than simple skeletal structures and functions: they "are typically thought to *embody* particular values rather than merely serving them instrumentally… they have a strong element of moral claims on … participants." They also "carry expectations of cultural significance, varying in degree from some incidental, non instrumental purpose to the full reflection of a particular moral order, in addition to any presumptions of temporal continuity." This indicates that "any attempts to change institutions through design will require conscious efforts at changing the cultural and ideational elements of the institution as well as its structural elements." They go on to say that institutions can become "synonymous with cultural meanings and practices and beyond the reach of designers who are intent on reengineering an institution's organizational features… in these cases the design shifts to the broader canvas of cultural change as the medium of institutional reformation." In other words, simply shifting the boxes about on an organizational chart and expecting a system to change is not sufficient: there are much deeper social, psychological and cultural dimensions involved. Policies designed to foster gender equity, for example, provide good examples of these deeper impacts.

They continue, saying that institutions should be understood as "neither wholly immutable nor fully plastic." This indicates that institutional designers have roles to play – either endogenous or exogenous – and the complexity of their scripts will vary with the normative assumptions behind their definitions of institutions. Once the essence of institutions is understood not as instrumental but as moral, the rational choice approach becomes too thin, and setting purposes and weighing context move into the foreground. This is the view taken by the "new institutionalism" literature, which asserts that they can be understood as governed by the logic of appropriateness which is in essence a moral statement about purpose and provides a meaning for other actions of the institution. They state: "Without understanding that embedded moral logic, it is not possible to understand the behavior of institutions or their occupants."

They go even deeper, and assert that, "the moral premises of relevance to institutional definition are principally ontological; they relate to assumptions about the self, its development, and its relation to others through social arrangements."

They then explore individualist and communal values in relation to institutional design, and conclude that the latter provides the more appropriate framework: "…the self both constitutes and is constituted by culture and community, …(and) a better understanding of the self and purposes becomes bound to a better understanding of these values and social arrangements; the roles, affiliations and commitments of context provide a framework within which ends and purpose can best be discovered and critically assessed." This cannot be done in isolation, as would be implied in the individualist view of the morally autonomous self, but "entails reflection and dialogue with others who share, and hence mutually constitute the same context."

The broad-based participatory consultative process at the root of the dialogical mode of institutional development, which is often called "stakeholder engagement" and similar terms, can be seen as a vehicle for this communal process. They say this is linked to the role of institutions in fostering the realization of human potential: "freedom of choice is not enough; it must be coupled with collective association and open, critical discourse…The purpose of knowledge from this angle… is educative and potentially transformative, assisting in clarification of ends and their implications for social and institutional change" (ibid 144-149).

From this communal point of view it is clear that institutional development can be seen as being far from a detached technical or instrumental exercise that an ostensibly objective external agent can undertake without being changed in the process:

> An institution that reflects the moral reference points of its context is positioned to draw on the strength and stability of that context. An encounter with an institution then becomes a special case of more general interchanges with the norms and conventions underpinning it. Devising new institutions or remaking old ones necessarily encounters all of the reflected elements of context and are thus best approached through a collective dialogue that simultaneously engages the broader context. Taking on the moral underpinnings of an institution, however, cannot be easily accomplished by an outsider insulated from the values she hopes to affect. In the process of remaking their institutions …(agents) fully expect to remake themselves. (ibid 152) [20].

The transformative process of institutional development is governed through interaction with others, sharing perspectives, with agreed rules of argumentation for collective reasoning and moral assessment. This enables traditions, social conventions and practices, and the institutional forms that reflect and reinforce them, to become overt and available for scrutiny. What counts is a determination made by collective and appropriately structured deliberation. "The institutions (or designs) that emerge from this process by definition, are seen to embody moral expectations and convey collective purpose" This has implications for democratic governance, as "participatory forms of governance…become the most likely progeny of participatory design" (ibid 152-4).

They conclude that "any design choice may involve the choice of whole systems of thought, not just the simple choice of a structure of organization."

Their article closes with a discussion of role of the institutional designer: "The dialogical tradition questions the legitimacy of designer as detached outsider bringing 'objective knowledge' to bear on others' institutions. In its stead the designer is cast in a minor role, setting a larger process into motion, rather than controlling it. Rather than engineer, the designer is animateur" (ibid 157). The extent to which institutional designers, particularly foreign agents of international development organizations,

[20] This theme reflects my own experience in working for years with various types development projects in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen and elsewhere – I have been profoundly impacted and changed by this experience, some of which I attempt to summarize in the *Researcher's Positionality Statement* below. One example of this change was the decision to undertake further study in governance, resulting in this thesis.

adopted this role is a central element in the analysis of the several Afghan policy initiatives reviewed by this research.

In this vein it was pleasing to receive an email from the head of the Afghan civil service commission's administrative reform unit following some work in early 2016 to support the development of a network of senior policy practitioners. A workshop was designed in collaboration with Afghan colleagues for some 30 senior policy officials from across the government in which they were provided tools to analyze their ministries' policy processes with the intention of helping the government prepare a policy framework to manage policies (it had none at the time). The email was received shortly after the workshop, as part of follow-up work being coordinated by the Afghan colleague in the Civil Service Commission. His email said, "Andy, Brilliant approach for development, you initiate something and leave it grow indigenously" (Sawayz, 2016). This was high praise indeed, consistent with the *animateur* stance described above: very encouraging and rewarding to receive. This initiative is discussed further in the *Findings* section below.

The implications of Linder and Peter's analysis for contextually-appropriate institutional development and policy implementation are significant. These deeper dimensions of institutions and institutional change are discussed more fully in the following section on context and culture in institutional change, and also subsequently in the section on policy reform in international development, particularly in the "Problem-driven iterative adaptation" approach in Matt Andrews' *The Limits of Institutional Reform in Development* (Andrews, 2013).

Institutional Change – Context and Culture

Goodin (1996:30) links institutions with a society's history and context, when he says that "social engineers always work with materials inherited from and to some extent unalterably shaped by the past." Not only are institutions the product of a society's history, much of what determines how they operate is not readily apparent to a casual observer. There is much more to institutions and institutional change than meets the eye.

It can be said that when one looks at a working institution, such as a political system, government ministry, a bank, school or hospital, it is as if one is looking at a tree – only the top half is visible. The root system that is an integral part of that tree is below the surface: the history and informal dimensions of the society's operations and more. March and Olsen (2006:6) echo this theme when they say that "politics was organized around the interpretation of life and the development of meaning, purpose and direction, and not only around policy-making and the allocation of resources." Any attempt to change an institution needs to take its deeper and largely invisible contextual components into account. This can be a significant challenge, especially in international development where foreign agencies are interacting with host country counterparts in efforts to improve their systems – which, as noted earlier, are like "black boxes" into which foreign agents can not readily see.

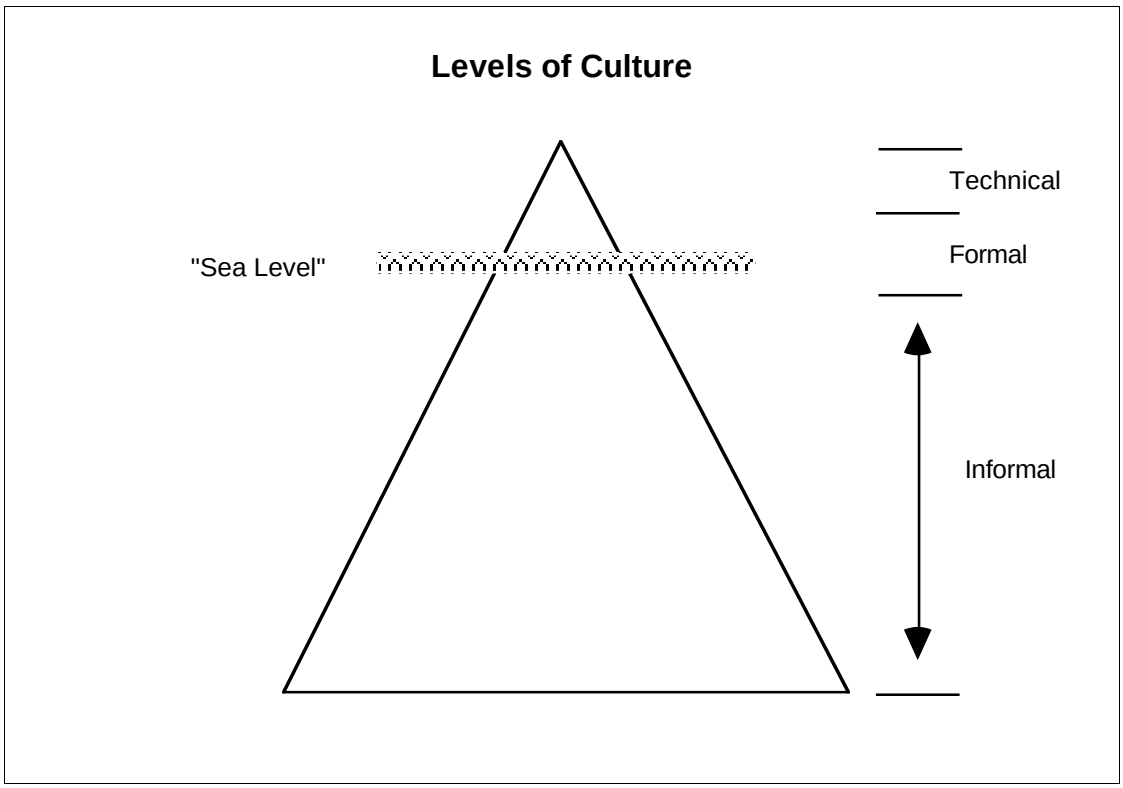
Matt Andrews (2013) uses an iceberg analogy to identify two sets of factors that need to be taken into account in institutional reform efforts in development. The uppermost visible layer he describes as regulations, the formal institutional content. Below the

water line are a host of norms and cultural-cognitive beliefs, many of which are unconsciously held but which nonetheless exert considerable influence when changes are introduced that are at variance with established beliefs and patterns of thought in the deeper dimensions of the social order in which the institutions operate.

Anthropologists Geert Hofstede and Edward T. Hall go even further (Hofstede, 1991; Hall, 1976). Hofstede calls culture the "software of the mind" that determines how individuals, organizations and societies operate. Like good software, it is rarely visible: it (hopefully) works as it should in the background, performing its limited functions well, but unable to do things for which it was not programmed. In a like manner, one's own culture is almost completely transparent to one's self: it determines what our cognitive system is able to perceive, and distorts or ignores phenomena for which it was not programmed, and we simply go about our daily tasks without giving it much thought. We take notice of others' cultures when we encounter people whose patterns differ from our own, and use our learned and largely implicit analytical categories to pass judgment on the appropriateness of their behavior. This extends to our assessment of the institutional frameworks within which they live.

Hall has described institutions as *extensions* of a group's culture, which he defines as a set of largely unconsciously-held rules that are learned in childhood and soon disappear from conscious awareness, and like a hidden submarine drive from the depths (Hall, 1976; Rogers, 2000). Like Andrews, he uses the concept of an "iceberg of culture" (see figure below) and identifies three layers of rules which contribute to our "structure of meaning" – how we see ourselves and the world in which we live, the foundation of our identity – and different levels of emotional response to infractions of these rules.

Figure 1
Hall's "Iceberg of Culture"



Adapted from Hall (1976) *Beyond Culture*

The small upper visible part above the water line is the "technical" layer of rules which can be relatively easily learned by outsiders – he places language, art forms, traditional dances, and other similar components in this layer, and says that changes or infractions of the rules associated with this dimension usually do not elicit strong emotional responses from members of the group.

He defines a "formal" set of rules as a relatively small layer that is partially above and below the water line – some are visible and can be learned, while others are not and one is simply expected to know them. He places rules associated with table manners, interpersonal space norms, and other similar social patterns in this layer. Infractions of rules at this level can elicit relatively strong emotional responses and may negatively effect interpersonal relationships.

The far larger set of rules at the base of the iceberg he calls the "informal" layer, which is completely below sea level, and almost completely invisible even to members the culture. Infractions of these rules usually elicit intense emotion and prompt strong negative reactions.

Social changes that threaten the integrity of this deepest dimension can elicit powerful disruptive behaviors, including violence, depression and even suicide (Tamas, 1985). The impact is described as similar to bereavement which accompanies the loss of a loved one (Marris, 1986) and people will go to great lengths to avoid that experience.

This dynamic can have major impacts on institutional reform efforts due to the close linkages between identity and institutions.

Much of our identity is linked to our place in the social order, as defined by the institutions in which we live. March and Olsen (2006:9) say that "members of an organization tend to become imbued with not only their identities as belonging to the organization but also with the various identities associated with different roles in the organization." Major changes in these institutions can elicit strong identity-maintenance behaviors that are driven by a natural need to maintain the integrity of our structure of meaning, the largely unconsciously-held integrated patterns of perception and belief that define who we are (Goodenough, 1963). These major changes can have significant disruptive effects which interfere with attempts to stabilize fragile war-affected societies, including fostering "hyper-masculinity" and violence against women (Cahn & Aolain, 2010). There can be tremendous volatility associated with this largely hidden dimension of institutional life.

Some elements of institutional change can elicit stronger emotional responses than others in different societies (Gelfand, Erez, & Aycan, 2007). Analysis of the cultural aspects of multinational business practices, for example, indicates that there are some areas where it is more important than others to consider local cultural factors in an international initiative (Aycan, 2000). It is relatively unimportant to take cultural dimensions into account when exporting practices related to technical processes, construction activities, manufacturing techniques and other relatively impersonal innovations such as introducing new accounting programs. The rules involved in most of these are largely in the technical level in Hall's iceberg and can be changed with relatively little emotional impact.

However, it is essential to pay a great deal of attention to local contextual and cultural factors when dealing with matters that effect personal status, interpersonal power relations, performance management and supervisory practices. While these can have a technical dimension, most of the implicit rules related to these functions are in the formal and emotionally more volatile informal dimensions of culture. These aspects of organizational operations can vary widely in different societies, and implementing change in areas that affect these deeper levels of the iceberg of culture usually is not as straightforward as in the more visible technical aspects. These complex issues are the focus of a large body of research, an example of which examines culture-related difficulties with wholesale importation of foreign business practices and structures in the expansion of Chinese multinational operations to other societies (Fu, Jeanne, Zhang, Li, & Leung, 2016). This might account in part for differences in development project performance – in observations over years of experience in the field it's been clear that construction and accounting systems projects, for example, seem to achieve their results far more easily than projects promoting gender equity, participatory management, or other attempts to restructure a society's role relationships – and which make changes in associated identities and structures of meaning in the process.

International development efforts to strengthen governance often focus on reforms at both the relatively superficial and the more emotionally-laden deeper dimensions of the recipient country's culture. Whereas agents interested in strengthening areas such as public financial management can work relatively effectively on basic technical matters such as improving accounting practices and introducing financial

management information software programs, they experience difficulty achieving results in other areas that address soft-skills issues such as leadership styles, redistribution of authority and human resource management practices which touch the deeper and potentially more volatile levels of rules in Andrews' and Hall's iceberg analogies.

In a major World Bank report, *Africa's Management in the 1990s and Beyond: Reconciling Indigenous and Transplanted Institutions,* Mamadou Dia (1996:14) highlighted the importance of cultural factors in development: "Given that traditional values drive legitimacy, social commitment, expectations and behavior, and that individual workers are molded by their sociocultural heritage, cultural sensitivity and congruence between management and traditional values are the hallmarks of effective human resource management." In one of the studies analyzed in his report the incorporation of local cultural processes in management was so effective that it reportedly generated a feeling among employees that the workplace was an extension of their own homes. This positive feeling can be challenging to achieve in institutional change efforts.

The contextualization factors described in this section can exert great influence on the effectiveness of institutional development and policy implementation in international development initiatives – this is discussed next.

Context, Culture, Institutions and International Development

In his contribution to a special issue on fragile states in *Third Word Quarterly,* Derick Brinkerhoff highlights the necessity of designing development programs with a clear understanding of the local context:

> …without a solid grasp of contextual factors (including history, politics, power dynamics and incentives) and the willingness to incorporate these as inputs to both intervention design and implementation, attempts to build constituencies and align with country actors will fall short. Recognition of the importance of context, of the constraining influence of path dependence and of the interplay between formal and informal governance institutions has become increasingly accepted as critical to successful international development programming and practice (Brinkerhoff, 2014:340-341).

While Brinkerhoff's comments are pertinent, there is more to the story than stating these element are necessary for effective development programming – how to actually *do* what he says is a complex matter indeed. Part of the challenge lies in the cultural underpinnings of many development interventions.

As noted earlier, institutional development efforts that are not rooted in the social and cultural context in which they operate are unlikely to be seen as legitimate, and as having an element of institutional ethnocentrism in their analysis and implementation process (Lemay-Hebert & Mathieu, 2014; Escobar, 1997). Most development agencies seem to try to impose institutional forms and administrative procedures derived from OECD-type states on these countries, often with poor results – see, for example, (OECD, 2008a; Crawford, 2004; Michailof, 2010; Brautigam & Knack,

2004; Andrews, 2013). While there may be some benefit in adopting foreign ways of operating (Sibghat, 2012), there can also be significant problems associated with these efforts.

There are both institutional and interpersonal dimensions in international development work. The key actors in the relationships between host country governments and the international development organization can be in a challenging position. They often find themselves working for their respective institutions which have quite different sets of values and priorities that effect the policy implementation process. The local partner is the agent of the country's leadership and population, while the foreign advisor is the agent of the donor organization and in some cases the international community. The extent to which they can achieve alignment of their sometimes quite different priorities influences the effectiveness of their efforts – the context and quality of their interaction determines in large measure their ability to accomplish development objectives. This situation is essentially similar to that of a cultural broker in an intercultural relationship (Hofstede, 1991), with a corresponding set of complex issues at play in the interaction (Peterson, 2014).

Cultural broker situations call for high-quality intercultural relations competencies in both sets of actors. Intercultural relations is a field of research with a large body of literature, an adequate description of which is beyond the scope of this thesis to define – the need is included in the lessons learned and suggestions for further research below. It is sufficient here to describe the main features of one widely-accepted analysis tool, the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ) to indicate the personal characteristics seen as associated with effective intercultural relations (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000; Leone, Luigi, van der Zee, van Oudenhoven, Perugini, Marco, & Ercolani, 2005).

The MPQ is offered as an on-line questionnaire that uses five scales to assess aspects of personality that are linked to effective intercultural relationships:

- ***Cultural empathy*** - the capacity to identify with the feelings, thoughts and behavior of individuals from different cultural backgrounds.
- ***Open-mindedness*** - people's capacity to be open and unprejudiced when encountering people outside of their own cultural group and who may have different values and norms.
- ***Social Initiative*** - denotes people's tendency to approach social situations actively and to take initiative.
- ***Emotional Stability*** - the degree to which people tend to remain calm in stressful situations.
- ***Flexibility*** - is associated with people's ability to adjust their behavior to new and unknown situations.

The MPQ is consistent with the *relational* model of intercultural communication competencies (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989) and as such is not ethno-specific: the instrument can indicate the level of an agent's ability to function effectively in virtually any cross-cultural encounter.

High-quality intercultural relations competencies are required in international development initiatives due to the often widely different histories, contexts and cultures of the key actors involved. As with any country, poorly-performing fragile states such as Afghanistan and some 40 or 50 others (Silva, 2011) have an array of formal and informal institutions which are rooted in their contexts and cultures, often with long-standing traditions and patterns of relationships. Many are poor, they have a history of colonialism, and their governments are trying with mixed success to improve social and economic conditions in their societies (Collier, 2007). As noted earlier, international agencies such as the World Bank, the UN, USAID, GIZ and others, most of which have their roots in relatively affluent western democratic societies, provide supports to these states in an effort to improve the effectiveness of their governments (OECD, 2012; World Bank, 2011a). These factors can contribute to marked differences in priorities, approaches and thought processes of the agents of these various agencies.

How foreign supports are designed and implemented to help improve local government performance is a central issue: there is a large body of literature on "aid effectiveness" which raises questions about development operations – see, for example, (Bourguignon & Sundberg, 2007; Kaufmann, 2009). As noted earlier in the discussion of hybrid political orders, there is increasing recognition that supports need to be provided in ways that are compatible with local contexts and traditions, and also reflect globally-accepted principles of governance (Boege et al., 2009; Kraushaar & Lambach, 2009; Andrews, 2013). This complex process has been described as "reconciling indigenous and transplanted institutions" (Dia, 1996) mentioned earlier, in a manner that fosters contextually-appropriate institutional development (Goodin, 1996), that can provide good governance. It is not a simple process.

Key principles of good governance in a modern state include responsiveness, participation, performance, accountability, transparency and equity (Grindle, 2010; Institute on Good Governance, 2014). Facilitating change in these elements deals with issues of personal status which were described earlier as requiring careful attention to culture if interventions are to succeed.

Analysis of the development of policies and institutions that work with Grindle's list of governance principles indicates it is a complex, contentious multi-actor and unpredictable process within any country (Rhodes, 1997; Hall, 1993). In an international development situation in a fragile state there is considerably more to consider in attempting to analyze and guide the process (Paudel, 2009). This is, in part, due to conditions in these states, and the involvement of a variety of foreign actors – such as the World Bank, international development agencies and occasionally the military – agents that are rarely present in domestic policy implementation in so-called developed states.

A major factor in these challenging situations is related to the differences in priorities, contexts, cultures and institutions of the external agents and host country systems – see, for example (Schick, 1998; Suhrke, 2013; Andrews, 2013), who discuss limits on what can be achieved in nation-building efforts in these countries. The priorities of fragile state leaders, politicians and bureaucrats can differ significantly from those of the agents of the international community who are charged with helping these countries implement policies to acquire some of the characteristics of a modern state.

For example, fostering gender equity or establishing merit-based staffing in the civil service may be high on the international agents' priority list, but not so high on the local leadership's list (Samar, 2011). These differences in priorities can have significant effects on policy implementation and institutional development in these states.

Multiple Rules, Multiple Games

The foregoing discussion of institutions and development is relatively silent on a "rules of the game" factor in Afghanistan and elsewhere. One of the more challenging characteristics of Afghan institutions – and in many other so-called developing countries – is the existence of multiple sets of rules and games, which can be played quite differently by key actors in the government depending on whom they are interacting with at the time.

The Afghan institutional framework can be described as a relatively thin veneer of modern state systems, such as constitutions, ministries, elections, presidents, parliaments, and so forth, which overlays a much older and deeper foundation of relationships and patterns of thought, belief and behavior that in large measure determine how the society really works. Actors in key positions in these systems are adept at shifting scripts (rules) to play their roles (games) in both sets of institutions. The hybrid political orders described earlier often have the same actors operating with different rules in different institutional frameworks. Understanding and working with this complex dynamic can be challenging to say the least.

This multiple-system phenomenon is well known in organizational development, where "formal" and "informal" networks and patterns of influence exist in almost all organizations (Schein, 1991; Argyris, 1993). When the same actors occupy influential roles in both systems and function in a coherent manner in both, things can go relatively well. Organizations operate effectively when these two sets of relationships co-exist in a harmonious way, and quite the contrary when they don't.

In systems such as Afghanistan these two sets of patterns can be at odds with each other, in large part because the relatively new "formal" system is influenced by international agents (and some local actors) who are supporting the introduction of culturally-laden modern state principles such as gender equity, merit-based recruitment and human rights, while the traditional (or informal) system seems to be doing what it can to maintain the status quo and limit the effect of some of these modern state elements on how the society functions. This is not simply a local vs. foreign actor conflict issue: Afghans occupy influential positions in both systems, with often the educated younger generation promoting the introduction of modern state norms, while in many cases it is the older generation of leaders who are entrenched in (and benefit from) the traditional system. This is all part of the local context that needs to be understood in any institutional development effort.

The interaction between the so-called formal and informal dimensions of institutional development is not adequately addressed in the literature reviewed above, which seems to presume a relatively coherent, monochromatic set of values at play in its description of how institutions develop and function. This issue is further discussed later in this thesis – one related concept being the existence of a "façade" in the

interface between foreign and local actors in the development relationship. Although it is an interesting area to explore further, this is enough to say here about this theme for now.

It is clear from the foregoing that fostering institutional change and implementing policies in a fragile state such as Afghanistan is a complex and challenging process in which context and culture need to be taken into account. The next section summarizes relevant aspects of the literature on policy implementation in fragile states, in a manner related to institutional development in the Afghan context.

2.4 Policy Implementation and Fragile States

The previous section on institutions highlighted a few of the key inter-related elements of institutional development and policy implementation in governance, with emphasis on the former. This section discusses the policy implementation dimension of strengthening governance in international development in fragile states, focusing on factors related to endogenization and contextualization of these efforts.

The section begins with a discussion of policy and context, followed by a high level description of policy implementation, an overview of mainstream policy implementation models and their relevance for non-OECD type states, and a discussion of policy implementation in international development, and concludes with comments on approaches to organizational change with a focus on fragile states.

Policy and Context

When one asks, "what is a policy?" the answer often is something like, "well, it depends on who you ask, and the context in which it is being used" – not a very helpful or precise response. The term is associated with others such as mission, strategy, law, regulation, guideline, procedure, plan, and more, all of which occupy various places in the constellation of elements in the guiding frameworks for the operations of the institutions of state. The relationships among the elements can vary, depending on the context and who is designing and implementing these frameworks. For the purposes of this research a basic taxonomy is required to lend some clarity to what is being discussed.

When the same question is put to Google, there can be over three billion hits. At the top of the list is a definition of a noun: "a course or principle of action adopted or proposed by a government, party, business or individual." and a string of synonyms: "plans, strategy, strategem, approach, code, system, guidelines, theory." Useful, but not very clear or precise.

British Columbia's Department of Education defines policy as follows:

> Policy is a plan of action used by the Ministry of Education to set out clear rules and expectations for the delivery of programs and services to the public.
>
> Policies come from legislation or from decisions made by elected officials, such as Ministers and School Trustees, or public servants and school administrators (Government of British Columbia, n.d.).

In this context policy is seen as subordinate to legislation, and as a plan for implementing the provisions of the law or the will of the organization's decision-makers. In other cases, policy can be used to set out the context for the development of legislation and implementing regulations and procedures. An example is Afghanistan's Subnational Governance Policy (GIRoA, 2010). When the SNG policy was drafted and ratified by the government, there was no subnational governance law, so it drew its authority from other laws, the country's Constitution and the consultation of a number of senior officials in the government (Williamson, 2011). It was subsequently approved by parliament, and became part of the foundation for a

number of other elements in the country's governance framework, such as the Municipalities Law and the Provincial Councils Law – both of which were in the pre-ratification stage at the time of writing of this thesis. It is worth noting that the SNG policy has been the subject of considerable controversy and was being replaced as this was being written[21]. Part of this redrafting process is included in the cases analyzed in this research.

Among the many Google responses to my question about policy was a clear document from the Federation University Australia: *What is Policy, Procedure and Guideline?* Policy and its components are defined as follows – adapted from (Federation University Australia, n.d.):

> **A policy** is a principle or rule to guide decisions to a desired outcome and is considered to be a 'Statement of Intent' or a 'Commitment' to a particular goal.
> A typical policy will consist of the following:
> **Purpose Statement:** Why the policy exists;
> **Policy mandate or authority**: Legal foundation of the policy;
> **Supporting Regulations:** List of issues dealt with in other more detailed supporting regulations and procedures;
> **Scope:** Who it applies to;
> **Policy Statement:** Details of the actual policy;
> **Responsibility:** Who is responsible for implementing and reviewing the policy;
> **Definition of terms.**

A *procedure* is described as a sequence of actions, processes and responsibilities required to achieve a particular result or goal in the policy. A *guideline* is a statement to assist with the determination of a course of action.

In this context policy is seen as subordinate to applicable legislation and other university regulations or previously-approved guidelines. Procedures and guidelines are derived from policies (Victoria State Government Department of Human Services, 2015).

Policy and *strategy* are closely related. Policy is described as being developed by top management, while strategy formulation is usually done by middle management. Policy is seen as being concerned with both thought and action while strategy is concerned mostly with action (Taleb, n.d.). A common expression about this distinction is: "strategy works, policy does not."

Much more could be said about the hierarchy of these concepts and their roles in governance – a full exploration of this issue is beyond the scope of this dissertation: it is sufficient to define the following general taxonomy of terms and concepts used in this research.

[21] Although the 2010 SNG policy served a useful purpose, there has been considerable dissatisfaction with it (Leach, 2011). It is a rambling 432-page document that was seen as difficult to implement and incorporating a wide array of issues that should not have been included. In late 2015 the government started re-drafting the policy, which was considered to be largely inappropriate and the result of a donor-driven effort (Yama, 2015b).

In general, a country's constitution and its laws are at the highest level, providing a context for policies addressing particular problems. In some circumstances where there is an absence of legislation, this order is reversed: an officially approved policy can provide a framework for drafting of laws. Regulations define how laws and policies are to be implemented, with strategies and procedures providing greater detail. Guidelines define even further levels of detail on actions required to carry out the intent of a policy, all of which should ultimately result in strategic plans, budgets, staffing charts, performance management procedures and, ideally, in monitoring and evaluation systems to feed performance data back to senior leadership so they can manage the organization appropriately.

This information is enough to define what is discussed in this dissertation. The next section gets further into the meat of the study – it explores how policies are developed and implemented.

Policy Implementation – a Brief and Partial Summary

Policy implementation has been the subject of considerable scholarly work, derived mainly from analysis of experience in OECD-type countries. See, for example, (March & Olsen, 2006; Matland, 1995; Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1989; Rhodes, 1997; Rhodes, 2006; Rhodes, 2007). In the last reference in this list Rhodes describes decentered and networked governance, which discusses involvement of non-state actors in the UK's system, and provides an interesting parallel to the hybrid political orders concept noted earlier in this thesis – these similarities will be discussed in the analysis section below. Also, there has been some critique of the applicability of much of the mainstream policy implementation theory in understanding systems in developing countries (Paudel, 2009; Brinkerhoff, 1996), where there are major differences in many of the contextual factors that are taken for granted in analysis of governance in western industrialized states.

There are at least two main aspects of analysis of policy implementation: one is understanding how a government decides that an issue requires its attention in terms of creating or changing its policies, institutions and programs – the different kinds of policy networks described by Rhodes (2007) falls in this area. A second and related aspect is the complex process associated with implementing such decisions so they become integrated into the operations of the government's institutions. While this section addresses some elements of the first, it focuses primarily on the latter.

In most OECD countries, only a few of the many social and economic issues that compete for leaders' attention are seen to be of sufficient concern that they become identified as problems that authorities decide to address. Once these decisions are made, resources are allocated to prepare policies, laws, budgets, regulations, strategic plans, staffing charts, performance management protocols and the rest of what is involved in running public sector programs. If the authorities continue to see the problems as priorities requiring the government's attention, these programs ultimately become part of the ongoing operations of the institutions of state.

Although this might seem to be a simple and straightforward process, in reality it is anything but. How policy implementation actually works has been the subject of

considerable analysis, much of which indicates that this key foundation of government operations is a complex, unpredictable and incompletely understood process. The comment by Goodin (1996) noted earlier on the unpredictability of the institutional design process applies to policy implementation as well. A description of this complexity is evident in the title of Pressman and Wildavsky's (1984) classic analysis of policy initiatives in the US: *Implementation: How Great Expectations in Washington are Dashed in Oakland; or, Why it's Amazing That Federal Programs Work at All, This being a Saga of the Economic Development Administration as Told by Two Sympathetic Observers Who Seek to Build Morals on a Foundation of Ruined Hopes*. What one sets out to accomplish in the policy implementation field might turn out to have a quite different outcome.

Even though this is a complex and unpredictable core aspect of public administration, there are identifiable components in the policy process. Six inter-related categories that can be used in analysis of policy implementation are: problems, agents, actions, context, institutions and organizations.

- ***Problems*** are issues that a country's leadership decides are significant enough that they need to be addressed by the state's policies and programs.
- ***Agents*** are actors (individuals or groups of any size) who are involved in the policy implementation process.
- ***Actions*** are the activities that agents or actors engage in as part of the policy implementation process – among other things, they strive to bring issues to leaders' attention, make decisions related to drafting and implementing policies, laws, budgets and associated regulations, and actually do the work the policies define as being required.
- ***Context*** includes a host of elements such as the social, economic, cultural, historical, and power dynamics in the environment in which policy implementation takes place.
- ***Institutions*** can be described as conceptual social structures, the "rules of the game" that define agents' roles, relationships and patterns of interaction in the society's operations.
- ***Organizations*** are formed when actors occupy roles in institutions, and behave in ways that may – or may not – be consistent with the rules of the game as they carry out the activities the policies define.

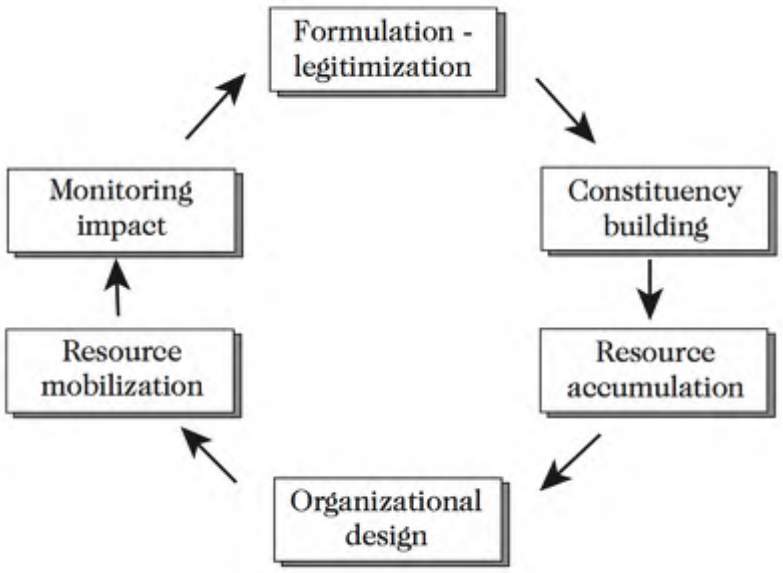
These categories are used in analysis of the policy initiatives studied in this research.

The latter two – institutions and organizations – were discussed earlier in this report. Ideally, the policy development and implementation process translates leaders' decisions to address problems into organizational-level behaviors that do so in an effective and efficient manner. This can be a complex process.

Once an issue has been identified by leaders as a problem that needs to be addressed, (which may or may not be an endogenous process) the rest of the policy development and implementation initiative is underway. This multi-stage process has been depicted by Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002: 32) as a sequence or cycle, with major steps shown in the following figure. They stress that in reality the process is

unpredictable and not as neat and tidy as it appears in the figure: it is rarely as linear and clearly defined, and there can be blockages or reversals and multiple iterations of the cycle as the policy initiative proceeds. Policy documents prepared at the beginning may undergo significant change as a result.

Figure 2
Policy Implementation Sequencing and Tasks



The authors describe a participatory approach to defining these six steps of the policy implementation process (ibid 57-59):

- ***Formulation – legitimization:*** preliminary analytical or diagnostic work to lay out the rationale for the reform. This work is used by interest groups both inside and outside of government to legitimize the policy initiative.
- ***Constituency building:*** identifying and reaching out to stakeholders to bring them into the policy process.
- ***Resource accumulation:*** identifying and acquiring access to the resources required for the policy initiative.
- ***Organizational design:*** defining and putting in place new implementation arrangements and structures.
- ***Resource mobilization:*** disbursing resources to the implementation actors and ensuring the new processes run smoothly and effectively.
- ***Monitoring impact:*** generating and analyzing feedback to support adjustments, adapt to changing conditions and contribute to future policy initiatives.

This seemingly rather straightforward list of tasks, which may have differing levels of contextualization and endogenization, are described in considerable detail in their book. They will contribute to analysis of the Afghan policy implementation initiatives

selected for this research, particularly in relation to the *actors* and *actions* components described above.

The authors note that individual policy implementation initiatives may extend over a decade or more during which there may be several changes in governments: stakeholder engagement needs to strong enough to withstand unanticipated changes in political context as proposed policy changes move toward becoming embedded in government operations.

Institutions and Policy Styles

Another link between the policy processes discussed in this section and the earlier section on institutions is in Paul Cairney's (2012:87-8) *Understanding Public Policy* in which he describes a range of approaches used to describe institutions, and asks, "what are institutions and what difference do they make to policy outcomes…what effect do they have on policy styles?" and, "…is policy made differently in political systems with rules that concentrate power at the centre?" He then describes policy processes associated with different structures of government.

He refers to Lijphart's (1999:2) often-cited argument that there are basically two types of political system designs – majoritarian, which concentrate power at the centre, and consensus, which share, disperse and limit the power of individual actors. The former is associated with competitive struggles for power, while in the latter there is less concentration of power and a spirit of inclusiveness, bargaining and compromise in which groups are more likely to cooperate with each other to achieve their objectives (Lijphart, 1999).

Cairney (2012:90) describes "policy communities" as having relatively close relationships between civil servants and certain interest groups. "Membership of that community is based in part on the willingness of its members to follow and enforce the 'rules of the game'. When civil servants and groups form relationships, they recognize the benefits – such as stability and policy continuity – of attempting to insulate their decisions from the wider political process."

There is a similarity of this analysis with the earlier description by Linder and Peters (1994) of the decisional approach in institutional design – a relatively closed community of presumed experts avoiding becoming engaged in the broader (and potentially messier) political processes. While this may be seen by elites as efficient and effective, Cairney says it is likely to produce policies that are not operationalized as well as those produced through a more inclusive dialogical process in which an array of stakeholders have a sense of ownership of the outcome.

Cairney says this ownership and contextualization issue calls for more evidence before making assumptions about a country's policy style:

> It is good to identify a basic common understanding (that institutions are important) and a set of questions to guide public policy research: … how are institutions formed by agents? Why, and under what circumstances do agents accept or follow rules? What patterns of policymaking behavior can we attribute to those rules? The solution for 'problem oriented scholars' is not to ignore the debate; it is to get

> enough of a sense of perspective to allow us to continue to engage in theory-driven public policy research. (ibid 92).

This dissertation project is designed to contribute to the research called for in such comments by Cairney and others, and link it to contextualization of initiatives in international development in fragile states.

Policy Implementation in International Development

Much has been written about policy implementation and institutional reform in international development, most of which addresses difficulties in this process. Examples include Frynas's account of a failed World Bank project's attempt to reform financial administration in Ghana (Fynas, 2009); Liebold's analysis of subversion by Chad's leaders of institutions designed to distribute oil pipeline revenue to serve the social good (Leibold, 2011), the negative assessment of that well-intentioned initiative in Chad by the World Bank's evaluation group (World Bank IEG, 2009a); and the Bank's evaluation of its many public sector reform efforts (World Bank IEG, 2008).

Reform efforts in Afghanistan have also received considerable attention – examples include the Congressional Research Service's analysis of governance (Katzman, 2014), Carlotta Gall's *The Wrong Enemy,* an insightful and scathing critique of the Afghanistan campaign (Gall, 2014), the Afghan government's own analysis of its inability to fulfill its obligations in the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (GIRoA, 2013c), and an *Atlantic* report on the Karzai government on the eve of the 2014 elections which ultimately put Ashraf Ghani in the President's chair (Mashal, 2014a). A common theme in these analyses is the prevalence of cronyism and corruption among the country's leadership, consistent with the predatory elite model seen in many developing countries (Mehran, 2013; Suhrke, 2013; Collier, 2009). These factors, which are discussed in greater detail later in the section on the Afghan context, contribute to making policy implementation a particularly challenging exercise.

While these and other similar critiques highlight failures, few go further to analyze the factors involved in these undesirable outcomes. Two books which provide useful analytical frameworks are Matt Andrews' 2013 *Limits of Institutional Reform in Development,* and a 2002 report, *Managing Policy Reform: Concepts and Tools for Decision-Makers in Developing and Transitioning Countries,* by Derick Brinkerhoff and Benjamin Crosby (Andrews, 2013; Brinkerhoff & Crosby, 2002). The latter, which was referred to earlier, is an in-depth analysis of USAID's decade-long *Implementing Policy Change* project, which operated in Africa, Latin America and in transitioning countries in Eastern Europe, while Matt Andrews' book draws primarily from extensive analysis of decades of World Bank supported reform initiatives.

The World Bank initiatives described in Andrews' book have had mixed results – for example, country CPIA scores for governance improved in about 70 percent of countries, but remained unchanged or dropped in about 30 percent. Scores for corruption, transparency and accountability improved in 53 percent, while remaining static or declining in 47 percent. Civil service reforms improved public administration in 42 percent of supported countries, while they stayed the same or

worsened in 58 percent. Other analyses indicate similar results, and cite common reasons for these problems.

Andrews says that "many governments do not improve after years of institutional reforms. This is because reforms often follow dominant best practices whereby context is largely ignored, poorly fitted best practices are mimetically reproduced, and narrow sets of high-level agents are relied on to champion reform. These interventions commonly yield reforms …where the form of government changes but functionality does not." This contributes to the institutional ethnocentrism noted earlier.

He then describes an approach associated with positive results, which he terms Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA), in which "externally influenced institutional reforms … focus on solving problems through a process…described as purposive muddling, incorporating action-based learning by broad sets of agents." He goes on to criticize norms in the international development system that "make it appropriate to exclude distributed agents from the process of designing interventions." (ibid. 214-5) – presumably in a misguided effort to simplify the process.

His analysis mirrors the two approaches to institutional design noted earlier, the *decisional* and *dialogical* modes described by Linder and Peters (1994), in which the latter is associated with relatively more effective and sustainable institutional development. He is also consistent with the application of Chaos Theory to organizational development, as described in Stacey's (1992) *Managing the Unknowable* and Kiel's (1994) *Managing Chaos and Complexity in Government*, which advocates an iterative, multi-actor participatory approach that some would describe as "purposive muddling" in that it is more process-oriented than focused on reaching specific pre-determined (and possibly obsolete) targets and not adjusting strategies in response to changes in the operational context.

Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002) go further than Andrews in their distillation of lessons from more than a decade of USAID-supported policy implementation projects in over 40 countries in Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. From 1990 to 2001 this Implementing Policy Change (IPC) project developed "tools and approaches to improve the process of policy implementation in ways that encourage and enhance sustainable democratic governance" (ibid: xi). Their main findings on effective approaches to policy implementation were summarized in the policy sequence and tasks noted earlier in this section.

They also provide an overview of the evolution of approaches to policy analysis in international development since the 1950s, noting that economic precepts remain at the core of strategies of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank on how countries can achieve take-off to growth and development.

> First generation policy analysis relied heavily on economic models that seek "first-best" solutions that maximize socioeconomic welfare for the greatest number of citizens under free-market conditions. The "how" question did not arise, since these economic models assumed that the best policies would be implemented because (a) governments are interested in maximizing welfare for all citizens (the "benevolent" state), and (b) governments have sufficient administrative capacity to implement

> policy choices effectively. However, experience revealed that the best (technically "correct") policies often were not adopted or implemented. The gap between prescription and real-world application led to a critical re-examination of the assumptions underlying economic models of policy reform.

This reflection resulted in scholars and practitioners focusing on the role and capacity of the state as the missing elements, which led to inclusion of politics and institutions as categories of inquiry in policy analysis and design, and to the second generation of analytical approaches and models of development.

> This second generation encompasses institutional economics and political economy, and focuses upon the interplay among state, market, and civil society. Key concepts are transaction costs, incentives and interest groups, all of which are related….Policy models based on institutional economics favour reducing the role of the government in the direct provision of goods and services and increasing the role of the private sector and civil society… Political economy places the impacts of political variables at the centre of explanations of policy outcomes. It emphasizes how incentive patterns are a function of underlying political objectives and interest group interactions…. The state, political economists hold, risks capture by interlocking circles of economic and political elites. From the perspective of small farmers or local businesses, for example, the average developing-country government, far from being benevolent, represents a "predator," a resource-extractive state whose policies add significantly to the costs of doing business.

Reflection on this experience led to realization that successful policy reforms needed to offset the influence of entrenched interest groups, reduce opportunities for rent-seeking, and strengthen the countervailing power of civil society. The "how" question from the second generation of policy approaches focused on recognizing the importance of institutions and politics, and that building capacity was necessary. However, the tasks of carrying out government functions in a market economy with an active civil society required a stronger state that most developing countries had.

> The third generation of policy analysis approaches responds to the lessons learned from the policy dialogue and reform experience of the 1990s and into 2000, in which the importance of the "how" question became paramount. The technical aspect of the question concentrates upon issues of reform sequencing and the interactions among the various components of macroeconomic, sectoral and governance reforms. … In addition, third-generation techniques see policy reform as a process. This shift means that policies are dynamic combinations of purposes, rules, actions, resources, incentives and behaviors leading to outcomes that can only imperfectly be predicted or controlled.

This process approach sees policy reform as a largely unpredictable, complex interaction among policy statutes, stakeholders, implementers and sociopolitical contexts – it calls for an additional set of tools that incorporate contextually-appropriate social and institutional factors more centrally into technical policy alternatives. These tools are more useful to policy makers in helping to guide policy development and implementation as it unfolds rather than in choosing among competing policies a priori. Further, it suggests that policy emerges from the bottom up, not just from top down (ibid. 4-5). These elements noted in Brinkerhoff and Crosby's work echoes previously-cited comments by Goodin and others on the unpredictable and organic nature of institutional development and policy

implementation, and also highlight the endogenous and contextualized nature of effective policy initiatives.

It is interesting to note that the basic components of this third generation approach described by Brinkerhoff and Crosby in their 2002 publication – participatory, open-ended, process oriented, etc. – seem to be still missing from the international development policy implementation scene described in Andrews' analysis published in 2013 – eleven years later. Although the overall purpose of international development is to introduce change and foster reforms in recipient countries, it may be that the introduction of innovation into the operations of the donors' development system itself is far more difficult than it seems: this is an issue that merits further research.

Policy Implementation and Organizational Change

One way of regarding policy implementation in government is to see it as fostering organizational change through the introduction of innovation in a complex system. This is a process with multiple factors which have been analyzed for decades by authors such as Batten and Batten, Saul Alinsky, Chris Argyris, Kurt Lewin, Everett Rogers, Peter Senge, Peter Marris, Ward Goodenough, Paulo Freire and many others (Batten & Batten, 1967; Alinsky, 1971; Argyris, 1993; Elsass & Veiga, 1994; Rogers, 1983; Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith, & Kleiner, 1994; Marris, 1986; Goodenough, 1963; Freire, 1970). These authors provide analytical frameworks and strategies for change that can be applied to a wide variety of situations and contexts, including policy implementation in a fragile state.

Furthermore, as noted elsewhere in this report, the fragile state contexts in which policy implementation initiatives take place are usually unstable – some are facing insurgencies, their economies are under stress, and their electoral and governance processes have relatively short histories. Afghanistan, for example, has had ten constitutions in the past century or so (Deputy Minister of Finance Afghanistan, 2013), and the 2014 election was the first peaceful democratic transfer of power in recent history. Additional conceptual tools that are useful in understanding these complex and turbulent contexts are found in General System Theory (Bertalanffy, 1968) and as noted earlier, Chaos Theory as applied to organizational behavior – see, for example Ralph Stacey's *Managing the Unknowable* (Stacey, 1992) and Doug Kiel's *Managing Chaos and Complexity in Government* (Kiel, 1994).

A general theme in these works is that effective and sustainable introduction of innovation in a complex system requires a wholistic perspective, and engagement and ownership of the change process by key influential actors in these systems: that it be endogenous and contextualized. External agents must work with these indigenous influencers and their patterns of relationships to foster alignment of their system along a desired trajectory that is compatible with the context in which the change is taking place. This is a key element in sustainability of international development as described, for example, in the Paris Declaration and other similar core documents in the field (OECD, 2008c; UNEP, 2009; OECD, 2007).

Although these organizational change and sustainability models could be described here in greater detail, to do so would be beyond the scope of this study. The basic

concepts are relatively well known – they will be applied as appropriate in the analysis section of this study.

Agents attempting to foster organizational change in developing country systems and bureaucracies face challenges that are particular to their contexts. Their systems often run more on the basis of patronage and cronyism than in a merit-based, results-oriented mode, and strategic plans, budget processes, job descriptions and performance management and evaluation systems often are not well established. Public sector jobs are often regarded by incumbents as providers of status and access to rents, and income maintenance assets rather than as key parts of a responsive, service-oriented results-based operation (Suhrke, 2013; Katzman, 2012; OECD, 2008a). These factors are part of the context in which institutional development efforts are undertaken.

Most of the strategies that are used with good effect in industrialized societies to increase employee motivation and alignment, and to implement organizational development initiatives, can have little relevance in countries such as Afghanistan. Staff development systems are often weak, and management and supervision practices are poorly developed. Technical skills for program design and budget planning and execution are in short supply. In other words, many fragile state administrative systems do not function at an even moderate level of effectiveness – that is one of the main reasons they are considered fragile. This issue has been the subject of numerous studies: see, for example (Christensen & Laegreid, 2007; Cookman & Wadhams, 2010; GIZ, 2014; Kaufmann, 2009; Pritchett & Woolcock, 2002; Schacter, 2000), as well as the two books mentioned earlier, by Matt Andrews and Brinkerhoff & Crosby. The policy implementation and institutional development work that is taking place to strengthen systems in this context is the focus of this research project.

Some of the policy development experiences in industrialized societies can apply in fragile states, but in ways which are often only partially visible to outsiders. In the *dialogical* approach described earlier, the engagement of multiple sets of agents, each with their particular vested interests, is associated with successful and sustainable policy implementation outcomes. In a fragile state a similar process is associated with positive outcomes – the main difference being that the various deliberations and exchanges often are in local languages and in contexts that are not visible to outsiders. They take place in the "black box" – the deeper dimensions described earlier of how the society really works. A line from a Bob Dylan song describes how the process often appears: "You know something's happening, but you don't know what it is – do you, Mister Jones…" He could have been writing about much that goes on in international development.

This section has summarized part of the literature on policy implementation in "developed" and fragile states. The information here will contribute to the analysis of the six cases studied for this research.

The Afghan Context

This section draws from a variety of sources to describe characteristics of the Afghan context which are relevant for this research.

2.5 Afghanistan as a Fragile State – A Selective Review

Introduction

The previous sections of this review highlighted areas of governance, fragile states, institutional development and policy implementation – models and theoretical frameworks relevant for this study. This section summarizes selected features of the Afghan context in which institutional development and policy implementation are taking place. The description is limited, and is far from a complete account of the country and its culture and history – that would be a much larger work than the scope of this study permits[22]. It does, however, go beyond the categories normally found in fragile state indexes described earlier to include factors relevant for this research.

As noted in the Project Summary, Afghanistan has been identified as a fragile state by the World Bank, OECD, the UN and other agencies. The World Bank's 2013 list of "fragile situations" ranks it below Haiti, the DRC and Yemen (World Bank, 2013c). It also has many of the characteristics of a "limited access order" as described by North and colleagues (North, Wallis, Webb, & Weingast, 2007). In keeping with the "Hybrid Political Order" concept described earlier, it also has assets to consider in any nation-building strategy.

Volumes have been written describing the country's history and more recent events: see, for example (Barfield, 2010; Dobbins, 2008; Rashid, 2008; Barfield & Nojumi, 2012; Gall, 2014) and the many reports by the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (www.areu.org.af), and the Afghanistan Analysts Network (www.afghanistan-analysts.org).

The following focuses on elements relevant for this study – it provides an overview of what needs to be considered in contextualizing policy and institutional development initiatives.

Context – War, Politics and Nation-Building

While this research was underway the government was engaged in a nation-building process in the midst of an active, violent and wide-spread insurgency.

An excerpt from a daily news summary for September 25, 2015, prepared by Resolute Support (the NATO initiative that followed the end of the ISAF mission in 2014) provides an indication of part of the context some fourteen years after the US-led invasion in 2001:

[22] For more complete and well-regarded analysis see (Barfield, 2010) and the many works of Barnett Rubin (http://cic.nyu.edu/people/barnett-rubin).

> Story of the Day – A United Nations report states the Islamic State group is making inroads in Afghanistan, winning over a growing number of sympathizers and recruiting followers in 25 of the country's 34 provinces, reported Agence France-Presse. The jihadist group has been trying to establish itself in Afghanistan, challenging the Taliban on their own turf. Afghan security forces told UN sanctions monitors that about 10 percent of the Taliban insurgency are IS sympathizers, according to the report by the UN. Afghan government sources said "sightings of the groups with some form of ISIL branding" or sympathy have been reported in 25 provinces.
>
> In other Afghan news, TOLO News reported that President Ghani stressed the need for more women political representation within government institutions, asking the ministries to consider more female appointments in a bid to empower Afghan women. Ghani pledged to review employment opportunities for women in the Afghan legal system by implementing necessary reforms within the relevant institutions. Ghani said that women have major potential in legal spheres and criticized the lawmakers for not casting the vote of confidence for his Supreme Court female nominee Anisa Rassouli. (Resolute Support, 2015)

This report of seemingly mutually-exclusive elements of a wide-spread and increasingly dangerous insurgency and a reform-minded government leader attempting to promote gender equity is typical of the quite different types of activities that co-existed in the Afghan context as this research was underway.

The government's presentation of the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework to the international community at the Brussels Conference[23] in October 2016 clearly defined the country's challenges and hopes for development (GIRoA, 2016:2):

> The Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) is a five-year strategic plan for achieving self-reliance. …(it) presents a long-term development narrative for Afghanistan by providing consistent high-level guidance to government and other stakeholders…
>
> The government is deeply invested in the peace process and stands firm on the need to find political solutions to the conflict…
>
> Building the people's trust that their government can provide a better future for them and their families is central to our national development plan. Our people must have confidence in a state that is well-governed through laws and institutions, provides a voice for the people to hold their government accountable, and delivers quality services. … (it) will help overcome the legacy of fragmentation and distortion that has stunted institutional development in Afghanistan. Improved governance, anti-corruption, and organizational reforms are woven into every section of this document.
> …
> We believe that with focused and sustained commitments, our approach to policy formulation and management can deliver results. …It details standards on inclusion,

[23] This was one of a series of international conferences held every few years since 2001 to secure donor funding to keep the Afghan state running, and to hear the government's commitments to establishing good governance in return for receiving these funds.

> gender equity, regional balance, and other development goals that provide a basis for making decisions and assessing results.
>
> Our aim is to be transparent about the challenges ahead. .... We must build a national consensus in support of the reforms presented in this framework. Afghanistan is a nation that understands hardship. But we are confident that hope, hard work, and staying true to our values will make our country succeed.

These few samples illustrate the aspirations and challenges that were features of the context in which institutional development was taking place as this research was underway.

Governance Context

The country's governance context provides nation-builders with significant challenges: a few of the more pertinent factors are described here. It also has significant assets on which to build, usually called "traditional" administrative systems – examples are noted at the end of this section.

Leadership

It is an understatement to say that Afghanistan's leadership context has been rather turbulent – in late 2013 Thomas Barfield summarized it as follows:

> No Afghan ruler has ever ceded power voluntarily or departed as part of a peaceful process. Even worse, every Afghan ruler since 1901 (thirteen in all) has either been killed or driven from office and into exile by military force. If the 2014 election happens, and produces a new leader who can hold the country together, it will be very positive. (Barfield, 2013:14)

Although there was some speculation that then president Karzai would ignore the Constitution and manipulate his way into a third term, an election did indeed take place in 2014. It was marred by what some called industrial scale fraud (NY Times, 2014), and the dispute between the two front runners was eventually settled by US Secretary of State John Kerry who imposed a coalition agreement compelling them to form a "National Unity Government" (AAN - Afghanistan Analysts Network, 2014). In spite of its instability and challenges the NUG was still in place two years later.

It is well known that during the Taliban regime (1997-2001) the country hosted Osama Bin Laden and Al-Queda, who planned and executed the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York in what has become known as "9/11" and precipitated yet another regime change, this time a massive invasion by US-led NATO forces that ousted the Taliban and ultimately put Hamid Karzai in the President's office following the first Bonn Conference in 2001 (Dobbins, 2008). Although there had been some foreign and domestically driven modernization efforts in the country since the 19th century, most of the international community's efforts to help Afghanistan establish modern state institutions began after 2001, in the systems overseen by Karzai.

Governance and administrative history

Not only has the country had a turbulent leadership history, it also has a turbulent and troubling administrative history; a few highlights will suffice for the purposes of this study – a full description is beyond the scope of this research.

Afghans recall with nostalgia a relatively stable period in the 1960s and 70s during the leadership of Daud Khan, who, like his predecessors, administered the country through a network of appointed provincial governors who operated relatively independently of the central government (Barfield, 2010). They worked with a variety of traditional leaders – tribal elders and others – to govern their provinces in a mode more akin to feudal fiefdoms than a modern democratic state. Afghans – and the many western adventurers who passed through the country at the time (my brother and sister-in-law among them) – say the country was well-managed and life was good in those days. That regime was replaced in a series of upheavals that ultimately saw a Soviet occupation and military campaign. A proxy war between the Soviets and the West, as depicted in the movie *Charlie Wilson's War*, ended with the withdrawal of Soviet forces in 1989. One result of this period was establishment of a Soviet-style control-oriented administrative system that shaped its bureaucracy and continued years later to exert an influence on the structure and operations of the government. It has become one of the most centralized administrations in the world (Katzman, 2014), but with poor performance: for example, in 2017 the budget execution rate from the development budget was reportedly about 30% (TOLO News, 2017a), indicating problems with governance and administrative issues such as programming and business processes.

The mujahedeen forces that received western support to drive the Soviets out of the country subsequently fought each other over control of Kabul, destroying much of the city in a brutal civil war. By late 1997 the Taliban had defeated all but one of the mujahedeen forces and controlled most of the country, except the Panjshir valley held by Masood's Northern Alliance. This group was instrumental in the ouster of the Taliban by the US-led coalition in 2001.

Progress since 9/11

There is little question that the nation building process since 2001 has had notable results. In an article in the July 1, 2015 issue of *the New Yorker,* Afghan scholar Barnett Rubin (Rubin, 2015b) summarized the key points in the progress he has seen in the country:

> No one who knew Afghanistan before 9/11 can fail to note the remarkable changes that have taken place there: the dramatic increase in life expectancy and decrease in child and maternal mortality rates; the elections for President, parliament, and provincial councils; the distribution of millions of cell phones, many connected to the Internet; the flourishing of the mass media; the construction of office and commercial towers, roads, and airports; and, perhaps most important, the spread of education, which is creating a generation of professionals who, as they move into positions of influence, are sure to transform the country. And yet, after thirty-seven years of continual warfare, the population is traumatized. Both civilian and military casualties are on the rise. Extreme poverty, vulnerability, and violence, especially against women, are pervasive, as are government corruption and other abuses of power. And

> all of the progress hangs by a thin, fraying thread— Afghanistan depends on foreign aid to finance two thirds of the government's operating budget and virtually all of its development projects and national-security forces.

While it is undeniable there have been tremendous improvements, there is still a long way to go before the country begins to emerge from the "fragile state" category.

Policy and Legal Framework

The country has a challenging policy and legal framework. It has had ten constitutions since the 1800s, and as noted earlier, did not have a peaceful democratic transition of power until the election of 2014. Each administration changed the country's legislation, often sweeping away much of the previous regime's systems and replacing them with their own, resulting in a number of contradictions, discontinuities and gaps in the state's governance structures. It has not had its equivalent of the decades-long continuous administrative history of more stable states, and as a result does not have a relatively coherent network of policies and laws that evolved over time in a somewhat integrated fashion (Deputy Minister of Finance Afghanistan, 2013). The country's legislative and policy framework can be described as resembling both a haphazard patchwork quilt and a slice of Swiss cheese.

One relatively small but important part of the policy and legal context is described in the August, 2015 draft of the National Priority Programme for Local Governance (GIRoA, 2015b):

> The reach of the Afghan state and its ability to provide security, deliver essential services and promote sustainable and equitable development are stretched to the limit. In more than 130 districts (out of 364), apart from security agencies, central government has little or no effective presence on the ground. Poverty levels are high, with more than 36 per cent of Afghans living below the poverty line. Service delivery is variable but generally unsatisfactory, particularly in areas that are affected by armed conflict.
>
> Some of the main constraints on the ability of SNG (Subnational Governance) institutions to provide quality governance and effective service delivery are the deteriorating security situation; a lack of sufficient human resources with relevant knowledge and skills; dwindling financial resources; weak or underutilised performance management systems; and systems of upward and downward accountability that are in the early stages of development and prone to abuse.
>
> Policy limitations have also played a part in holding back development. In the relatively few places where it is possible to discern a clear policy position, the existing SNG policy (SNGP, 2010) is overly ambitious, and does not take sufficient account of resource constraints, the realities of the Afghan context, or of comparative experience.

The Subnational Governance Policy mentioned in this excerpt was being revised as this research was underway, and some of the work involved in creating its successor was analyzed for this thesis. As noted in the introduction, other policy initiatives analyzed in this research dealt with gender equity, municipal governance, establishing a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system, and the early stages of establishing a national policy management system. These efforts were challenging

indeed, given the security, political and institutional context in which this work was taking place.

Gender Equity Issues

The status of women in Afghanistan has often been cited as a serious concern. For example, the section titled *Women and Socio-economic Development* in the government's presentation at the 2016 Brussels Conference stated:

> The potential of women to contribute to economic development remains largely restricted by structural barriers, cultural norms and insecurity. Relevant indictors for women are significantly worse than those for men. Seventeen percent of women are literate, compared to nearly half of men, and just 15 percent of working age females are in paid employment. Enabling women to participate in the economy and society to a greater extent is a priority for Afghan's successful development. (GIRoA, 2016:8).

Other sources speak more forcefully on the issue. For example, in an article in their 17 January, 2016 edition, Khamaa press carried a story about a woman who had suffered horrific abuse and mutilation at the hands of her husband, and added:

> The status of women in Afghanistan has been deteriorating at an alarming rate and this is despite the fact that millions of dollars have been spent in the past several years to promote women's rights, stop gender based violence and to create a healthy, safer and secure environment for women to live and work.
>
> The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) is of the view that insult, humiliation, rape, arbitrary or summary punishment and murder of women has increased and weak governance, weakness of law enforcement agencies, lack of security and lack of rule of law in districts and remote provinces have contributed to continuation and worsening of the situation.
>
> "In the first half of 1394 (21 March 2015 to 21 March 2016), AIHRC has registered 2,579 cases of violence against women while in the first six months of 1393 this figure was about 2,403," AIHRC said in a report. This figure indicates 7.32 percent increase in the number of violence cases against women…
>
> "In the first six months of 1394 as many as 190 women's and girls' murder cases have been documented in the regional and provincial offices of AIHRC," said the AIHRC report, "and the perpetrators of only 51 murder cases have been arrested." Afghan experts believe that the actual number of women and girls murder cases is much higher and usually remain unreported, because the overall majority of people in Afghanistan do not have confidence in the judicial system. People in Afghanistan "rated the judiciary as the most corrupt institution in the country." (Masoud, 2016).

Weak governance and inadequate policy frameworks are often cited as contributing to gender equity challenges in the country. In the conclusion of Orzala Ashraf Nemat's thorough analysis of women's issues in Afghanistan, in which she links the emancipation of women to achievement of peace and security in the society, she states:

> Thanks to various local, national, regional, and international factors, it will be impossible for any political settlement among armed men in Afghanistan to put women back into the margins of the society.
>
> Yet, it is also important to emphasize that women's advocates in Afghanistan are not necessarily looking for a symbolic representation or a slice of the power cake. What Afghan women are seeking goes far beyond conventional power-sharing. What they seek is, rather, a sustainable peace, based on foundations of a principled justice system in which law and order is dominant—indeed, in which law is the basis of order. Only such a system can ensure women's active role in the society, in all fields from sociopolitical to economic to cultural. It is the same foundation of a sustainable peace that minority ethnic and religious communities require—except that, in the case of women, they actually are the majority. (Nemat, 2011:28).

Two of the cases analyzed later in this thesis deal with gender equity issues.

Orzala Ashraf Nemat's call for establishment of a rule-based social order was addressed in another Afghan scholar's analysis of governance in the society – traditional decision-making institutions.

Shuras and Loya Jirgas – Traditional Gatherings with Mixed Benefits

Afghanistan has a long history of conducting *Shuras* and *Loya Jirgas* – large consultative gatherings in which important matters are discussed and decisions taken that reflect the will of participants. The former are called to deliberate on a variety of local and regional matters, while the latter are convened by the government for important matters of state, such as ratifying changes to the constitution and accepting the position of a head of state. These are similar to other 'traditional' gatherings such as *durbars* in Ghana (Bawah, Akweongo, Simmons, & Phillips, 1999), which provide venues for celebrations and large scale open consultation on affairs of community concern: a foundation of participatory governance. While these large consultative gatherings are seen as legitimate to most participants and observers, there may be problematic aspects of these systems.

A study by Khalil Humam (Humam, 2015) comparing the early years of development of Japan and Afghanistan found that Japan made good decisions, while Afghanistan did not, which helps explain the differences in their respective trajectories. In the 17th and 18th centuries Japanese authorities used force to impose a rule-based social order which was part of the foundation of its subsequent progress. Afghanistan's leaders a century later did not impose a rule-based system, and made use of the *Shuras* and *Jirgas,* consultative bodies described above, which were convened periodically to make major governance decisions. Because these consultative bodies could change the direction of the country as they wished, depending on who was involved, the underlying social pattern remained relatively fluid and unstable, and a rule-based social order was not put in place. This lack of rule-based constraints remains a feature of the social and political order to this day. The desire to maintain consultation-based fluidity at the base of the social order (rather than rules) helps explain why a draft law defining the basic organization of the government has been

stalled in the Ministry of Justice for over five years, and why powerful individuals feel they have no need to obey the law[24].

To the extent that institutional development is seen as establishing facilitative constraints on a social system – as discussed earlier – some Afghan elites are likely to resist establishing a rule-based foundation of the nation-building process. Those who wish to do so proceed with caution so they do not provoke a backlash that could block their efforts. This is part of the contextualization linked to effective policy implementation in the country.

Other factors – Religion, Drug Trade, Poverty, and More

This section summarizes a few of the other contextual factors that influence the evolution of governance in the country.

One of the most pertinent factors – about which there is usually an uncomfortable silence in the international development discourse – is religion, the elephant in the room that few scholars seem to want to talk about, let alone analyze as a factor to consider in a development initiative. Another huge factor in Afghanistan is the drug trade, another un-acknowledged elephant in the room which has a major impact on how the society and its institutions function. These and other factors are briefly summarized in this section, in no particular order of significance.

Islam is the foundation of Afghan society and underpins its varied institutional and conceptual frameworks. Barfield's highly-regarded analysis of Afghan culture and politics provides a useful overview of the role of Islam in the society:

> It perhaps goes without saying that Afghanistan is a Muslim country, mostly Sunni (85 percent) with a minority (15 percent) of Shias and Ismailis….Afghanistan is an example of an older form of Islamic society in which religion is not an ideology but remains an all-encompassing way of life…When religion is a way of life, it permeates all aspects of everyday social relations, and nothing is separate from it. This is the state of Islam in Afghanistan. Its influence is ever present in people's everyday conversations, business transactions, dispute resolutions, and moral judgments. There is no relationship, whether political, economic or social, that is not validated by religion….In such a society it is impossible to separate religion from politics because the two are so closely intertwined….Afghanistan is a place where the concept of Islamic politics is little debated, but only because its people assume there can be no other type (Barfield, 2010: 40-41).

There are some variations in the rather generalized view in Barfield's analysis. There are several versions of Islamic thought and practice in the country, two of which are the Salafist and Hanafi schools, which shape the population's consciousness and its relationships with the institutions of state. There are indications of conflict between

[24] An incident in Herat is an example. A local strongman, the head of the Provincial Council, accompanied by heavily armed followers burst into the office of the Attorney-General and walked out with one of his men who was being held for trial. As he left he reportedly shouted, "What law? *I* am the law!" He was later tried and found guilty of this and other offences, but was not actually taken into custody at the time (Tolo News, 2017b).

these two schools, the former being closely linked to the conservative Wahhabi sect, and the latter seen as more open and pluralist in its approach.

There is a wide range of adherence to religious principles among different sectors of Afghan society. An illustration was an exchange some years ago with a senior official in the Afghan embassy in Ottawa. When visiting his office during Ramadan, the fasting period, he asked to shift our meeting to someplace outside the embassy. On the short walk up the street to a nearby Starbucks coffee shop he lit a cigarette and said, "This Ramadan stuff is killing me!" and we were soon enjoying a good latte as the conversation continued. He was not unique, but other Afghans may be unlikely to do this.

Some of the more socially-conscious elites in the 1960s and 70s identified themselves with leftist principles more than Islam as a means to improve conditions in the country. This was consistent with the work of Muhammad Abduh, an Islamic scholar of the 19th century, who wrote, after his return from France in 1888, that "I went to the West and saw Islam, but no Muslims; I got back to the East and saw Muslims, but not Islam." He was indicating that most of the core values of western countries, such as freedom, human rights, and justice, do not conflict with Islam and called upon his fellow believers to strengthen these values in their societies (Hasan, 2011).

Most of the inner workings and dynamics of religion in Afghanistan are not readily apparent to foreign technical advisors – they know there are mosques and hear the calls to prayer, but usually know little about Islam's influence on society or on the operations of the government. The inputs they make are largely blind to this foundational aspect of Afghan life.

The drug trade – a unholy alliance of international drug cartels, warlords and the Taliban: this is a description that was provided by a former governor and minister who wished to remain anonymous, since this is a lethal combination of actors, and he said his life would be in danger if his identity were made public in this thesis. He said the presence of international drug cartels increased in the mid-2000s, and the brutal killing of two groups of development workers in Helmand province in 2005 was seen as the cartel's declaration of war against the state. This is consistent with the view that the conflict in Afghanistan can be seen as a contest for control of the ungoverned space (Lane MGen & Sky, 2006) – the drug trade can flourish where government is weak, and those in high places who benefit from this weakness are in no rush to strengthen the government.

Much has been written about this situation – see, for example, Eisler's *Afghanistan's Opium Economy: Incentives, Insurgency, and International Demand,* Ahmed Rashid's (2015) commentary on the international impacts of the drug trade on BBC News, and Barnett Rubin's many works on this topic – an example is his 2009 contribution to *The Future of Afghanistan* and another provocative thought-provoking item, his 2008 blog entry, *Who Lacks Capacity? Using the Skills of the Opium Trade for Counter-Narcotics* (Eisler, 2012; Rashid, 2015; Rubin, 2008; Rubin, 2009).

These and other works note that Afghanistan supplies about 90% of the world's opium for production of heroin and other related products. There are estimates that the drug trade represents about 50% of the country's GDP, and people at all levels are

reportedly involved, including key members at the top of the government. The insurgency is described as being funded in large part by the drug trade, and the conflict seems to be as much about accessing opium to feed a seemingly insatiable international demand as by a religiously-driven ideology. Much of the insurgent activity in southern Afghanistan, particularly in Helmand province, is said to be over control of the area's poppy fields, and in the north (Badakhshan and Kunduz) it is said to be for control of heroin labs and transit routes to the former Soviet republics and Europe. These issues have received in-depth analysis – see, for example, (Mansfield & Fishstein, 2016; Mansfield, 2016), who say the drug trade directly contributes to state fragility.

Opium has reportedly increasingly been locally processed into heroin, which is said to be easier to transport and market. Heroin labs seemed to operate with considerable impunity. For example, in 2013 when on a team working on a brief governance assessment for GIZ in the northern provinces, these labs were discussed, as was the impact of narcotics on the area, which is a transit route through the 'Stans and Russia and on into Europe. One of the local people involved in the discussion said that the labs were operating all over the province – some were close to where we were meeting. He offered to take the team on a short drive to see one: he was thanked but his offer politely declined.

The police and military were reported to be involved in the transportation of drugs from Afghanistan to Pakistan and Russia, and also through Iran and Turkey to Eastern Europe – an example was the arrest in mid-2015 of an Afghan Army General accused of transporting 15 Kg of heroin in a military vehicle (TOLO News, 2015a). The construction boom in Kabul and other centers over the past several years was said to be fuelled by "black money" reportedly from the drug trade as well as embezzlement, which could not be taken out of the country so it was being used to build massive (and largely unoccupied) high rise apartment blocks. Also, there have been ornate "poppy palaces" built in several areas of the city – large homes owned by influential Afghans, including government officials whose salary levels were far too low to support such lavishness. It is reasonable to wonder what other effects these huge sums have had on the country's politics and institutional development.

Much more could be written about this topic: this partial summary suffices to indicate the massive impact the drug trade has on the operations of the Afghan state and the broader society. It is hard to underestimate its distortive effect in terms of the values and behaviors of officials and other actors at all levels who are involved in running the nation. Many occupy positions in the government and at the same time are rumored do what they can to block efforts to strengthen the state, as this would interfere with their illicit activities. It is reasonable to assume that stakeholder engagement in policy development is negatively impacted by this situation.

Predatory elite capture is a feature of the Afghan state (Suhrke, 2013), which negatively impacts economic development and the government's attention to improving the social good. Much of the economy has been described as being captured by criminal elements (Mehran, 2013) which further limits the state's ability to serve its citizens. The election of 2014 put in place a new National Unity Government headed by Dr. Ashraf Ghani which says it is committed to addressing these and other related problems noted in this section (GIRoA, 2014a). As this was

being written over a year later there seemed to be little reduction of the criminality and elite capture factors, in spite of the government's promises – these contribute to the public's heightened concerns about unemployment and insecurity (USIP, 2015).

Corruption is wide-spread at all levels of Afghan society. Due to a combination of factors including lack of domestic political will and inadequate foreign attention to strengthening rule of law, it has become one of the world's most corrupt countries (Transparency International, 2012), and a culture of impunity allows known offenders to move freely in the society (Filkins, 2011). As noted earlier, the country produces about 90% of the world's opium, which is listed as one of its main exports (CIA, 2012) and fuels a large illicit economy that weakens governance and perpetuates instability in the region and elsewhere in the world (Felbab-Brown, 2013). In her book, *Thieves of State,* Sarah Chayes documents the corrosive and destabilizing effects of corruption on the nation building process in Afghanistan and elsewhere (Chayes, 2015) and calls it the major threat to global security.

Rentier state: Afghanistan is an aid-dependent country with about 75% of the government's income being provided by the international community (US Government Accountability Office, 2011). This has been a factor in the country's administration almost continuously since the 1800s, when its central administration and military were supported by the British as part of its buffer state status between India and Russia (Barfield, 2010). Its rentier state condition effects state-citizen relations and democratic processes, in that the government's revenue is not dependent on its relationship with the population (Verkoren & Kamphuis, 2013). The government requires popular support to validate its legitimacy as a sovereign state primarily during elections – the rest of the time there is less of a need for a reciprocal relationship between the state and its citizens. The consequence is that most leaders focus their attention upward and outward rather than inward toward their own people as they go about their business. This tendency was evident when evaluating USAID projects and supporting subnational governance and financial management systems, and was exacerbated during the high expenditure period of major military intervention (about 2008 to 2014), when communities could approach local military authorities for development funds and ignore the government's own planning and budgeting systems, which remained dysfunctional as a result.

Legitimacy is a problem for the state – the on-going insurgency could not function without support from the population (Kilcullen, 2006; US Army, 2006). The state does not provide enough services to citizens across the country to achieve output legitimacy, and citizens do not have sufficient opportunities to engage with the institutions of state to strengthen their sense of ownership and foster input legitimacy (Ferrell, 2014). While the high voter turnout for the 2014 Presidential elections indicates the population was more engaged than in the previous even more overtly corruption-plagued vote, they had high hopes for improvement in the state's operations. However, a year later, the 2015 Asia Foundation survey indicated this sense of optimism was at its lowest level in the past ten years (USIP, 2015).

Institutional fragmentation and patchwork systems: Uncoordinated donor inputs since 2001 exacerbated problems arising from the state's fragmented and patchwork-like legal and policy framework (described earlier). President Karzai periodically issued lengthy decrees which were intended to improve governance, but these were

often ignored by ministries that did not have the capacity to comply and report as required. An example was Decree No. 45 which had 33 sections and 164 articles, many of which would require ministries to make changes they were ill-equipped to implement (GIRoA, 2012; AAN - Afghanistan Analysts Network, 2012).

Low performing public services and systems contribute to lack of legitimacy and public alienation. Governance systems have been centralized for decades, and were further influenced by Soviet-era control-oriented approaches which did not place a premium on effective and efficient services to the public. For example, it reportedly takes 54 signatures and six months to hire a teacher in a district, and the President needs to sign the staffing charts of over 150 municipalities before their budgets are approved, even though they receive no funds from the central government and have to raise their own revenues for operations (Ministry of Finance Manager, 2013).

Low indigenous technocratic capacity within the government hampers its ability to design and implement policies that would improve government performance. In a decade of working with the government it has become increasingly evident there is a small but growing cadre of young, educated and committed Afghans working in the state – they represent the future leaders of the country. There also is a small network of capable and competent senior officials and other influential leaders outside the government, but these represent a minority within the upper levels of the government and society.

Reliance on expatriates to compensate for a lack of indigenous expertise to provide needed technical assistance contributes to challenges in policy implementation. Several well-intentioned foreigners have worked for years with Afghan counterparts to strengthen their systems – others have been short-term advisors who provided inputs without much familiarity with the context. This heavy reliance on foreign expertise, most of which has been provided by donors who have their own agendas and objectives, has contributed to the patchwork-like framework noted earlier, and also to the production of a number of policies and programs that are of varying levels of compatibility with each other and with the Afghan context. This problem is part of the focus of this research.

Limited Access Orders: is the term used by Douglass North in describing the many states that have conditions similar to Afghanistan (North, 2007). He criticizes the efforts of the World Bank and other international development agencies that are based on assumptions derived from what he calls "open access orders" – the relatively few economically and politically advanced societies that are the main providers of aid to fragile states. In a vein similar to comments by Matt Andrews (2013) on the limits of institutional reform in development, he says these strategies are not compatible with the contexts in which they are being applied, and defines a number of alternate approaches that would be better suited to the realities of such states. The relatively effective contextualized and endogenous policy initiatives analyzed in this study are compatible with North's suggestions.

Development traps: The country is caught in all four of the "traps" described in Paul Collier's *The Bottom Billion* (2007) – landlocked with unfriendly neighbors, poor governance, civil unrest, and is a rentier state that is reliant on income from donors rather than revenue from a diversified economy for its operations (Verkoren &

Kamphuis, 2013). These traps make it difficult for countries to emerge from cycles of violence and poverty; Afghanistan is one of the most "trapped" nations in the world.

These are a few of the many challenging contextual elements that need to be taken into consideration in fostering institutional development in Afghanistan.

Most of the information in this section has identified deficits in the Afghan system, challenges that interfere with the development of good governance. The society also has assets that can contribute to good governance – a few are described next.

Assets – "Traditional" Systems, Good People, Women Artists, Media

This section will briefly describe several of the society's so-called "traditional" institutions – in keeping with the concept of Hybrid Political Orders mentioned earlier, as assets to consider in analysis of Afghan government systems. Another set of assets are in contemporary features of the society – good people, and their efforts to promote constructive forces in the society. These assets are examples of elements on which to build in strengthening the state.

Mirabs – Water Masters

The majority of Afghanistan's farmers rely on irrigation for their livelihood, and over 90% of the country's irrigation systems are operated by *mirabs* – respected and knowledgeable individuals, usually landless sharecroppers – who are hired by communities to manage the distribution of water, a critical scarce resource (Peavey, 2011). Although there are variations in their operations and institutional arrangements in different parts of the country, (Thomas & Ahmad, 2009), there are common factors that have interesting governance aspects.

For example, in areas where there may be several irrigation systems along a single watercourse, communities have developed mechanisms to ensure a fair distribution of water for upstream and downstream users. In some cases a *mirab* selected by an upstream community manages the distribution of water in a downstream community, and a *mirab* from the downstream community works the upstream system (Rassul, 2011). This system of checks and balances maintains harmony and distributes available water in an equitable manner, key aspects of governance. Furthermore, *mirabs* are elected by system users (an example of democracy), their operations are transparent (accountability for performance), and services are paid for by farmers (fiscal sustainability). They also operate using varied complex systems of entitlements based on the different characteristics of the many users of the system (contextual appropriateness). The items noted in brackets are all key elements of good governance that are part of long-established non-state practices in the society's irrigation systems.

Wakili Gozars in Municipal Governance

A public policy thesis by Hamid Afghan describes forms of legitimate and participatory governance in municipalities based on traditional representatives of neighborhoods (*gozars)* called *wakili gozars.* (Afghan, 2012). He suggests these

could form an efficient, effective and legitimate means of citizen involvement in municipal governance, alternatives to democratically-elected representation. Integrity Watch Afghanistan conducted a study of administrative corruption of *wakili gozars* (Integrity Watch Afghanistan, 2013) in which they described the high calibre of individuals selected to be *wakili gozars* and the multiple roles they perform in service to their neighborhoods and the municipalities at large. While their research identified instances of administrative corruption, they did not suggest the institution be abolished – it performed a useful function in the operations of municipal governance. Urban areas appear to have long-standing processes by which respected individuals are selected for positions of leadership and exercise their responsibility for a variety of community affairs. One of the policy initiatives included in this thesis analyzes municipal administrative systems that incorporated these so-called traditional institutions in the state's governance processes, an example of a hybrid political order as described in Boege et al (2009).

Mediation and Conflict Resolution

Some parts of Afghanistan have systems of mediation and conflict resolution that operate on well-defined principles that are similar to mediation practices elsewhere in the world. They serve as non-state or hybrid governance mechanisms to resolve a range of problems, some of which could explode into lethal violence if left unattended. One example of an elaborate community-sanctioned hybrid mediation process in Kandahar was described in an evaluation of a subnational governance project (Tamas & Austin, 2013). Community members often turn to these culturally-embedded mechanisms to resolve conflicts that in other countries may be dealt with in civil court systems.

Good People and Energies – Hamdeli Festivals, Sports, etc.

There are a number of other contemporary strengths to take into account. One such strength is the many good people in the government and the broader society who are sincere, honest actors doing what they can, often at great personal risk, to build up their country. Many are youth who have returned from higher education abroad, and others were educated at home. They are in positions of influence throughout the society, and many are well networked – they know each other and work together to support their common desire to build a functioning state. They also know who the spoilers are and how this "mafia" operates, and try their best to counter its destructive, self-serving schemes.

An example of positive energies released by a group of these good people was a series of *Hamdeli* festivals beginning in 2014, which were a celebration of hope and positive forces. A network of capable Afghans organized several festivals, which were attended by thousands of families, mainly during the *Naw Ruz* period. Singers and artists came from afar to celebrate at these gatherings. They did not seek external funding, and received support such as free TV coverage by the TOLO network, to share the spirit across the country. This process received support from the President, and the team had plans to continue to act as a vehicle of positive energy in a country that is weary of the many negative forces experienced over the past decades (Yama, 2015a).

The success of Afghan sports teams is another positive element to celebrate – their cricket team has frequently won matches against Zimbabwe and other strong competitors, and Afghan soccer teams have also done well on the international stage. These assets could be built upon to strengthen national identity in much the same way as Mandela's South African government supported and celebrated the success of their Springbok rugby team as a focus of national pride.

These are a few examples of the many assets and "traditional" institutions and practices that are components of Afghan community life, and which are part of the elaborate long-standing non-state and hybrid governance systems that contribute to the functioning of the society. As in nation-building efforts in other so-called developing countries, these are strengths upon which agents can draw to help build modern institutions that are likely to "work with the grain" of pre-existing modes of collective behavior in the society.

Two other relatively new assets worth mentioning are courageous women artists, and a free and open media.

Courageous Women Artists

Another positive element is a group of courageous Afghan women artists, who have established a gallery in Kabul to provide mutual support and an outlet for their work. Much of their art counters the oppression and subordinate position of women. It can be seen as similar to art forms described by Paulo Freire (Freire, 1970; Freire, 1973) as indicating there are "cracks in the culture of silence" – and that the society is in transition from an oppressor-oppressed dynamic to a more egalitarian partnership among the various influential groups in the community (see Annex 3 for a sample). Freire says that once these cracks begin to appear, the process may be slowed down, but it can't be stopped – the transition is underway. These artists and their friends and supporters – many of whom are men – are in the vanguard of the transition in Afghanistan.

Open Media

A major asset is the country's media, which is the most open and free in the region. Its various outlets provide multiple avenues for Afghans to be informed of an array of initiatives and events across the country. Open line programs which give the public a voice and a way to air their concerns are particularly popular. Unfortunately, the government seemingly has not been as skilled in the use of strategic public communication as are the anti-government elements, so the media's potential as a constructive nation-building resource has yet to be fully tapped.

Much more could be said about formal and informal elements of the Afghan governance and social context, but this suffices for the purpose at this point. This is part of the context in which Afghan officials (with their international partners) are attempting to implement principles of good governance and associated institutional structures using strategies that are compatible with the realities in which they must operate.

Summary

The foregoing incomplete description of Afghanistan's history and its current situation is useful when one wants to identify factors related to contextualizing its institutional development process.

Issues such as on-going war and insurgency, some elites' reluctance to accept a rule-based social order, the desire to keep government weak so the drug trade can flourish, and the state's lack of a monopoly on the use of violence, among others, are part of the reality of administrative life in the country. Also, the fact there have been ten constitutions over the past century or so, and that the country has not developed a moderately coherent and comprehensive set of laws and policies, all contribute to a challenging governance context indeed.

Agents who want to introduce new policies and contribute to contextually-appropriate institutional development need to work with these factors if they hope to succeed. The cases analyzed later in this thesis describe how several policy initiatives were carried out, and identifies characteristics of these efforts that were linked to their relative degree of effectiveness.

2.6 Relevance of Established Analytical Models

This thesis has drawn from parts of the large body of literature on policy implementation and institutional development, which includes the works of Goodin (2014), Linder and Peters (1994), March & Olsen (2006), Rhodes (2006, 2007), North (1991), Cairney (2012), Grindle (2007, 2011), Hardin (1996), Harriss (2003), Kaplan (2013), OECD (2003), Pressman and Wildavsky (1984), Sabatier (2007), Scott (2006), and others. With the exception of works that deal specifically with fragile states, such as by Grindle, Kaplan, North and OECD in the list above, most are describing processes which take place in the relatively few affluent, stable so-called developed countries described by North et al (2007) as "open-order societies". As a result of this focus, there are elements that influence institutional development in fragile states such as Afghanistan which are not taken into account in most of these works. Examples include:

Counter-insurgency, legitimacy and institutional development
There is no mention in the mainstream policy literature of the relationships of institutional development, legitimacy of the state, and counter-insurgency. The military's definition of victory in a counter-insurgency campaign includes the population's acceptance of the legitimacy of the state so the people stop supporting the insurgents (US Army, 2006). This perception of legitimacy by the security sector is linked to effectiveness of the state's institutions. The problems which a fragile state's government decides to address in its policy development process may be linked to legitimacy and counterinsurgency requirements, imperatives that are not central elements in the policy work in OECD-type states described in the mainstream literature.

Relatively new, thin and incoherent policy context
Most of the mainstream policy and institutional analysis literature presumes this work is taking place in a densely-populated policy and legislative context that has been developed over decades of relatively stable and coherent growth – see, for example, (Polski & Ostrom, 1999) and (Simon, 1997). In most OECD- type states this web-like multi-layered context provides challenges in both policy analysis and in the introduction of new institutional structures – they need to take the complex pre-existing structures into account. In states such as Afghanistan, however, which has had ten constitutions since the late 1800s, the policy and legislative framework was described as resembling both a patchwork quilt and a slice of Swiss cheese – there are gaps and contradictions that have emerged over the relatively short period since the establishment of the most recent regime. Also, there may simply be an absence of policy in a number of areas, such as the national monitoring and evaluation system, subnational governance and gender equality policies analyzed in this research. This thin and incoherent policy context can contribute to challenges with role clarity and procedural processes in a number of governance areas. These factors are not central features of most of the existing literature.

State monopoly on the means of violence
Most of the policy literature has been developed in societies where the state has a monopoly on the means of violence. This is not the case in fragile states such as Afghanistan, where warlords with their private armies pose a threat to the state's ability to maintain security on its territory. Stakeholder engagement in policy implementation discussions can be challenging when key state and non-state actors may have their weapons close at hand.

Predatory elite capture of the institutions of state
While most analysis of policy and institutional development assumes a relatively benign state apparatus, this is not the case in many fragile states. Predatory elite capture of the country's institutions is a feature of many such states, one of several factors about which the mainstream policy implementation literature seems silent. These elites will do what they can to maintain their positions, and may take stands that interfere with effective policy implementation processes that could limit their freedom of action. Strategies are required to work around these potential blockages.

Motives of leaders and officials
There seems to be an unstated assumption in most of the policy and institutional development literature that government leaders and public servants have the best interests of the citizenry in mind. This assumption needs to be questioned in many fragile states where the public sector is seen as a source of rents and its primary beneficiaries seem to be public servants and their friends rather than the population they are supposed to be serving. This is problematic but understandable in societies where there is no social safety net, the private sector is underdeveloped, and there are few other options for family income. The mainstream policy literature does not say much about the challenges of working in these contexts.

Corruption and a culture of impunity
Afghanistan ranks among the most corrupt countries on Transparency International's scale, while the OECD-type states in which most of the policy and institutional literature has been developed are among the least corrupt. This corruption and its

associated culture of impunity influences the behavior of senior leaders and officials who are asked to support policy initiatives, contextual factors that are not found in the mainstream literature.

Rentier state dynamics

Afghanistan is a "rentier state" – which means that the government's income does not come from taxing a productive private sector (Verkoren & Kamphuis, 2013). In such states the leadership's orientation is usually upward and outward, toward the sources of income, rather than inward toward the population with whom leaders need to maintain a reciprocal relationship. This external focus produces a dynamic that is quite different than in most OECD-type states, a condition that is not mentioned in most of the mainstream policy and institutional development literature. An example cited in this thesis is the Afghan President's support for policies demonstrating fulfillment of commitments to donors to strengthen governance so foreign funds will continue to support his government. The mainstream policy and institutional development literature does not address issues arising from this sort of situation – it assumes the government is working with domestic interest groups who operate within a viable local economy, not external entities on which it depends for its operating budget.

The drug trade

A huge elephant in the room that impacts Afghan governance is the drug trade, which some analysts estimate produces about 90% of the world's opium and is about 50% of the country's total GDP. The last thing the drug trade wants is an effective government which can provide security and resources for agricultural value chains that support licit rather than illicit crop production. There are indications that influential actors, members of the predatory elite, have a stake in the drug trade – in production, transportation, conversion of opium to heroin, and more, and as such are likely to do what they can to interfere with effective policy implementation and institutional development. There is no mention of these factors and spoilers in the mainstream policy and institutional development literature.

Resistance to establishment of a rule-based social order

A factor related to corruption is the resistance of elites to operating in a rule-based social order. The preference for a more fluid consensus-based system enables powerful individuals who may prefer to be involved in activities that weaken rather than strengthen the state. These factors are not mentioned in the mainstream literature, which seems to assume the struggle is about *which* rules to introduce, rather than a struggle between those who would like to establish some rules of the game and those who don't want any.

Low levels of indigenous technical expertise

Most of the policy and institutional development work in OECD-type states is carried out by local technical experts, either from within government or elsewhere in the society. This is not the case in most fragile states, many of which lack sufficient indigenous technical expertise to plan and implement policy initiatives. This creates a reliance on foreign experts, many of whom may not be familiar with the context in which the policies are to operate. This is one of the central issues addressed by this dissertation – a factor which is not adequately dealt with in the mainstream policy literature.

Condition of the population – literacy, health, economy, etc.
Most policy initiatives analyzed in the mainstream literature are taking place in affluent countries with relatively educated, healthy populations with life expectancy and literacy levels close to the top of the global range. Most fragile states are at the other end of this continuum, with governments struggling to deal with a host of factors (such as unemployment rates estimated to be over 50%) that are not addressed in most of the policy literature.

Hybrid political orders and institutional ethnocentrism
Most fragile states have only relatively recently become involved in contemporary nation building processes – many as recently as when they gained independence after WWII. While they may have the superficial appearance of modern states, in many these elaborate new institutions, such as constitutions, parliaments, elections, ministries, and so forth, are a thin veneer which overlays a much deeper and older system that in large measure determines how the society really works. These deeper and older dimensions include a host of so-called "traditional" institutions that have served their societies since before the colonial era, and many continue to provide order and public goods. In many of these states their recent development has been marked by a type of institutional ethnocentrism which imposes institutional forms derived from OECD-type states on quite different social and cultural substrates, sometimes displacing effective "traditional" ways of managing the societies' affairs, with questionable results. Effective nation-building in these societies often blends so-called modern and traditional systems in what Boege et al (2009) calls "Hybrid Political Orders." The mainstream institutional development literature says virtually nothing about blending modern and traditional systems in strengthening governance in fragile states – it seems to assume that systems based on Western traditions are (or should be) the global norm.

Proxy wars
A major factor that is not dealt with in the mainstream policy literature is the proxy wars that take place in fragile states such as Afghanistan. These conflicts suck limited host country resources out of social and economic development spending to support the security apparatus, contribute to a pervasive sense of insecurity, and introduce militarized actors to the domestic policy mix that are not present in most OECD-type states. The massive military presence in Afghanistan, for example, exerts influences on the state apparatus that make it difficult for leaders to focus on policy initiatives that are likely to benefit the population at large, such as education system reform. The literature does not address the challenges of policy implementation and institutional development in war zones. Much of this work is dealt with in the military literature under headings such as "stability operations" which focus primarily on short-term security issues and fall far short of the long-term requirements of nation building in most fragile conflict-affected states.

There could be more items on this list, but this suffices for the purpose of this thesis.

In summary: there are a number of contextual factors in fragile states that are not present in the societies which have been the focus of most of the policy implementation and institutional development literature, and which need to be taken into account when attempting to understand how to strengthen governance in states

such as Afghanistan. The work of North et al (2007) on *Limited Access Orders in the Developing World* is a useful but partial exception to this shortcoming. The literature needs to expand its analysis to include a broader range of factors if it hopes to be relevant for agents working to improve policy and institutional development in the approximately 40 or 50 states identified as fragile. There is much to be done to achieve this broadening of the analysis in the field.

Conclusion and Relevance for this Research

This literature review has described selected features of the fields of governance, state fragility, institutional development, and policy implementation, and parts of the Afghan context – all with a focus on contributing to an analysis of factors linked to contextually-appropriate institutional development in fragile states.

It has also noted characteristics of states such as Afghanistan that influence institutional development which are not taken into account in most of the established institutional and policy development literature.

Concepts that were directly or indirectly relevant for this research include the following:

Governance
There are multiple definitions of "governance" in the international development literature – most seem to speak of a central authority acting on or serving a relatively passive recipient population. Some speak of multiple levels of organization, from the central government to the family. Few seem to make space for so-called traditional non-state entities that pre-date or operate outside the relatively recently established modern state. The concept of "hybrid governance" and others noted in the section are useful for the analysis below.

State Fragility
The contested concept of state fragility was linked to poorly-performing government institutions, which contribute to low legitimacy, insecurity and challenges such as transnational crime and the drug trade that impact the entire world. Samples of the methods used to calculate the level of state fragility indicated the complexity of the process. There are concerns that the imprecise concept of fragility is a deficit-based assessment by so-called developed societies, and does not recognize strengths in the approximately 50 states labeled as fragile. Some of these states are devising their own measures which reflect a more asset-based approach. While acknowledging weaknesses, these asset-based views helped guide this research.

Institutional Development
Aspects of the broad and multifaceted literature on institutions that helped this research include the notion that they are not to be seen mainly as working organizations, but as regular patterns of behavior, the "rules of the game" that influence members' activities. They are organic conceptual social structures rooted in their context, and their development is often an unpredictable process that is better facilitated by an animateur with a high tolerance for uncertainty than tightly controlled by an engineer with a fixed objective in mind. The *decisional* and

dialogical approaches in the literature are useful in analyzing the policy initiatives in this study. Also, institution-building involves cultural change, has a moral dimension, and exerts an influence on those who facilitate their development – they can expect to be changed in the process. These are a few of the concepts in this section of the literature review that were useful in this research.

Policy Implementation

The literature in this section defined the major steps in the policy sequence, a model that is applied in the analysis section below. As with institutional development, policy implementation is an ill-defined and unpredictable process with a continuum of stakeholder participation that is similar to the *decisional* and *dialogical* models described in the previous section. The literature highlighted the endogenous and contextualized nature of effective policy initiatives, and indicated that policy implementation failures were linked to inadequate contextualization. This approach is similar to the introduction of innovation in complex systems, with well-known features of organizational development practice in turbulent and unpredictable contexts. In international development, however, much of the internal nation-building activity is not directly visible to external agents, who are dealing with local counterparts who operate in what appears to be an opaque "black box" of the society in which they live and work – this is part of the complexity of donor-supported policy implementation work.

Afghan Context

This section summarized some features of the context in which this research took place. The country has long been the unfortunate site of proxy wars – Britain vs. Russia during the colonial era, the US vs. the Soviets in the Cold War, and more recently a complex struggle involving NATO vs. the Taliban, Al Queda and ISIS, India vs. Pakistan, and Iran vs. Saudi Arabia. It is a rentier state with a government that receives about 75% of its revenue from donors, with a history of predatory elite capture of the institutions of state, and is caught in all four of the traps described in Collier's (2007) *The Bottom Billion*. Literacy levels are about 50% for men, less than half that for women. As noted earlier, it has had ten constitutions since the 1800s, and has not had the relatively stable evolution of institutions one sees in most OECD type states: its legislative framework resembles both a patchwork quilt and a slice of Swiss cheese. The 2014 election of Ashraf Ghani as President marked the first peaceful change of leadership in modern times. Although Ghani seems to be trying to move the country in a good direction, many of its formal and informal leaders are resistant to establishment of a rule-based social order and an effective government, due to their possible involvement in corruption, the drug trade, and other activities that would be controlled by an effective state apparatus. In spite of these challenges the country has significant assets on which to build, including a host of so-called traditional institutions, and a growing technocratic cadre that is committed to developing a functioning state. Much of the more effective development work has been with members of this cadre.

Relevance of Established Analytical Models

This section listed a number of factors that are present in Afghanistan and in many other fragile states that are not included in much of the mainstream literature, which has been derived largely from analysis of policy implementation and institutional development in OECD-type countries. Factors such as predatory elite capture of the

institutions of state, proxy wars, the drug trade, and a resistance among elites to the establishment of a rule-based social order are part of the context in which institutional development efforts are underway in Afghanistan. Effective strategies to strengthen governance in fragile states need to take these and other related factors into consideration.

This summary sets the stage for the next section of this thesis, which describes the research methodology, and is followed by findings and analysis, and then the conclusion.

Chapter 3. Methodology

Introduction

As stated in the *Summary* at the beginning of this thesis, the overall purpose of this research was to analyze institutional development and policy implementation in a so-called fragile (or "failed") state – Afghanistan – to identify factors to be considered by foreign and local agents interested in strengthening good governance in such states.

The effectiveness of actors' efforts was linked to the extent to which they were contextually appropriate, and the following definition was offered of this concept in nation-building initiatives:

> *"Contextually appropriate" refers to the extent to which key elements of an initiative to increase governance effectiveness are contextualized and compatible with endogenous patterns of thought and behavior.*

The literature review described selected features of the fields of governance, state fragility, institutional development, policy implementation and relevant parts of the Afghan context – all with a focus on defining factors linked to contextually-appropriate institutional development in fragile states.

The central premise and research questions stated earlier are repeated here for convenience.

Research Premise and Questions

The central premise of this research is:

> *The effectiveness of institutional development and policy implementation initiatives in fragile states such as Afghanistan – as indicated by their incorporation into the operations of the state – is associated with the extent to which they are contextually appropriate.*

Two related questions are:

1. *To what extent are contextualization and endogenization associated with the effectiveness of policy implementation and institutional development to strengthen good governance in Afghanistan?*

2. *What other factors may be associated with the effectiveness of policy implementation and institutional development in Afghanistan?*

A note on analytical categories: *contextualization* and *endogenization* were described earlier as two complementary elements of a single broad category of analysis – contextual appropriateness. Also, *policy implementation* and *institutional development* were described as two distinct but closely related elements of governance. They bleed into each other, especially when institutions are seen not as functioning organizations, but as their underlying conceptual social structures or what North (1991:98) calls "the rules of the game" – which includes factors such as purpose, structure and role relationships that usually are defined in policy documents.

The research also reviewed selected features of the models used to analyze policy implementation and institutional development, and comments on the relevance of these models to the conditions of fragile states such as Afghanistan.

Six policy initiatives were analyzed: two focused on gender equity issues; one was in the early stages of creating a national monitoring and evaluation system; two dealt with subnational government, and one established a mechanism for citizen involvement in municipal governance. These are described in some detail below.

This *Methodology* section draws from the review of the literature and other sources to describe the following:

- Research philosophy and positionality statement
- Research strategy – including rationale for case selection, reasons for the selected qualitative methodology and the use of a semi-structured interview protocol with key informants
- Research method and limitations
- Interview guide rationale
- Informant selection and data collection process

Research Philosophy and Positionality Statement

This section describes part of the research philosophy, with elements of a positionality statement.

The second edition of the *Handbook of Qualitative Research* identifies a number of "theoretical paradigms and perspectives – positivism, postpositivism, interpretivism, constructivism, hermeunetics, feminism(s)" and more, that one needs to take into account in understanding how a researcher operates (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000b:20). I have not studied these various paradigms and perspectives thoroughly enough to know their specific characteristics, but can say that I am fairly comfortable with what little I know about the constructivist paradigm, which "assumes a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a subjectivist epistimology (knower and respondent cocreate understandings) and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures (ibid: 21)."

Given that I am comfortable with the constructivist paradigm, my personal research philosophy has at least two aspects: the motivation to study a particular situation, and what is involved in analyzing and learning from a situation. I'll briefly comment on the first before addressing the second.

Motivation behind this research

I've been involved in some form of development work since the late 1960s – a long time, and all of it has been driven by a desire to better understand what makes people tick, and how to help them "tick better" – to help them improve the quality of their lives. Throughout this time I've been steadily increasing my diagnostic ability and improving my intervention skills, and working with progressively larger systems.

What began with helping a small group of marginalized welfare mothers in Ontario and social service clients in Inuit communities in the Canadian Arctic expanded over the years to improving the performance of Canadian government ministries, and a variety of international development projects impacting entire countries.

Each of these gave partial answers to a widening range of unanswered questions, spurring me on to broader and deeper engagement with issues impacting the quality life of entire populations within a globalization context. In the international development field this is sometimes (and rather clinically) called improving aid effectiveness – see, for example, (Crawford, 2004; Bourguignon & Sundberg, 2007).

Since the early 80s my work has taken me to a number of so-called developing countries, including about ten years in Afghanistan, during which I became increasingly curious about how to improve governance in this troubled country and others like it. Helping find solutions to this puzzle is the motivation behind this research. The relationships I was privileged to make with like-minded Afghan officials provided a few insights into the challenging circumstances in which they lived and worked, and pointed me in the direction of exploring how to foster contextually-appropriate institutional development, which recognized that improvements had to be organically linked to the broader underlying structures in the society. This key piece of the puzzle is the focus of this thesis, which I hope contributes to improving governance and aid effectiveness in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the world.

Analysis approach

This is a summary of my general approach to social system analysis, which will be elaborated to address this particular thesis project. It seems generally consistent with the subjectivist epistimology (knower and respondent cocreate understandings) noted above. I used this approach in the multiple evaluations conducted for USAID and other agencies, and in other research projects over the years. I believe that research of this sort has at least two dimensions – an extractive aspect to collect information to better understand what is going on in a given context, and also a contributory and interventionist aspect, to provide inputs and exert some influence on and foster beneficial change in the context – and that both have impacts on the researcher as well as the context being studied.

I don't think it is possible to analyze a social situation without changing it in some way – one of the best known examples of this is the Hawthorne Effect, summarized in (The Economist, 2008) and elsewhere. While the people interviewed for this thesis research provided a tremendous amount of information, my intention was to also make some institutional development inputs they could use to strengthen their organizations – consistent with my participatory action research approach discussed below. One of the more perceptive participants in sessions I was involved with[25] noticed this aspect of my approach – and said, "Good mentoring, Andy" as I made comments and asked questions during our interactions.

[25] This was while working on the early stages of the National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy initiative that is analyzed in this research.

I think this sort of research is a two-way street – the analyst gets something, and also gives something back as the work goes on. Sometimes simply asking a question prompts an informant to articulate things that had previously been implicit knowledge: this makes the knowledge explicit, and enriches the learning process for both parties. This co-learning process is consistent with adult education principles articulated by scholars such as Malcolm Knowles and Paulo Freire (Knowles, 1988; Freire, 1973) whose work influenced me greatly in my graduate studies in continuing education. I see the provision of technical advisory services in places like Afghanistan as a specialized form of adult education, where the learning is very much a mutual process.

One of the aims of this work is to help a system improve itself, to operate in a sustainable and progressively more effective manner. A definition of capacity development from the Australian aid agency AusAID speaks to this:

> The process of developing competencies and capabilities in individuals, groups, organisations, sectors or countries which will lead to sustained and self-generating performance improvement (AusAID, 2006).

A strategy from my years of social work experience has proven useful in this regard: the impetus for beneficial change in a system can be facilitated by an external party, but the energy to bring about change must ultimately come from inside the system itself. In other words, sustainable growth in system performance is endogenous; it comes from within. This influences how I operate.

These research principles are consistent with two items in the literature review above. One addresses the role of the technical advisor, the designer in the *dialogical* approach to institutional design:

> The dialogical tradition questions the legitimacy of designer as detached outsider bringing 'objective knowledge' to bear on others' institutions. In its stead the designer is cast in a minor role, setting a larger process into motion, rather than controlling it. Rather than engineer, the designer is animateur. (Linder and Peters 1994:157)

Another relevant item in the literature review addresses the impact of this work on the technical advisor, especially when recognizing the moral dimension of institutional development:

> Devising new institutions or remaking old ones necessarily encounters all of the reflected elements of context and are thus best approached through a collective dialogue that simultaneously engages the broader context. Taking on the moral underpinnings of an institution, however, cannot be easily accomplished by an outsider insulated from the values she hopes to affect. In the process of remaking their institutions …(agents) fully expect to remake themselves. (Linder and Peters 1994:152).

This theme reflects my own experience in working for years with various types development projects in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen and elsewhere, and earlier work with Aboriginal communities in Canada – I have been profoundly impacted and changed by this experience. One example of this change was the decision to

undertake further study in governance, which includes the work involved in this thesis.

Personal change has been the case throughout the years I have been doing this sort of work. Fostering institutional development is very much a two-way street, and that's how I see this research. There is more on this in the following brief *Positionality Statement*.

Researcher's Positionality Statement

One of the requirements of some forms of qualitative research is a "positionality statement" in which the researcher provides information on his/her biases, points of view, background, and other factors that help a reader know something about the priorities and filters at play in the research. This is based on the notion that the questions one asks, and a research project's design, data collection processes, observations and conclusions are linked to one's belief system and learned perceptual and cognitive processes.

The constructivist label (noted above) seems to fit fairly well with how I see myself and the world, a view that has come about in part from my childhood experience as a stateless Hungarian post-war refugee kid and Canadian immigrant, my belief in the Bahá'í Faith and its teachings about the oneness of humankind and the establishment of a New World Order, decades of work in community development in diverse social and cultural settings, and in providing intercultural training and organizational development services in a wide variety of contexts, including in what is now known as strengthening "governance" in international development. These experiences have shown me that there can be many world-views and visions of reality, all of which coexist with some harmony in my own thinking and influence my behavior.

My work with intercultural relations training and organizational development has shown me that the cognitive system is essentially a pattern-matching or stereotyping mechanism based on learned perceptual categories, and there is no such thing as bias-free perception – the best one can hope for is to control for bias wherever possible. I've been socialized into the white Anglo male sector of Canadian society and see the world through that lens. I've spent years living and working with Aboriginal and Inuit communities in Canada and in international development in a variety of countries, so have come to know that there are many possible ways of seeing the world. Even as a teenager I knew that "reality was relative" and that improving the human condition was a worthy thing to try to do. I regard the diversity of the human family as something to be celebrated and enjoyed, and have worked for decades to foster conditions where all can be helped to have voice and realize their full potential. I see improving institutional frameworks as having the potential to enhance these processes. That is part of why I have worked in Afghanistan and elsewhere for years, and why I am writing this thesis – to learn from the process, in the hope that I can become more effective in my service, and that some of my thoughts and experiences may be of use to others who share similar motivations.

I could say more, but this should suffice for the purposes of this thesis.

Research Strategy, Methods and Tools

This is a qualitative research project with a methodology that is consistent with some of the many elements described in Denzin and Lincoln's 1064-page *Handbook of Qualitative Research: Second Edition* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000a). The approach is described here in a manner that is sufficient to link it to the appropriate parts of the almost overwhelming array presented in the *Handbook*. Four sections are of interest – the introduction and overview by the editors that describe the evolving nature of the qualitative research field (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000b:1-36); the chapter on qualitative methods by Vidich and Lyman (Vidich & Lyman, 2000); Jennifer Greene's chapter, *Understanding Social Programs Through Evaluation* (Greene, 2000:981-1000); and the contribution by Ray Rist, *Influencing the Policy Process with Qualitative Research* (Rist, 2000:1001-1017).

Pertinent comments in the editors' introduction and overview include:

> "…the field of qualitative research… (has an) avowed humanistic commitment to study the social world from the perspective of the interacting individual." (p xvi);
>
> "Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world…. (it) involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world…researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them." (p 3)

In their comments about the "action research" tradition in qualitative research, the editors state:

> The relationships among researchers, universities and society in general must change. Politically informed action research, inquiry committed to praxis and social change, is the vehicle for accomplishing this transformation… Action researchers literally help transform inquiry into praxis, or action. Research subjects become co-participants and stakeholders in the process toward solving problems in the world….together, stakeholders and action researchers create knowledge that is pragmatically useful (p 32).

This latter statement is one of the key objectives of this thesis, which is a form of participatory action research. It involved working with Afghan officials and foreign technical advisors to explore and better understand some of the dynamics of the local governance context, with a view to applying findings to improve institutional development practices in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the world.

In their summary of the history of sociology and anthropology in the section on qualitative methods, Vidich and Lyman comment on social scientists as observers:

> …social scientists are observers. As observers of the world they also participate in it…Objectivity resides not in a method, but in the framing of the research problem and the willingness of the researchers to pursue that problem wherever the data and their hunches may lead. (Vidich & Lyman, 2000:39).

That is how this thesis research project unfolded – the focus was only generally defined at the outset, and became clearer as time passed and work proceeded, sometimes along unexpectedly productive avenues of inquiry as conditions in the context changed from one month to the next.

In their description of the ethnographer's approach in what they call the postmodern era of sociology, the authors state:

> …the sociologist-ethnographer will not merely observe (a group's) … history; he or she will participate in its everlasting quest for freedom and be a partner in and a reporter on 'the pains, the agonies, the emotional experiences, the small and large victories, the traumas, the fears, anxieties the dreams, fantasies and the hopes' of the lives of the peoples. These constitute this era's ethnographies – true tales of the field. (p 60).

While not a formal sociology or ethnographic treatise, this research has a similar approach – it has an emancipation-oriented undercurrent in terms of the selection of policies to be analyzed, and what is reported here is a collection of "true tales of the field" of the perceived reality of the struggle to understand how to help strengthen governance in one of the most challenging contexts in the contemporary international development arena.

In Jennifer Greene's contribution, *Understanding Social Programs Through Evaluation,* she describes features of the Constructivist framework:

> Constructivist inquirers seek to *understand contextualized meaning,* to understand the meaningfulness of human actions and interactions – as experienced and construed by the actors – in a given context…These constructions are influenced by specific historical, geopolitical, and cultural practices and discourses, and by the intentions – noble or otherwise – of those doing the constructing. So these constructions are multiple and plural, contingent and contextual.
>
> Methodologically, constructivism is most consonant with natural settings, with the human inquirer as the primary gatherer and interpreter of meaning, with qualitative methods with emergent inquiry designs, and with contextual, holistic understanding, in contrast to interventionist prediction and control as the overall goal of inquiry….constructivism supports the decentering of inquiry/evaluation discourse from questions of method to questions of purpose and role. The quality of technique becomes secondary to the quality and meaningfulness of understanding. (Greene, 2000:986f) emphasis in original).

Greene continues her analysis by discussing the use of storytelling in qualitative evaluation of social reforms:

> …qualitative evaluations are framed by the careful selection of one or more *cases* to study and by the rich, multilayered descriptions of the *contexts* in those cases…(which are) selected not for their intrinsic interest but for their potential to provide insight into the overall reform initiative….with their constructivist world-view, evaluators in this genre most comfortably *position their stories* as guides for the improvement of specific contextual practices … as opportunities for program learning and insight by diverse interested stakeholders… or as vehicles for reframing the larger policy conversation. (p 990 – emphasis in original)

Acknowledging the context and "reframing the larger policy conversation" are part of what this thesis is all about. Actually, a preliminary step, shedding some light on the existing policy process so it can be better understood, is a prerequisite to reframing the process. The cases analyzed in this research provide relevant insights.

She continues to describe factors in stakeholder engagement in evaluations:

> …participatory and collaborative approaches to evaluation…emphasize the active engagement of stakeholders in the evaluation process for purposes of enhancing ownership and thus usefulness of the evaluation results …participatory evaluators frame evaluation primarily as an opportunity for engagement, learning and action in that context. And the *process* of conducting the evaluation – the ways in which stakeholders are involved…becomes of central importance, not the issue of what methods are used or even what substantive results are obtained.
>
> In ongoing developments, utilization-oriented participatory evaluators are advancing the significant role evaluation can play in *organizational learning,* forging connections to contemporary emphases on strategic planning and quality management within organizational development circles…
>
> As social program evaluators we have responsibilities to multiple audiences, including the powerful policy makers, the all-but-powerless poor people who are often the intended beneficiaries of the programs we evaluate, and the citizenry at large. Our work, therefore, must respectfully balance social scientific theories of knowledge construction, interpretation and representation with the political realities of social policy making…I believe that the constructivist, qualitative genre of evaluation – with its valuing of responsiveness and pluralism – is extremely well position to be an active player in this dialogical evaluation evolution (p 994f, emphasis in original).

Greene's points are pertinent in that this whole thesis is, in a sense, a form of evaluation of a number of cases to highlight factors that seem to enhance or limit effectiveness of government operations and have a direct impact on the population's well being. It is also intended to strengthen the government's ability to learn from and strengthen its policy making and institutional development processes.

The participatory and inclusive approach she calls for, which is rooted in the lived reality of the people in the context being studied, is consistent with Linder and Peter's comments on the *dialogical* approach described earlier, foundations of the principles of contextualization and endogenization that are key elements in this research, as is the call for the participatory action research approach at the core of this study.

The *Handbook's* contribution by Ray Rist directly addresses the core issue in this thesis in his chapter, *Influencing the Policy Process with Qualitative Research* (Rist, 2000). A key point he makes about the policy development and implementation process is similar to descriptions in the literature review above: it is not a tidy, linear engineering-type activity where a few decision-makers collect available information and make a rational fact-based decision that then is implemented in the government's operations, as they would if they were planning to build a bridge, for example. He describes the actual process as follows:

> Policy making is multidimensional and multi-faceted. Research is but one (and often minor at that) among the number of frequently contradictory and competing sources that seek to influence what is an ongoing and constantly evolving process. The emphasis here on policy making being a *process* is deliberate. It is a process that evolves through cycles, with each cycle more or less bounded, more or less constrained by time, funds, political support and other events. It is also a process that circles back on itself, iterates the same decision issue time and again, and often does not come to closure. Choosing not to decide is a frequent outcome (p 1002).

He goes on to cite Weiss (Weiss, 1982) who wrote: "Both the popular and the academic literature picture decision making as an event … (however,) the traditional model of decision making is a highly stylized rendition of reality…The complexity of governmental decision making often defies neat compartmentalization." Rist continues, "…the notion that research *should* have an impact on decision making seems to have become more and more an article of faith… the reorientation away from "event decision making" to "process decision making" necessitates looking at research as serving an "enlightenment function" in contrast to an "engineering function."

"Viewing policy research as serving an enlightenment function," he continues, "suggests that policy researchers work with policy makers and their staffs over time to create a contextual understanding about an issue, build linkages that will exist over time, and strive constantly to educate about new development and research findings in the area" (p 1002f, emphasis in original).

Rist goes on to highlight the potential role of qualitative research in the various stages of the policy cycle – formulation, implementation, accountability, providing policy tools, and more. In his concluding comments, however, he says:

> In reviewing the contribution of qualitative work to the policy process it is apparent that the contributions are more in the realm of the potential than the actual. There is no broad-based and sustained tradition within contemporary social science of focusing qualitative work specifically on policy issues, especially given the real time constraints that the policy process necessitates…. The issue is chiefly one of how to link those in the research and academic communities who are knowledgeable in conducting qualitative research studies to those in the policy arena who can commission such work and who will make use of the findings (p 1015).

Rist's closing comments nicely summarize the intent of this thesis research: to bring a form of qualitative participatory action research to bear on the actual work of policy development and implementation – in a fragile state – with the view to better understanding the process and increasing the effectiveness of institutional development to strengthen good governance in those challenging contexts.

Research Method, Limitations, and Informant Selection

The research method uses primarily a case study format (Yin, 2006; Flyvbjerg, 2006) based on document reviews and key or elite informant interviews using a semi-structured data collection instrument (see below) in a manner consistent with guidance provided by Richards, Gillham and Denscombe (Richards, 1996; Gillham,

2005; Denscombe, 2010). All interviews, other data collection and analysis were by myself. The study also draws from the literature on context, culture and governance noted above and others (Dillon & Valentine, 2002; Bang, 2004) that relate to development of sustainable contextually-appropriate institutions in fragile states, for example, (Ghani & Lockhart, 2009; Offe, 1996; Andrews, 2013).

Research Design, Process, Rationale for Case and Informant Selection

The strategy used in this research was rather straightforward – it was a participatory qualitative action research project as described above. I was interested in learning and documenting something about institutional development in Afghanistan, and focused on working with knowledgeable Afghan and foreign informants to analyze a number of policy development initiatives to do so – these are described below.

The rationale for case and informant selection was also rather straightforward. Because of my years of work in the country I was aware of a number of policy initiatives that seemed to have differing levels of effectiveness: I wanted to better understand and report on why that was so, and selected cases from this range for analysis. I also needed to pick initiatives where the information was relatively accessible, and which had knowledgeable observers and participants who were directly involved and would be interested in telling me about their experiences. These were officials and advisors who either wrote or managed the preparation of policy initiatives of interest for this thesis. I had worked closely with a number of these actors, and in some cases provided input to their efforts. In summary, cases were selected on their potential to provide useful information, and informants were selected on the basis of their availability, interest and direct involvement with the study's cases, as noted in the section on *Informant Selection* below.

This approach is consistent with Flyvbjerg's (2006) comments on the strength of the case study approach which makes it possible to focus inquiry and analysis on known activities that are likely to produce practical results – knowledge of what is actually going on in the context studied.

For example, a previous organizational analysis project I had worked on with Afghanistan's Ministry of Women's Affairs clearly identified that the ministry's gender-related work had run into difficulty – its policy initiatives were not having the anticipated effect (Tamas, Williams, Sakhi, & Qaderi, 2011). Among many others, I interviewed the former Minister of Women's Affairs for that project, and she had opinions on why this was the case. I also knew the designers of another gender equity initiative that had run into difficulty, and had personally observed some of the interactions around the introduction of this effort. Also, in my support for the government's monitoring and evaluation system and subnational governance programming I met frequently with officials and advisors who were designing policies and programs to strengthen these challenging sectors of the state's operations – it was part of my job. For details see the section below.

In the design of the data collection process I wanted to provide opportunities for these actors to describe the various components of the policy development and implementation process, to get information to which I did not have direct access while I was working in Kabul. I did not want to begin my interviews with questions on

contextual appropriateness: rather, I wanted a description of the agents and their actions using categories from analysis of policy implementation (see above), and only later, well into the interview, did the question of contextual appropriateness arise. A follow-up question explored the compatibility of foreign and local actors' priorities, a major challenge in donor-supported development initiatives.

I also wanted to help these officials better understand the various components of the policy process, in the spirit of the well-known principle that analysis is not simply observation, it is also an intervention – it changes the system being studied. I wanted to do what I could to understand what had gone on, and also to strengthen these officials' awareness of the many elements in a policy process, as part of an indirect organizational development intervention to strengthen the government. This is an element in participatory action research, discussed further below.

I used a semi-structured questionnaire to help focus discussion, but also to give informants opportunities to provide information they considered relevant that was not directly linked to the question – this is what actually transpired. I obtained information from two or more of the actors involved with each policy initiative so I received more than a one-sided view of the process. During interviews I recorded informants' comments in written form, stopping periodically to read my notes back to check if I had accurately captured the essence of their opinions. This data collection strategy is generally consistent with Richard's (1996: 201) guidance on conducting elite interviews. Some informants were not directly accessible, and provided responses to the questionnaire by email. As I analyzed my interview notes I reviewed responses from multiple informants to each of the questions, and took note of the key views expressed – some were in agreement or similar, and also complementary (filling in blanks in others' comments), and occasionally there were divergent opinions. These are noted in the *Findings* section below.

Research Limitations

This research had numerous limitations. For one thing, I was attempting to understand and describe activities that were taking place in the "black box" of a foreign society and governance context into which I could not see. I am not an ethnographer who spent years studying and attempting to understand certain phenomena in a foreign system. I did not know, from personal experience, what transpired when my host country partners consulted with each other, their leadership or stakeholders on the various aspects of the activities being analyzed here. I had to take what I was told at face value and work with the information that came to the surface of the "black box" in which my Afghan informants operated. This limitation is a common feature of this type of rather basic cross cultural organizational development research, which has a large body of literature: see, for example, (Schaffer & Riordan, 2003; Tsui, Nifadkar, & Ou, 2007) and the many articles in publications such as *The Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology,* the *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Management* and others, a full exploration of which is well beyond the scope of this thesis.

As a result, there were few opportunities to use personal observation to verify what I was being told – it was a collection of subjective reports of recollections and perceptions of key actors who were directly involved in the policy processes being

analyzed. As noted by Richards (1996) there were relatively few elite informants available for each case, in part because there were few actors in the key roles involved. I did what I could to accurately capture their comments, and then combined this information into a format suited to this thesis. There were multiple opportunities for gaps and omissions, and distortions of events to support biases of informants and also of myself.

The study is precise only to the extent that the information is relatively consistent with what I think I was told and recorded in my notes. I shared preliminary versions of the findings and data analysis portions with several key informants and they said that I had done a good job of describing a complex process, and in some cases they provided supplementary information to enrich the analysis and lessons learned. I think that's about as good as it can get in this sort of research.

A note on language: although I was analyzing Afghan experience, all my Afghan informants were fluent in English, and all interviews were conducted in English. I think some senior level officials I interviewed would have been reluctant to freely express themselves if an interpreter had been present, so I worked with what I received directly from them. If I had professional-level capacity in either Dari or Pashtu I am sure there would have been more depth and nuances in the data collection process: however, that was not the case, and the thesis suffers from this shortcoming.

Bias in Participatory Action Research

A related factor in this study, which might be seen as a limitation, is inherent in the bias involved in participatory action research. Action research methods have as part of their intention the changing of a situation in a manner deemed desirable by the researcher. I had a stake in the success of some of the cases analyzed, but no direct involvement in others. The cases in which I had a direct work involvement – and hence a stake in seeing them do well – were the M&E Policy and the Subnational Governance Policy. Although I received information about the other cases, and knew the key informants, some of the work (such as with the District Development Council and NAPWA policies) took place when I was not in the country. I did not make direct technical advisory support to the work involved and could not influence the factors analyzed in this research. Regardless of the level of my involvement in these cases, my intention was to do what I could to support the technocrats I was working with and to strengthen the government – that was my bias throughout this research process and the rationale behind undertaking this thesis project.

Interview Guide Rationale

This section describes the rationale behind the interview guide, its relationship to the main thesis premise and questions, and to the policy analysis categories noted earlier.

Interview Guide

This research focuses on the efforts of foreign and domestic actors to design and implement policies to strengthen the institutions of state, and seeks to identify factors related to different levels of effectiveness of these activities.

To identify these factors the research reviewed relevant documentation and asked the following questions of key informants familiar with selected policy implementation and institutional development initiatives in Afghanistan:

1. Which policy implementation initiatives are you familiar with?
   1.1. How effective are they?
2. What factors were associated with the degree of effectiveness of a specific policy implementation initiative?
   2.1. How was the policy initiative identified and carried forward: who were the main actors and what processes were involved?
   2.2. What stage has the initiative reached in the multi-step design, approval and implementation process?
   2.3. What is likely to happen next?
   2.4. What were the roles of international and local actors in this policy implementation process?
   2.5. What was the degree of alignment of foreign and domestic objectives in the policy implementation effort?
   2.6. To what extent was the policy implementation initiative compatible with the context in which it took place?
   2.7. To what extent did the policy initiative contribute to institutional development?
   2.8. What other factors influenced the level of effectiveness of the policy and institutional development initiative?

The research also drew from my role as a participant-observer in some of the policy and institutional development initiatives analyzed in this thesis.

In addition, the research reviews selected features of the models used to analyze policy implementation and institutional development, and comments on the relevance of these models to the conditions of fragile states such as Afghanistan.

Rationale for Interview Guide Questions

The questionnaire is structured in a manner similar to the policy analysis process using categories linked to the policy development steps described it the literature review above, repeated here for convenience:

Six inter-related categories that can be used in analysis of policy implementation are: problems, agents, actions, context, institutions and organizations.

- ***Problems*** are issues that a country's leadership decides are significant enough that they need to be addressed by the state's policies and programs.
- ***Agents*** are actors (individuals or groups of any size) who are involved in the policy implementation process.

- ***Actions*** are the activities that agents or actors engage in as part of the policy implementation process – among other things, they strive to bring issues to leaders' attention, make decisions related to drafting and implementing policies, laws, budgets and associated regulations, and actually do the work the policies define as being required.
- ***Context*** includes a host of elements such as the social, economic, cultural, historical, and power dynamics in the environment in which policy implementation takes place.
- ***Institutions*** can be described as conceptual social structures, the "rules of the game" that define agents' roles, relationships and patterns of interaction in the society's operations.
- ***Organizations*** are formed when actors occupy roles in institutions, and behave in ways that may – or may not – be consistent with the rules of the game as they carry out the activities the policies define.

Informant responses to the interview guide were expected to generate information for these elements in the policy development process, and also for the contextual appropriateness issues that I wanted to explore. A summary of categories of information sought by each question follows.

Questions 1 and 1.1

1. Which policy implementation initiatives are you familiar with?
   1.1. How effective are they?

The purpose of these two related questions was to get a general overview of informant familiarity with policy initiatives, and an overall sense of their view of the effectiveness of these efforts.

Question 2

2. What factors were associated with the degree of effectiveness of a specific policy implementation initiative?

The purpose of this question was to prepare the informant to discuss characteristics of a particular policy initiative with which they were familiar, and to identify factors related to its level of effectiveness.

Question 2.1

2.1. How was the policy initiative identified and carried forward: who were the main actors and what processes were involved?

One purpose of this question was to obtain the informant's views of how the policy initiative started – who owned it or saw the issue as a problem that needed to be addressed by the state. This would bring out information on the extent to which it was primarily an endogenous or exogenous initiative. The question also was designed to elicit information on who was involved in the initiative – to what extent foreign or local actors carried which parts of the load of the policy development process – this would indicate its level of contextualization. It also sought information on the processes involved: what the various participants actually did, such as supervise and support the initiative, manage stakeholder engagement, provide political support, write the policy documents, etc.

Question 2.2

2.2. What stage has the initiative reached in the multi-step design, approval and implementation process?

This question elicited information on where the initiative was on the trajectory from initial problem identification to full implementation and operationalization. The cases analyzed in this research were at various stages of this journey.

Question 2.3

2.3. What is likely to happen next?

This self-evident question asked informants to describe what they thought would happen with the trajectory of the policy initiative being discussed. It would indicate to what extent a constituency for change had been developed, whether it had sufficient high level and broad-based stakeholder support to move toward implementation or not, and whether there were contextual factors that would inhibit or facilitate its development.

Question 2.4

2.4. What were the roles of international and local actors in this policy implementation process?

This question was similar to part of Question 2.1, but focused on getting more detailed information on the roles of foreign and local actors in the policy process and indicate the level of endogenization and contextualization of the initiative.

Question 2.5

2.5. What was the degree of alignment of foreign and domestic objectives in the policy implementation effort?

This question sought further information on the origins of the initiative, whether foreign or local priorities were driving the process, and the degree of compatibility of these external and internal objectives. It addressed the endogenous or exogenous dimension of the policy process, and, to some extent, its degree of contextualization.

Question 2.6

2.6. To what extent was the policy implementation initiative compatible with the context in which it took place?

This question directly asked informants to comment on the contextualization issue: to provide information on the extent to which it was perceived as fitting well within the local context, or as an alien import from a foreign society or world view.

Question 2.7

2.7. To what extent did the policy initiative contribute to institutional development?

This self-evident question asked informants to comment on their perception of the extent to which the policy initiative contributed to institutional development – an issue which is the core of this thesis research.

Question 2.8

2.8. What other factors influenced the level of effectiveness of the policy and institutional development initiative?

This question elicited information on other factors that may have influenced the effectiveness of the policy initiative.

Links to Thesis Premise and Questions

As noted earlier, the information elicited by these questions was designed to support the two related broad lines of inquiry in this thesis. It identified effectiveness factors linked to the interrelated policy implementation and institutional development processes, as well as obtaining information on the degree to which the various components of the process were contextualized and endogenous – the extent to which they were contextually appropriate. These are the core concepts in the central premise of the thesis, and in the thesis questions.

The next section describes the informant selection and data collection process.

Informant Selection and Data Collection Process

This section describes how informants were selected and the data collection process for each of the six case studies.

Sampling Strategy

The sampling strategy was purposive rather than random – informants were selected on the basis of their direct involvement in the policy initiatives analyzed, their accessibility and interest in contributing to this research. I had direct or indirect work relationships with these informants over my years of service in Afghanistan. They were all professionals responding in their official capacity, and included Afghan government staff at Minister and DM levels, Directors-General, Directors, and Afghan and foreign technical advisors working for the Afghan government or donor organizations. I was in this last category, a Policy Advisor with GIZ.

The following table lists the policies analyzed and the informants linked to each policy initiative.

Table 9
Informant Description

Policy	Informant Description	Comment
1. District Coordination Council Policy: IDLG and MRRD	Deputy Minister, MRRD Director of GDCLCA (IDLG) Deputy Minister, IDLG Technical Advisor ASI	All were directly involved in managing stakeholder consultation and writing the policy
2. Municipal Advisory Board Guidelines: IDLG	Director General, Municipal Affairs, IDLG Technical Advisor, GIZ	Both were involved with writing and implementing the policy
3. Anti-Harassment Policy Guideline: IDLG	Director General, Municipal Affairs, IDLG Technical Advisor, GIZ Gender Advisor, IDLG	All were directly involved in writing and implementing the policy
4. Gender Policy (NAPWA): Ministry of Women's Affairs - MOWA	Former Minister, MOWA MOWA Analysis Project Team, USAID NAPWA Gender Advocacy Adviser	The Minister and USAID team observed Ministry operations and analyzed the policy. The Gender Advocacy Adviser worked on NAPWA implementation
5. National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy Framework: Administrative Office of the President	M&E Director, Administrative Office of the President Director of M&E and Administrative Reform, Civil Service Commission Afghan and foreign technical advisors with GIZ	All were directly involved in the policy development and stakeholder consultation process, GIZ Technical advisors wrote the draft policy framework for the President's review
6. Subnational Governance Policy 2016: IDLG	Director-General, Policy, IDLG President's Advisor, Subnational Governance, Former Acting Minister, IDLG	All were directly involved in managing or writing the policy, and designing and conducting stakeholder consultation

Interview Schedule and Locations

Interviews and data collection using the interview guide took place as follows:

February 2, 2014, in Kabul, with follow up email January 22, 2016
February 9, 2014, in Kabul
February 15, 2015, in Kabul
February 23, 2015, by email
June 20, 2015, in Kabul
November 21, 2015, in Berlin (during visit of IDLG Minister)
December 12, 2015, by email
October 24, 2016, in Kabul
October 30, 2016, by email

Additional data collection took place in Kabul:

March 2015 to December, 2015 – Participant observation – M&E Policy
June 28, 2016 – 2016 SNG policy: document review, interview
July 4, 2016 – NAPWA: interview & email
October 16, 2016 – M&E Policy Framework - email

The final interview with an Afghan technical advisor who was in Kabul took place over Skype on November 17, 2016.

Informant and Interview Details

The information in this section expands on the brief comments in the table above with details on informant selection criteria and the data collection process and schedule.

The policies selected for analysis were all prepared for government officials, with local and foreign actors having varying levels of involvement. In some, foreign advisors did the bulk of the work, while in others there was a blend of local and foreign input, and yet in others local actors did most of the work. The policies were at various points in the conceptual, approval and implementation process. Analysis of part of how they were prepared and supported, and what transpired as they proceeded toward implementation, generated the data for this dissertation.

1. District Coordination Council Policy: IDLG and MRRD

Informants:

1. Deputy Minister, Programs, MRRD – Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Development
2. Director of GDCLCA (IDLG) – General Directorate of Community and Local Council Affairs, Independent Directorate for Local Governance
3. Deputy Minister, Policy, IDLG – Independent Directorate for Local Governance
4. Foreign Technical Advisor, ASI – Adam Smith International

Rationale for Informant Selection, Data Collection Method:
Informants 1, 2 and 3 were senior Afghan civil servants who planned the policy development strategy and would be responsible for implementing it when it was approved[26]. They were directly involved in designing and writing the policy (initially in Pashto, not English) and managing a series of high level stakeholder consultations during which the drafts were revised to accommodate participant input. Informant 4 was a foreign technical advisor with decades of Afghan experience who worked on the early stages of the policy development process.

All informants had first hand knowledge of the policy development process, and I had a good personal and professional relationship with them all. They thought the research topic was important, encouraged me to pursue it, and wanted to contribute to a better understanding of contextualized institutional development in fragile states like Afghanistan.

All were interviewed using the interview guide above.

Informants 1 and 2 were interviewed in person in Kabul on 2014-02-09 and 2015-06-20, respectively. Informant 3 was interviewed in person on 2015-11-21 while he was in Berlin on an official visit with German donors and parliamentarians. Informant 4 provided his responses by email on 2015-12-16.

[26] The policy was ready to roll out for pilot testing in early 2015, but implementation was suspended at that point because the newly-elected government changed its strategy for District Council formation. See details in *Findings* section below.

2. Municipal Advisory Board Guidelines: IDLG

Informants:

1. Director General, Municipal Affairs, IDLG
2. Foreign Technical Advisor, GIZ

Rationale for Informant Selection, Data Collection Method:
Informant 1 was the Director of what is the equivalent of a country's ministry of municipal affairs, and had been working for years to implement some form of representative citizens' municipal council (there was none). He was responsible for guiding, supervising and overseeing the implementation of the policy.

Informant 2 was a foreign technical advisor who had been working in the municipal affairs program for some years, doing what she could to support the Director's desire to implement some form of citizen's representative body in the over 150 municipalities in the country. They worked well together and managed to get these guidelines implemented and operational in a relatively short time.

Both informants had first hand knowledge of this policy development process, and I had a good personal and professional relationship with them. They thought the research topic was important, encouraged me to pursue it, and wanted to contribute to a better understanding of contextualized institutional development in fragile states like Afghanistan.

The Director was interviewed in person in Kabul using the interview guide on 2015-02-10, the foreign technical advisor used the interview guide to email her responses on 2015-03-06, shortly after she had left her job with the ministry and was no longer in the country.

3. Anti-Harassment Policy Guideline: IDLG

Informants:

1. Director General, Municipal Affairs, IDLG
2. Foreign Technical Advisor, GIZ
3. Afghan Gender Advisor, IDLG

Rationale for Informant Selection, Data Collection Method:
All three informants were directly involved in designing, writing and promoting this policy and were eager to tell me about their experience.

Informant 1 was the same individual as in the previous case – the Director General of IDLG's municipal affairs unit. He had a long-standing proven track record of supporting the advancement of women. For example, some 15 years earlier when he was working in Kandahar with UN Habitat during the Taliban regime, he openly taught literacy classes for women, securing the mullahs' approval to do so after challenging them to show him where in the Koran it said women should not be educated. They could not do so, and ordered the Taliban to allow him to continue.

Informant 2 was the same foreign technical advisor as in the Municipal Advisory Council case above, who had been working with the Municipalities unit for several years. A German woman aged about 30, she was an ardent promoter of women's rights.

Informant 3 was an Afghan woman in her late 20s, recently returned from graduate study in the US, and a committed and vocal gender equity advocate.

All three were interviewed using the semi-structured interview guide above. Informant 1 was interviewed in his office in Kabul on 2015-02-10. Informant 2, the foreign technical advisor, used the interview guide to email her responses on 2015-03-06, shortly after she had left Afghanistan. Informant 3 was interviewed in Kabul 2014-02-02, with additional information provided by email 2016-01-22.

4. Gender Policy (NAPWA)[27]: Ministry of Women's Affairs

Informants:

1. Former Minister, MOWA – Ministry of Women's Affairs
2. MOWA Analysis Project Team, USAID
3. Afghan NAPWA Gender Advocacy Adviser

Rationale for Informant Selection, Data Collection Method:
Data collection for this case was quite different than the others in this thesis.

I had several occasions to interview Afghanistan's former (and first) Minister of Women's Affairs (Informant 1) in 2012 while leader of an evaluation team carrying out a USAID-funded organizational analysis of MOWA. Our wide-ranging discussions covered a number of issues, far broader than the focus of this thesis research. For example, she told me that when she was a young girl she would climb trees like the boys in her community, and was told by her mother and other elder females that young women don't do that sort of thing. She said the scolding did not stop her, and she had continued that sort of norm-violating behavior all her life, in the interests of being a full and accomplished human being, what some would call a liberated woman. She also told me of frequent confrontations she had with then President Karzai about what she saw as his token efforts to mask his thinly-veiled oppressive attitude toward gender equity. In the course of these discussions she discussed UNIFEM's efforts to design a national gender mainstreaming policy for the country. She was adamant that the UNIFEM approach was not suited to the country's context, and warned her successor to keep them at bay. UNIFEM persisted, however, and ultimately produced NAPWA – the National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan, one of the policies analyzed in this research.

[27] NAPWA – National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan – the government's first system-wide gender equity policy.

Informant 2, the MOWA organizational analysis team, also analyzed NAPWA and other elements of MOWA's operations – information from that 2012 analysis contributed to this research.

Informant 3, the former NAPWA Gender Advocacy Adviser, was interviewed several times in Kabul in 2015 and 2016, in the course of other work I was doing with her. She had been working with MOWA when the NAPWA policy was being developed, and subsequently was directly involved in promoting the introduction of its gender mainstreaming procedures across the government. She provided information in response to questions I posed that were part of the interview guide.

The interview guide was not used to collect information from these sources, but its categories informed the selection and reporting of data from all three.

5. National M&E Policy Framework: Administrative Office of the President

Informants:

1. Afghan technical advisor, GIZ.
2. Afghan Director-General of Administrative Reform and Monitoring & Evaluation, Civil Service Commission
3. Afghan Director, Monitoring & Evaluation, Administrative Office of the President.
4. Myself – as a participant-observer working as a foreign technical advisor on the project

Rationale for Informant Selection, Data Collection Method:

Informants 1, 2, and 3 were all intimately involved in the evolution of this M&E policy framework. Informants 2 and 3 co-chaired a working group of ministry M&E officers who were instrumental in lending some shape and a preliminary structure to this initiative, contributing to preparation by Informant 3 of a Request for Support from GIZ's Open Policy Assistance Fund (OPAF) which had two results. One was an overall assessment of M&E operations in government and among donors and CSOs, as a baseline describing the state of affairs in this sector. The other was hiring qualified Afghan and foreign analysts to conduct further research and prepare a M&E Policy Framework which ultimately was approved by the President and in October 2016 was ready to submit to Cabinet for implementation across the government. Informant 4 – myself – was a participant-observer in the project since it started in early 2015 and unfolded thereafter. I played a low-key role as part of a multi-actor support team throughout this process, lending process-related and subject matter expertise as it seemed appropriate. For example, in the early stages I facilitated consultative meetings, provided basic M&E program design information, and later wrote the last chapter of the M&E Framework project report, which outlined the steps involved in taking the next set of actions to turn what was a detailed situation analysis into a policy framework. The chapter that I contributed to the report drew from the policy development section of the literature review above.

Data was collected from informants 1 and 2 using the Interview Guide. The views of informant 3 were collected in multiple conversations as the initiative proceeded. My

recollections of the process were extracted from log notes recorded since early 2015 and email exchanges with other key participants. A narrative of the process is in Annex 1.

6. Subnational Governance Policy 2016: IDLG

Informants:

1. Afghan Director of Policy and Planning, IDLG
2. Former Director-General, IDLG
3. Afghan Technical Advisor, Subnational Governance Advisor to the President
4. Myself – a foreign technical advisor, as a participant-observer.

Rationale for Informant Selection, Data Collection Method:
Informant 1 was the leader of IDLG's team that wrote the several drafts of the policy and designed and managed the extensive stakeholder consultations that contributed to the final draft that was submitted to the President for his review in October 2016.

Informant 2, the former Director-General (equivalent of a Minister) of IDLG was part of the senior management team that commissioned and guided preparation of the subnational governance policy.

Informant 3 was the Advisor to the President on Subnational Governance, and worked on the policy with IDLG officials and the President to make it suitable for discussion during the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan in October, 2016.

Informant 4 (myself) has been a technical advisor supporting IDLG's subnational governance institutional development in a variety of ways for over 5 years, in a number of roles. I was asked by IDLG's minister to offer feedback on earlier versions of the revised subnational governance policy, and provided technical advice to the Director of Policy and Planning (Informant 1) at multiple occasions over the past 2 years. In September 2016 I was asked to provide comments on the draft that was submitted to the President for his review.

Data collection from informants 1, 2 and 3 was in responses to the Interview Guide, my input was from interview notes and log notes. Informant 1 was interviewed in Kabul on October 24, 2016; Informant 2 provided emailed responses to the Interview Guide on October 30, 2016; and Informant 3 was interviewed by Skype on November 17, 2016.

The data received is noted in the *Findings* section below, with informant comments quoted as appropriate to illustrate the views reported.

Chapter 4. Findings

Introduction

This section summarizes the research project's findings, focusing on factors linked to policy implementation and contextually-appropriate institutional development to strengthen good governance in Afghanistan – a fragile state.

As noted in the previous *Methodology* section, six policy initiatives were selected for analysis:

1. District Coordination Council Policy
2. Municipal Advisory Board Guidelines
3. Anti-Harassment Program Guidelines
4. National Action Plan for Afghan Women (NAPWA) – Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA)
5. National Monitoring & Evaluation Policy Framework
6. Subnational Governance Policy 2016

These examples were selected based on two main criteria: their utility as demonstration cases as identified by Flyvbjerg (2006) and others, and the accessibility of relevant information and key informants who had meaningful roles in the policy development process.

Analysis Categories

The following categories are repeated for convenience from the earlier section on policy implementation. Six inter-related categories that can be used in analysis of policy implementation are: problems, agents, actions, context, institutions and organizations.

- ***Problems*** are issues that a country's leadership decides are significant enough that they need to be addressed by the state's policies and programs.
- ***Agents*** are actors (individuals or groups of any size) who are involved in the policy implementation process.
- ***Actions*** are the activities that agents or actors engage in as part of the policy implementation process – among other things, they strive to bring issues to leaders' attention, make decisions related to drafting and implementing policies, laws, budgets and associated regulations, and actually do the work the policies define as being required.
- ***Context*** includes a host of elements such as the social, economic, cultural, historical, and power dynamics in the environment in which policy implementation takes place.
- ***Institutions*** can be described as conceptual social structures, the "rules of the game" that define agents' roles, relationships and patterns of interaction in the society's operations.

- ***Organizations*** are formed when actors occupy roles in institutions, and behave in ways that may – or may not – be consistent with the rules of the game as they carry out the activities the policies define.

Additional analytical categories of interest are the extent to which the initiatives were *contextualized* and *endogenous*, and the *principles of good governance* that were reflected in each case.

Summary descriptions are provided of the main features of the selected policy development initiatives using these analytical categories as appropriate.

4.1. District Coordination Council (DCC) Policy

Informants:

1. Deputy Minister, Programs, MRRD – Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Development
2. Director of GDCLCA (IDLG) – General Directorate of Community and Local Council Affairs, Independent Directorate for Local Governance
3. Deputy Minister, IDLG – Independent Directorate for Local Governance
4. Two Foreign Technical Advisors, ASI – Adam Smith International

Introduction & Overview of Policy and Context

Afghanistan has five levels of government administration: national, provincial, district, municipal and village. In addition to Parliament, the Constitution identifies four types of subnational level councils – at the village level, municipal councils, district level, and provincial councils. The government has only been able to conduct elections for provincial councils, the other three have not yet been formally elected.

Two central agencies are the main actors in subnational governance – the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development (MRRD) and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG). MRRD is active mainly in the villages, but also at the district level, while IDLG focuses mainly on provincial and municipal levels and also at the district levels, where its operations overlap with those of MRRD.

Several rounds of elections have been held to form national and provincial institutions, and MRRD's National Solidarity Program has established a form of local administration – Community Development Councils (CDCs) – in over 30,000 villages. Municipal Advisory Councils are being established at the municipality level (described later in these Findings). However, there is an institutional gap at the district level. The country has some 376 districts, and there are appointed governors in most districts, about 160 of which have no dedicated administrative buildings. There is no clearly defined district-level administrative entity comparable to Provincial Councils, even though the Constitution specifies there should be elected district councils. A number of reasons have been advanced for this lack, including low levels of political will, prohibitive costs of conducting elections, boundary

definition problems, and others. District-level representation is required on the *Loya Jirga* to make changes to the Constitution, something the government pledged to do.

Donors active at the district level addressed the institutional gap by forming a variety of bodies to assist with programming and project operations in the districts. These include ASOP Councils, DDAs, and others, appointed bodies[28] which rely on donor support. They have not been part of the Afghan government's administrative structure, a factor which has been the cause of some confusion related to which body exercises district-level authority. The government recognized as early as 2009 that the development of a policy to rationalize district-level consultative bodies was necessary, but policy development did not begin in earnest until President Karzai issued Decree No. 45, on 26 July 2012 (GIRoA, 2012), which provided a clear mandate to address this problem. The District Coordination Council (DCC) policy (GIRoA, 2013a) was seen as an interim measure to consolidate and formalize district-level administrative bodies, until such time as elections for District Councils (as required by the Constitution) could take place.

The preparation of the District Coordination Council Policy provides a useful example of institutional development in the Afghan government. Information was obtained in 2014 and 2015 from five key informants intimately involved with the process – in-depth interviews with three Afghan officials, two at the Deputy-Minister level in MRRD and IDLG, the other the Director-General of the IDLG unit charged with preparing and implementing the policy. Data was also obtained from two foreign technical advisors who supported the initiative. All were intimately involved in guiding the process or writing the policy itself. The Interview Guide was used to obtain information from the five informants.

I have had extensive contact with all five individuals for some years, some of which was while I was a technical advisor within the policy unit of IDLG before the DCC policy development initiative took place. I was not working with IDLG during the period of intensive DCC policy development activity in mid-2012 and early 2013. Later, as a GIZ advisor, I participated in some of the meetings preparing the launch of the initiative in early 2014. The GIZ program with which I worked was ready to support one of the four pilot roll-outs of the DCC initiative in the northern provinces in which GIZ was active.

At that time I was asked by IDLG to review and comment on the policy and its implementing regulations. Its application consisted primarily of conducting an analysis of existing district-level consultative bodies, assessing their functionality, deciding which combination of existing actors (or new actors) should be appointed to form DCCs, and orienting the new DCCs to their responsibilities.

The policy was approved by cabinet and ready to implement in September, 2013, but its roll-out process was delayed until early 2014.

[28] ASOP Councils were established by USAID, DDAs were established by UNDP. Other district level bodies were created to support donor inputs to agriculture, education, counter-narcotics, and other sectors.

After an initial donors conference announcing the policy and its roll-out plan, its implementation was put on hold in mid-2014 pending the election of the new government, and changes in donor priorities and project funding levels.

Implementation was suspended in mid-2015, primarily because the government had not moved forward with either conducting district council elections or the appointment of DCCs to resolve administrative ambiguity at the district level. In mid-2016 the government decided to draft a new Local Councils Law that would formalize four levels of subnational institutions, at the provincial, district, municipal and village levels. Work was underway on this new law in late 2016.

Even though the DCC policy was approved but not implemented, the work involved is seen by government and foreign agents as an effective policy and institutional development initiative that will inform subsequent work in this area.

Problems

The main problem to be addressed by the DCC policy was the need to consolidate multiple district level donor-supported consultative bodies and establish a single unified government Council at the district level, as an interim measure until district-level councils could be elected.

An informant described the situation as follows:

> The Constitution identifies four types of councils – at the district level, at the village level, municipal councils, and provincial councils. The government was only able to conduct elections for provincial councils – the other three were not formed or elected [yet].
>
> There were multiple unelected councils or consultative groups formed by donors etc. to assist with project implementation in a variety of sectors – agriculture, education, governance etc. This multiplicity of councils became a problem in itself. The government had to come up with a solution – a single unified Council at the district level.

Agents

The primary agents were the DMs of MRRD and IDLG, the head of the General Directorate of Coordination for Local Council Affairs (GDCLCA), the IDLG unit administering provincial and district administrative entities, and two foreign technical advisors. A number of other actors were involved, including the Ministers of both IDLG and MRRD, a DM in the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), Cabinet, Senior Minister Arsala, the Ministry of Justice, the Office of Oversight on the Implementation of the Constitution, Ministry of Finance, Civil Service Commission, Ministry of Economy, the Election Commission, Ministry of Women's Affairs, line ministries at the provincial level, and the donor community, primarily DFID and USAID, and also UNAMA and UN Habitat.

Actions

The actions taken by the various agents were rooted in a recognition of the need to rationalize district level administrative bodies, an issue that had been discussed within the government and among donors since at least 2009, but the lack of political will prevented moving forward with the initiative. A conflict between the heads of IDLG and MRRD blocked progress, and there were differences in objectives for these district level governance entities. Donors applied pressure on the government, saying they would not fund its National Priority Program of subnational governance reforms unless a policy to rationalize district level administration was put in place.

In late 2011 the head of IDLG's Policy Unit (who subsequently became DM Policy) approached a respected elder politician, Senior Minister Arsala, for assistance in overcoming the blockage at the top of MRRD and IDLG. They sought the help of a DM in the Ministry of Agriculture who had good personal relations with the heads of both IDLG and MRRD. His mediation proved successful – he convened a working group that prepared an initial draft of a policy (in a local language) as a starting point, and work on the policy proceeded.

One of the DMs involved at the time put it this way:

> I came to IDLG – there was conflict – they thought they were fully responsible and had full ownership of the issue.
> In 2012 (their DM) and I came to common ground. We had a technical team and built a trusting environment.
> I took much of the load – I was the senior of the two deputy ministers. (Their DM) was new there.

Work accelerated considerably after the President issued Decree 45 in July, 2012 mandating MRRD to resolve the problem of multiple district councils – this increased the perceived legitimacy of the initiative. Technical level staff capitalized on the decree to encourage their leadership to move the process forward.

An informant commented on this phase of the process as follows:

> I pushed for a single District Council – Cabinet pushed for a decision – IDLG & MRRD, with mediation from the Ministry of Agriculture – and the senior minister Arsala – to develop terms of reference for District Councils.
>
> As we discussed we realized terms of reference were not enough – then we thought of a regulation – then we realized we needed a policy.
>
> There was no international community involvement to this point. They came into the picture as this moved forward.

Extensive consultations took place at the national and subnational levels involving stakeholders at three levels – the center, provincial and district levels. Line ministries were involved at the provincial level because of their linkages with operations at the district level. Some of these consultations took place in large-group recreational and team-building retreats at a rural property near Kabul.

An informant described these consultations:

> I wanted to have a constructive debate at the technical level on the overall context and needs of the development of the country – we had multiple retreats at a large home outside town to build unity on the team – these helped us become friends and work better together.

There were good meetings and discussions, people would argue and agree to changes to the draft policy, the changes would be made, and the new versions would be reviewed. The technical team kept their leadership well briefed, and the leadership became involved in major issues from time to time.

Another informant described the complexity of the multi-staged consultative process:

> The DCC Policy was both a very real policy document with enough inclusive clarity on issues to address the policy challenges, attached with a ToR and guiding manual. The policy processed was being managed by a team expanding in four circles. Circle one led by IDLG and MRRD as leading entities did put together the zero draft. Circle two added with MoF, Office of Oversight on Implementation of the Constitution, and then circle three with all other sectoral ministries, and finally consultation with civil society and donors. As the result, the policy was well capturing the policy issues, provision of policy options, was inclusive, incentivized and attached with appendices stating the details that was easy to make all stakeholders understand both the policy issues, options, direction and implementation modality and processes.

Informants reported that since the policy came about through a consultative process, people's concerns were dealt with as the process went along. They consulted with all the government players at all levels and included their views in the policy documentation as it went through multiple drafts. The idea was to retain as much as possible of the existing bodies – to retain their capacity, institutional memory, and relationships with other actors in their environment. They learned a lot from the existing councils which contributed to an effective policy – they built on the existing knowledge base and experience.

There was no involvement of foreign technical advisors in the initial draft of the policy. As work proceeded, foreign advisors provided some coaching and produced English versions of documents that were initially prepared in local languages. One of the informants described the process:

> (Foreign advisors) played a very small part in the process. This was the first time a policy had been written first in Pashto, and then translated into English: it was more clear that way. We did it our way and owned it.

Foreign advisors later became involved in writing up some of the implementation guidelines (GIRoA, 2013b). However, these were seen as wordy and cumbersome, so the head of GDCLCA worked with his counterpart at MRRD to prepare several simple Excel spreadsheets they could use to do the assessments described in the policy.

The work on the draft policy was substantially complete by October 2012, with continuous tweaking thereafter. It was finalized in January 2013 – about nine or ten months after intensive work began. It was then submitted to Cabinet, where it was

tabled until December that year – an inexplicable delay during which donor priorities changed, the election of a new government loomed, and conditions for the successful roll out of the four initial pilot tests of implementation of the policy became less favorable.

The DCC policy was approved by Cabinet as an interim measure to provide district representatives as called for in the Constitution before a *Loya Jirga* can be convened to change the Constitution. This was seen as compensating for the inability to conduct elections at the district level at the time. Its implementation was suspended, but it remained on the government's agenda. The President and Chief Executive Officer, heads of the new government, said they were committed to holding district level elections: when this description of the process was written in the third quarter of 2016 there was no indication of whether or when these would be held, or whether elections would be delayed and they would approve the interim solution defined in the DCC policy. The government's attention shifted in late 2016 to development of a new four-level Local Councils Law that would incorporate district level administrative bodies. There was some speculation that a version of the DCC Policy may be implemented as an interim measure until the new Local Councils Law comes into effect.

Context

A few of key elements such as the social, economic, cultural, historical, and power dynamics in the environment in which the policy initiative took place are as follows:

- There was general agreement within government and among donors that there were too many unofficial bodies at the district level, that some rationalization was needed, and it was necessary to form an official government institution to fill the administrative gap at the district level.
- All major stakeholders were in agreement that something needed to be done: the question was *how* to do it.
- The moderate level of interest by donors and government increased with issuance of the President's decree 45 – it strengthened motivation to act on the issue.
- There was donor interest, and they attached funding conditionality linked to support for the subnational governance National Priority Program (NPP). This helped push the government into action.
- It was primarily a technical level initiative which was eventually supported at the political level
- The technical level officers understood the informal relationships among their political leaders and were able to capitalize on this to engage a mediator (the DM in the Ministry of Agriculture) whose efforts overcame blockages at the ministerial level.
- There was multiple government stakeholder involvement and distributed ownership of the process.
- Several recreational team-building retreats helped build unity, friendship and common purpose among previously un-connected stakeholders.

- Work was done first in the local language, and was later translated into English. Foreign technical advisors worked in a support role more than in a leadership role.
- Work started under one regime and was going well, but the election of the new government changed priorities and stalled the process.
- The primary donor, UNDP, changed priorities as the election approached, and withdrew its funding for implementation. GIZ was still interested but was not large enough to carry the whole process, so financial support for the initiative was put on hold.

One of the informants commented on the extent of the policy's contextual compatibility:

> As far as it went (up to approval), quite suitable. The content of the policy is quite flexible, it allows for local realities and power relationships. It ought to have kept people on the ground reasonably happy, but what came out (the roles and responsibilities of the DCC) was still quite progressive.

Another informant said:

> It's compatible with the domestic conditions…Very much totally local Afghan-led process. The idea behind it was Afghan, content, length of the document and so forth.

A third informant said:

> Since it came about through a consultative process, people's concerns were dealt with as the process went along. It was compatible with the context. We asked all the players at all levels and included their views in the policy documentations as it went through multiple drafts in the development process.

Institutions

Even though the policy was not implemented as expected, the planning and consultative process created a set of relationships, "rules of the game" that defined agents' roles, relationships and patterns of interaction in the government's operations, as follows:

- The policy was developed within an existing institutional network – MRRD, IDLG, other government entities, and the major donor agencies.
- The lack of a policy development protocol within the upper levels of the Afghan government (which would normally be provided by a Centre of Government institution) hampered progress.
- The policy was designed to create an administrative institution at the district level, and that conceptual structure still exists, in potential – it simply was not put in place.
- Implementation of the institutions (DCCs) was put on hold due to a changed political and financial context (election of new government, new donor priorities).
- The policy development process increased cooperation among key players in the central government and at the subnational level. The process was seen by key actors as a good product.

- Actors learned the rules of the game – and reported they could do other policy work faster next time.

An informant's comment on the extent to which the initiative fostered institutional development:

> It definitely contributed somewhat. It was a model policy development process (in terms of the internal process) and both IDLG and MRRD gained from being a part of it. It also clarified roles and responsibilities of IDLG and MRRD and strengthened the relationship quite a lot. I think the process helped IDLG to understand how it could work better in future.

Organizations

- No new government organization was created at the district level: however, policy-related relationships improved among key stakeholders – an important sustainable product.
- The DCC policy and procedures could be adapted to support elected district councils when or if the government decides to form them.

Contextualization, endogenization and principles of good governance

Informants reported that the District Coordination Council initiative was compatible with its context, due largely to the extensive stakeholder consultation process they carried out It was a contextualized initiative, and much of the work was done first in the local language, and later translated into English for the benefit of donors who were being asked to support it.

Also, the recognition of the need for the policy came from within the government itself – it was an endogenous initiative, arising from an acute awareness within government and the broader society that this institutional development was long overdue. Donor pressure accelerated its development.

The policy's intended principles of good governance included representation, citizen participation, accountability, legitimacy, performance and effective service delivery: these would likely have been manifested if the policy had been implemented.

4.2. Municipal Advisory Boards

Informants

1. Director General, Municipal Affairs, IDLG
2. Foreign Technical Advisor, GIZ

Introduction & Overview of Policy and Context

This section summarizes what is essentially part of a municipal governance policy that was implemented in 2013 by IDLG – the Terms of Reference for the introduction and operations of Municipal Advisory Boards (MABs).

There are some 160 municipalities in Afghanistan, and each of the 34 provinces has a main provincial city. Although the 2002 Constitution provides for elections of mayors and municipal councils, these have not yet taken place. As an interim measure, the unit of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) that supports municipalities, the General Directorate of Municipal Affairs (GDMA), prepared Terms of Reference for election of Municipal Advisory Boards (MABs). These MABs provide a form of citizen participation in municipal governance, and work with mayors (who are appointed by the President) to help manage the municipalities' affairs.

Problem

The problem addressed by the MAB policy was the need to consolidate various donor-initiated municipal consultative groups and create interim bodies to provide citizen participation in municipal governance until the government implements constitutional provisions for elected municipal councils. This is similar to the DCC policy initiative described earlier.

An informant described the problem on which the policy focused as follows:

> In mid 2011, USAID, UNDP, and UN-Habitat had already established various mechanisms for citizen representation in the provincial capitals. In addition, there were traditional means of citizen representation and conflict resolution in place. These were working sometimes in parallel, sometimes in competition with one other.

Agents

The primary agents were the Head of GDMA, an expatriate advisor in GDMA, and the leadership of IDLG. Other agents were donors working with municipalities, mayors, and members of traditional municipal administrative units: *gozars* and *nahias.*

The foreign advisor who worked on this policy described her role:

> As a GDMA team member, seconded by a donor government, I took it on as my task to harmonize all existing approaches. The head of GDMA gave his full backing and secured full support from IDLG leadership, and the donors were eager to follow the lead of IDLG / GDMA as its Afghan partner institution.

Actions

The draft policy was initially developed beginning in 2011 by the expatriate advisor[29] who saw the need and took it on herself to harmonize existing approaches and write draft Terms of Reference for a single Municipal Advisory Board in each provincial city. Her initiative was fully supported by the Head of GDMA, the leadership of IDLG and donors. A wide-ranging consultative process reviewed multiple draft versions of the Terms of Reference and resulted in an approved policy in 2013.

The technical advisor described the process:

> I drafted the ToR of the MABs. After many rounds of revisions within GDMA and with the donors in the Technical Working Groups (monthly coordination meetings), they were translated from English into Dari and Pashto, were given the stamp of approval from IDLG leadership and were distributed to the mayors of the provincial capitals through official mail.

The policy builds on traditional neighborhood administrative structures to elect respected individuals to function as Municipal Advisory Boards which function in a manner similar to fully elected Municipal Councils. The roles and responsibilities of these Boards are specified, as are their relationships with Mayors, citizens and other parts of the government. In 2013 MABs were formed in all but one of the 34 provincial cities, and in 2015 they had their second round of elections. The initiative is seen as a success – MABs and their respective subcommittees were meeting regularly and carrying out their functions in the cities.

Context

The Terms of Reference recognized the limitations of the current government (it could not yet hold municipal elections), and drew extensively on traditional administrative structures to identify individuals who could be selected to represent neighborhoods and sit on MABs. This is consistent with the Hybrid Governance approach described earlier in this thesis.

The technical advisor described the extent to which initiative was compatible with the context:

> Quite. Although mayors are appointed by IDLG and not elected, there was no major resistance from them. Especially in the larger municipalities in the North and also in Herat, young people have a good understanding of the concept of citizen representation and are willing to get engaged. The inclusion of Gozar and Nahia representatives and the low quota for women respects traditional customs.

[29] Note: This was the same expatriate advisor who worked on the anti-harassment policy guideline discussed below.

Institutions

The institution of the Municipal Advisory Board was created as a result of this policy initiative. The Terms of Reference clearly defined the roles and relationships of the major actors involved in municipal governance.

An informant said the policy strengthened institutions:

> It tremendously strengthened both the municipalities and GDMA / IDLG. Municipal Councils are foreseen in the Afghan Constitution (Article No. 141), so the MABs are a decisive step towards compliance with it. In the municipalities, transparency and accountability through citizen representation were introduced as concepts. GDMA / IDLG strengthened its policy-making and oversight role.

Organizations

In 2014 functioning MABs were operating in all but one of the country's 34 provincial cities, and they had their second round of elections in 2015. The MABs were seen to be functioning in a manner that is generally consistent with their institution's rules.

Contextualization, endogenization and principles of good governance

The Municipal Advisory Board policy incorporated traditional patterns of neighborhood representation, building on pre-existing structures to create citizens' councils that took on new roles in advising mayors and holding them accountable – in a contextualized manner than blended modern and traditional systems of governance.

The need for this new institution was identified from within the society – citizen representation in municipalities was in the Constitution and the MAB policy was developed – initially by a foreign advisor – to fill a widely-acknowledged gap in the country's governance system. It was an externally-facilitated endogenous initiative.

Principles of good governance in the MAB system included citizen participation, accountability, legitimacy, performance, effectiveness and sustainability – they had been operating for several years and seemed set to continue doing so following the next set of national elections. Their transition to democratically elected (rather than selected membership) entities was described as likely to take place sometime in the future.

4.3. Anti-Harassment Policy Guidelines - IDLG

Informants:

1. Director General, Municipal Affairs, IDLG
2. Foreign Technical Advisor, GIZ
3. Afghan Gender Advisor, IDLG

Introduction & Overview of Policy and Context

In 2013 staff in two units of IDLG launched an anti-harassment initiative that resulted in IDLG endorsing a brief three-page policy document (See Annex 2) that ultimately was not implemented. The process was the subject of considerable controversy, and resulted in one of the originators having to leave the organization. While the policy itself was not implemented, the process had a number of indirect and unanticipated positive impacts.

Problems

The policy was developed to address harassment in the workplace, foster gender equity and support the advancement of women in IDLG. When asked how the policy originated, one of the informants said:

> The idea came from a foreign embedded advisor (me at GDMA/IDLG) and was further developed in close coordination with the then head of the IDLG Department for Capacity Development and a representative of UNDP at IDLG.

Agents

The primary agents were three women in IDLG: an expatriate advisor embedded in the IDLG unit supporting municipalities[30] – the General Directorate of Municipality Affairs (GDMA), a US-educated Afghan heading the Capacity Development unit in IDLG, and a foreign national working for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) as an embedded advisor in IDLG. Other actors included the other female members of IDLG's staff, the head of IDLG, and several unit managers in the organization.

Actions

The idea for the initiative came from the expatriate advisor in GDMA, and was further developed in close coordination with the head of the IDLG Capacity Development unit and a representative of UNDP at IDLG. The head of GDMA supported the initiative.

The foreign informant described part of the process:

> I drafted the text in English, which was translated into Dari and Pashto. The head of the Department for Capacity Development advertised the idea amongst the leadership of IDLG to obtain their backing and UNDP provided funds for printing posters, brochures etc.

She said the head of IDLG did not pay much attention to the initiative and she capitalized on his lack of interest to push the process along. There was some interest from gender officers in other ministries that were considering similar initiatives.

[30] This advisor also initiated the Municipal Advisory Board policy described earlier.

I was in the GDMA meeting room in 2013[31] when the initiative was announced to Afghan staff by the expatriate advisor – there was very little discussion, and as I left I asked one of the participants, deputy head of the unit, what he thought. He said, in a derisive tone, "It's a bunch of blah-blah," which I took as indicating there could be difficulties with implementation.

After an inauguration ceremony on Women's Day 2013 (which was boycotted by IDLG's Afghan female staff) and many words of commitment by IDLG leadership, the policy was never implemented.

Reflecting on the process during our interview, the US-educated Afghan said, "I lost the women in IDLG because of my strategy." She said she used an inappropriate approach, based largely on her experience with gender programming in the US.

Apparently because of her education in the US as a Fulbright Scholar she was accused of being a CIA spy and of promoting un-Islamic practices.[32] An anonymous email circulated to all IDLG staff made further accusations that caused her to resign her position and leave the organization. The expatriate advisor's contract came to an end two months later, after which she left Afghanistan, and the UNDP advisor soon after also left the organization. The head of IDLG reportedly said there should be no further action on the policy since "it made IDLG look bad." There was nothing further done with this initiative in IDLG.

Context

Afghanistan is one of the world's most conservative societies when gender equity is concerned. Traditional practices rooted in tribal culture (more than in Islam) have been cited as major barriers to implementation of programs promoting equality of women and men (APPRO, 2014; AREU, 2008). The context is not conducive to gender equity initiatives that are seen to be based on western approaches (see the example below from work with the Ministry of Women's Affairs - MOWA). Informants readily admitted their strategy failed because it was not well suited to the context.

Other gender-related initiatives that were more closely connected to the local context have had better results. For example, information from the head of GDMA (who supported the anti-harassment initiative) described his work with women in Kandahar over a decade earlier, during the Taliban regime. He said they had about 400 women involved in literacy and other initiatives as part of his work with the Community Fora program that was then supported by UN Habitat. He said he was able to work with women in the heart of Taliban country because he could draw from the Koran to demonstrate to mullahs and the Taliban Governor that Islam promotes the full participation of women in society, that the Prophet regularly consulted with his wife, a successful merchant, throughout his ministry, and that he mentioned women three times in his final statements before he died. The head of GDMA attributed his

[31] I was in GDMA as part of my work on an evaluation of a large USAID-funded municipal development project.

[32] My contacts with foreign-trained Afghans indicate this sort of accusation is not universal among the dozens of returned Fulbright scholars.

success with women's programming in Kandahar to this grounding in the religious underpinnings of the Taliban's ideology.

Institutions

The policy did not contribute to its intended result of gender equity related institutional development in IDLG, as it was not implemented. However, it did have broader effects: one informant saw its impact as follows:

> We can call it a failed policy initiative if we only look at its internal implementation at IDLG. But outside, the trend that it triggered continues till today; now, workplace anti-harassment is a national priority – it was a taboo back then – and everyone is talking about it. There are campaigns ongoing against it, men, primarily young men, are coming forward as flag bearers of those campaigns. Comparing it to the time when men at IDLG felt "defamed" as a result of this policy initiative, I'd say we have come a long, long way (Nijat, 2016),

This change took place over a relatively short three-year period.

Organizations

While the initiative "broke the ice" in that it prompted discussion of women's issues in IDLG and more broadly in other parts of the government, there was no clearly-evident lasting organizational result in IDLG.

Contextualization, endogenization and principles of good governance

Informants said the initiative was not compatible with its context, although it did have an effect in helping make the context somewhat more sensitive to gender equity issues. Both technical advisors interviewed readily admitted the initiative had come from outside, rather than emerging from within the society: it was not endogenous. Good governance principles embedded in the initiative included gender equity, participation, and social responsibility – which were not realized because the policy implementation process was blocked.

4.4. National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan (NAPWA) - MOWA

Informants:

1. Former Minister, MOWA – Ministry of Women's Affairs
2. MOWA Analysis Project Team, USAID
3. Afghan NAPWA Gender Advocacy Adviser

Introduction & Overview of Policy and Context

This section is a brief summary of an analysis of Afghanistan's Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) and the policy being analyzed: the National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA), with some additional findings – it is largely self-explanatory. It is different from the other cases analyzed in this research, as it is

based largely on a USAID-funded comprehensive organizational analysis of MOWA conducted in 2011 rather than the questionnaire used in the other cases, supplemented by additional information provided in July, 2016 by a former MOWA Gender Advocacy Advisor. It does not use the same categories of information (problem, agents, actions, etc.) as the cases due to the inaccessibility of data on events that took place over ten years earlier.

Organizational Analysis and Capacity Development of MOWA

I was asked in 2011 to be the team leader on a USAID-funded project to carry out an organizational analysis and prepare a capacity development program for Afghanistan's Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA). During our analysis we found the ministry to be almost completely dysfunctional due to a combination of problems linked to its leadership, management, a structure that was not aligned with functions, and a host of capacity deficits. A draft of our report with its analysis and remedial plan was accepted by USAID in June (Tamas, Williams, Sakhi, & Qaderi, 2011). Unlike most USAID reports it was not made public, due to what I was told was the sensitivity of the issues addressed. However, the report was well liked by USAID, and a few months after it was submitted the lead gender advisor at the Mission in Kabul told me quite happily that all of our nineteen recommendations had been incorporated in a $14M follow-on project that was eventually awarded to The Asia Foundation (TAF) (USAID, 2012).

A significant factor at play in this initiative was the intense pressure by then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to improve the status of women in Afghanistan as one of the conditions of continued US support for the country's government (Clinton, 2012; Clinton, 2013). There was no shortage of money or political will from a major donor for the initiative. It all looked good, on the surface, and from USAID's perspective.

A few months later it was apparent that things had changed. On a visit to the USAID mission I saw the same gender advisor – he looked rather dejected, which was uncharacteristic of him. When I inquired as to why he was so unhappy when the previous time we met he had been very upbeat and enthusiastic, he told me there were problems with the MOWA project. Apparently, when the Asia Foundation's staff went to the ministry to begin working on this new project, they were told by MOWA counterparts they were not particularly interested in their services. He said this was a major problem that he was not sure how to handle.

The details of how this issue was addressed are difficult to ascertain, since much of this type of discussion usually takes place behind closed doors as USAID looks for ways to salvage a troubled high-profile project. Almost two years later a follow-on project was launched – MORE – Ministry of Women's Affairs Restructuring and Empowerment Project (USAID, 2013), which incorporated some of the findings of our 2011 analysis. The USAID press release further stated:

> The MORE project will support the Ministry in continuing to provide direction for policy leadership on socio-economic issues that affect Afghan women. The project

> will build the capacity of MoWA and DoWAs[33] staff to most effectively partner with Civil Society Organizations and other key ministries and provincial departments.

In discussions in mid-2015 with the new government's recently-appointed Minister of MOWA, a GIZ colleague was told that most of the gender equity related policy functions noted in the USAID press release above had been shifted out of MOWA and into the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MOLSAMD), which presumably was seen as a more effective base for this function. MOWA did not appear to able to do the job, even with millions of dollars and years of support from USAID and other donors.

I was troubled but not surprised by this turn of events, due in part to information provided by senior Afghan officials we interviewed during our MOWA project and with whom I later had several conversations. One of the most outspoken was Dr. Sima Samar, who had been appointed Afghanistan's first Minister of Women's Affairs following the Bonn Conference in 2001, and in 2011 was the Head of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission.

She said that shortly after her appointment she was approached by the United Nations' women's organization, UNIFEM, with an offer to help address gender equity problems in Afghanistan. When they told her what they intended to do she turned down their offer, saying their approach was not appropriate for Afghanistan (Samar, 2011). She said she also told her successor to turn them away for the same reason. UNIFEM persisted, however, and ultimately MOWA signed an agreement with them to design a gender equity program, which resulted in preparation of NAPWA – the National Action Plan for the Advancement of Women in Afghanistan (GIRoA, 2007). The initiative uses a gender mainstreaming approach in an effort to promote gender equity in all government operations.

Implementation of NAPWA has not been particularly successful (APPRO, 2014), in large part because it is not aligned with the reality of its context (AREU, 2008), and reflects the foreign assumptions that Dr. Samar rejected. She said essentially that it is based on a western feminist and individualist cultural approach to the advancement of women that is not well suited to Afghan society.

Our organizational analysis found that a number of senior and middle level MOWA staff had not read NAPWA, and many of those who had read the policy said they did not really understand it. Furthermore, we found there were other Islamic, collectivist societies that had gender equity programs that met international standards and placed the advancement of women in a broader context. Their ministries had titles such as Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (Indonesia) and Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (Malaysia) – they saw women as embedded in a broader network of relationships that needed to be taken into account in attempting to improve their circumstances. NAPWA did not do this – it tended to treat women as individuals rather than as being integrated in a larger social and economic context that needed to be understood and worked with to achieve desired objectives.

[33] DOWAs (Departments of Women's Affairs) are provincial-level offices of MOWA.

In interviews in July, 2016 the former Gender Advocacy Advisor said the following:

> This document (NAPWA) that I worked on and talked about for many years is a piece of garbage … just big words from Google assembled together… (it was) written by two foreign consultants… Not even including the views of people who should be implementing it. It was dropped from the sky, there was no participation from stakeholders – it was totally alien.

Much more could be said about the Ministry of Women's Affairs and NAPWA, but this bit of information about difficulties with the government's main gender equity policy initiative will suffice for the purposes of this dissertation.

This situation was reported to be one element in a bigger context-related issue: Dr. Samar said the ineffectiveness of MOWA and NAPWA was not accidental – it was linked to a deliberate strategy the Karzai government used to maintain the status quo in the face of the international community's modernization-related efforts. Her views were echoed in Anna Larson's interview with an Afghan parliamentarian, who said:

> I think MoWA sounds beneficial in name but is in fact useless… We support MoWA in Parliament just to show the world that it exists and to show them that we are working for women in Afghanistan. … We support it because of what the world would think if we did not. In the past few years MoWA has been also only for show, organizing workshops and getting funds, but it has not had a proper strategy (Coburn & Larson, 2013)

Contextualization, endogenization and principles of good governance

The development of NAPWA did not take context into account, and it was not endogenous – it was "dropped from the sky" – an exogenous process. The principles of good governance reflected in NAPWA included gender equity, accessibility of services (it was essentially a gender mainstreaming initiative) and, to some extent, accountability. Its ineffective implementation limited its governance impacts.

Government Sabotage of Gender Programming – Part of a Pattern?

One of the other things Dr. Samar asserted in her discussion of MOWA and NAPWA was that the Karzai government subtly and intentionally sabotaged the gender equity effort through the appointment of a Minister who was not likely to take a strong stance on the issue. She was the sister of one of Karzai's friends, had never married or had children, and did not seem to consider family violence a major problem. Dr. Samar said she was put there by the President as a token figurehead for the ministry but would make it unlikely that anything substantive happened on the gender equality issue [34]. This seemed to be borne out during a GIZ governance assessment mission I worked on in late 2013 in northern Afghanistan when I was told by the ministry's provincial representative in Balkh that MOWA had not distributed available funds to their district offices so they could do the community-level gender equity

[34] This contentious view was corroborated by at least two other senior-level Afghans I encountered in the course of my work – they said they were surprised I knew that much about the inner dimensions of how the Afghan government operated.

programming they had planned and which the Ministry had approved. All they received was salary money and funds for rent and utilities, even though there reportedly was more available.

The sabotaging tactic was reportedly used in other parts of the government as well, such as in the Civil Service Commission and the Attorney-General's office, the operations of which could interfere with the free hand the country's predatory elite leadership wanted so they could use the instruments of state for their own benefit (Nijat, 2014a; Mashal, 2014b; van Bijlert, 2009; Mehran, 2013).

The challenge is present in other parts of the government as well. For example, in the Ministry of Interior (MOI) great emphasis was placed on recruiting women into the Afghan National Police (ANP). While the GIRoA and the MOI leadership voiced the politically appropriate rhetoric, little had been done to change a culture of gender violence and gender bias. A Senior Anti-Corruption Advisor at the MOI confirmed reports that exploitation of women by ANP officers was endemic, with some women having to perform sex acts in order to receive their pay or benefits (Rubin, 2015a).

An example I cited earlier is repeated here for convenience. When I was working with the training unit in the civil service commission in 2005 I was told by employees who served on appointment panels that the Chairman regularly contacted them to direct that a particular applicant in a supposedly objective merit-based recruitment interview should be selected as the successful candidate. This was reportedly well-known in the upper levels of the donor community, whose representatives pressured the government to replace him. When I asked the head of the unit in which I was working why this had not taken place, he said that the Chairman had over sixty friends in Parliament who would make life difficult for the President if he did so (Civil Service Training Unit Director, 2005).

As I wrote this in 2016, more than ten years later, the Chairman had not been replaced, even though a new and ostensibly cleaner government had been operating for well over a year. A senior official in the Civil Service Commission (who prefers to remain anonymous) told me that the Chairman and his cronies have had more than a decade to put their appointees in positions throughout the government, and his friends in Parliament were still likely to cause major problems for the new president if he tried to remove him and remedy the situation. This was described by an Afghan GIZ colleague as creating a "dark web" of patronage appointees that actively resisted the recruitment of well-trained conscientious young Afghans seeking employment with the government, many of whom saw no option but to join the stream of refugees seeking asylum in Europe and elsewhere.

A GIZ colleague who had been working with an anti-corruption program told me that a similar process had been evident in the Attorney-General's Office during the Karzai regime, with a member of the country's elite appointed as the AG and expected to do as little as possible to interfere with the cronyism and patronage that pervaded the system – to do just the minimum required to maintain donor support for the government.

The new government elected in 2014 seemed to have taken steps to remedy that situation by appointing a more aggressive Attorney General. However, the October,

2015 release from jail of one of the key figures in the massive $900M Kabul Bank scandal (Filkins, 2011) so he could be part of a major redevelopment project indicated the system was still able to be manipulated by influential actors (TOLO News, 2015e). The President's Special Advisor on Good Governance, A. Z. Masood, was pictured standing beside the criminal on the podium at the project's opening ceremony (AAN - Afghanistan Analysts Network, 2015). The controversy stirred up by the criminal's release prompted the President to issue a decree cancelling the project (TOLO News, 2015c) and ordering him back to prison to serve his full term (TOLO News, 2015b). It is noteworthy that the President suspended his Legal Advisor over this and other related matters (TOLO News, 2015f), and also that it required a presidential decree to achieve what one might expect a justice system to handle on its own. The suspended Legal Advisor subsequently said he had been acting on the orders of the President (TOLO News, 2015d) – making attribution of responsibility for this situation difficult to pin down.

These dynamics – only some of which are readily evident to outsiders – are part of the challenging context in which institutional development is taking place in Afghanistan

4.5. National Monitoring & Evaluation Policy

Informants:

1. Afghan technical advisor, GIZ.
2. Afghan Director-General of Administrative Reform and Monitoring & Evaluation, Civil Service Commission.
3. Afghan Director, Monitoring & Evaluation, Administrative Office of the President.
4. Myself – as a participant-observer working as a foreign (GIZ) technical advisor on the project.

Introduction & Overview of Policy and Context

This section reports on the early stages of a policy development initiative, the first few steps of a process that its sponsors hope will result in the implementation of a National Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Policy.

In mid-2015 I began working with a group of M&E directors from several ministries and the Administrative Office of the President (AOP) to put together a project that assessed the current state of M&E operations across the government[35] – and among donors. After a first meeting, the Afghan officials formed a Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group, which took over management of the process. They successfully negotiated with GIZ to fund the assessment project, which was led by two Afghan researchers supported by a seasoned foreign M&E specialist and directed by Afghan government personnel. The first phases of what is likely to be a multi-stage process were completed in October 2016. A M&E policy implementation framework had been approved by the President, who said he wanted it taken to

[35] See Annex 1 for a considerably more detailed narrative account of the early stages of this process.

Cabinet for implementation. Information about this project was collected from Afghan members of the Working Group, a foreign technical advisor, and from my own experience with the initiative.

Problem

The policy problem being addressed was the lack of a comprehensive and reliable monitoring and evaluation framework for the government, resulting in inadequate data on the performance of the institutions of state to guide decision-making at the highest levels of the government, and to generate evidence to demonstrate responsiveness and accountability to the public. These are major legitimacy-related problems that contribute to insecurity.

One of the informants put it this way:

> …the government departments (were) questioned did we implement our project right, what was right, and what has been changed, then the question come up did we have proper M&E system and then the answer was we do have M&E system but the above questions cannot be answered as the systems are not reading each other and every entity acts independently. So the experts of the topic (M&E) decided to come together and find out why we don't have answers for the questions on result and positive changes, the experts thought maybe we should conduct an assessment.

The problem was identified by government actors who took ownership of the initiative – it was an endogenous process.

Agents

The agents included members of what became the M&E Working Group – the M&E directors of the Civil Service Commission, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy, IDLG, and the Administrative Office of the President. They were supported by the Deputy Minister (Policy) of IDLG, the heads of two privately owned Afghan research organizations, an Afghan member of GIZ's Monitoring, Evaluation and Communications (MEC) project, the head of GIZ's Open Policy Advisory Fund (OPAF), and myself, as a policy advisor in GIZ's Regional Community Development project (RCD), and others. What became the M&E Stakeholders research project was administered by the Project Office of the Administrative Office of the President (AOP), and guided by the head of the AOP's M&E unit. A seasoned foreign M&E specialist was engaged by GIZ to support the project.

Actions

The initiative began in July, 2015 with a meeting – which I initiated – in the unit in IDLG that supported newly-elected Provincial Councils (PCs), to discuss strengthening the capacity of IDLG's M&E unit by doing performance evaluations of how well the PCs carried out their oversight functions – observing and commenting on the quality of government operations in the provinces. The M&E directors of the Civil Service Commission and the Ministry of Economy (MoEc) were present, as well as an Afghan researcher who had recently completed a baseline assessment for GIZ on the population's perceptions of the government. MoEc acts as the country's planning ministry and is also responsible for providing government performance data

to the country's leadership. A lively discussion was soon underway on challenges in measuring the government's performance – the system was described as uncoordinated and producing low-quality data. I had to leave the meeting early so was not part of much of the discussion, but wrote in my log notes that evening that I thought I might have helped start something that could take on a life of its own.

The next day I was pleasantly surprised to have received an email from the M&E Director of the Civil Service Commission with minutes of the meeting – the group had decided to expand their circle to include Ministry of Finance and other key M&E actors, and to carry on their discussion with a view to establishing some sort of working group to develop a comprehensive government-wide M&E system. The M&E Director from the Administrative Office of the President (AOP) was invited to the next meeting, which took place in the Civil Service Commission. AOP acts as the Centre of Government institution in the newly-elected Afghan government, and their M&E director was keen to do whatever possible to strengthen that organization – it was widely regarded as dysfunctional, a major factor in the government's poor performance. She subsequently asked GIZ for support for three projects – to strengthen the capacity of her operations, to do an institutional analysis of AOP, and to conduct an overall assessment of M&E across the government and among donors.

GIZ responded positively to these requests, and used its OPAF program to fund two projects: an institutional analysis of AOP, and a Stakeholder Analysis of M&E operations across the government and among major donors. The third project was ultimately seen as not being required – the M&E unit looked after its own capacity development needs. Work began in September: Centre of Government experts from Potsdam University were hired for the AOP assessment, and Afghan researchers, supported by a seasoned former GIZ M&E advisor, were hired for the Stakeholder analysis which included preparation of a framework for a comprehensive National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy. The Afghan researchers found that the M&E officers in participating ministries and donor organizations responded quickly and willingly to their survey questions, indicating a high level of stakeholder receptivity for the initiative.

Both projects were substantially complete by the end of 2015. While the institutional analysis of AOP was a most interesting project that could be the subject of a much longer article, the focus here is on the M&E study with its policy development process. A report of the preliminary situation assessment with a last chapter – which I wrote – that also defined next steps in the policy development sequence was shared with stakeholders in early 2016.

Project reports and the M&E Policy Framework document were shared with the President in mid-2016, who reportedly was strongly in favour of proceeding with implementation. Documentation was translated into local languages, and by October the M&E Policy Framework document was being made ready to take to Cabinet for approval and implementation across the government. A draft implementation plan was being prepared. The M&E Framework was discussed at the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan in early October where GIRoA and international donors met to plan future supports for the Afghan government.

One informant described the actions of the foreign technical advisors as follows:

> The International actors let the local actors to understand their own situation, come up with their own idea and later on they should feel ownership and responsible.

Another informant said:

> Actually this was a locally driven imitative as the local agents had realized the need to look to the M and E as the tool for learning and corrective measure for all and specially understanding that whether we are getting the policy objective or not. The international role was more coaching and mentoring and introducing the tools and processes that an effective policy formulation and implementation has to take. They were also playing the role of coordination and conflict mediation to smooth the power dynamic within the stakeholder so the discussion on roles and relationship of the stakeholder get cleared. I can say that it was a locally driven and international expert providing technical support and some coordination and creating a neutral environment for the policy discussion.

Local actors said essentially that the foreign advisors facilitated a contextualized and endogenous process.

Context

The primary context in which the policy development initiative took place was the network of uncoordinated and poorly-functioning M&E units in key government ministries and donor agencies, and the new unit in the Administrative Office of the President.

When asked to what extent the initiative was compatible with its context, one informant replied:

> The M&E policy implementation initiative is compatible but meanwhile there were and are some resistance from the government ministries this is because roles and responsibilities within the ministries are not well-defined such as the case of MoF and MoEc. And mean time the ministries feel that the policy will be trying to limit their authority and it will be centralized,
>
> - lack of information and communication
> - roles and responsibilities are not clear within the ministries
> - But with the M&E policy initiative all the stakeholders were part of the development phase so mostly the initiative is compatible.

Institutions

No new institutions were established at the early stage in the policy process. The M&E Working Group was an informal network – the M&E Policy may formalize its structure and operations. One informant's response to the question about institutional development was as follows:

> Actually it did show the clarity of the role of the different institutions involved and would help to a large extent the institutional development. The role of the institutions involved during the discussion but also in the policy was defined which can help the institution development of who will be doing what and how.

Another informant reported:

> As all the stakeholders ministries and entities were involved from the beginning now they know on how to develop a policy.

The project sponsors are pleased that with the President's support the policy seems likely to create a national M&E framework – what is essentially an institution – for assessing the results of all government and donor operations.

Organizations

The policy development process was building on a poorly performing and uncoordinated collection of M&E organizations in ministries and among donors. The President created a high level working group of advisors to review the Framework document in preparation for submission to Cabinet for implementation.

The research project's final report was provided to AOP in early 2016, and the M&E unit there moved to implement many of its findings. They anticipated formalizing the M&E Working Group and establishing a set of protocols identified in the report which would result in a draft policy framework for consideration by the President and for implementation across the government.

Other Factors

One of the informants identified other factors that influenced the effectiveness of this initiative:

> I think the power dynamics as there were people with influence from the center of government and also from the civil service reform and ministry of economy, ministry of finance and IDLG which looks after the sub national so we had important players around and also some link with the leadership position in the institutions. So it was a right mix of institution and the power level as well as the role they had in their respective institution. Also the team spirit that all wanted to do something for the good of their country was important driving factor to overcome the turf politics compared to public benefit or supremacy of the public benefit compared to their organizational benefit.

Contextualization, endogenization and principles of good governance

Informants' comments indicated that the initiative was well-contextualized, and it emerged from within the system (was endogenous) – government officials saw the need (as did foreign advisors) and sought external assistance to address it. The principles of good governance associated with the initiative included accountability, transparency, effectiveness and performance, all of which are linked to legitimacy, which is a key to stability and security in an insurgency-plagued society.

4.6. Subnational Governance Policy 2016

Informants:

1. Director of Policy and Planning, IDLG
2. Acting Director-General (Minister), IDLG
3. Myself – a foreign technical advisor, as a participant-observer.
4. Advisor to the President on Subnational Governance

Introduction & Overview of Policy and Context

The government's first subnational governance policy, which was prepared with UNDP support and issued in 2010, was set to expire in 2015 at the end of its mandated five-year term. Before this policy was issued the country's subnational structures were governed by a number of laws, without policies or regulations to specify details of how these systems were to operate. In mid-2015 work began in IDLG on a new policy to replace the earlier version, which had been the subject of considerable criticism. The previous policy document was seen as far too large (over 430 pages), the translation from English to Dari and Pashto was of questionable quality, and there were problems with its scope: too many elements were included in the policy. For example, it had sections governing police operations, which was a function of the Ministry of Interior. In spite of its shortcomings it did have some positive effect on operations of the state, such as establishing the 25% quota for women on Provincial Councils, which was based on part of the policy that was implemented, and it also set the stage for development of a Provincial Budgeting Policy by the Ministry of Finance.

In the second half of 2015 several drafts of the new policy were prepared and circulated to a range of interested parties – myself included – for comment. These were written largely by an expatriate technical advisor working closely with senior IDLG leadership. There was considerable urgency, as preparing the SNG policy was a time-sensitive commitment to donors. During this time there was a change in leadership of IDLG. When a draft was taken to the President in late 2015 he rejected it, and ordered IDLG to go back to the drawing board and produce a more "Afghanized" version for his review. A simple translation from the original English to Pashtu was not enough to satisfy the President – he wanted a broader participatory process to produce a suitable policy. Although it was unclear to IDLG staff what Afghanization actually meant, a quite different and more participatory consultation and review process – to which I contributed – was put in place to produce a new draft. In mid 2016, after considerable consultation and many revisions, a substantially different version was taken to the President. He found it much more to his liking. In November 2016 the latest version was being circulated to donors for review, and their comments were being incorporated in yet another revised draft to be taken to the President.

Problem

The main problem to be addressed was that the previous SNG Policy had lapsed, and a new and better version was required to provide a framework for the operations of the many subnational governance entities in the country. Also, the government was

committed to prepare a new SNG policy to satisfy promises made to donors in international conferences.

Agents

Primary agents included IDLG leadership and its policy management unit, the Office of the President, the President himself, and the President's Special Advisor on Subnational Governance. Other participating actors included line ministry representatives at the central and subnational levels, CSOs, Provincial Governors, Provincial Councils, representatives of the donor community, and others, as noted in the *actions* section immediately below.

When asked who were the main participants in the policy development process, the Policy Director said:

> Local actors had a big role. It was a bottom-up approach, generally it was both ways: bottom-up and top-down.
> International actors are key participants. Consultation with them is not finished yet, we will include their comments, share it again, they can check to see if their comments are included.

Actions

There was extensive multi-stakeholder consultation across the country. The Policy Director described it as follows:

> We were advised to work on the new SNGP by the President. A team was established in IDLG, led by the Policy Director. Different people were engaged at different times: GDLCA, Municipalities, Deputy Ministers, Policy Directorate. We produced a zero draft – first steps.
> We totally dismissed (the foreign technical advisor's) previous work – put it in the dust bin – the President told us to ignore it.

In discussing how they were to proceed, the President's SNG Advisor said:

> There were two possibilities – one was to translate it into Pashtu, with few changes in content. (The President) did not like the translated version – if it was in the original structure. He wanted a totally different process.

The Policy Director continued his description of the process they used:

> The zero draft was discussed with Govern4 Afghanistan, 3 DMs, and 2 Provincial Councils. This was the beginning of stakeholder engagement.
> After that we took the policy to 31 provinces for consultation – this involved governors, line departments, CSOs, municipalities PCs, DGs, DDA, MABs, the private sector, university professors and students from faculties, mayors and others.
> The methodology: we shared a draft with them a week beforehand – asked Provincial Governors to consult with stakeholders, so they would come to a workshop prepared.

> We introduced the policy to them – each group worked on different parts of the policy, we took their input and verified it with participants, to get their agreement – and then revised the draft of the policy based on this input.
> When we were finished with the provinces we came back to Kabul, shared the revised draft with LMs, Kabul CSOs, Kabul university.
> There was a very good thing in the Kabul coordination. Had AOP, Masood's office, Abdullah's office, full representation from Centre of Government.

He went on to describe some of the subsequent consultative and approval processes in the government:

> After that to get good support from Centre of Government, we established a core team: mangers from CEO, MoJ, AOP, Masood's office – called this a core group
> This core group had 2 meetings to review the draft – to see if it incorporated all the inputs from the previous consultation.
> Two points: 1: we had a good technical team, made good input. 2: to help them feel a sense of ownership of the policy. MoJ involvement helped so it will be applied easily.
> After the core group meetings we shared it with the International Community, to get their comments.

The SNG Advisor commented on the process they used:

> There was lots of rich material in the original Pashtu text (which was translated from the original English) but it was not a policy document. … I held meeting with technical people who knew how things worked…A policy is not something written by an expert – regardless of whether it is a foreigner or a local… (it) needs to be the product of a team.

The translation from Pashtu to Dari and English was a long and complex job; they needed to make sure the text in each version meant the same thing.

> We went over the draft document word by word, phrase by phrase, making sure the original Pashto version content and intent was accurately reflected in the Dari and English versions. It took a lot of time!

Context

The process provided a strong link with the context. The Policy Director put it this way:

> The policy development process was totally an Afghan-led process, governed by local people, it was an opportunity to have it compatible with Afghan context.
> Those who were writing and commenting on the policy were familiar, part of the context.
> The whole thing is compatible with the Afghan context.

Institutions

The policy work was early in formulation of "rules of the game" – a new institutional framework for a number of subnational governance institutions. The process used to

this stage was, in a sense, defining some of these rules for both subnational governance and also for the broader issue of the government's overall system for managing the policy development process itself. The Acting Director-General (Minister equivalent) commented at length on how the development of the new SNGP indicated the government lacked an adequate institutional framework for policy development:

> The first factor for any policy, are the stakeholders joint well understanding of policy issues, consultative process based policy development, jointly agreed upon the policy stipulations and eventually a entity-specific role and division of task in policy implementation and importantly the political well and institutionalized technical commitment by all stakeholders to policy implementation impacting the situation. All parts like a chain are important for an issues to be addressed by a policy. Whereas, each policy formulation had and has its own policy story practice. This is because Andy as you have stated once, that for Policy formulation, we need a Policy to guide us who does policy development and at what levels, and what is the common policy formulation process?

The lessons learned from the SNG Policy were seen as contributing to a broader policy management framework.

The missing government-wide policy management framework he described was the focus of another policy initiative that was in its early stages as this thesis was being written. It was using a strategy similar to the M&E Policy Framework initiative described earlier to form a Policy Managers Working Group with members from across the government who would be keen on taking the process forward. Supporting this process was part of my job with GIZ.

Organizations

As the policy had not yet been approved there were no new organizations created. The work was being done in existing organizations.

Contextualization, endogenization and principles of good governance

Informants' comments indicated the policy process was endogenous – Afghans saw the need and started addressing it. It also became more contextualized as it went forward. The contextualization was accomplished after the change of leadership of IDLG and the President's "Afghanization" order which caused a shift in the policy development strategy from a small group to a broader process with multiple stakeholder consultations which produced revisions to earlier draft documents to reflect a variety of views of what was required of the policy.

Also, after rejecting the early English version written mainly by an expatriate advisor, the more participatory work was done initially in both Afghan languages; the first drafts were written in Pashtu, and only after considerable work had been done was an English version prepared for donor review.

Principles of good governance reflected in the policy development process included participation, citizen engagement, representation, consultation, legitimacy, and responsiveness. The policy itself (a draft of which I was asked to comment on) also included financial probity, accountability, and clear delineation of the authorities of multiple actors at all levels of government.

Summary of Findings

This section has summarized key findings from six policy initiatives in the Afghan government:

1. District Coordination Council Policy – Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG)
2. Municipal Advisory Boards - IDLG
3. Anti-Harassment Policy Guideline - IDLG
4. Gender equity programming and policy – Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA)
5. National Monitoring & Evaluation Policy development – Centre of Government: Administrative Office of the President (AOP)
6. Subnational Governance Policy 2016 - IDLG

It also described what appeared to be incidents of local leaders' sabotage of externally-driven efforts to establish elements of good governance as defined in most modern states.

There were marked differences in the effectiveness of these policy initiatives, and the degree to which they were contextually appropriate – in other words, contextualized and endogenous – seemed to be related to the extent to which they were (or seemed likely to become) integrated in the operations of the institutions of state. These issues are addressed in the following *Analysis* section.

Chapter 5. Analysis of Findings and Lessons Learned

Introduction

The overall theme in this research (as noted earlier) is that in nation-building efforts in fragile states, the effectiveness of policy initiatives – as indicated by their incorporation into government operations – is associated with the extent to which the initiatives are compatible with the contexts in which they are being carried out. The research draws mainly from experience of policy implementation and institutional development in Afghanistan, which has features similar to other fragile states.

With the overall theme and underlying assumption in mind, this section analyzes the six policy initiatives described in the Findings section:

1. District Coordination Council (DCC) Policy – IDLG and MRRD
2. Municipal Advisory Boards (MABs) - IDLG
3. Anti-Harassment Policy Guidelines - IDLG
4. Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) and the National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA)
5. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Policy development
6. Subnational Governance Policy 2016 - IDLG

Research Premise and Questions

The central premise of this research (repeated from above for convenience) is:

> *The effectiveness of institutional development and policy implementation initiatives in fragile states such as Afghanistan – as indicated by their incorporation into the operations of the state – is associated with the extent to which they are contextually appropriate.*

The term *contextually appropriate* is defined below as being linked to two concepts: *contextualization* and *endogenization*, both of which are also described in this thesis.

Two related questions are:

1. *To what extent are contextualization and endogenization associated with the effectiveness of policy implementation and institutional development to strengthen good governance in Afghanistan?*

2. *What other factors may be associated with the effectiveness of policy implementation and institutional development in Afghanistan?*

The research also reviewed selected features of the models used to analyze policy implementation and institutional development, and comments on the relevance of these models to the conditions of fragile states such as Afghanistan

After first defining "contextually-appropriate," the analysis draws from the literature review and other relevant material to identify key factors linked to the level of

contextual appropriateness and effectiveness of the selected policy and institutional development initiatives.

Definition of "Contextually Appropriate"

There were numerous reference to the importance of "context" in the literature review in the sections on institutional development and policy implementation, and particularly in the works of Matt Andrews (2013) and Brinkerhoff & Crosby (2002) which refer specifically to challenges in international development. However, there was no clear definition of "contextually appropriate" in these works.

An on-line search for "contextually appropriate" found numerous references in linguistics and language learning, mainly relating to the proper use of terminology in a stream of discourse, but relatively few dealing with international development. Examples of the latter include (English, 2013; MacDonald et al., 2013; Wessells, 2009) – but these also have no clear definition of the term. The focus of their work was mainly on how the design and implementation of an intervention was sensitive to and incorporated features of the host environment.

For the purposes of this research I propose the following definition of contextual appropriateness in international development:

> *"Contextually appropriate" refers to the extent to which key elements of an initiative to increase governance effectiveness are contextualized and compatible with endogenous patterns of thought and behavior.*

This definition includes the possibility that the level of contextual appropriateness can be on a continuum from high to low, and the various elements of a complex policy implementation and institutional development initiative may be at different points on this local-to-foreign continuum.

The definition supports Goodin's (1996) notion that institutional development is an organic process, and is also consistent with core elements of organizational change theory as defined by, for example, (Dimock, 1993), Schein (1991), Senge (1994), Chris Argyris (Argyris, 1993) and others. It is interesting to note that the international development literature does not often mention the well-known and evidence-based work of these and other organizational development practitioners, who have decades of experience promoting the introduction of innovation in complex systems, key features of which may be only partially understood by the external agents who are charged with helping them improve their performance.

A foreign technical advisor on an international development project working with a host government's systems is in much the same position as a management consultant working with a public-sector or private-sector organization in the industrialized world. While there may be marked differences in the two sets of contexts, the core principles behind the intervention strategy are essentially the same: endogenous and contextualized initiatives are usually more successful and sustainable than those owned and driven by external actors and forces. The marked differences in actors' foreign and domestic contexts makes it all the more important that local factors be appropriately incorporated in an international development initiative.

Contextual Appropriateness of Policy Initiatives

The above definition can be used to assess the degree of contextualization and endogenization of the six policy initiatives analyzed for this research. The categories of analysis listed earlier are convenient: problems, agents, actions, context, institutions and organizations, and the terms "local" and "foreign" are used to denote internal or external factors.

The following questions can be asked in each category:

1. **Problem** – who identified and "owned" the problem – locals or foreigners, or both?
2. **Agents** – who were the primary agents – locals, foreigners, or both?
3. **Actions** – who did most of the key work – locals, foreigners, or both?
4. **Context** – to what extent did the problem and actions fit with the local context?
5. **Institutions** – where were the 'rules of the game" developed – locally, externally, or both?
6. **Organizations** – how did the organization fit with others in its context?
7. **Other factors** – were there any other relevant factors?

5.1. District Coordination Council Policy

Problem – who identified and "owned" the problem – locals or foreigners, or both?	The problem was identified by both local and foreign actors, and local actors assumed ownership of the issue.
Agents – who were the primary agents – locals, foreigners, or both?	Primary agents were local actors, with some support from foreign technical advisors, and pressure from donors.
Actions – who did most of the key work – locals, foreigners, or both?	Local actors did most of the work, with some support from foreigners.
Context – to what extent did the problem and actions fit with the local context?	The problem and actions taken were seen by foreign and local actors as fitting well with the context.
Institutions – where were the "rules of the game" developed – locally, externally, or both?	The institutional framework was developed locally, but it was not implemented as the policy was put on hold due to changes in government priorities.
Organizations – how did the organization fit with others in its context?	No organizations were developed as the policy implementation process was put on hold pending senior-level decisions on formation of district level administrative entities.
Other factors – were there any other relevant factors?	The policy development initiative was seen as effective, with the *process* that the actors engaged in as a beneficial result in itself: it strengthened relationships among key actors that could be tapped for other similar work in the future.

5.2 Municipal Advisory Boards

Problem – who identified and "owned" the problem – locals or foreigners, or both?	Both: The problem was initially identified by a foreign technical advisor, but subsequently owned by locals.
Agents – who were the primary agents – locals, foreigners, or both?	Both: The foreign TA took the initiative, and both locals and foreigners were agents.
Actions – who did most of the key work – locals, foreigners, or both?	Both: The foreign TA took the first steps, after which most of the implementation work was done by locals.
Context – to what extent did the problem and actions fit with the local context?	Very well – the initiative incorporated existing "traditional" Afghan neighborhood representatives in new Municipal Advisory Boards.
Institutions – where were the "rules of the game" developed – locally, externally, or both?	The institutional framework was developed locally – an adaptation and extension of a pre-existing "traditional" structure.
Organizations – how did the organization fit with others in its context?	The organization fit well with others in the context.
Other factors – were there any other relevant factors?	The initiative received limited financial and programming support from an external agent, UN-Habitat.

5.3. Anti-Harassment Policy Guidelines

Problem – who identified and "owned" the problem – locals or foreigners, or both?	The problem was identified and owned primarily by foreign actors, with some support from locals.
Agents – who were the primary agents – locals, foreigners, or both?	Primary agents were foreigners and foreign-trained locals.
Actions – who did most of the key work – locals, foreigners, or both?	Foreigners did most of the work.
Context – to what extent did the problem and actions fit with the local context?	The problem and actions undertaken did not fit well with the local context. It did, however, contribute to increased discussion of harassment issues in other parts of the government.
Institutions – where were the "rules of the game" developed – locally, externally, or both?	The institutional framework was developed externally: the policy was essentially an import from a foreign context.
Organizations – how did the organization fit with others in its context?	No organization was formed – the initiative was rejected and abandoned by the host organization.
Other factors – were	The organizers of the initiative admitted they failed due to

there any other relevant factors?	inappropriate strategies and incompatibility with the context. The initiative promoted discussion of gender equity and harassment issues within other ministries for the first time.

5.4. Ministry of Women's Affairs and NAPWA

Problem – who identified and "owned" the problem – locals or foreigners, or both?	The problem was identified and owned mainly by foreigners with some support from locals.
Agents – who were the primary agents – locals, foreigners, or both?	Primary agents were foreigners, with some support from locals.
Actions – who did most of the key work – locals, foreigners, or both?	Most of the key work was done by foreigners with little local participation.
Context – to what extent did the problem and actions fit with the local context?	The initiative did not fit well with the context: the program was accepted for demonstration purposes but was not effectively implemented.
Institutions – where were the "rules of the game" developed – locally, externally, or both?	The institutional framework was largely foreign – driven by UNIFEM.
Organizations – how did the organization fit with others in its context?	The organization operated as a relatively isolated enclave in the broader cultural, political and administrative network.
Other factors – were there any other relevant factors?	MOWA was imposed on Afghanistan after the Bonn Conference in 2001 and local efforts to contextualize its policy (NAPWA) and operations failed, resulting in an ineffective ministry with foreign-designed programs that were largely ignored, resisted or sabotaged by much of its host country context.

5.5. Monitoring and Evaluation Policy development

Problem – who identified and "owned" the problem – locals or foreigners, or both?	The problem was identified and owned by local actors who started the initiative with minimal foreign involvement.
Agents – who were the primary agents – locals, foreigners, or both?	Primary agents were local actors, including the President, with some assistance from foreigners.
Actions – who did most of the key work – locals, foreigners, or both?	Local actors did most of the work, with some advice and input from foreigners. A network was established among key local actors who carried the work forward to Cabinet approval.
Context – to what extent did the problem and actions fit with the local context?	The problem and actions fit well with the context – they addressed an acknowledged gap in the existing system.
Institutions – where were the "rules of the game" developed – locally,	The institutional framework was locally-developed, with some assistance from foreigners.

externally, or both?	
Organizations – how did the organization fit with others in its context?	This preliminary initiative fit well with others in the context – it provided a foundation for further related policy work and organizational development.
Other factors – were there any other relevant factors?	This was the early stage of a policy and institutional development initiative that was guided by the President, and was well-received by key local and foreign actors.

5.6. Subnational Governance Policy 2016

Problem – who identified and "owned" the problem – locals or foreigners, or both?	The problem was identified and owned by local actors, who had different levels of interaction with foreign advisors. Foreigners were involved at the beginning, but were later bypassed, and work was carried on by locals.
Agents – who were the primary agents – locals, foreigners, or both?	Primary agents were local actors, with some assistance from foreigners.
Actions – who did most of the key work – locals, foreigners, or both?	Local actors did virtually all the work, with some advice and encouragement from foreigners. A network was established among key local actors and needs identified for further work.
Context – to what extent did the problem and actions fit with the local context?	The problem and actions fit well with the context – they addressed an acknowledged gap in the existing system, and did so in a contextually-appropriate manner.
Institutions – where were the "rules of the game" developed – locally, externally, or both?	The institutional framework was locally-developed, with minimal assistance from foreigners.
Organizations – how did the organization fit with others in its context?	This preliminary initiative fit well with others in the context – it provided a foundation for further related policy work and organizational development.
Other factors – were there any other relevant factors?	This was the early stage of a policy and institutional development initiative that was guided by the President, and was well-received by key local and foreign actors.

Analysis from Literature Review

Introduction

The literature review summarized relevant information on governance in international development, fragile states, institutional development, policy implementation, and the Afghan context. The information below complements the previous section by drawing from the literature review to analyze the research findings and address issues related to the thesis questions.

Governance in International Development

The policies analyzed in this study reflected a central authority's efforts to extend the reach of government to address issues that lacked clearly-defined institutional and policy frameworks. Three initiatives – the DCC, MAB and Subnational Governance policies – were designed to create new representative subnational administrative

entities and opportunities for citizens to engage with authorities. The Monitoring and Evaluation policy was an early stage of an effort to establish a comprehensive mechanism to assess the performance of the government and improve its legitimacy. The two gender policies were attempting to promote human rights, increase equity of access to opportunity for women and protect them from harm. These all were attempting – with varying degrees of success – to build foundations for formal administrative systems to address previously-neglected areas of governance that are core elements of the operations of many states.

State Fragility

Although this research was taking place in a fragile state, its focus was not on analysis of the various components or symptoms of state fragility, which were summarized in the literature review above. The six policy initiatives that were studied demonstrate characteristics that are consistent with conditions in fragile states: in all but two examples (the DCC and SNG policies) the state relied heavily on foreign technical advisors, and donor funds were needed for all six. The country was not self-sufficient in these key technical and financial dimensions of governance. It also was engaged in a war with the Taliban and other groups who controlled significant territory, and had the dubious distinction of being one of the world's most corrupt countries (Transparency International & Integrity Watch Afghanistan, 2016) and producing some 90% of the world's opium. There is not much more to say about these factors in the analysis of research findings: they indicate a high level of state fragility.

Institutional Development

Rules of the Game – Economic vs. Sociological Models

The institutional development initiatives analyzed in this research were focused on developing what economist Douglass North (1991:98) called the "rules of the game" – a concept rooted in a rational actor or economic view of motivation and behavior. However, with the exception of the potential employment dimension of the gender equity initiative in the MOWA example, there was little evidence of economic factors in these cases – they were intended to improve the administrative functions of the state, which was more of a sociological orientation. These "rules" were required for new institutions – conceptual social structures which defined roles for individuals to occupy in public sector organizations to manage systems to better serve the society.

Accident, Evolution, Intention

Goodin's (1996) three models explaining the origin of institutions[36] can be used to analyze the six policy initiatives. They were all *intentional*, in that actors set out on lines of action with particular objectives in mind. However, there were overt *evolutionary* elements in at least two: the District Coordination Councils (DCCs) and Municipal Advisory Boards (MABs). These initiatives focused on creating new administrative structures that built upon pre-existing patterns of organization, some of which had earlier been *intentionally* created by donors to guide their district-level development initiatives.

[36] He says the origins of institutions can be accidental, intentional, or evolutionary, or more likely a combination of these factors.

There may well have also been *accidental* elements in their origins: the MABs overtly incorporated traditional neighborhood representatives (*wakili gozars,* etc.) in their institutions, and it is reasonable to assume that representatives on the several sets of district-level institutions would likewise be selected on the basis of their visibility on traditional decision-making entities, which often was based on the esteem in which they were held by citizens in the district. How these traditional institutions came into being is not known; they may have originated by *accident*, in the distant past.

They may also have *evolved* over time through a process described by Ostrom et al (Ostrom, Burger, Ifield, Norgaard, & Policansky, 1999) in which communities devise their own systems to organize the equitable distribution of scarce resources, such as the *mirabs* who manage irrigation networks in Afghanistan. This self-organized and sustainable collective approach with its built-in checks and balances is in contradiction to the destructive self-interested individualist economic assumptions described in the "tragedy of the commons." This is consistent with the assertion by March and Olsen (2006:4) that the self-interested individualist rational actor model, by itself, is an inadequate framework to explain observed collective institutional development behavior in a number of contexts. They identify a quite different *cultural community* explanatory model which is more contextualized and may also apply in the cases analyzed here. They say it is a "perspective which sees political life as organized by shared values and world-views in a community of common culture, experience, and vision."

Dialogue vs. Decision, Issue Networks vs. Policy Communities

Two quite different mechanisms are identified in Linder and Peters' (1994) analysis of institutional development – one based on a large multi-actor *dialogue,* the other on a smaller elite specialist-driven *decision* processes. Their preference seems to be for the former, in that it is more participatory and as such has greater chances of buy-in and broad-based support from political and administrative stakeholders. These are similar to two types of policy networks identified by Rhodes (1997) – relatively loosely organized and participatory *issue networks*, and more tightly-knit specialist-led *policy communities.*

Work on the Subnational Governance policy began as a *decisional* elite-driven effort which seemed headed toward failure as it was unacceptable to the President, who said it was not adequately contextualized ("Afghanized"). It subsequently shifted to a quite different and more open, participatory *dialogical* process which produced a different result and appeared more likely to succeed.

The relative levels of effectiveness of the six initiatives described earlier do not fall neatly into these two sets of categories. Most had what might be considered in OECD-type societies as rather low levels of stakeholder participation, but two similar elite-driven processes had quite different results. The successful Municipal Advisory Board (MAB) institutional development process, for example, was initiated and driven largely by a foreign specialist and implemented by a small group of administrators, and it was reported to be effective. That same foreign advisor and another small group of specialists initiated the Anti-Harassment policy, which they said was a failure. The same senior level Afghan administrator supported both initiatives. There may be other reasons for these quite different results, which will be discussed below.

Policy Implementation

Policy Implementation Sequencing and Tasks

With the exception of the MOWA case, the policy initiatives analyzed in this research were in the relatively early stages of the policy implementation sequence defined by Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002: 57-59). The MAB policy had been in effect for two years, and was further along in its implementation than the other four. In their cases, problems were identified, and stakeholders (what the authors call a "constituency") were engaged, and some funding requirements were identified, but not secured or deployed.

The country's main gender policy, the National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) had been developed several years earlier, but was having limited impact on the government's operations and the society. This was due in part to inadequate contextualization and constituency development, and the inability to allocate resources for its implementation. Problems associated with the exogenous origins and support for NAPWA and the lack of contextual appropriateness of foreign-driven gender programming will be discussed further below.

Institutions and Policy Styles

Four of the policies analyzed in this study reflect a majoritarian, tightly controlled policy style described by Cairney (2012) that is consistent with the highly centralized nature of the Afghan government. Exceptions were the District Coordination Council (DDC) policy and the Subnational Governance (SNG) policy, both of which engaged civil society organizations and other formal and informal groups in their development. The DCC policy's sponsors were confident that if the government had decided to proceed with its implementation things would have gone well, largely because of its multi-stakeholder participatory development strategy.

The assumption that a more open and participatory policy development process is necessary for good implementation outcomes was not borne out in the success of the Municipal Advisory Board policy – its was developed by a small elite group with relatively little stakeholder participation, and yet it has proven to be effective. Possible reasons for this anomaly are discussed below.

Policy Implementation in International Development

The literature review draws from the work of Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002), Andrews (2013), and others to examine institutional development and policy implementation in international development. The authors make numerous references to the deeper hidden dimensions of social and cultural patterns that influence the policy process. They essentially say that endogenous processes are more effective than those designed and driven from outside the society. This assertion was borne out in the different levels of effectiveness of the policies analyzed. The two gender policies were externally-driven, and failed. The other four were more endogenous, and were relatively more successful. This is further discussed below.

Policy Implementation and Organizational Change

Policy implementation is a form of introduction of innovation in a complex system, such as adopting a new pattern of behavior or recognizing and addressing problems that previously were not part of the system's concern. As with other types of organizational change, effectiveness and sustainability are linked to the degree to which a system's key influential actors perceive benefits and take ownership of the initiative: stakeholder engagement is linked to a positive outcome. The two gender policies failed in this regard, while the other four were more successful. Possible reasons for these different results are discussed below.

The Afghan Context

The description of the Afghan context in the literature review covered a broad range of issues, only a few of which are referred to in this section.

Governance Context – Policy and Legal Framework

The state's policy and legal framework was described as resembling both a haphazard patchwork quilt and a slice of Swiss cheese. The six initiatives analyzed in this research were designed to fill some of the holes in that framework – to address issues for which there was no policy guidance.

Legitimacy

Four of the initiatives addressed the need to strengthen legitimacy: the DCC, MAB and SNG policies were designed to improve public participation in governance, and the intent of the M&E policy was to help the government improve its performance so it could address accountability issues. The problems experienced by the two gender policies were linked to their incompatibility with their context which negatively impacted their legitimacy, contributing to resistance and their failure to achieve their objectives.

Institutional Fragmentation & Low Performance

All six policies addressed institutional fragmentation and performance issues. The DCC policy was designed specifically to reduce fragmentation of decision-making entities at the district level and increase performance by creating a single government entity to coordinate efforts of state and non-state actors active in the districts. The SNG policy had a similar and broader intent, a comprehensive framework for institutions at the provincial, district, municipal and community levels. Municipal Advisory Boards likewise were channels for coherent neighborhood-level input to Mayors and city administrations. The intent of the M&E policy was to develop mechanisms to evaluate the operations of government entities and provide information to senior levels to further reduce fragmentation and improve performance. The intent of the gender policies, particularly NAPWA, was to systematically foster the advancement and well-being of women in the government and across the country.

Governance Assets – "Traditional" Systems

The Municipal Advisory Board policy was the most overt of the six in incorporating long-standing indigenous institutions in a contemporary governance structure – it enabled neighborhoods (*gozars, nahiyas, etc.)* to use long-standing indigenous procedures to select representatives to sit on MABs that worked with mayors to

manage city affairs. It was an externally facilitated, contextualized and endogenous process, an example of hybrid governance. It tapped into local capacities that are similar to others that underpin the many so-called "traditional" institutions such as the *mirabs* who have effectively managed irrigation systems for centuries.

The DCC policy also drew on "informal" processes to remove a roadblock caused by conflict between the heads of MRRD and IDLG – its sponsors sought the assistance of an influential older Afghan leader, Senior Minister Arsala, and also engaged a deputy minister in the agriculture ministry, whose involvement might not be understood by outsiders, to help move things forward. The sponsors knew that the DM in the agriculture ministry could draw on his good relationships with both MRRD and IDLG ministers to mediate their conflict and remove the blockage. Afghanistan has a long tradition of using mediators who have appropriate relationships with the protagonists to resolve conflicts in a variety of troublesome situations (see, for example, Tamas & Austin, 2013), and in this case the approach worked – the conflict was resolved and the process moved forward.

Possible Reasons for Observed Results

The relative effectiveness of policy initiatives analyzed in this research was not always neatly linked to whether they were completely locally generated or foreign driven. That would be too simplistic an explanation. Two policies with quite different results were initiated by the same foreign advisor, in the same part of the government, and supported by the same senior official. The Municipal Advisory Board (MAB) policy was successful and had become integrated in the operations of the government, while the Anti-Harassment policy was rejected. It is interesting to examine the factors involved in these cases.

Gender Initiatives

The two gender initiatives analyzed in this research were not effective. The Ministry of Women's affairs and its NAPWA policy received considerable external support, but was not successful in becoming fully integrated in government operations. This was described by the first Minister of Women's Affairs (MOWA) as being due to a combination of an approach that was incompatible with Afghan society, and a sabotaging tactic used by the President – appointment of a Minister who was not likely to forcefully advance the gender equity agenda, but would do just enough to keep much-needed foreign funds flowing into the country. This was part of an elaborate façade which is discussed further later in this report.

The Anti-Harassment policy in IDLG was also a failure, for similar reasons. The fact that a member of the team that worked on the policy was an Afghan was no guarantee they operated in a contextually appropriate manner. She was western-educated, and used a strategy influenced by the equity programs she saw in the US, which she later admitted was inappropriate – a western ethnocentric approach similar to that in the UNIFEM initiative for MOWA that was rejected by its first Minister as not being suited to the Afghan context.

Another somewhat more effective gender initiative that was discussed during the data collection phase but was not fully analyzed for this research was a gender mainstreaming policy in municipal governance. The senior official who described this process said that it was necessary to calibrate expectations to the reality of the communities in which activities were taking place (DG Municipal Affairs, 2015) – in other words, to contextualize these efforts. Among other things, the policy set quotas for hiring women in municipal governments. While these were only partially met, the fact that municipalities installed separate bathrooms for females was seen as an achievement that advanced the gender equity agenda.

Municipal Advisory Boards (MABs)

The Municipal Advisory Board (MAB) policy was a success. It is interesting to try to understand why it worked even though it was elite-driven and was the initiative of the same foreign advisor who worked on the failed Anti-Harassment policy described above.

One of the factors to consider was that the policy drew on pre-existing neighborhood-based administrative systems and practices. Municipalities had long ago been divided into sectors or neighborhoods, based on natural groupings – areas around major mosques or markets, or demarked by rivers, main roads, etc. These neighborhoods had identified respected individuals to act in a variety of formal and informal roles, as their spokespersons, arbiters or mediators to resolve conflicts, and other governance-related functions. This was described in the corruption analysis of *wakili gozars* conducted by Integrity Watch, reported above (Integrity Watch Afghanistan, 2013).

The MAB policy set up a system of involving these respected neighborhood representatives on Advisory Boards to work with the appointed Mayors. It was an organic process with its roots in the history and existing patterns of organization in the municipalities, an example of hybrid governance that "worked with the grain" of pre-existing systems, as described by (Boege et al., 2009) and (Booth, 2011).

It was an example of an effective externally-facilitated contextualized and endogenous institutional development process. As such it conforms to the definition of contextually-appropriate institutional development stated earlier, even though it was the result of a *decisional* and elite-driven strategy, with relatively little broad-based stakeholder involvement in the design phase. This indicates that in some situations appropriately-designed contextualization may compensate for low levels of stakeholder participation in effective institutional development in fragile states. This is discussed further in the *Conclusions* section below.

The other initiatives that were seen as relatively effective – the Monitoring and Evaluation, District Coordination Council and Subnational Governance policies were likewise relatively compatible with pre-existing patterns, and were driven from within the society more than by external actors. They also were primarily endogenous initiatives that drew on external supports to address problems that were owned by local actors – all factors which contributed to their success.

Lessons Learned

This section highlights a few of the major lessons learned from this research that can be taken into account by agents interested in supporting policy implementation for contextually appropriate institutional development in fragile states.

Capacity Development for Policy Implementation

One indicator of contextual appropriateness is the extent to which local actors have (or are helped to acquire) the capacity to take on key roles in designing and implementing institutional and policy changes. Capacity development has many definitions – the version prepared by the Australian development agency AusAID (AusAID, 2006) is particularly useful in that it focuses on fostering on-going and self-perpetuating improvement in capability:

> The process of developing competencies and capabilities in individuals, groups, organizations, sectors or countries which will lead to sustained and self-generating performance improvement.

Afghan officials were working on the six policy initiatives with varying amounts of external support, which was related to different levels of local capacity to address these issues. A four-step capacity development scale designed by AusAID (ibid:4) is useful in defining the relative level of indigenous capability in these policy examples.

Table 10
Staged Capacity Building Model (AusAID)

Dependent	Guided	Assisted	Independent
The adviser controls the particular work function and may do most of the work, takes the decisions or is highly influential in the decision-making process. This is typically the case when an adviser is appointed to an in-line position, or where capacity for particular functions is very low.	The adviser still has a high level of control, but counterparts can undertake the straightforward elements of the function under supervision or guidance. Staff may not be fully aware of the full function – they 'may not know what they don't know' – and may not be aware of the need to follow through and take responsibility for ensuring the process or function is fully completed.	Counterparts are now taking prime responsibility for the function, can handle most of the complex aspects and know when they need to ask for assistance. The adviser's role is more one of support, with occasional reminders and prompts to follow through, and occasional higher levels of support for new situations or for infrequent events (such as preparing an annual budget).	Counterparts are now fully competent to do the whole function. They may still use an external adviser for highly technical work that occurs only once a year or on an ad hoc basis. This is similar to bringing in external consultants as needed, a common practice in developed countries if it is more cost-effective to 'buy in' the capacity rather than develop it in-house.

The description of the AusAID model states that one indicator of where a capacity development initiative is located on this continuum can be seen by taking note of "on whose computer the work resides" – the answer indicates the relative level of local capacity in the system and the type of external support required. At the more autonomous and capable "assisted" and "independent" levels the work usually resides on the local partner's computer. The levels in the six examples in this research are summarized in the following table.

Table 11
Relative Level of Local Capacity in Cases Analyzed

Policy	Capacity Level
District Coordination Council Policy	**Independent, with some assistance**: the initiative was designed and driven largely by local actors, foreign advisors acted in a coaching and support role, with reliance on foreign funds for implementation
Monitoring and Evaluation Policy development	**Independent, with some assistance**: the initiative was designed and driven largely by local actors, foreign advisors acted in a coaching and support role, with reliance on foreign funds for implementation
Municipal Advisory Boards	**Assisted:** a foreign advisor initiated the policy, which was then adapted and implemented by local actors, with minimal foreign supports required for implementation
Anti-Harassment Policy Guidelines	**Dependent:** Foreign advisors designed the policy and funded implementation
Ministry of Women's Affairs and NAPWA	**Dependent:** Foreign advisors designed the policy and funded implementation
Subnational Governance Policy	**Dependent, shifting to Independent, with some assistance:** The work on this initiative was initially carried out largely by foreign technical advisors with direction from local leaders. After the President's intervention and the departure of foreign advisors, the process was designed and controlled by local actors, who occasionally sought advice from foreign technical specialists (myself included).

The two relatively more "dependent" initiatives were also the least effective.

Gender Initiatives – Nuanced Approach Needed

Informants said that a more nuanced approach is needed to assess the effects of gender initiatives. Strategies seen as failures or as having limited impacts reportedly did have a beneficial effect.

To ensure accuracy while writing this thesis I sent my description of the IDLG Anti-Harassment Policy to key informants for their feedback. I received the following response:

> We can call it (the Anti-Harassment Policy) a failed policy initiative if we only look at its internal implementation at IDLG. But outside, the trend that it triggered continues till today; now, workplace anti-harassment is a national priority – it was a taboo back then – and everyone is talking about it. There are campaigns ongoing

> against it, men, primarily young men, are coming forward as flag bearers of those campaigns. Comparing it to the time when men at IDLG felt "defamed" as a result of this policy initiative, I'd say we have come a long, long way…
>
> In addition to the role of individuals like Nora, Popal sb, Sofia, or me, the institutional role of IDLG in the larger context of Afghanistan was significant – in most likelihood without IDLG's leadership realizing it. Looking back, I see this policy initiative as an act of institutional leadership by IDLG because it contributed to ripening the issue for the larger context – Afghan society. To add some context, had the women's rights movement [and their international partners] in Afghanistan, in the past 15 years, focused on ripening the issue of women's rights for the larger context, as opposed to assuming that it is ripe [misdiagnosis], we would have been at a different place now.
>
> I suggest focusing on individual roles within IDLG as well as the institutional role in the larger context, and comparatively looking at the policy initiative's impact within as well as outside IDLG (Nijat, 2016).

These comments highlight the importance of considering culture in understanding these processes. Culture plays a major role in development, and cultural factors need to be taken into account in development initiatives. These include understanding resistance to identity change, the desire to maintain the integrity of one's structure of meaning, and the need to be acutely aware of cultural factors in innovations impacting matters of personal status which are in violation of hidden protocols in the informal level of cultural rules described in the earlier discussion of the iceberg of culture defined by Hall (1976).

Achieving gender equity is perhaps the most challenging role adjustment the world has yet to make – a lot of "ripening" seems to be required, and not only in Afghanistan. Nijat's comments indicate that a thorough analysis of the context is a prerequisite for effective intervention design and operation. However, the structure of the international development process with its relatively short timelines and focus on quick, measurable results makes it difficult to achieve this level of understanding of the context before moving into project design and implementation. The old adage, "haste makes waste" applies in international development as much as in any other endeavor. This could be a much longer discussion, but is beyond the scope of this thesis to address further.

Foreign and Local Agent Relationships – a Non-Directive Approach

In effective international development, as in any major organizational change initiative in which external actors are involved, foreign agents work with local partners to foster endogenous processes that are owned and incorporated into the local context. Ideally, the resources or influences required for the initiative also come from within the local context.

One way of looking at institutional development and policy implementation is as a complex form of introduction of innovation in existing systems, and the principles of effective community development or organizational change apply to these efforts. These principles include local ownership of the initiative, and being aware of the extent to which the change is compatible with its surroundings. In international

development a similar concept of "working with the grain" of existing systems (Booth, 2011) is linked to effective and sustainable initiatives.

This is consistent with a fundamental principle articulated decades ago by Batten and Batten (Batten & Batten, 1967) in their classic analysis of a non-directive approach in group and community development. They say that an external agent should work with the energies that are present in the context to help it move itself along a constructive trajectory. This strategy usually involves identifying and establishing trusting relationships with formal and informal influencers in the various parts of the entities being worked with, and encouraging them to align their energies toward common objectives. The four more effective policy initiatives studied here achieved this alignment, while the two ineffective gender initiatives did not.

A non-directive approach can be difficult to achieve when the funds are provided by external parties who have priorities that may differ from those in the host context. The primary motives of local actors who agree to international development initiatives are often to secure the funds, which makes it difficult to operate in an authentic non-directive mode.

An appropriate non-directive strategy with externally-funded initiatives is to encourage local actors to engage in an endogenous process of defining their development needs and institutional requirements, and then adapting minimal inputs of external funds and technical advice to reinforce the acquisition of increased capacity of local actors to identify and work toward their own objectives. It is an understatement to say this is difficult to achieve: most development agencies espouse this approach, but the mixed success of international development projects attests to the relatively few instances in which it is actually manifested.

Contexts, Façades and Black Boxes in International Development

What is Context?

One of the major lessons learned in this research is the importance (and challenge) of taking context into account: it is a frequent theme in institutional development in any environment. In international development the term alludes to elements that may be only partially understood by local and foreign actors, and can have psychological-cognitive or cultural factors, and also administrative-structural elements.

The cognitive or psychological factor is addressed by authors such as Matt Andrews (2013) who uses an iceberg analogy – noted earlier – to describe a deeper and largely invisible dimension in the society that plays a major role in reforms that are part of the nation building process. Andrews does not define the content of this deeper dimension of the recipient society beyond generalities – using terms such as norms, values, preferences, and others. These concepts do not provide an understanding of how these elements compare to the comparable deeper and largely hidden dimensions of western development workers' own emotional, cognitive and analytical processes. Also, the very notion of a "policy" – as a higher-order document near the top of a taxonomy that guides strategies, operations and employee behavior – derives from a particular way of seeing the world, and may differ from other types of cognitive systems and ways of organizing collective goal-oriented behavior in a society.

As noted earlier, anthropologist Edward Hall (Hall, 1976) uses the term "context" to describe two types of cultures and modes of communication – high-context and low-context – and places societies in various points along this continuum. He sees middle-eastern, collectivist societies as being relatively high-context, and western individualist societies as low-context. High-context communication assumes actors know a lot about the situation being discussed and can use relatively little effort to achieve a shared understanding of an issue. Low-context communication, on the other hand, does not assume shared knowledge of the situation or its background, and requires considerably more effort to get an idea across.

Actors in high-context societies can use relatively little effort to engage their colleagues in significant large-scale collective events. For example, after my family was adopted into the Tlingit tribe of First Nations peoples in the Yukon in the early 1980s, we sat in on the planning of a Potlatch, a traditional institution and ceremony, that was to take place three days hence. There were twelve people in this planning session, during which we drank tea, played cards and told jokes, and the whole thing was done in about 45 minutes. It was the slickest piece of large-scale event management I had ever seen. Three days later the elaborate network of relationships and competencies that were embedded in the context produced the event, that in this case was essentially a sit-down dinner for about five hundred people that raised over $10,000. My wife and I noted that it would take us much longer than 45 minutes to plan a sit-down dinner for only ten people, and it was unlikely that we would be playing cards, drinking tea and telling jokes while we did it.

There are also differences in contexts within each type of society – for example, highly-trained western professionals can exchange a lot of information with relatively few words if they have a shared understanding of the vocabulary or background of the issue. An example in this thesis you are now reading is my earlier use of the term "taxonomy" which describes a hierarchy of concepts – I presume the reader knows what the term means, and it does not require more explanation. However, a person who was not familiar with the concept would need a more detailed explanation – requiring more words – before shared meaning could be achieved. Other examples include my use of the terms "collectivist" and individualist" above – this assumes readers are familiar with the works of scholars such as Hofstede (1991) and Hall, and others who have analyzed culture and communication. This is high-context communication.

In international development initiatives local actors are well aware of the background and dynamics of a particular situation in their own society, while foreign actors do not have that level of knowledge of the context. One could say that local actors are operating in a high-context mode, while the foreign actors are in a low-context situation in regard to the workings of the local environment. However, the reverse applies to the workings of the international development system – local actors may know a lot less about the donor system than the development worker does[37]. This

[37] This generalization needs to be tempered by awareness of the effect of differential power relations among the two sets of actors. For example, during the slave era in the US, slaves reportedly knew a lot more about their masters' ways of life than the opposite – slave

asymmetry of knowledge places domestic and local actors in different levels of advantage depending on what is being done and which context is being considered.

These different levels of context help explain some of the dynamics in the "façade" phenomenon discussed in the next section.

Façades and Black Boxes in International Development

A structural or administrative dimension of context was depicted by one informant as a multi-sector system in which local actors presented a "façade" to the international community as part of an elaborate dance that kept donor money coming in to the country. There likewise is a deeper dimension within the donor system that is largely invisible to local country actors. These façades and black boxes are illustrated in the following table:

Table 12
Multiple Contexts and Façades in International Development

Donor – Foreign		Recipient – Local	
1. Donor Country Internal Context	**2. Donor Development Agents**	**3. Local Development Agents**	**4. Recipient Country Internal Context**
Donor domestic politics, foreign policy and funding decisions	Project design and implementation	National development plans, PRSPs, etc.	Host country domestic politics and financial processes
Donor project design, approval and analysis processes	Technical assistance, budget support, etc.	Local government counterparts, staff, etc.	Local administrative capacity and processes

This table shows there are at least four sets of structural contexts to take into account in most international development interventions – two on each side of the foreign-local relationship. Each vertical line can be seen as a semi-permeable boundary between the groups and functions described, permitting only some of the information and influence to flow horizontally from one block to another. The internal contexts of each set of actors in sections 1 and 4 – donors and recipient country agents – are largely invisible to each other. Agents of foreign donors usually know little about the deeper levels of the context in which their local partners operate, and vice-versa. The occasional high level intergovernmental meetings during which funding commitments are made are not likely to provide participants with much insight into the deeper dynamics of their respective parties' contexts.

The boundary between the two middle groups, sections 2 and 3 – donor and local development agents – is somewhat more permeable, but these agents may be only dimly aware of the workings of the context in which their counterparts operate. Each appears to have a black box behind them into which the other party can not clearly see.

The boundaries within each country system, however, are considerably more permeable – influence flows relatively freely between blocks 1 and 2, and between 4 and 3. The two sets of country level agents receive inputs rather easily from within

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owners were largely ignorant of the internal workings of slaves' social systems. These differences in knowledge can be used to the weaker parties' advantage.

their own systems, and need to take these into account in their dealings with their counterparts.

However dimly they may be understood by actors in an international development situation, these contexts and their relationships matter – a lot.

One area in which relationships matter a great deal is in the collaboration of foreign and local actors in a technical advisory exchange, such as supporting policy initiatives like the cases in this research. When a foreign advisor attempts to foster contextualized and endogenous institutional development in a host country system, the visibility that may be present in an organizational development project in the advisor's home society is absent. The foreign actor is supporting processes in contexts that appear opaque. The internal institution-building dynamics are taking place in the black box behind the local partner – a process the external agent can't directly observe. This raises the question of how one can competently support institutional development when they can't see into the institution they are working with, when whatever is happening is taking place on the other side of the façade described above.

Here is where the quality of relationships becomes a key element in effective international development work. The cultural broker role described earlier, where the local and foreign agents can be seen as meeting in the middle of a bridge between two worlds, is a key to understanding how these processes work. The quality of relationships between these two sets of actors, and the ability to triangulate, to build some understanding from multiple sources of data, are part of obtaining some sense of the largely invisible processes on the other side of the façade. Also, the intercultural relations competencies described earlier are key factors in the effectiveness of these insider-outsider relationships.

Much more could be said about this topic, which may be an interesting issue to pursue further: this central factor in the effectiveness of international development work is a larger topic than can be adequately addressed in this thesis.

Was Sabotage of Foreign Efforts Contextually-Appropriate Development?

The façade analogy us useful in understanding some of the challenges in promotion of gender equity. In the description of gender policy initiatives and MOWA, examples were given of what seemed to be sabotage of international efforts to introduce a number of modern state practices, one of which was gender equity. While the government accepted donors' funds, they worked in the background, behind the façade, to limit the effectiveness of gender programming. A question can be asked as to whether the sabotage of these efforts was contextually-appropriate development. It might be, depending on who you ask and which context is being discussed.

An advocate of gender equality would see the token efforts of the government in MOWA as resisting the introduction of beneficial changes in the society and as inconsistent with efforts to promote the equality of women and men that is part of the global context and its principles of justice and human rights. However, for a member of the local elite who is benefitting from the status quo, and who wants to maintain

the integrity of his structure of meaning, and is not open to identity change (all of which are understandable preferences) then sabotaging the introduction of effective gender equity programming can be seen as an example of local contextually-appropriate institutional development.

The extent to which principles from the global context can influence change in the sometimes quite different principles rooted in the local context is an open question. Achieving any meaningful change in local mindsets and behaviors, particularly in matters of personal status such as male-female role relationships, is challenging indeed, and its difficulty may easily be underestimated. While external agents can encourage such changes, if they are to succeed the efforts need to be rooted in the society itself, as endogenous processes owned and driven by local actors.

It is difficult to introduce major innovations in a context that is resistant to change: an incremental approach is required. One of the advisors supporting implementation of the harassment policy in IDLG described the following lessons learned from their seemingly failed attempt.

> To bring societal change and to ripen an issue requires many, many attempts. This goes for any issue in any society. At the beginning, most attempts will fail before more and more people want the change and form majorities. Maybe this policy was too ambitious because the issue is too sensitive (yet important!). Very technical issues are often more successful, for example building bathrooms for women, so that they feel more comfortable at the workplace or are not kept away in the first place; this in turn will promote women's issues (in our case: in municipal offices). (Roehner, 2016)

The stresses within the society as these conflicting frameworks struggle for ascendency are difficult for foreign development agents to appreciate. The most appropriate stance is to identify and encourage local actors who are promoting values consistent with globalization, justice and human rights, all the while recognizing they maybe subjected to pressures from within their own systems (sometimes from their own families) to maintain the integrity of patterns that are not consistent with those values from the broader context.

This calls for a light touch, and authentic relationships between local and foreign agents – which can be difficult to achieve, particularly in fragile states where there is a high turnover of technical advisors and representatives of foreign governments. The staff turnover rate in USAID staff in Afghanistan, for example, was about 85%, and over a two year period my Afghan counterparts on a project we evaluated said they had to establish working relationships with six different project officers, each needing to be oriented to what their project was doing (Tamas & Dunn, 2012). It is difficult to do effective contextually-appropriate institutional development when this is the reality of how some foreign agencies operate in the country.

Culture, incentive structures and international development

International development initiatives often assume people will change their role relationships – such as financial reforms that include shifting from a centralized to a decentralized decision-making structure. While these may seem to be straightforward

technical matters, they also affect issues of personal status, which impact the deep emotionally-laden informal level elements in Hall's iceberg of culture, and contribute to the façades described above, behind which local actors do what they can to limit the impact of the change.

The society's incentive structure needs to be understood if development initiatives are to succeed. There are likely to be winners and losers, and everybody wants to win, while nobody wants to lose. This is a common human trait.

This applies to both technical and social change initiatives. While it may seem that public financial management (PFM) reform, for example, is in the technical domain because it is mainly about financial administration matters, it also impacts power, authority and status structures, and how these changes are handled will be key to any project's effectiveness. The resistance to establishment of a rule-based social order (discussed earlier) falls into this category. Institutional development entails implementation of rules ("Rules of the Game") that both enable and constrain individual and collective behavior, which can be a challenge in Afghanistan and other similar societies. Development actors on both sides of the local-foreign relationship need to take these factors into account as they go about their business.

This is as far as it seems appropriate to go in analyzing the findings of this research. The following *Conclusion* section highlights key points of the study, links with the central premise and thesis questions, discusses the relevance of established analytical models, identifies factors for development agents to consider in their work, provides a few analogies to understand contextually-appropriate institutional development, and indicates areas for further research.

Chapter 6. Conclusions and Directions for Further Research

Introduction

This research has analyzed six policy initiatives in the Afghan government, with a view to better understanding factors linked to contextually-appropriate institutional development in fragile states. This section summarizes the key points of the study, its lessons learned, and directions for further research.

Key Points of the Study

One of the key un-stated points of this research (as noted earlier) is that it is useful to try to strengthen governance in a context as turbulent and troubled as Afghanistan, and to better understand what is involved in this effort. In spite of an on-going insurgency, wide-spread corruption, disunity and predatory elite capture of the institutions of state, and in a donor-dependent rentier state that produces some 90% of the world's opium and continues to be the site of others' proxy wars, governance activity is taking place and well-intentioned leaders and officials are doing what they can to foster stability and improve the government's performance.

The international community appears willing to continue bankrolling the government and especially its security forces, perhaps driven by a desire to prevent a recurrence of 9/11 or its equivalent. Effective governance is seen as an antidote to insurgency and the drug trade, so external support is unlikely to be completely withdrawn anytime soon, especially given the geopolitical forces at play in the region[38]. Efforts to strengthen governance are likely to continue, and even though there are questions about the effectiveness of international development initiatives to strengthen fragile states, this work is a worthy subject of analysis.

This research focused on a relatively small piece of Afghanistan's broader situation: analysis of the effectiveness of a few of the government's policy implementation and institutional development efforts. The study presumes that it is useful to better understand these factors as part of an on-going effort to improve domestic and international development practice related to nation building in fragile states. It found that some of the policy initiatives seemed more successful than others, and identified factors related to these differing levels of effectiveness.

A note is appropriate on the relationship of policy implementation and institutional development. As noted earlier, the two are linked in that policies often create or change institutions. Also, when one views institutions as the "rules of the game" (North 1991:98), which usually include statements about their purpose, actors and their role relationships, elements that are usually found in policy documents, it indicates the two concepts bleed into each other: they are both distinct and closely related.

[38] A description of these geopolitical forces is well outside the scope of this thesis. For details see, for example, Rashid (2011), Gall (2014) and the many items by Barnett Rubin.

The research was based on the following premise and asked two thesis questions.

Thesis Premise and Questions

The thesis premise and questions noted earlier are restated here for convenience, followed by summary comments drawn from this research.

Central Premise

The central premise of this research is:

> *The effectiveness of institutional development and policy implementation initiatives in fragile states such as Afghanistan – as indicated by their incorporation into the operations of the state – is associated with the extent to which they are contextually appropriate*[39].

Thesis Questions

Two related thesis questions are:

> *To what extent are contextualization and endogenization associated with the effectiveness of policy implementation and institutional development to strengthen good governance in Afghanistan?*
>
> *What other factors may be associated with the effectiveness of policy implementation and institutional development in Afghanistan?*

The research also reviewed selected features of the models used to analyze policy implementation and institutional development, and comments on the relevance of these models to the conditions of fragile states such as Afghanistan.

These issues are discussed below.

Thesis Question 1: Contextual Appropriateness and Level of Effectiveness

The following table lists the policy initiatives analyzed and summarizes their level of effectiveness, highlighting their contextual appropriateness, and uses Linder and Peters' (1994) *decisional* and *dialogical* models as an analytical tool.

[39] *Contextually-appropriate* was defined earlier as a combination of contextualized and endogenous processes.

Table 13
Policy Initiatives and Level of Effectiveness

Policy	Effectiveness Level & Comments
1. District Coordination Council Policy	**Effective** – a locally-driven contextualized and endogenous *dialogical* process; implementation stopped in 2014 due to a change in priorities following election of the new government
2. National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy Framework	**Effective** – an externally-facilitated contextualized and endogenous *dialogical* process; the M&E Policy Framework was approved by the President, and in late 2016 was proceeding toward submission to Cabinet for approval and implementation across the government
3. Municipal Advisory Boards	**Effective** – an externally-initiated *decisional* process but well-contextualized, incorporating traditional structures; a successful *Hybrid Governance* initiative in operation since 2013 in 33 of 34 Provincial municipalities
4. Anti-Harassment Policy Guidelines	**Not effective** – a small-group *decisional* process that was not contextualized or endogenous – it was culturally inappropriate; implementation was stopped by IDLG leadership in 2013
5. Ministry of Women's Affairs and NAPWA	**Not effective** – an externally-driven *decisional* process that was not contextualized or endogenous – culturally inappropriate; the policy was approved in 2008, but implemented in name only: it was not supported by MOWA or applied across the government as intended
6. Subnational Governance Policy	**Effective** – Policy development shifted from an initially ineffective small-group *decisional* mode in 2015 after the President's intervention to a broader participatory *dialogical* process in 2016: it became contextualized and endogenous, and was being readied for submission to Cabinet for implementation as this was written.

Contextual Appropriateness of Policy Initiatives

The *Findings* section above describes details of the policy development and implementation processes in each of the cases studied. Those which were classified as effective (with one exception) used a *dialogical* process with considerably more stakeholder engagement than the ineffective cases. The exception was the effective Municipal Advisory Board policy, which is described below. The *dialogical* process consisted of extensive inclusive consultation sessions, and several iterations of the policy document drafting and revision process. Agents whose operations would be directly impacted by the policy had multiple opportunities to study and assess the effects of the initiative on their work. This input made it possible for people who knew the context to make input to the policy design process – in effect, their participation fostered contextual appropriateness, as they were agents familiar with the environment and its complexities and this knowledge was incorporated in the policy development process. Higher levels of meaningful and extensive stakeholder engagement increased the degree of contextual appropriateness, leading to increased effectiveness.

Effectiveness of Policy Initiatives

The level of effectiveness of policy initiatives was described earlier as being related to the extent to which the multi-staged initiative was, or seemed likely to become, incorporated into government operations. The two gender polices which were seen as ineffective were not *endogenous,* in that they were driven by agents who did not operate in a contextualized manner, and drew on conceptual frameworks that were alien to the local social fabric – they were *exogenous*, and were introduced from outside the system. The more effective initiatives, on the other had, were based on *endogenous* processes and drew on extensive local inputs to develop policies that were compatible with local modes of operation. The effective cases seemed to be proceeding toward government approval and implementation, and in one case had been in operation for several years. This latter policy, which established Municipal Advisory Boards (MABs), was an anomaly in that it was the product of more of a *decisional* than a *dialogical* process, as described below.

MAB Policy – An Interesting Anomaly

It is interesting to note that the Municipal Advisory Board policy was effective and had been in operation for several years in all but one of Afghanistan's 34 provincial municipalities, in spite of it having been a foreign-initiated and largely externally-driven *decisional* process. It did not have as extensive stakeholder participation in the early design phase as the other effective policies. Its effective implementation may be attributed to building upon and incorporating traditional neighborhood administrative agents (*wakili gozars*) in a modern state structure – an example of Hybrid Governance as described by Boege et al (2009). In this case contextual appropriateness seemed more pertinent than the wide-spread participation often associated with effective *dialogical* policy development and implementation initiatives.

Thesis Question 2: Other Factors Associated with Effectiveness

A major additional factor influencing effectiveness was the President's interest, guidance and support for some initiatives, and his need to present governance-related achievements to the donor community to justify continued international support for the government.

Another major factor was the availability of skilled Afghan technical staff and advisors who could work in local languages and understood the cultural and political factors that needed to be dealt with in the policy development and implementation process – they fostered contextualization of the initiatives.

Yet another factor was the availability of facilitative foreign technical advisory support, with minimalist interventions to ensure local ownership and direction of the initiatives. This support is discussed further in the *Lessons Learned* section below.

How Does Contextualization Happen?

Contextualization is a key theme in this research which merits additional discussion. It seemed to be the product of at least two factors: extensive participation of local

actors, who presumably operated in a manner compatible with their culture (noted earlier); and also knowledge of existing long-standing modes of social organization.

The former would be a product of the *dialogical* mode of operation in which multiple local views would moderate each other into a generally acceptable set of perspectives that participants would be happy with – indicating they would be contextually appropriate. In the MAB policy case, the latter was the product of foreign advisors' awareness of long standing indigenous forms of social organization, and working with local agents to adapt these for use in hybrid systems of governance, as was the case with the Municipal Advisory Boards.

Factors for Development Agents to Consider in their Work

An objective of this research was to identify factors for local and foreign agents to consider as they support contextually-appropriate institutional development in fragile states. A number of these factors have been described in the analysis of research findings above – a few are summarized in this section, in no particular order of priority.

Attention to culture is more important in some initiatives than in others

High quality intercultural relations skills are a key element in effective development work. However, cultural factors need to be taken into consideration to varying degrees in different types of institutional change interventions in international development. For example, technical initiatives, construction projects and other innovations such as adoption of financial management systems, require relatively little attention to culture when compared to initiatives that affect matters of personal status. Efforts to introduce gender equity programming, new supervisory practices, participatory styles of management, and other initiatives that impact on established role relationships are more challenging – they can elicit powerful identity-maintenance resistance behaviors that emerge from infractions of rules in the deeper levels of the iceberg of culture. Consideration of this hidden dimension is required early in the conceptual stage of a development initiative and throughout its operations. Reliance on bi-cultural advisors for guidance in these matters can be problematic, as foreign-influenced locals who are often asked for advice may be rather blind to their own cultural patterns and could be as ethnocentric as some insensitive foreigners can be. It is advisable to not place wholehearted reliance on information from a few local actors and to seek multiple sources of advice before proceeding with program design.

Recognize façades – your local partners' and your own

International development involves interaction between representatives of affluent societies and local officials – the foreign agents usually want to promote change in local conditions, while in some cases the priority of locals is to access foreign resources. Local agents often receive pressure from within their system to maintain relationships with donor representatives so resources continue to flow, but in some cases to do what they can to limit foreign influence on the inner workings of the society. Gender equity programming is one of the areas where these quite different motives can encounter each other. Local actors may present a façade to foreigners, behind which they do what they can to limit foreign influences and maintain the status quo. Likewise, foreign agents often present an image of wanting to be of assistance,

while behind the image there are their own career aspirations and organizations that have their own self-interests in mind, some of which may not be as altruistic as they appear, but can not be made evident to local partners. What is behind these façades can limit both sets of agents' abilities to act as effectively as one would wish. Establishing authentic interpersonal relationships in which learning and influence are seen as a two-way street helps both parties deal with these challenges.

Endogenous processes can be externally facilitated – carefully

External inputs can facilitate alignment of local actors' energies around themes of common concern and foster a society's internally-driven movement along a desirable trajectory. However, foreign agents need to use a light touch to avoid unduly shaping these themes, which need to emerge from within the society itself and in a form compatible with local patterns of thought and behavior. This is a major theme in this thesis.

"Underdeveloped" societies have significant administrative expertise

All societies have competencies that contribute to their survival: however minimal they may appear, they serve to maintain the existing system. These competencies are organized in administrative patterns that may be invisible to foreigners, and may also be overlooked or taken for granted by locals. Identifying and building on existing administrative competencies is the essence of effective development.

Institutions are organic entities with roots set deep in local soil

When one looks at an institution it is as if one is looking at a tree – only the top half is visible. Institutional development requires attention to both the visible and hidden dimensions, and recognition that they are interdependent. Working with only the visible parts of a system without considering its deeper elements is not effective development.

There could be more factors on this list for agents to consider – some are incorporated in the thesis sections above. These few suffice for the purpose of this thesis.

Analogies for Contextually-appropriate Institutional Development

The Merriam-Webster definitions of *endogenous* and *exogenous* described earlier are helpful in that they use the terms "organism" and "system" to locate the origin or production of an initiative as emerging from within or originating from outside a particular context. This terminology is consistent with an organic and systems-theory based analysis of institutional change efforts, particularly the tree and iceberg analogies used earlier to describe an institution as being only partially visible. Its root system or deeper informal dimensions are hidden from view but are essential components of its make-up. This applies also to Hall's iceberg of culture in which infractions or changes affecting the many invisible rules in the deeper levels can be the source of intense negative emotions.

A related analogy, from horticulture, is to see institutional development as similar to the process of grafting a new branch onto a tree which has established root stock. When a graft is well done, and there is an appropriate relationship between the new

branch and the pre-existing trunk and root system, things go well. There are, however, limits on what can be grafted: a northern pine tree branch might not thrive if it is grafted to a southern citrus tree trunk and root system, which may have difficulty remaining relatively unaffected by the attempted modification.

A systems framework is consistent with the reality of an institution as being embedded in a broader social and economic context that must be taken into account in any change effort. A whole-system approach is required, and the boundaries between the innovative element and the host context (the broader system) need to be well-managed. This is a basic concept in organizational change theory described earlier.

In some ways institutional change efforts also resemble organ transplants in the human body – they can be more or less sustainable depending on the characteristics of the host and the new organ. If it is not compatible the body rejects it, or is harmed by it. Too much input can be a problem: the state could, in cases such as the massive inflow of funds to Afghanistan after 2001, become dysfunctional. Some difficult transplants can survive as long as the system is on artificial life support or is receiving medication to prevent rejection. Things can go well as long as external input is provided, but they can fail when it stops. Cases abound in international development: the result of the sudden withdrawal of US forces from Iraq provides a chilling example.

These analogies reflect concepts in the several sections of the literature review, mainly institutional development, policy implementation, and the Afghan context. They are useful in understanding the relative effectiveness of selected parts of the six policy initiatives studied in this research.

Thesis Contributions to Policy and International Development Literature

Analysis of Governance in an Insurgency-Afflicted Rentier State
This research took place in an insurgency-afflicted rentier state with a donor-dependent government that was struggling to establish a range of laws, policies, institutions and procedures to increase its effectiveness and legitimacy, and thus foster self-reliance and reduce the population's support for the insurgents. The effort to increase the government's legitimacy is consistent with the US Army's (2006) definition of "victory" in a counter-insurgency. As noted earlier in the section on limitations of the mainstream policy and institutional development literature, there has been relatively little scholarly analysis of governance-related interventions in this type of context – the thesis contributes to this body of literature.

Analysis of Reform Efforts in a Corruption-Plagued, Elite-Captured Society
This thesis analyzes policy and institutional development efforts in a society which is near the bottom of Transparency International's corruption scale and has experienced elite capture of the institutions of state. Well-intentioned officials and leaders are doing what they can to address these challenges, including attempting to implement policies and create institutions that can contribute to strengthening the rule of law and establish a contextually-appropriate rule-based social order. This thesis describes some of the factors involved, which is a contribution to the literature.

Definition of "Contextually-Appropriate"
While there is frequent mention in the literature of the need for development initiatives to be compatible with the contexts in which they are taking place, there are few descriptions of what this actually means and what it looks like. This thesis defines "contextually appropriate" as a combination of *endogenous* and *contextualized* and provides illustrative examples, which contributes to the literature in this area.

Expanding Literature on Hybrid Models of Governance
The thesis explored and expanded the literature on hybrid governance by providing examples of policy initiatives that were both consistent and inconsistent with the concepts identified by Boege et al (2009) and others. Analysis of these initiatives indicated the significance of this literature in governance-related international development design.

Contextualization can Trump Participation for Policy Effectiveness
The thesis illustrates the link between contextualization and the relative effectiveness of a small-group elite-driven *decisional* approach to policy implementation, which counters the prevailing notion that wide-spread stakeholder involvement, as in the *dialogical* approach, is required for effective and sustainable policy design. This is a significant contribution to the international development and policy implementation literature.

Black Boxes and Facades in International Development
Descriptions in the thesis of the relationship between local and foreign actors as involving a "black box" behind each (their respective social and institutional contexts) into which the other cannot easily see, and the existence of "facades" in these relationships are contributions to the international development and governance literature.

External Agent Role in Helping Strengthen Governance in a Fragile State
The thesis provides examples of strategies external agents can consider to increase their effectiveness in assisting local agents to strengthen their governance operations. This is a contribution to the literature.

Analogies for Contextually-Appropriate Development Design
The thesis provides analogies from horticulture and biology to illustrate the dynamics of governance-related institutional development efforts. A tree analogy is used to illustrate the hidden root system that must be considered in governance efforts, the process can be seen as "grafting" new entities onto pre-existing root stock – with its limitations – and considering making changes in a society as being analogous to doing organ transplants in a human body. These are contributions to project design and to the broader literature.

Linking International Development and Organizational Development
A puzzling gap in the international development literature is the lack of recognition of its similarity to a complex form of intercultural organizational development (OD), and the utility of cross cultural management and OD concepts in designing and analyzing

international development initiatives. The thesis makes this link and contributes to both bodies of literature.

Development is an Unpredictable, Non-linear Process
The thesis provides examples of policy implementation and development efforts as an unpredictable non-linear process, in particular with the Monitoring and Evaluation policy case narrative in Annex 1. This calls for flexible, responsive and adaptive development project design, and is a contribution to the literature.

Development Partner Sabotage of International Development Efforts
Development partners wishing to maintain the integrity of their structures of meaning, and resist cultural change, can subtly but effectively sabotage international efforts to introduce modern state initiatives such as fostering gender equity or a merit-based public sector recruitment system. They can pay lip service to the efforts so they maintain donor funding while working in the background (behind the façade noted above) to subvert those efforts. Donors are sometimes aware of this dynamic but are often unable to do anything about it – and can be caught in a type of co-dependency relationship as a result. The description of this dynamic in this thesis is a contribution to the literature.

This section has summarized a few of the more obvious contributions this thesis makes to the literature. The next section lists several areas for further research.

Areas for Further Research

This section is a brief summary of issues related to this study that would benefit from further research.

Strategies to help donors foster endogenous institutional development

This research describes a number of factors related to endogenous institutional development, which builds on initiatives that emerge from or are grounded in the context in which they are taking place. Development agents who wish to work in this mode need to work effectively with local counterparts to identify these indigenous systems and processes, and do what they can to nurture initiatives that are designed, owned and driven largely by local actors. Both sets of agents can be seen as cultural brokers who need to operate with high levels of collaboration. However, most international development strategies in fragile states seem focused on activities of donors as external agents – they are an outsider's view of the enterprise, and describe how these outsiders *act on* the local context, rather than *work with* local agents to strengthen endogenous and contextualized systems.

A 2015 OECD publication, *States of Fragility 2015* is no exception: it says relatively little about internal dynamics in such states and how they can be helped to strengthen themselves (OECD, 2015b). The focus needs to shift inward, and considerable effort is required to help the aid industry make this transition.

Existing development agency habits and patterns are likely to be difficult to change: the characteristics of the donor community need to be better understood so its institutions can increase their ability to operate in a way that fosters endogenous growth in fragile states. Organizational development initiatives are required in donor agencies to foster this change in their corporate culture and institutional behavior.

Limiting negative impacts of elite capture and anarchy of state sovereignty

There can be problems with some forms of the locally-driven, endogenous development processes described above, particularly when they run counter to principles of good governance. Fragile states with weak governments can be subject to predatory elite capture, and leaders may try to maintain the status quo (and their access to rents) by resisting beneficial inputs from donors – such as equity programs or merit-based public sector recruitment – by "playing the sovereignty card" which limits donor influence on their internal operations. The gender policies analyzed in this study are useful examples.

Predatory elite capture of the institutions of state can be enabled by leaders' resistance to foreign and local pressure to replace problematic officials who are known to be corrupt and using their influence in patronage networks and for personal gain, as was the case for over a decade in the Afghan civil service as described earlier in this study. Aid conditionality can have limited impact on these issues, especially in strategically-significant countries like Afghanistan where donor states have a vested interest in maintaining relationships with local leadership. Research is needed to identify methods that are proven effective in addressing this problem.

Civil-military collaboration in nation building in conflict zones

Doing development work in a war zone such as Afghanistan requires collaboration between military and civilian agents to ensure their respective efforts are complementary. The imperatives of fighting an insurgency exert an influence on all governance actors, particularly senior level officials whose sustained commitment is required for policy development work and institutional development. Long-term institutional development horizons can be disregarded by military actors who often are on relatively short assignments and are impatient to achieve their strategic objectives before they move on.

Military efforts to buy peace by paying local strongmen to stop fighting can be short-term fixes that undermine the longer-term and more sustainable democratic initiatives of civilian actors engaged in nation building – see, for example, Carlotta Gall's (2010) *The Wrong Enemy* and Ahmed Rashid's (2008) *Descent into Chaos.* Also, some development agencies are opposed to collaborating with the military, and risk putting their personnel in danger in non-permissive environments where everyone is a target. Research is needed on structural arrangements to maintain security of all actors engaged in nation building in conflict zones while limiting negative long-term institutional development impacts of the military's short-term stabilization strategies. Situations such as the democratic cost of buying peace in Anbar province during the Iraq conflict, described in (Tamas, 2010a), is one of many such cases that could be the focus of useful analysis that can inform both sets of actors.

There are more areas that would benefit from applied research – these are enough to indicate the general direction such analyses could take.

Postscript – There is Promise, and Much Yet to Learn

International efforts to promote effective institutional development in fragile states is a complex, long-term proposition that requires considerable research. A 2003 OECD report on institutions and development highlighted the significance of local, endogenous factors in policy development:

> In recent years, the role of institutions for development has received considerable attention from development researchers, policy makers and practitioners. … Most of the reviewed studies find a strong positive correlation between the quality and performance of institutions on the one hand and development outcomes on the other…. institutions do not stand alone but are embedded in a local setting influenced by historical trajectories and culture. Studies analysing the impact of institutions on development outcomes need to take into account the differences between exogenous and endogenous institutions, the local setting, the actor perspective and the existence of different levels of institutions with different time horizons of change… policy makers have to ensure that policy reforms have to be coherent with the existing social structures of the society. Research that finds solutions to improve the links between existing indigenous social structures and formal institutional set-ups such as governance structures would not only address a currently under researched area, but also promise to yield highly relevant policy results. (OECD, 2003:8).

This dissertation hopefully contributes to this important body of research.

Development is far from being a value-free exercise. One can ask whether the purpose of contextually-appropriate institutional development is to simply create the foundations for organizations that serve and preserve the status quo, or whether these institutions can alter the existing order and promote change in the society. Is the current context a given, or should it change? If so, to what extent, and according to whose values or vision of human development? How much change is possible or desirable (to whom)? These profound questions underpin this research, which is focused on strengthening fragile states – but, strengthening them to which end?

Institutions are described by Claus Offe (Offe, 1996:199-200) as having a dual nature – they serve people but also shape them. Good institutions have the ability to elicit good behavior as well as provide services to a population.

> The relationship between institutions and social norms… is reciprocal and cyclical. Social actors generate, support and enact institutions, and these institutions, in turn, generate social agents capable of observing social norms. Institutions establish standards, both normative and cognitive, as to what is held to be normal, what must be expected, what can be relied upon, which rights and duties are attached to which positions, and what makes sense in the community or social domain for which an institution is valid. Institutions accomplish a socializing function in that they serve as examples and reminders of how people "ought to" behave and relate to each other and what they legitimately can expect from each other….good citizens make good institutions and good institutions are "good" to the extent they generate and cultivate

> good citizens or the "better selves" of citizens, who at least get "used to" and "feel at home" in those institutions, develop a sense of loyalty, and come to adopt the cognitive expectations and moral intuitions from which the institutions themselves derive.
>
> There is also a second test concerning the quality of institutions: institutions must not just perform the task of what we might term "congruent socialization," but they must also *function* properly i.e., accomplish the task or mission set for them, or be compatible with the supply of resources they depend upon and must extract from their environment.

It is useful to know that institutions are created by people, and can also shape people: they can elicit certain characteristics and suppress others while they serve the public. What inner and outer changes are legitimate to encourage? Surveys indicate Afghans want security, jobs and an end to corruption, and some also actively promote gender equity. They yearn for good governance and a society that works, in the broadest sense. These are worthy objectives for institutional development.

All societies are on trajectories as they evolve through time, and Afghanistan is no exception. It is one of the world's most troubled countries with challenges that can seem overwhelming to an insightful observer. It also has strengths and capabilities on which institutions are being built that serve its people in a hopefully contextually-appropriate way, while shaping them into global citizens as they occupy their unique place as members of the human family. It is one of the world's most challenging environments in which to implement nation building initiatives – any achievements in this context are likely to provide lessons that can be applied elsewhere.

This research has explored a small part of a rapidly-changing dynamic, and has identified a few factors to consider in on-going efforts to foster the evolution of Afghanistan's institutions and the people they serve. Hopefully others will find this information useful as they continue with this work in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the world.

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Arnprior, Ontario, Canada
April 20, 2018

Annex 1. Policy Development Experience - Narrative

Introduction

This is a narrative[40] of a complex set of policy development initiatives that got underway as this dissertation was being written in 2014-2015, and was not foreseen when the research project was designed. I found myself a participant-observer in active policy development processes within the Afghan government, part of my work with the German development agency GIZ. Some of this work is included here as a supplement to the retrospective analysis of prior policy implementation efforts based on data collected using the questionnaire in the Methodology section. Both sets of data are addressed in the Findings and Analysis sections of the thesis.

The initiatives in which I participated had two initial main threads – one focused on strengthening the government's monitoring and evaluation capacity, and the other was linked to strengthening the Administrative Office of the President, the country's primary Centre of Government institution. The work focused initially on the M&E issue, and evolved – or rather branched out – into a broader Centre of Government institution building process. Interestingly, and to illustrate the organic and unpredictable nature of this work, its beginnings can be linked with the GIZ project's support for newly-elected Provincial Councils.

Provincial Council Supports

A year after the election of the new Afghan government in 2014 there was the election of Provincial Councils (PCs) – the third round for these bodies which served five-year terms. The Councils operated at the provincial level – they had a number of ill-defined functions and were not seen as being particularly effective. The director of the unit in the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) that was responsible for supporting the PCs told me over several visits that he wanted to bring some clarity to their functions and increase their effectiveness. He was doing this using several measures, including by drafting a new Provincial Councils Law and planning a set of three conferences in which the over 300 newly-elected PC members from 34 provinces would receive an orientation to their functions and responsibilities and become informed of the provisions of the new law. The draft law, which he said was supported by the President, was starting to work its way through the approval process.

The director, a bright and capable senior civil servant with whom I had worked over the past several years – before starting my job with GIZ in 2014 – asked me if GIZ could support the three conferences (which meant pay for them). Our project agreed to fund the initiative, as it was directly linked to our support for subnational governance. His unit took responsibility for the content of the program and logistics, which was a considerable challenge, as PC members were seen as high-value targets by the insurgents and security was a foremost concern. Our finance and administration staff worked with his administrators to figure out how to pay for the conferences and PC members' expenses, etc.

[40] First part written in September 2015

The first conference with about 120 PC members was held in early January 2015 in a lavish venue in a Kabul hotel – it was a resounding success. The council members met the President and a number of Ministers and had a warm and encouraging launch for their new responsibilities in the provinces. PC members for the first time reported a sense of being part of a bigger nation building enterprise and had more clarity on their functions – the IDLG director's objectives were being met, and plans were made for the two other conferences, to be held in quick succession.

However, shortly after the first conference the approval process for the new PC law, which was underway at the time, ran into a snag. The oversight provisions written into the law and supported by a new regulation which gave the PCs authority to scrutinize and comment on government operations in their province, was rejected by both the President's legal advisor and parliament. Although the President was in favor of the general provisions of the new law, which strengthened and clarified the role of the PCs, other influential actors were not so supportive. They did not like the level of authority the law gave the PCs over government line ministry operations. Parliament removed the oversight provision from the draft law and the supporting regulation was rejected.

The Council members reacted strongly to the blockage of what they saw as their primary function – without the ability to oversee and comment on ministry operations they felt they would be useless, toothless bodies. They shut their offices in protest and launched a highly visible public campaign to reverse this blockage.

The IDLG director told me that the President was in a bind and did not want to get into a big fight with Parliament, since he was having difficulty getting it to approve his Ministerial appointments, which was the subject of widely-criticized delays in formation of the new government. If he locked horns with Parliament and pushed for passage of the PC law and approval the new oversight provisions and regulations as written, Parliament would likely retaliate by rejecting his proposed ministers, a process which had already taken many months longer than desired.

As this was unfolding I met several times with the director of the IDLG unit supporting the PCs, who asked me if we could postpone the next two conferences. He did not want to bring over a hundred angry PC members into Kabul where they were to meet the President and other high ranking officials when they were in a full-blown protest over the blockage of the oversight provisions in the new PC law. We agreed, and waited while the government sorted out what to do about the blockage. Over the next several weeks a compromise was found that satisfied the major actors, and planning for the next two conferences proceeded. The President issued a decree reinstating the old PC law, which had a somewhat milder oversight clause, and asked that the regulation be softened a bit and re-issued as a procedure. This was relatively easy for the director to do, and satisfied all the major actors, and the two remaining conference were scheduled.

A major topic of the conferences was how the Councils would exercise their oversight responsibilities. This provided an opportunity to work on a variety of institutional development initiatives, one of which was performance monitoring of the government.

I had been working with the monitoring and evaluation units of IDLG and the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service (IARCSC) over the previous year or two with a view to strengthening their capacity. I had prior relationships with both

through the various development projects I had worked on over the years. The civil service commission was responsible for assessing and reporting on the overall performance of the public service. Also, our project had hired a capable Afghan research firm to conduct a baseline study in the six northern provinces where GIZ operated, as part of the M&E process for our own project. The baseline study assessed the public's current perceptions of the effectiveness of the government, and was planned to be repeated periodically in an effort to determine whether our subnational governance support project was having any impact on the public's perception of state effectiveness. These and other similar initiatives provided opportunities for offering technical advice to the government actors involved.

Strengthening Monitoring & Evaluation

I discussed with my Afghan partners the desirability of assessing the Provincial Councils' performance in the exercise of their oversight responsibilities as a way of achieving two objectives – strengthening M&E in both IDLG and the civil service commission, and also as a tool to strengthen PC operations. They thought it was a great idea, and convened a meeting on March 31, 2015, to discuss how this would be done. As discussion proceeded they said there was a government-wide problem with weak, uncoordinated M&E. They thought they should include the M&E directors of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economy in the next steps of this process since it had broader implications for the functioning of the government and thought more discussions with key players were required. I had to leave the meeting early so did not know how it was going to go until the next day when much to my pleasant surprise I received a copy of an email from the IARCSC member with a record of proceedings. He had taken it upon himself to send these to the others who they thought should be involved, and suggested a follow up meeting should take place in the near future. My diary notes of the meeting have a comment to the effect that I might have helped start something that would take on a life of its own. Little did I know at the time what would come of this initial effort.

In his email the civil service commission's M&E director called for a next meeting to be held the following week, to which M&E directors of Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economy were invited. Also, the director of the policy unit in IDLG, with whom I had a long-standing relationship, sent a note to the director of the M&E unit in the Administrative Office of the President (AOP) suggesting she become involved. Over the past months he and I had been talking about the importance of having an effective Centre of Government in a functioning state, and had several discussions about the need to strengthen that poorly-performing institution at the heart of the Afghan government.

A few days later I was invited to meet with the AOP's director of M&E in which we discussed a range of issues related to the ineffectiveness of the organization. She was very troubled by the poor performance of the government and wanted to do whatever possible to strengthen the whole system, focusing initially on problems within AOP. She recognized that M&E can be "the tail that wags the dog" – which can ask questions and generate information that can help other parts of the system better understand situations and improve their performance. There was a government-wide lack of coherence and effectiveness of its M&E functions, and she saw this initiative as a way of addressing a number of serious issues in the government.

In the next meeting the following week the M&E directors of the AOP and the civil service commission were asked by the group to co-chair the proceedings, which rapidly evolved into a planning process for creation of a M&E Working Group that would serve to foster coherence and improve the performance of M&E units across the government. The AOP's director of M&E had a good relationship with the President, met with him frequently, and said that he would likely welcome any initiative to improve the government's M&E systems. The meeting proceeded to further define the concept of a M&E Working Group, which could have taken several forms that the group was struggling to define. Its members could be official representatives of their respective ministries, or an informal network, some sort of Community of Interest, or could be high-level mandated advisory group serving the President's office – there were several option to offer the President.

At one point I mentioned that it sounded to me as if what was happening was the beginnings of a policy development process that would result in a government-wide M&E policy framework and institutional system – there was none at the time and this was part of the problem with measuring government performance. This seemed to help the group focus its discussion on a few options to present to the President to seek his guidance and mandate to move forward with their initiative. During several meetings conducted by the co-chairs and well-recorded by the civil service M&E director, the Terms of Reference of the Working Group were further refined and a proposal awaited the President's response.

My role was mainly to provide encouragement, to help convene meetings in a suitable venue in the small hotel in which I lived, and to offer comments now and again when the group's consultation was in English. Most of their deliberations took place in Dari, and they periodically summarized their consultations for my benefit and asked my opinion of the proceedings.

At the time this narrative was written, in late September, 2015, the group's identity-related options had been clearly defined and were still waiting for feedback from the President before further work could be done. Group members periodically asked for updates on progress and were told that the President was busy with a broad range of other matters such as conferences to secure international commitment to continue financially and militarily supporting the government, responding to allegations of massive government corruption and what seemed to be a steadily worsening security situation.

Throughout this process discussions were underway with the director of the M&E unit in the AOP to design three projects to be supported by GIZ. Two were linked to her operations: to conduct an overall assessment of M&E across the government, and to do capacity development with the staff in her unit. The third was to conduct an organizational assessment of the entire Administrative Office of the President (AOP) as part of a multi-stage process to increase the capacity of this key Centre of Government institution.

Administrative Office of the President: Centre of Government

One of the issues that had been discussed throughout these meetings, and was part of consultations I had with the Secretary of Cabinet of the Office of Administrative Affairs

(OAA) before the election a year earlier, was the government's lack of a policy framework to manage policy, which was part of a general weakness in the country's Centre of Government institution. This was a fundamental problem that impacted negatively on government effectiveness across the board. After the election the OAA was merged with the President's office to create the AOP – and the lack a policy management framework was still an issue: it had not been addressed.

The merger of OAA with the President's Office was carried out without a detailed transition and workflow continuity plan or new standard operating procedures and staffing charts for the various parts of the new organization. The units were merged, but the work the previous entities were doing was not carried on. Before this merger, ministries requiring senior level guidance sent letters requesting direction from above, but after the change there was no clarity within the new organization as to who had authority to respond to these requests, so they were not processed as required. The Centre of Government was a large and almost completely dysfunctional organization.

To compound matters, there was what amounted to a forced marriage between the two leaders who contested the election, President Ashraf Ghani and his opponent, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah. Both parties had been accused of industrial-scale fraud in manipulating the balloting process, and there was a real risk of their disagreement about the election outcome spiraling out of control into yet another Afghan civil war. In an attempt to settle matters, John Kerry, the US Secretary of State, imposed what amounted to a coalition agreement in which Dr. Abdullah would become the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and share governance duties with Ashraf Ghani, who had been declared winner and assumed the role of President. It is an understatement to say that there were serious problems with this arrangement, but it was better than the alternative, which was war. The work we were doing with AOP did not take into consideration the similar administrative organization that had been created in the office of the CEO. The AOP reported to the President and was managed by his Chief of Staff – there seemed to be no technical level administrative linkage across to the other camp's group. We were working with the President's part of a government that was an unstable poorly-defined entity.

While work was proceeding on the three projects requested of GIZ by AOP – two focusing the M&E unit, the other a broader organizational analysis of AOP, an office was created to manage projects in the AOP. This Project Management Office (PO) was put in place to control the uncoordinated efforts of separate units of AOP to seek support from eager international donors and to bring some coherence to these inputs. I held several meetings with the Project Office to review the three GIZ proposals. They agreed that the two M&E projects were fine and work could proceed to implement them as planned, so the road was clear to begin to act on those requests.

However, the Project Office requested some modifications of the AOP Assessment project proposal which had a rather minimal and preliminary project design. They recognized the Centre of Government required considerable support to begin to function effectively, and wanted the project to be part of a broader institutional development program. As part of this they wanted to negotiate a strategic agreement with the German government to provide a broad range of supports to strengthen the AOP. The Project Office wanted to hold a workshop to discuss details of the way forward with the M&E

projects, and also the AOP assessment, and to begin talking about a strategic partnership with the German Government.

I was working with two other parts of the GIZ system at the time: one was the Monitoring, Evaluation and Communications program (MEC), and the other was the Open Policy Advisory Fund (OPAF). MEC and OPAF had funds for these projects. My role was as a policy advisor and to help shape the process. Although my project did not have a direct funding role, by virtue of my seniority and long standing relationship with many of the key actors on the Afghan side I was essentially the lead advisor on the German side.

We all had been cautioned to keep our efforts at the technical cooperation level, and were being carefully monitored by our managers to ensure we stayed clear of the political dimensions that could easily become involved in these linkages with the President's office. When we told our managers that the Afghans wanted to hold a workshop to discuss the three projects and also a strategic partnership with the German government, there was quite understandably a commotion at the senior levels of our system, including the embassy. The embassy representative did not agree to be part of a workshop to be held the following week in which there would be any discussion of a strategic partnership to strengthen the Centre of Government. We were told to cancel the workshop, and I was given the task of informing our Afghan partners. In a hasty and apologetic phone call I told them that the workshop had to be cancelled. The two M&E projects were OK and work could proceed on them, but the AOP assessment project was another matter. It was too far up the political ladder for our leaders' comfort. The head of the Project Office said he understood, and looked forward to continuing to work on moving all three projects forward in spite of the political sensitivity around the assessment project.

There were other factors at play that made it difficult to pull the plug on the AOP assessment project. A few weeks earlier one of the GIZ units (International Services, or IS) that bids on projects from agencies such as the World Bank and the EU – essentially a for-profit consulting firm embedded in GIZ – had received a Request for Proposals from the World Bank for a project to reform the Administrative Office of the President. I was contacted by the head of IS to see if I wanted to become involved with this project. When I read the RFP I felt that it was not a particularly well designed initiative and told IS that did not think it would be an effective approach to strengthening the Centre of Government. It was not up to normal World Bank standards, and did not appear reflect an in-depth knowledge of Centre of Government systems, and proposed to have an external consulting firm direct the change process rather than facilitate an organic process driven and owned by members of the organization. It did not appear to be an endogenously-driven institutional development effort.

At the time I had been working on M&E Working Group with our counterpart at AOP, and told IS that I could check with her to see what was behind this rather poorly-designed World Bank initiative. When I asked her about it, she said that it was indeed a problematic approach and she had said as much to the her superiors. Her concerns were similar to mine noted above, and she said that I could be sure it would be withdrawn. In my first meeting shortly thereafter with the head of the new Project Office I asked about the World Bank initiative. He said it had been issued before he started his job – he did not like it one bit and had written a three-page memo to his superiors outlining his

objections. IS soon learned that the World Bank RFP was withdrawn at the request of the President's office. I was told by the head of the Project Office that the AOP Assessment we were discussing was designed to replace that WB project, and the President's office had been informed that "the Germans" were going to provide the services they required. There was no way to stop the AOP Assessment project without the German aid mission suffering a major loss in credibility.

A few days later I had a meeting with the embassy official responsible for development during which I discussed the AOP project. She seemed somewhat more relaxed after hearing more about the context and possible approach. The next day my OPAF colleague (who had been part of much of the earlier discussions) and I briefed the new GIZ Country Director, who contacted the embassy expressing strong support for the AOP assessment. He received the go-ahead for the first stage (institutional assessment) of what some feared could mushroom into a much larger organization development job. The next day the Country Director and I met with the director of the Project Office to advise him that GIZ would be proceeding with a project to do an institutional assessment of AOP, with potential further supports to be discussed at a later date.

The next day (July 8th) I briefed my boss, the RCD project team leader, on events – she, like the Country Director, quickly grasped the significance and sensitivity of the initiative. She had recently returned from leave during which she had mentioned to our link with BMZ, our political masters and funding agency in Berlin, that we were beginning to provide supports to the Administrative Office of the President. Her BMZ contact said this was interesting and encouraged us to proceed. My boss said that the initiative requires the President's support if it is to succeed, and wondered how we could help that happen. I told her we might be able to do this by engaging Clare Lockhart, who had worked with Ashraf Ghani on their book, "Fixing Failed States" and on several initiatives in the World Bank – she encouraged me to contact Clare to see if she could be an advisor on the project. At the same time I was encouraged to visit Potsdam University to discuss the project with faculty who had extensive Centre of Government experience – the high-caliber foreign experts the AOP wanted to have on the project. Several Potsdam U faculty had experience in Afghanistan and had previously participated in the SIGMA-OECD studies of Centre of Government (OECD, 2004): they were well qualified to be part of the project.

In this discussion with my boss I also said that the project would require an on-site project facilitator. She smiled and looked me in the eye and said, "yes – a good one." – clearly implying that I was that person. I thought this might turn out to be the case, but having her say what she did made my sense of responsibility for the project increase significantly. The next day I left Kabul, heading for Frankfurt and Eschborn.

The following week – on my way home to Canada for a long leave – I spent a few days at GIZ headquarters in Eschborn, near Frankfurt. I also visited Potsdam University to brief the team there on the project. A few of their members had plans to visit Kabul in early August on another project, and could arrange an informal meeting with AOP during that visit to establish a relationship, build confidence and share information.

My efforts to contact Clare through a mutual friend with whom I had worked in Afghanistan in 1998 proved successful, and I was encouraged by my boss to follow up on our email exchanges with a personal visit in Washington when I was home on leave.

While this was going on there were contacts between potential Afghan participants and the project office at AOP, and the team I hoped would be acceptable for the M&E policy initiative was approved for the project. The lead Afghan partner was JS Consulting, the same firm that had conducted the baseline study mentioned at the beginning of this narrative, and who would be working on strengthening the M&E unit. The head of this firm was a physician and researcher trained at Johns Hopkins University, and had a well-developed tablet-based system for doing organizational assessments that could be modified for this project. He was also a classmate and close confidant of the President's Chief of Staff, who was the director and designer of the Administrative Office of the President, and supervisor of both the head of the M&E unit and the Project Office.

The week before I was due to return to Afghanistan on August 21, one of my RCD project colleagues was kidnapped as she was coming to our office in Kabul. This incident, coupled with an increased number of security problems in the city, prompted GIZ to evacuate their international staff from Kabul. Staff who were out of the country on leave were advised to stay where they were until further notice. I was told to extend my stay for two weeks, to work from home, and then go to work with the governance section of our head office in Eschborn. GIZ had been operating with a relatively light security regime, with staff living in ordinary houses without armed guards. While I liked the light security, I was also wondering when it would end, as we were vulnerable as we drove around town in soft-skinned vehicles and lived and worked in facilities without armed guards and tight security perimeters.

I arranged a visit with Clare Lockhart in Washington during this time: it took place in late August, during which we developed a good professional relationship – Clare shared a lot of important insider information on the workings of the Ghani administration and was keen to do what she could to help. She liked the approach we were taking, saying that strengthening the Centre of Government in Afghanistan was "the most important project in the world right now." She also said she wanted to have further exchanges with me on concepts and approaches to nation building and strengthening governance. We thought it would be better to engage the Institute for State Effectiveness (which she and Ghani founded some years earlier) for this project, rather than herself personally, and made tentative plans to convene a multi-stakeholder meeting somewhere convenient – perhaps Germany – to plan the initial stages of the project.

I travelled to Germany during the first week of September and continued planning discussions with GIZ colleagues in Afghanistan and headquarters. We soon were at the point of beginning to discuss contracting procedures. Stephanie Kettler, the head of the OPAF project that was to pay for all this, said it would be easier to have a single contract with Potsdam University, with whom they had worked in the past, than to have two separate contracts with Potsdam and ISE. She suggested the two form a consortium so that from the GIZ side there would be a single set of administrative linkages. I contacted both parties and they agreed – they had never met but both knew of each others' work and were keen to collaborate and learn from each other on this project.

On September 13 I travelled to Potsdam to meet the head of the OPAF project and have a meeting with the university team there on Monday, and then later in week went for a one-day visit to Kabul on the 16th. We are restricted on our stay in Kabul due to security issues and limitations on accommodations – GIZ is having to shift to a compound-based

operation, which would take some time and would also be a major cultural and psychological change for the organization. They had not worked in the sort of war zone contexts where staff have to live and work in secure compounds such as USAID, DFID, the World Bank and others had been doing for years.

On September 11th I saw Robert Kressrier, the GIZ Country Director, in a meeting in Eschborn that was called to brief GIZ's many displaced Afghanistan staff on the current rather confused state of affairs on their operations in the country. I told him that I planned to visit Potsdam and to be in Kabul that week to take the AOP projects further, and asked if he had any advice. He said that he was preoccupied with overall country programming issues, so did not have anything specific to say, other than that he was happy GIZ had people like me looking after this project. I felt both good and worried when he said that… good in that he expressed his confidence in me, and worried that things might not work out – and also rather detached, since there were so many elements out of anyone's control that it would not make much sense to get too terribly attached to any specific process or outcome. It was quite an adventure and I felt blessed to have this opportunity to help accomplish something that might actually be worthwhile.

Stephanie Kettler (head of the OPAF project) and I flew to Dubai on Tuesday evening (the 15th), arriving in the wee hours of Wednesday morning, and took the early and very cramped Fly Dubai flight into Kabul. I had four major events the next day: cleaning out my things from the hotel room I had used for the past year or so, meeting with Gerd Sippel, the deputy country director, a brief meeting with Nader Yama at IDLG along with Agnes Bartholomaeus – RCD project team leader and my immediate supervisor; and then a meeting at 2:00 pm at the Presidential Palace with directors of four AOP units to discuss the assessment project. The Afghans included two from the M&E unit, the head of the Policy unit, two from Human Resources, and the deputy head of the Project Office. They were happy to see us as it was a confirmation that the Germans were continuing their support for the AOP in spite of the security-related "temporary" withdrawal of international technical advisors.

The discussion with the AOP directors indicated that they had made considerable progress on their own since drafting the initial requests for support in July. The M&E unit reported that their original request for capacity development supports needed to be modified since one of their senior staff had been providing training and mentoring to other personnel and they were able to work at a more advanced level than anticipated. What they needed now was technical advice on higher level issues, particularly those related to operating a M&E system in Centre of Government institutions. The Human Resources representatives said they had started to do an inventory of their personnel complement – a key early step in any organizational analysis – and were ready to share what they had developed with a view to getting further assistance in refining their assessment to identify specific issues to address to improve organizational performance.

Their progress indicated things had not been standing still while we were out of the country, and that the GIZ supports needed to be provided in a flexible manner that could respond to unexpected and rapidly changing conditions in the context. This requirement called for a consultative process and funding mechanism that could identify needs as they arose, and could adapt contracting processes as required to address these changing requirements.

There was no way to verify the extent to which the reported progress was meaningful without beginning to conduct the assessment project and taking a closer look at what was being reported by our partners. Things had to move beyond the preliminary design and contracting stage to actually getting engaged with our Afghan partners in the work required.

A meeting with the Potsdam team was set for early the following week to update them on our findings and to move the project closer to full implementation. Also, Clare Lockhart of the Institute for State Effectiveness was informed and said she was pleased with the update and would be further engaged in the process as it progressed.

This was an unfolding story and it continued as this thesis was being written. What began a few months earlier as an effort to strengthen the Afghan government's Provincial Councils and set up a M&E system to monitor the performance of their oversight function expanded considerably. It unfolded in an organic manner which was driven primarily by our Afghan partners and at this point was focusing on two main lines of action: strengthening the M&E unit in the Administrative Office of the President while doing an overall assessment of M&E across the government, and carrying out an institutional assessment of AOP. The M&E Working Group – the first "product" of this multi-faceted initiative – was still waiting for the President to give it his blessing.

A Complex, Organic and Unpredictable Process

As noted earlier, what began as an initiative with one part of the government, IDLG, to strengthen Provincial Councils, evolved over several months into a multi-track set of initiatives to strengthen the Centre of Government. This key institution had long been seen as only partially effective and this deficit was a major contributor to the state's fragility. There was no policy to manage policy, and its procedures, roles and responsibilities were not clearly defined, significantly hampering government performance.

An initial list of assessment questions was prepared by the Potsdam University team and sent to the AOP for review (see below). Although the Project office had received this list of questions they had not sent any response when we met in mid-September. My sense was that they could not provide clear responses to almost all of the questions the Potsdam team saw as a preliminary step in the assessment process.

The Potsdam team's document with related questions was as follows:

Information and documentation for the preparation of our first mission
Dr. Klaus Goetz, Potsdam University 23 August 2015

In preparation of our first mission it would be very helpful if we could review available internal and external reports that deal with the AOP and its predecessor organizations (preferably for the last 4-5 years).

In addition, we would be grateful for the following:
- 2 recent assessment reports produced in house;

- Documentation relating to current
    - **AOP Staff**: staff numbers/ gender; recruitment, deployment, promotion and retention; qualification, functional allocation, biographical data, employment status, and salary rates;
    - **AOP Schedule of functional responsibilities** and related job descriptions;
    - Current rules and procedures governing **gender** issues within the AOP;
    - Current rules and procedures governing Presidential and Cabinet **appointments** (for example, selection and appointment of Governors);
    - **Work plans** of the AOP organizational units;
    - Current and previous **organization charts** of the AOP;
    - **Standing orders** and other procedural rules governing the work of the AOP, notably relating to budgeting, preparation of legislation, preparation of Cabinet meetings, strategic planning, and oversight functions;
    - **AOP budget** allocations according to organizational units (current and previous years);
    - Procedures AOP and responsibilities for **public procurement**;
    - Rules and procedures governing **horizontal and vertical coordination** across functions and units **within** the AOP:
    - Rules and procedures governing AOP relations with **subnational** bodies;
    - Rules and procedures governing AOP **coordination** with ministries and other central bodies;
    - Setup, procedures and technical infrastructure for (MIS) **information** gathering, analysis and processing for Presidential and Cabinet decision- making;
    - Organizational setup, procedures and technical infrastructure at AOP for **government communication**;
    - AOP setup and procedures for **crisis management** and rapid response;
    - AOP rules and procedures governing **intelligence** and **civil-military** relations;
    - AOP setup and procedures for **regional and international relations,** including with the donor community.

We are aware that most of the information and documentation mentioned above is likely to be in Dari and Pashtu. Nevertheless, it would be good to check what information is available and what could be translated prior to our first planned mission in September.

This list of questions basically defined the range of functions in a Centre of Government institution, most of which seemed not to have been formalized in the AOP. This indicated the scope and breadth of the tasks ahead for the government and other actors interested in improving the state's performance. They would be the focus of institutional development activity with AOP for months and perhaps years to come.

Postscript – January 2016

The previous narrative was written in September 2015. The situation progressed considerably during the succeeding months, and continued to unfold as this was being written in late January 2016.

Our kidnapped colleague was released after several months in captivity, and continued to work with GIZ in other capacities. She reported that she had been held in close confinement, but was not physically abused by her captors, who she said were criminals who were well-practiced at using kidnapping as a form of income generation. The consequences of having to move to a higher-risk security posture were being better

understood by the German development system, and adjustments were being made in GIZ operations in Afghanistan.

The two projects with the Administrative Office of the President – the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Stakeholder Analysis, and the Institutional Analysis of AOP – were completed and final reports were submitted to Afghan officials. I wrote the final chapter on the M&E report, an indication of where to go next with a policy to implement a government-wide M&E system. Both reports were well received as a basis for further work to strengthen the government's systems.

Postscript 2 – September 2016

Work continued within the Afghan system following up on both reports mentioned above. The organizational analysis of the AOP produced a number of recommendations, one of which was to establish a set of Rules of Procedure for operations impacting AOP. A follow-on project was designed in mid 2016, and work was to be done later in the year using the same Potsdam University team that worked on the Assessment project..

The M&E project had borne fruit, in terms of the Framework being approved by the President in mid-2016, with orders that it be presented to Cabinet and then given to the Ministries for implementation. The President was reportedly including the project as an example of progress on improving governance at the Afghan presentation at the Brussels Conference in early October 2016.

Postscript 3 – October 2016

An email sent by an Afghan GIZ colleague in MEC to a senior official in Afghanistan's Center of Government institution – the Administrative Office of the President (AOP) – described the state of the M&E initiative in October, 2016. It was moving forward nicely.

The email stated that the President had established a high level working group to review the M&E Framework report and advise on its submission to Cabinet, and also prepare a summary for submission at the Brussels Conference in late October as an example of the government's progress in increasing its capacity.

The actual text of this email has not been included here for confidentiality reasons. It suffices to say that the M&E project was seen as a success by both the government and GIZ. Work on the Rules of Procedure recommendation of the AOP assessment project was also underway.

This Annex describes a small part of how some high-level development work actually took place – it was not a linear, well-formulated process at the outset, and took unexpected turns along the way, but ultimately produced good results. GIZ's flexible, responsive management and ability to rapidly deploy funding were keys to the effectiveness of the initiative.

Annex 2. IDLG Anti-Harassment Policy Guideline

Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG)

Anti-Harassment Policy Guideline
For IDLG employees in the centre and provinces

In accordance with the Constitution of Afghanistan and applicable laws, this is the guideline of IDLG to provide a work environment free from discrimination and harassment, in particular sexual harassment, for all staff members. This guideline is proposed to be implemented under the overarching policy of ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA) on the subject, including the NPAWA.

The Afghan Civil Service Law condemns all forms of discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, religion or physical disability (Chapter 2, Article 10, Section 2). It states: "All civil servants have the right to appeal against discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, religion, social status, political affiliation or marital status by colleagues or those in position of authority" (Chapter 4, Article 17 section 8).

The National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) condemns violence against women because it is one of the major obstacles to women's leadership and participation in public life (p. 51). It stipulates that the "adoption and implementation of a policy against sexual harassment (...) be a priority of government" (p. 53).

Scope of this Guideline

This guideline applies to all IDLG staff members, including civil servants and contracted staff, of the IDLG central office and the sub-national offices, i.e. Provincial Governor's Offices (PGO), District Governor's Offices (DGO), Provincial Councils (PCs), and Municipalities.

The interpretation and administration of this guideline shall be the responsibility of the IDLG General Directorate of Human Resources.

What is Harassment?

The IDLG aims at creating a safe and dignified working environment for all staff members and therefore explicitly prohibits any form of harassment, in particular sexual harassment of female staff members. Such conduct will not be tolerated.

The term "harassment" refers to any inappropriate behavior towards a co-worker with a sexual or any other discriminatory notation.

Harassment includes but is not limited to:

- **Verbal conduct** such as nicknaming, insulting and intimidating comments, obscene or threatening language, sexual advances, unwelcome (sexual) attention, unwanted invitations, slander and spreading rumors
- **Visual content or conduct** such as derogatory posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, e-mails, web pages or gestures.
- **Physical conduct** such as touching, blocking normal movement, stalking or following, beating, (sexual) abuse and rape
- **Threats or demands** to submit to (sexual) requests in order to avoid any loss/disadvantages and offers of benefits in return for (sexual) favors

- **Retaliation** for opposing or reporting discrimination and/or harassment, or for participating in an investigation conducted by IDLG
- **Any other conduct** that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment and impairs an employee's working ability or emotional well-being at work, including abuse of authority.

What can the Employee do?

If an employee feels being discriminated against or harassed, as complainant, the employee is advised to demand the offender to stop the behavior. The employee asked to stop any harassing behavior by a co-worker is expected to comply immediately.

An employee with a concern or claim of discrimination or harassment is encouraged to discuss the situation with the immediate supervisor, unless the supervisor is the source of the harassment. At that point, the supervisor may resolve the complaint through mediation between the parties involved and by providing advice and counseling on strictly confidential basis.

At any time and if the complainant feels that the issue cannot be resolved informally by the supervisor, the complainant can report the incident(s) to the Conflict Resolution Committee at IDLG (chaired by the IDLG General Directorate of Human Resources, with the Head of the IDLG Appeals Department, the Head of the Gender Department and the Head of the Department of Services as members) in person, by postal mail, email or telephone.

The discrimination or harassment report can be made anonymously. However, the complainant is encouraged to provide as much information as possible, so that the issue can be addressed effectively. It shall be the responsibility of IDLG to maintain the confidentiality of the complaint and the complainant.

The complainant may choose to reach out to the IDLG Conflict Resolution Committee at the following contact details.

IDLG Conflict Resolution Committee
Email address: appeals@idlg.gov.af
Telephone: 020 210 4709
Mailing address: Conflict Resolution Committee, IDLG, Ariana Square, next to the Central Statistics Office, Kabul, Afghanistan

There is no limitation period for reporting an incident, i.e. complaints can be filed even after long periods of time have passed since the incident(s).

IDLG expressly prohibits any form of retaliation against an employee for filing a complaint under this guideline or for assisting in an investigation.

What will the Supervisor and IDLG do?

Detailed guidelines for implementation will be prepared and circulated subsequently.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the IDLG Conflict Resolution Committee will conduct or supervise an investigation of the incident(s) as per the guidelines for this purpose. It will prepare a written, unbiased report with a directive for the type of disciplinary action to betaken.

A complaint will normally be acknowledged within three business days and resolved within four weeks. In the process, confidentiality and privacy rights of all involved persons will be ensured to the maximum extent possible.

Before any disciplinary action is taken, several steps of warning have to be given to the employee:

- Counseling or oral discipline warning
- Written discipline warning
- Final written discipline warning
- Suspension without pay

- Termination of employment

Copies of this guideline will be displayed at the notice board or other conspicuous place in the IDLG offices at province, district and municipal level.

All supervisory personnel should make special efforts to ensure that all staff members understand and effectively implement this guideline.

Annex 3. Sample of Afghan Women's Art

Scream
Farahnaz Bakhshi, Afghanistan
Cracks in the culture of silence, a sign of hope.

Purchased in 2011 at a showing of Afghan women's art at the Canadian embassy, Kabul.

Annex 4. Key Informants

This partial list of key informants includes those specifically interviewed for this dissertation, and others who provided significant contextual information on relevant social, governance and policy-related matters. Positions noted indicate their places in the Afghan governance and social context at the time of research.

Name	Position	Data Provided
Aarya Nijat	Researcher, Afghanistan Research & Evaluation Unit (formerly with IDLG)	Gender policy in IDLG, subnational and municipal government
Abdl Baqi Popal	General Director, General Directorate of Municipal Affairs (GDMA), IDLG	Gender Mainstreaming Policy, Anti-harassment Policy, Municipal Advisory Board Policy
Abdul Momin Mansoor	Head of Subnational Financing, Budget Unit, Ministry of Finance	Provincial Budgeting Policy
Abdul Muqtader Nasary	Director, Policy and Planning, IDLG	Provincial Budgeting Policy, Subnational Governance Policy
Abdul Salam Rahimi	Chief of Staff, Administrative Office of the President	Afghan context, institutional reform
Abdul Subhan Raoof	DG, Monitoring, Evaluation & Audit, Administrative Office of the President	M&E, organizational reform
Abdullah Raqeebi	Director-General, Policy and Planning, MoF	Policy management framework
Ansarullah Foshanji	Director, Planning and Programs Design and Acting Director, Monitoring & Evaluation, Reform Implementation, IARCSC	Policy development and implementation, M&E, administrative reform
Ateeq Nosher	Deputy, Policy and Planning Administrative Office of the President	Policy development and implementation
Clare Lockhart	Director, Institute for State Effectiveness, Washington DC	Institutional reform, nation-building, Afghan context
Dr. Akmal Samsor	Director, JS Consulting Services, Kabul	Afghan politics, organizational reform
Dr. Birte Brugmann	Municipal Governance Advisor, General Directorate of Municipal Affairs, IDLG	Gender Mainstreaming Policy, Anti-Harassment Policy, Municipal Advisory Boards Policy
Dr. Greg Wilson	Former Technical Advisor, IDLG and IARCSC	Policy development, administrative reform
Dr. Mohammad Mustafa Mastoor	Deputy Minister for Finance, Ministry of Finance	Provincial Budgeting Policy, Municipalities Policy
Dr. Nora Roehner	Municipal Governance Advisor, General Directorate of Municipal Affairs, IDLG	Gender Mainstreaming, Anti-Harassment, Municipal Advisory Boards policies
Dr. Orzala Nemat Ashraf	Special Advisor to the President on Subnational Governance	Subnational Governance Policy development process, general contextual information
Dr. Rohullah Amin	Director, American Institute for Afghanistan Studies, Kabul	Afghan context, religion & culture, analysis of nation building
Dr. Sima Samar	Head, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, former Minister of Women's Affairs	Governance issues, Gender policy, NAPWA
Farishta Sakhi	Sr. Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Gender policy, organizational reform
Frydoon Shairzay	Sr. Advisor to Chairman of IARCSC and Minister of Finance	Afghan context, administrative reform
Gerhardt (Gerd) Sippel	Deputy Country Director, GIZ Afghanistan	Administrative reform
Hamidullah Afghan	Senior Program Advisor, IDLG;	Municipalities Policies,

	Later, Mayor of Jalalabad	Subnational governance
Khalil Humam	Director, National Policies Integration, MoF	Policy development and management framework
Khatol Sediq	Women's Economic Development Advisor, MOWA	Gender policy, NAPWA – National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan
Lima Ahmad	Director of Monitoring & Evaluation, Administrative Office of the President, former NAPWA advisor, MOWA	Governance, Operations of the Centre of Government, M&E policy, MOWA and NAPWA
Marcus Williamson	Technical Advisor, Adam Smith International, IDLG	Subnational Governance Policy 2010
Mohammad Hameed "Thamasi"	Legal Advisor, Deputy Ministry, Policy and Coordination, IDLG	Municipalities Law and Policies
Mohammad Ismail Rahimi	DM Policy, ANDS and Monitoring & Evaluation, Ministry of Economy	Provincial Budgeting Policy, M&E, administrative reform
Mohammad Nader Yama	A/Director-General, IDLG, former Director of Policy Coordination Unit, IDLG	District Coordination Council Policy, Subnational governance, M&E, policy development
Mohammad Nasir 'Figar"	Program Development Manager, Strategic Policy Unit, IDLG	Subnational governance policies
Mohammed Ehsan "Hail"	Manager – Good Governance, Rule of Law & Human Rights Sector, DG Budget, Ministry of Finance	Subnational budgeting and related governance issues
Mohammed Hashem	Open Policy Advisory Fund, GIZ	Administrative reform, Afghan context
Naheed Sarabi	Senior Coordination and Partnership Advisor, IDLG, later DG Analysis & Reporting, MoF	Policy development, subnational governance, M&E systems
Najib Amin	Deputy Secretary for Cabinet, Office of Administrative Affairs	Provincial Budgeting Policy, Centre of government operations
Parwiz Habib	Donor Coordinator, IDLG	Subnational governance, gender issues
Robert Kressrier	Country Director, GIZ Afghanistan	Institutional reform, Centre of Government
Saeed Ahmad Khamoosh	General Director, GDCLCA, Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG)	District Coordination Council Policy, Provincial Councils Law
Sawayz Sayed Zabihullah	Director General, Administrative Reform Secretariat, IARCSC	Policy management, administrative reform, M&E Policy development
Shafiq Ahmad Qarizada	Deputy Minister (Policy), Ministry of Finance	Provincial Budgeting Policy
Sibghatullah Khan	Sr. Policy Advisor, IDLG	Afghan context, organizational reform
Tariq Ismati	Deputy Minister, Programs, Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development (MRRD)	District Coordination Council Policy, Provincial Budgeting Policy, Subnational Government
Wazhma Frogh "Zulfiqar"	Founder, Women, Peace & Security Research Institute	Gender policy, NAPWA
Wazhma Wesa	Director of Afghanistan National Development Strategy, Office of the DM Policy, Ministry of Finance	Provincial Budgeting Policy, Subnational Governance, National policy processes

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