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Security Force Assistance in Afghanistan

Identifying Lessons for Future Efforts

Terrence K. Kelly, Nora Bensahel, Olga Oliker



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Preface

Security force assistance (SFA) is a central pillar of the counterinsurgency campaign being waged by U.S. and coalition forces in Afghanistan. The outcome of the campaign hinges, in large measure, on the effectiveness of the assistance provided to the Afghan National Army, Afghan National Police, and other security forces, and the extent to which the armed elements of tribes, sub-tribes, and clans can be brought under government control. Yet senior U.S. military and civilian officials have posed many questions about the effectiveness of SFA in Afghanistan, and few empirically rigorous assessments exist to help answer these questions.

This monograph analyzes SFA efforts in Afghanistan over time. It documents the U.S. and international approaches to building the Afghan National Security Forces from 2001 to 2009, focusing primarily on the lessons and themes that emerged from extensive fieldwork in Afghanistan in 2009 and their implications for the U.S. Army. As part of our research, we also examined Soviet approaches to SFA in Afghanistan from the 1920s until 1989. That research will be published separately in a forthcoming companion document by Olga Oliker entitled *Building Afghanistan's Security Forces in Wartime: The Soviet Experience*, MG-1078-A.

The findings of this monograph should be of interest to U.S. military and civilian officials involved in preparing and executing security force assistance, both in Afghanistan and beyond. It should also interest those both inside and outside the U.S. government who seek

a deeper understanding of U.S. reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan and the key challenges that those efforts face.

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Summary

The Challenge of Security Force Assistance in Afghanistan

Building new military and police forces from scratch is a difficult enterprise under any circumstances. In Afghanistan, these difficulties are compounded by several factors that make security force assistance (SFA) efforts particularly challenging. These include decades of conflict that have shattered Afghan society, a weak central government that is viewed by a large part of the population as illegitimate, endemic corruption, security forces that are unreliable and in some cases badly trained and corrupt, and high levels of poverty and illiteracy. Perhaps most important, SFA in Afghanistan is being conducted in the midst of a conflict against a well-established insurgency with deep roots in the Pashtun parts of society, large and reliable funding sources, and areas of sanctuary in Pakistan.

Methodology and Approach

Our original project design identified three research tasks:

1. Develop an analytic framework for assessing the effectiveness of security force assistance.
2. Examine the evolution of security force assistance efforts in Afghanistan.

3. Apply the framework to Afghan security assistance efforts and develop recommendations for improvement.

We expected that our research would enable us to identify several different ways in which SFA efforts in Afghanistan have been organized and executed during the past nine years. Unfortunately, given the available data, we found it impossible to identify truly distinct approaches. Although different approaches have been implemented, this has not been done systematically. Units in one part of the country have taken one approach; units in another part a different one—but no one has tracked the results as coalition units rotated in and out of Afghanistan.

We therefore shifted our analytical focus to considering how different approaches could be better developed and tracked in the future and what the key components of a useful assessment in the Afghan context would be. Our analysis draws on political science, defense studies, and defense sector development literature and lessons learned to chart the history of SFA in Afghanistan since 2001, identify key themes, and develop a framework for the future. We also sought to draw key lessons for the Army that could apply to future SFA efforts beyond Afghanistan.

This monograph therefore analyzes SFA efforts in Afghanistan, discusses the requirements for effective SFA assessment mechanisms, and identifies important lessons for that effort as well as for the U.S. Army more broadly. As part of our research, we conducted an extensive literature search and visited key institutions, meeting with U.S., coalition, and Afghan individuals involved with SFA efforts in Afghanistan. RAND team members were able to spend a considerable amount of time in Afghanistan with extraordinary access to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), the NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan/Combined Security and Transition Command–Afghanistan (NTM-A/CSTC-A), and the ISAF Joint Command (IJC) to increase our understanding of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and the coalition’s efforts to develop them.

Overview of Security Force Assistance in Afghanistan, 2001–2009

Afghan forces were initially designed for a relatively benign security context free of Taliban influence, and SFA efforts were therefore designed under the assumption that professional forces could be carefully and deliberately built up over time. Force generation efforts were initially slow and modestly resourced. In 2004 and 2005, efforts to increase the rate of force buildup were undertaken with an eye to securing Afghanistan's presidential (2004) and parliamentary (2005) elections. However, this effort resulted in a decrease in quality that leaders found unacceptable. At the end of the period, the Taliban's resurgence became evident, and additional resources were sought to increase the size of the ANSF significantly. But it was not until 2008 that the need became widely recognized and the resources were provided for such an increase. Table S.1 identifies the increasing end-strength objectives for the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP).

Coalition efforts to develop the ANSF and the security ministries followed a similar trajectory.¹ Efforts were originally split between key coalition countries, with the United States taking responsibility for the

Table S.1
ANA and ANP Authorized End Strength, 2001–2009

Date	ANA End Strength	ANP End Strength
December 2001	50,000	Undefined
February 2002	62,000	
December 2002	70,000	
November 2005		62,000
May 2007		82,000
February 2008	86,000	
August 2008	134,000	

NOTE: This table contains only dates when authorized end strength changed for either the ANA or the ANP.

¹ The ANSF includes the ANA, the ANP, and several smaller security organizations.

ANA; Germany for the ANP; and the UK, Japan, and Italy taking responsibility for key efforts necessary for the ANSF to be effective (counterdrug activities; disarmament, demilitarization and reintegration; and the judiciary; respectively). All of these efforts were originally modest, and U.S. preoccupation with Iraq starting in late 2002 diverted resources away from the Afghan effort.

U.S. SFA efforts in Afghanistan began with the opening of an Office of Security Cooperation (OSC) under the U.S. embassy in Kabul, with U.S. special operations forces playing a role in the field. Additionally, the U.S. State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) hired DynCorp International to assist with police training in 2003. In May 2005, the United States established CSTC-A to oversee ANA development, and it soon took control of ANP development as well. This work included developing the training base and ministries and overseeing the U.S. training teams that were embedded with ANSF units and organizations. The last function passed from CSTC-A to the new operational command, the IJC, when it was established in October 2009. At the same time, CSTC-A, a U.S. command, was combined with the new NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan (NTM-A) under a three-star general.

Observations About Recent SFA in Afghanistan

Our analysis of SFA in Afghanistan includes three key lessons.² First, while the security context in Afghanistan changed radically from one of relative security in 2002 to one of crisis in 2007, changes in the ANSF were not as significant. Increases in the ANSF were authorized, but no fundamental reexamination of the types of forces needed, how they operate together (if at all), and how they work with other important governmental functions, such as the judiciary and corrections systems or traditional forms of justice and security provision, were considered until very recently, if at all.

² The observations presented here are derived from the authors' trips to, and interviews conducted in, Afghanistan in June, July, September, November, and December 2009.

Second, there are no formal assessment tools to provide the feedback to those responsible for developing these institutions that could have clearly indicated that changes of this type were needed. The assessment mechanisms currently in place, the Army Training and Readiness Assessment Tool (ATRAT) and Police Training and Readiness Assessment Tool (PTRAT), provide only unit status report-type feedback. Such feedback implicitly assumes that the forces being assessed exist in a stable and mature security sector framework. These tools are therefore not appropriate for security forces being developed in a highly dynamic security situation under governments that are, themselves, nascent.

Third, the operational environment affects SFA significantly. This conflict has existential implications for the government of Afghanistan, and the United States has deemed it highly important to its own national security. SFA cannot be separated neatly from security operations. Because SFA generates a significant part of the means needed to achieve ends—principally, defeating the insurgency—it is an integral component of the fight. If it fails in the long run, so do operations. Furthermore, most efforts from 2001 through 2009 have sought to build Afghan military forces that closely resemble Western military forces, and have similar capabilities. As a result, SFA efforts to develop the Afghan military have been based on Western models. They have produced forces that can work well at low levels where such characteristics as literacy, technological sophistication, and reliability are either not critical or can be easily overseen or bolstered by ISAF forces, but they tend to fail at the higher levels of organization where systems for planning, personnel, logistics, and other critical functions must function. This lower level of small-unit competency has not been achieved for the police, where the lack of police trainers and expertise has combined with a challenging environment to create considerable confusion on the role of the police and what capabilities they need. The result may be police forces that are built, to a large extent, on a military model, but without military capabilities.

Between 2001 and 2009, there have been a number of different approaches to advising and partnering with Afghan security forces. While we describe these approaches, it is difficult to draw clear conclusions about which ones have been more or less effective, because

there has been no tracking of personnel or units over time based on the training and advising they received. One key lesson, therefore, is that approaches must be developed in ways that support their assessment over time. Another key lesson is that advisors and partners must be better prepared for their mission, including specialized training for those who work with police.

A Framework for SFA and Assessing SFA During Conflict

The current assessment approach in Afghanistan does not provide those charged with helping senior Afghan officials develop the ANSF with adequate feedback. Here, we briefly describe the critical elements of adequate feedback and provide a framework for designing assessment systems that, to some extent, will be unique for each conflict in which SFA is provided.

An effective assessment mechanism for SFA during conflict should start with the goal of the effort and work toward increasingly more specific criteria for success until a point is reached where the performance of individuals, units, organizations and programs can be clearly characterized. This should include information that could lead to judgments about their appropriateness for the task at hand as well. This approach can be viewed as a hierarchy of objectives and tasks that, at the top, addresses whether the end goal of the effort is being achieved and is developed further down the hierarchy through greater levels of specificity. If individuals, units, and institutions are performing their missions as defined but the goals are not being met, then the inescapable conclusion is either that the conceptual approach is flawed or that the means available for performing it (e.g., individuals, forces, institutions, resources) are inappropriate or insufficient.

Effective assessment mechanisms also need to provide those charged with development and training (institutional and unit) with information of a type and format that they can use. The U.S. military uses the acronym DOTMLPF (doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities) to capture the key institutional functions and systems that must function individu-

ally and together for military institutions to be capable of their missions.³ The same construct, with minor changes, works for police—or any large organization (e.g., police do not have doctrine in the same sense as military organizations but they do have checklists and procedures that they follow). Those charged with building institutions, therefore, need feedback that provides them with insights into the state of, and changes needed in, the component systems of DOTMLPF. This involves establishing an assessments feedback loop that connects measures of effectiveness, measures of performance, and input measures to the elements of DOTMLPF. Current assessment approaches do not provide information that is security sector-wide or focused on DOTMLPF. To facilitate the development of more helpful assessment mechanisms, all major players responsible for SFA should articulate what input they require to design and develop forces, based on the status of the current force and the current conflict.

Implications for SFA in Afghanistan and for the U.S. Army

U.S. Army doctrine for SFA, and stability operations in general, are still developing. Current SFA doctrine (see U.S. Army Field Manual 3-07.1, *Security Force Assistance*) is aimed at providing useful guidance to the brigade combat team (BCT). While doing so is important, the BCT represents only one of several SFA providers in Afghanistan, and it is operating in an environment in which the entire security framework and all of the host nation's security institutions are in development. As such, current doctrine is not sufficient for conflicts such as Afghanistan. A complete doctrine would stipulate that U.S. operating forces working to develop the host nation's fielded forces should give feedback to those charged with providing SFA to such national-level institutions as the security ministries, general staff, logistics command, and training and doctrine command, because these are the institu-

³ As used here, DOTMLPF—appropriately modified for policing components—is meant to also signify aspects of accountability and transparency, human rights, coordination with other security forces, contextualization within the broader justice sector, the rule of law, and other critical issues.

tions that must design, field, and maintain the indigenous security forces. Without this feedback, they have no way of knowing whether their efforts are producing forces of the size, type, and quality that are needed.

In cases in which SFA is being provided in conjunction with U.S. military operations, U.S. military leaders need to understand the interdependencies between operations and SFA and be able to link SFA to success in operations. Alternatively stated, as part of a comprehensive campaign, commanders must not only orchestrate those aspects of the military effort that have traditionally fallen under the operational art but must also include SFA in this holistic campaign plan. This expanded role for U.S. military leaders also includes the ability to understand how the operational environment affects not only operations but how institutions can be built, how they will operate, and how to balance competing priorities between the operational and SFA missions.

In large-scale endeavors, such as those in Afghanistan and Iraq, the U.S. Army will likely be involved in building police forces. Police training is not a primary mission of the Department of Defense (DOD), but in large-scale cases there will likely be no other organization that can take on this mission. To the extent that U.S. political and military leaders believe that such efforts will again be encountered, the U.S. Army will need competent forces, or police augmentation, to take on this mission.

The case of Afghanistan also shows that Western models for forces and ministries may not work in countries with very different societies, requirements, and resources. The ability to understand this fact and to derive reasonable plans for developing and fielding host-nation forces that take the unique context of the country into account will be a critical capability. In particular, the ability to provide SFA to create forces that are distinct from the U.S. model in any and all elements of DOTMLPF, as appropriate, is critical.

All these challenges have implications for the U.S. Army. Among these are the need to provide adequate predeployment training to advisors and planners. Current efforts to train soldiers before deployment are better than those previously in place, but they focus primarily on

advisors, not units, and still have a way to go to be adequate. This observation primarily concerns the emphasis of the Army as an institution on the training mission, not the efforts of the units that are currently training advisors for Afghanistan and Iraq.

The selection of advisors is also critical. Not all Army officers are equally able to work with indigenous forces. The current system cannot adequately capture such critical issues as personality and does not consider such important issues as experience with advising (or other relevant experiences) when advisors are selected. The same argument pertains to the selection of unit commanders whose principal task is developing host-nation units. In this area, lessons may be available from U.S. Army Special Forces because this is what they have traditionally been selected, structured, and trained to do.

Finally, these challenges have implications for the development and education of U.S. Army leaders. Since SFA in different areas will always have unique aspects, leader development and education efforts should provide not only generic skills but, more importantly, flexibility in thought and imagination. There are certainly Army officers who have been tremendously successful in SFA—and in stability operations and counterinsurgency more generally. An examination of the development paths of those officers might yield important insights for the Army as an institution.

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Forces, without whose insights much of what we say in this monograph would not have been discovered.

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Abbreviations

ABP	Afghan Border Police
ADAB	ANSF Development Assistance Bureau
AIA	Afghan Interim Authority
AIG	Afghan Interim Government
AMF	Afghan Militia Forces
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANAP	Afghan National Auxiliary Police
ANCOP	Afghan National Civil Order Police
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
ASF	Afghan Security Forces
ATRAT	Army Training and Readiness Assessment Tool
AWOL	absent without leave
AUP	Afghan Uniformed Police
BCT	brigade combat team
BSB	brigade support battalion
CENTCOM	U.S. Central Command

CFC	Consolidated Fielding Center
CM	Capability Milestone
CSS	combat service support
CSTC-A	Combined Security and Transition Command–Afghanistan
CTC	Central Training Center
DDR	disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
DOD	Department of Defense
DOTMLPF	doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities
ETT	embedded training team
EU	European Union
EUPOL	European Police Mission in Afghanistan
FDD	Focused District Development
FM	Field Manual
FMF	Foreign Military Financing
FMS	Foreign Military Sales
FSF	foreign security forces
FY	fiscal year
G8	Group of Eight
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
ICG	International Crisis Group
IJC	ISAF Joint Command

INL	Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (U.S. State Department)
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
JCISFA	Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance
JFTC	Joint Force Training Center
JMRC	Joint Multinational Readiness Center
KIA	killed in action
KMTC	Kabul Military Training Center
KPA	Kabul Police Academy
LOTFA	Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan
METL	Mission Essential Task List
MOD	Ministry of Defense
MOE	measures of effectiveness
MOI	Ministry of the Interior
MOP	measures of performance
MOS	military occupational specialty
MP	military police
MTT	mobile training team
NCO	noncommissioned officer
NDS	National Directorate of Security
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NTM-A	NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom

OMC-A	Office of Military Cooperation–Afghanistan
OMLT	operational mentoring and liaison team
OSC	Office of Security Cooperation
OSC-A	Office of Security Cooperation–Afghanistan
PMT	police mentoring team
POMLT	police operational mentoring and liaison team
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
PTRAT	Police Training and Readiness Assessment Tool
QRF	quick reaction force
RC	Regional Command
RC-E	Regional Command–East
RC-N	Regional Command–North
RC-S	Regional Command–South
RTC	Regional Training Center
SF	Special Forces
SFA	security force assistance
SOCOM	U.S. Special Operations Command
SSR	security sector reform
TDY	temporary duty
TOC	tactical operations center
TRAT	Training and Readiness Assessment Tool
TTHS	training, transient, holding, and student
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Introduction

Security force assistance (SFA) is a central pillar of the counterinsurgency campaign being waged by U.S. and coalition forces in Afghanistan. The outcome of the campaign hinges, in large measure, on the effectiveness of the assistance provided to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), which includes the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP), as well as some smaller security forces, and the extent to which the armed elements of tribes, sub-tribes, and clans can be brought under government control. This chapter starts with a brief overview of the security, political, and socioeconomic context in Afghanistan and the current threats facing the country. We next look at what might constitute reasonable expectations for the ANSF and then provide an overview of our research approach.

The Challenges of Security Force Assistance in Afghanistan

Building new military and police forces from scratch is a difficult enterprise under any circumstances. It requires large numbers of personnel to serve as advisors and trainers, large amounts of resources to purchase equipment and fund training, and extensive efforts to develop the ministerial capacity necessary to oversee the new security forces. In Afghanistan, these usual difficulties are compounded by several factors that make SFA efforts particularly challenging.

Afghanistan in Context¹

Afghanistan's location at the crossroad of empires means that its history has been marked by conflict, going at least as far back as the time of Alexander the Great.² Afghanistan's history is also one of shifting patrons, and with them shifting support and assistance to its security forces. In the 20th century alone, Afghanistan received security development aid from myriad countries, including Turkey, East and West Germany, the Soviet Union, and the United States and its current coalition partners, among others.

Afghanistan today continues to feel the consequences of over three decades of continuing conflict, starting soon after the Saur Revolution of 1978, which sparked first an insurgency and then the Soviet invasion in support of the government in December 1979.³ The ongoing fighting destroyed most national institutions, including the security forces. Local militias and other nonstate armed groups that developed during that period fought one another as well as foreign invaders, and they remain important and influential today.⁴

These decades of conflict left Afghanistan desperately poor, weakened its traditional social structures, and incentivized predatory political and economic behavior based on short-term gain at the expense of long-term development.⁵ For much of the past three decades, ethnic and political groups competed for economic advantage (licit and illicit).

¹ This section draws heavily on work done by RAND for the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) as part of a project to assess the ANSF. This text is an edited version of that which also appeared in a RAND Project Memorandum for CENTCOM by Terrence Kelly et al. entitled "RAND Objective Assessment of the ANSF."

² Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan: A Military History from Alexander the Great to the War Against the Taliban*, revised edition, New York: Da Capo Press, 2009.

³ Olga Oliker, *Building Afghanistan's Security Forces in Wartime: The Soviet Experience*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-1078-A, forthcoming.

⁴ The United States and its allies worked with some of these groups in the 2001 effort to overthrow the Taliban, especially the Northern Alliance, which increased their influence and power. Ali Jalali, "The Future of Security Institutions," in J. Alexander Thier, ed., *The Future of Afghanistan*, Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009, p. 24.

⁵ Many have written well about Afghanistan. We recommend Barnett Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, 2nd ed., New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2002.

Jobs, particularly in non-poppy agriculture, are hard to come by in the face of deteriorating infrastructure, the monopolization of arable land by power brokers, and the expanding poppy trade. The government does not control its borders or deter the misuse of natural resources (e.g., timber, arable land). The inability of indigenous economic activity to compete with more efficiently produced and cheaper foreign products is both a product of and a contributing factor to continued underdevelopment. Criminals, including insurgents, drug producers, and traffickers, further siphon off licit economic capacity. Poverty and criminality also limit the funds available to the government for development activities.

That is not to say that Afghanistan has no sources of economic activity. The war economy and drug trade have injected substantial amounts of money into Afghanistan, and in areas where economic conditions are better, small-scale business and trade have sprouted. But this is far from sufficient to lay the groundwork for sustainable economic development and growth.

Few Afghans alive today have any personal memories of functioning national institutions, given their relatively short life expectancies,⁶ and the large numbers of displaced persons and emigrants have deprived the country of valuable human capital.⁷ The most relevant recent experience in this context is that of the 1980s. For those who were part of the communist government, its army, or its police and intelligence services, the substantial firepower, mobility, training, and technological capabilities provided by the Soviets to these security forces⁸ serve as a model, and set a very high bar, for what Afghan security capabili-

⁶ The estimated life expectancy in Afghanistan in 2009 was 44.64 years, causing Afghanistan to be ranked number 214 out of the 224 countries for which life expectancy is calculated. See *CIA World Factbook*.

⁷ One source estimates that during the recent decades of conflict, half of Afghanistan's population has been displaced and one-third has left the country. See J. Alexander Thier, "Introduction: Building Bridges," in Thier, ed., *The Future of Afghanistan*, p. 2.

⁸ Olikier discusses Soviet security assistance to Afghanistan in the 1980s.

ties should be.⁹ For those who fought against this force, their memories of its firepower and technical prowess also seem to provide an important reference point—and lead them to draw many of the same conclusions.¹⁰

This means that any effort to build national security forces in Afghanistan today must wrestle both with the U.S. expectation that high-level capabilities are possible and the reality of a mostly illiterate population that has been at war for two generations. Moreover, the forces themselves must incorporate a range of groups that have spent decades fighting one another.

The bottom line is that the Afghan government is unable to provide basic services in most of the country. The inability to create functioning courts and correction systems is particularly important because security force assistance can only do so much in their absence. This is evident in the area of police development, but it also affects all aspects of SFA because a coherent judicial framework is essential for a functional and accountable security sector and, indeed, a functional and accountable government.

In the absence of such accountability, it is no surprise that corruption continues to undermine public faith in Afghanistan's leaders. Those with political power are effectively immune from prosecution. This failure is made all the more critical by comparison with the period of Taliban rule. Under the Taliban, human rights and liberties as commonly understood were all but nonexistent, particularly for women, but a certain security prevailed, and corruption was limited. Today, although civil and human rights and liberties in many parts of the country are better than they were under the Taliban, they are still severely limited—whereas corruption is worse.

⁹ A substantial number of the current officer corps of the ANA were officers in the army of the communist regime.

¹⁰ Interviews with Minister of Defense Abdul Rahim Wardak and Chief of the General Staff General Bismillah Kahn Mohammadi, September 2009, Kabul.

The Threat

How security forces are structured and developed should, in principle, reflect the threats faced by a society. This is important in the context of recent efforts in Afghanistan because both the Afghan government and those who have sought to assist it have radically revised their views of Afghanistan's threat environment over the past eight years. When U.S. SFA efforts in Afghanistan were first being planned in 2002, a driving assumption was that the Taliban had been decisively defeated and would not reappear.¹¹ Instead, the major threat envisioned was a return to the warlordism that had plagued the country in the 1990s and had given rise to the Taliban.¹²

As we now know, the assumption of the Taliban's lasting disappearance proved premature. By the middle of the decade, it had become evident that the Taliban had not been destroyed and was posing an increasing threat to Afghanistan's fledgling government.¹³ Moreover, the return of the Taliban did not mean that the threat of warlordism was gone from Afghanistan, but rather combined with it to create a much more complex situation. Moreover, even the Taliban and its allies have proven to be a more complicated adversary than might first have been expected.

The threat we see today is thus not a homogenous movement but rather a collection of movements that are currently cooperating under the umbrella of the Taliban, as well as a number of other groups that sometimes align with the Taliban and one another and sometimes do not. Together, these groups have a significant presence in most of

¹¹ See Jason Howk, *A Case Study in Security Sector Reform: Learning from Security Sector Reform/Building in Afghanistan (October 2002–September 2003)*, Carlisle, Pa.: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, November 2009, for an insider's view of this period.

¹² We will often use the term "Taliban" to refer to this movement and others that are currently associated with it, such as the Haqqani Network and Hezb-Islami Gulbuddin. The meaning should be clear from the context.

¹³ One of the factors that may have facilitated the reemergence of the Taliban is its opportunity for sanctuary in Pakistan. See Seth Jones, *Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan: RAND Counterinsurgency Study, Volume 4*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-595-OSD, 2008.

Afghanistan.¹⁴ The Taliban and its associated movements currently pose an existential threat to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA). Their success can be attributed to many causes and continues to be subject to expert debate, but their survivability in Afghanistan has much to do with the fact that these are indigenous, Afghan movements. Their members live in the communities where they operate, and this knowledge has helped them be particularly effective in co-opting local groups and structures, focusing on groups most at risk from rivals and thus in search of allies. They are able to play local identities against national identity, and they offer an ideological clarity that other groups do not, even while calibrating their message according to audience, enabling them to appeal to the rank and file.¹⁵ The Taliban is also a predatory organization and often achieves its goals by intimidating the public. However, the GIROA is corrupt and no less predatory, so the bar is set low for the Taliban to succeed. Further, the government is unable to protect the population, rendering Taliban intimidation even more successful.¹⁶

Thus, while in 2002 it may have been thought that a small ANSF would be sufficient to withstand warlords and help maintain order, the resurgence of the Taliban has created a much more demanding set of requirements.¹⁷ SFA must be geared not just to defeating insurgents and foreign threats but also to helping the ANSF provide the protection that people need to withstand intimidation. No less important is giving them a framework of law and order and protection from crime that is

¹⁴ See briefing by Major General Michael Flynn, Director of Intelligence for the ISAF, "State of the Insurgency: Trends, Intentions and Objectives," December 22, 2009, for an overview of the insurgent threat.

¹⁵ See Abdulkader Sinno, "Explaining the Taliban's Ability to Mobilize the Pashtuns," in Robert D. Crews and Amin Tarzi, eds., *The Taliban and the Crisis of Afghanistan*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008. See also the other essays in Crews and Tarzi, eds., and those in Antonio Giustozzi, ed., *Decoding the New Taliban: Insights from the Afghan Field*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.

¹⁶ See, for example, the discussion of corruption in General Stanley McChrystal's "COMISAF's Initial Assessment," memorandum to the Secretary of Defense, August 30, 2009. In addition, these issues have been widely reported by numerous reporters and scholars.

¹⁷ See Chapter Two for more details.

crucial for the growth of trust in the government that will, in the long run, be the best protection against insurgents. This means the simultaneous and consistent development of the broader security sector (e.g., a justice framework and a corrections system) that can ensure that the ANSF themselves, and the government as a whole, are accountable to the Afghan people. This will require, among other things, reducing the corrupt behavior that has alienated the Afghan population in the past.

Reasonable Expectations for the ANSF¹⁸

The requirements identified above are a tall order. The socioeconomic challenges discussed above create significant limitations on what the ANSF will be able to do in the near future in the form of financial, institutional, and human resource constraints. Moreover, the poor reputation of the ANSF, particularly the police, and the significant danger of the job mean that those who have other economic options tend to seek alternative employment, further limiting the recruiting pool. Literacy rates for the ANSF illustrate this well. The *CIA World Factbook* estimates male literacy in Afghanistan at 43 percent. National Training Mission–Afghanistan (NTM-A) estimated in November 2009 that 10 percent of the force was literate.¹⁹ One must conclude, therefore, that Afghanistan’s educated middle and elite classes are underrepresented in its security forces.

It is not unusual for the armed forces and even police of a country to draw from the less-advantaged in its population. In southern Sudan, for example, the very low literacy rate of 24 percent for the region as a whole still outstrips the 10 percent literacy rate among police.²⁰ It

¹⁸ This section is an edited version of a section in Kelly et al., “RAND Objective Assessment of the ANSF.”

¹⁹ *CIA World Factbook*. Literacy for Afghanistan is defined as the percentage of persons age 15 years or older who can read and write. Almost 100 percent of the ANSF is male. While the literacy figures for the country as a whole can be questioned, the basic argument, that ANSF literacy is below that for the population as a whole, holds.

²⁰ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Southern Sudan Office, “Briefing Note on Southern Sudan,” October 2006; Alfred Sebit Lokuji et al., *Police Reform in Southern Sudan*,

is also a considerable challenge to develop security forces in a socio-economic environment like Afghanistan's—especially under conditions of continuing conflict, where the forces being built are already in the fight. Moreover, Afghanistan's modern history is full of changing governments and movements gaining power, so it is unreasonable to expect most Afghans to throw their lot in with the government until it is clearly winning. However, given the job that Afghanistan's army and police have to do, these constraints on capabilities can be debilitating. Over time, the solution is economic development and literacy education. In the near term, however, other options must be considered (e.g., providing incentives that are sufficient to overcome many Afghans' reticence to participate in the ANSF—a subject of other, ongoing RAND research). During earlier periods, different recruiting paradigms were implemented with differing results. In a forthcoming RAND report, for example, Olga Oliker discusses the Soviet experience in this regard.²¹

Security sector assistance in Afghanistan presents other challenges, as well. Most successful efforts at security sector reform (SSR) have taken place in countries that have emerged from conflict, and they have involved years of effort and substantial resource commitments, so the lessons they convey are only partially applicable in Afghanistan.²²

Juba, Sudan: The North-South Institute and the Centre for Peace and Development Studies, June 2009.

²¹ See Oliker, forthcoming.

²² According to the October 2008 U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-07, *Stability Operations*, security sector reform is the set of policies, plans, programs, and activities that a government undertakes to improve the way it provides safety, security, and justice. Security sector reform aims to provide an effective and legitimate public service that is transparent, accountable to civil authority, and responsive to the needs of the public. It may include integrated activities to support defense and armed forces reform; civilian management and oversight; justice, police, corrections, and intelligence reform; national security planning and strategy support; border management; disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR); and concurrent reduction of armed violence (paragraph 6-4). Security sector reform was enacted in El Salvador, Sierra Leone, and Liberia following comprehensive peace agreements in 1992, 1999, and 2003 respectively; in Sudan, following a peace agreement in 2003; in Mozambique, following a General Peace Accord in 1992; in South Africa, after the end of apartheid in 1994; in Northern Ireland, following the Good Friday Agreement of 1998; and in Bosnia-Herzegovina, following the Dayton Accords of 1995. See Mark Malan, "Security

The most recent example of security force development under conflict conditions—the ongoing effort in Iraq—is being carried out in a country with much higher levels of economic development, literacy, and education than Afghanistan. SFA efforts in Afghanistan may also be more challenging than those in Iraq because responsibility for SFA has been divided among lead nations. As discussed in Chapter Two, the United States was the lead nation for the ANA, while Germany was the lead nation for the ANP (until 2007). These different approaches and resources weakened unity of effort and the ability to develop the ANSF as a whole.

This is not to say that the current effort in Afghanistan is impossible. However, it does serve to note that central among the lessons of security sector reform is the requirement to establish systems and approaches that fit with the needs and capabilities of the country in question, as well as development goals. Lessons identified in studies of security sector reform are consistent in calling for two things: a comprehensive assessment of the security needs of the country, and ensuring that reform efforts are based on realistic understandings of what is sustainable “financially, operationally, and logistically.”²³ The discussion above indicates that in the case of Afghanistan, the needs are many and the capabilities limited. SFA providers must therefore

Sector Reform in Liberia: Mixed Results from Humble Beginnings,” Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, March 2008; Peter Albrecht and Paul Jackson, “Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997–2007,” Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform and International Alert, February 2009; Helene Maria Kyed, “Community Policing in Post-War Mozambique,” *Policing and Society*, Vol. 19, No. 4, December 2009, pp. 354–371; Lokuji et al.; Mary O’Rawe, “Human Rights and Police Training in Transitional Societies: Exporting the Lessons of Northern Ireland,” *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 27, 2005, pp. 943–968; Bruce Baker, “A Policing Partnership for Post-War Africa? Lessons from Liberia and Southern Sudan,” *Policing and Society*, Vol. 19, No. 4, December 2009, pp. 372–389; Baker, “Reconstructing a Police System Out of the Ashes: Rwanda’s Solution,” *Policing and Society*, Vol. 17, No. 4, December 2007, pp. 344–366; and Baker, “Multi-Choice Policing in Uganda,” *Policing and Society*, Vol. 15, No. 1, March 2005, pp. 19–41.

²³ United Nations General Assembly Security Council, *Securing Peace and Development: the Role of the United Nations in Supporting Security Sector Reform*, Report of the Secretary-General, Report No. A/62/659-S/2008/39, January 2008. See also Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, *OECD-DAC Handbook on Security Sector Reform*, 2007.

undertake careful consideration of their way ahead. Our discussions with coalition and Afghan officials indicate that to date, needs assessments have been made with respect to the threat posed by terrorists and insurgents but less with respect to other security threats; these assessments have not provided adequate input for the Afghan security ministries and generating forces or those International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) elements that provide advisors (i.e., dedicated personnel embedded in ANSF units) and partner with them (i.e., ISAF units that conduct operations with ANSF units and train them).²⁴ We return to this issue in Chapter Three.

Research Approach

The objective of this study was to analyze the effectiveness of ongoing SFA efforts in Afghanistan and to develop recommendations for improving these efforts through detailed empirical analysis. This section presents our research approach in three parts. We begin by discussing what we had hoped to do at the start of this effort. Next, we discuss the data shortfalls that precluded us from executing the initial plan. Finally, we present the approach we ultimately adopted.

Initial Research Approach

Our original project design identified three research tasks:

²⁴ While focusing needs assessments on determining what forces are required to counter the threat posed by insurgents and terrorists seems reasonable at this point, not one of the dozens of current and former senior Afghan official interviewed for this monograph felt that the current focus was adequate or correct. They all had one of two views: (1) They viewed the conflict as one between intelligence agencies of neighboring countries that is being played out in Afghanistan, in which case they asserted that a smaller, high-quality force is needed to back up the National Directorate of Security, Afghanistan's intelligence agency; or (2) they believe that Afghanistan needs a large armored force supported by modern fighter aircraft (similar to what the Soviets had built for them), because this would provide Afghanistan with respect in the region. Afghan leaders currently responsible for the ANSF indicated that they would prefer the latter.

1. Develop an analytic framework for assessing the effectiveness of security force assistance.
2. Examine the evolution of security force assistance efforts in Afghanistan.
3. Apply the framework to Afghan security force assistance efforts and develop recommendations for improvement.

Figure 1.1 provides a graphical depiction of our original approach to the first task. In it, we identify three principal factors or sets of institutions that contribute to developing ANSF: the political and social context of Afghanistan because it has a major effect on what can be accomplished there; the security ministries and the roles they play in creating the forces and systems that support them; and the content and quality of ANA and Afghan National Police (ANP) training. Given this information, our goal was to conduct empirical analysis to determine which approaches have worked well and which have not, based on the performance of the security forces. To assess SFA in Afghanistan, we sought to identify SFA approaches that were sufficiently dis-

Figure 1.1
Elements of Security Sector Framework



tinct to provide a basis for comparison, and then data on how they performed as measured by the success of the soldiers, police and units that they produced.

Data Availability

This approach required data that could support two principal lines of investigation. The first was simply to examine the various SFA approaches that have been implemented in Afghanistan, identifying what goals and assumptions shaped them and how they changed or evolved over time. The second was to assess how well those approaches worked—whether they accomplished the goals they set for themselves, and whether they were successful in developing the ANSF in line with the model above. The combination, we hoped, could help us identify clear lessons from the Afghanistan SFA experience.

Unfortunately, we discovered that it is impossible to connect the SFA approaches in Afghanistan with the results produced because data is not kept over time. While it is clear that approaches have changed, neither the information regarding their evolution nor the criteria used to assess their effectiveness was available. Moreover, we could not conclusively catalog the different approaches tried, because there was so much variance and so little tracking. Units in one part of the country took one approach, units in another part a different one, and no one tracked the results when forces rotated out. We could identify certain variations in approaches in place at the time of our research. For example, our interviews with Afghan officials and specialists and coalition advisors to the ANA and ANP indicated some differences between the partnering and training undertaken by U.S. embedded training teams (ETTs) for the ANA and police mentoring teams (PMTs) for the ANP, and several distinct approaches of other ISAF operational mentoring and liaison teams (OMLTs) for the ANA and police OMLTs (POMLTs). However, even when we could identify differences in approach, we were less able to connect them to any differences in results. The data that we would need to carry out such an analysis, which would involve tracking Afghan personnel and/or units who had participated in the different programs over time, did not exist. What did exist were evaluations of the units through the Army

Training and Readiness Assessment Tool (ATRAT) and Police Training and Readiness Assessment Tool (PTRAT) (respectively) from 2006 to the present. ATRAT data, in particular, indicate that units with U.S. ETTs perform better on reported criteria than units with most OMLTs, but the data reported is limiting and those who reported it stated that it is not reliable.²⁵ Because the ATRAT and PTRAT report indicators of unit status (e.g., personnel fill, equipment readiness), they have some significant shortcomings. First, they assume that units are properly designed with appropriate doctrine and soldiers or police who are capable of operating within the institution's systems, and that the units exist in a stable and mature force. If this were the case, assessing their status would suffice, but even then this would provide insights only into the potential for performance, not actual performance. However, as the following chapters make clear, this is most definitely not the case. Moreover, RAND assessments indicate that the data in the ATRAT and PTRAT reporting cannot be taken at face value.

We could also identify, as a program, the Focused District Development (FDD) approach to police training, in which entire district police units are pulled off line and trained as a whole.²⁶ Assessment of the FDD approach, however, is similarly marred by the fact that FDD is not implemented uniformly across the country and, again, not assessed over time. In some cases, for example, less than the entire district police force is pulled off line, and police from other districts are sent to train along with them to fill vacant training slots. Moreover, while the eight-week training program that FDD is supposed to encompass is, on paper, standard, its implementation is not, and both coursework and other aspects, such as the involvement of PMTs and POMLTs in the training, vary greatly. An additional, and perhaps even more debilitating, challenge for assessment is establishing effectiveness. While many advisors report that units come out of FDD with higher capabilities than when they went in, high attrition among the police means that one year later, a unit that went through FDD may be made up mostly of personnel who received no training at all. In the course

²⁵ See unpublished work by Kelly et al.

²⁶ See Chapter Two for more details on the FDD program.

of our research, we discovered that data on unit performance is generally not captured and that what data exist extend back at most two years. Specifically, the ATRAT and PTRAT capture what amounts to information on the status of inputs to units (e.g., personnel assigned and present for duty, equipment on hand and mission-capable), but very little or no data on how a unit performs its missions.²⁷ As such, they indicate how a unit *ought* to perform if it is structured properly and has the right doctrine, people, equipment and so forth; they do not indicate how a unit *does* perform. Moreover, they cannot provide direct insight into the quality of SFA as measured by effects. Every individual in a field unit or advisory capacity involved with producing these data whom RAND interviewed, from sergeants to general officers, indicated that the data are not reliable because advisors and partner units cannot independently validate the data they get from Afghan colleagues, which they generally believe to be inflated. Most indicated that ATRAT and PTRAT measure only one aspect of what is needed for adequate assessments.²⁸ Thus, no data exist that would permit anyone interested in examining SFA to connect a given approach to security force development with performance. Furthermore, because data have not been retained over time, it is difficult to make conclusions about how SFA efforts have developed.²⁹ We were able to access ATRAT data

²⁷ In 2009, the ANP began using a new system called the Capabilities Endorsement process, which contains far more detail and provides the ability to provide more information on a unit's ability to perform. However, as of December 2009, the ANA had not adopted the process, and the general opinion of users was that it was too much information for advisors to provide on a monthly basis. The ISAF Joint Command (IJC)—the operational command of ISAF that directs all coalition operations and works with and assesses the ANSF—was planning, as of October 2009, to create a new assessment tool. Therefore, the CE will likely not be implemented in the ANA or provide longitudinal data on the ANP. RAND interviews in Afghanistan, September, November, and December 2009.

²⁸ This fact creates a situation that is unique in our experience because all involved with the production of official reports on the status of a major effort insist that these reports are not accurate. With regard to what the ATRAT and PTRAT should measure, unit status report-like data is important but not sufficient for making accurate assessments about unit capabilities.

²⁹ Even if ATRAT and PTRAT data had been retained for longer periods, it would remain difficult to use those data to assess SFA efforts over time because of the shifts in the security

from 2006 to the present, and we incorporated them into our analysis as much as possible. But very little of those data provide direct insights into the quality of SFA as measured by effects. As a result, our findings rely heavily on interviews with Afghans and coalition advisors.

Revised Research Approach

Prior to visiting Afghanistan, the RAND team conducted an extensive literature search and visited U.S. institutions and U.S. and Afghan individuals involved with SFA efforts in Afghanistan.³⁰ In the course of this work, we discovered that no one outside of Afghanistan had useful data (as noted above).

During the course of this project, RAND team members were able to spend a considerable amount of time in Afghanistan with extraordinary access to ISAF, the NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan (NTM-A)/Combined Security and Transition Command–Afghanistan (CSTC-A) and the ISAF Joint Command (IJC), gaining an understanding of the ANSF and coalition efforts to develop them.³¹ During much of this time, we had unrestricted access to coalition data and personnel, as well as many senior Afghan personnel in Kabul and soldiers and police in the field. RAND interviewed hundreds of Afghans and coalition personnel over ten weeks in Afghanistan in the second half of 2009.

Organization of This Monograph

The next three chapters focus on the development of the ANSF. Chapter Two provides an overview of SFA in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2009, and Chapter Three identifies some of the key lessons from that

situation in Afghanistan, and thus the expectations of SFA units, as discussed in Chapter Two.

³⁰ See Appendix A for an overview of the literature and documents reviewed for this effort and Appendix B for an overview of the interviews that we conducted.

³¹ These visits were for three separate research efforts, but all had very closely aligned purposes. As such, data and observations gathered as part of those efforts contribute to this report.

period. In Chapter Four, we present a proposed framework for SFA in Afghanistan and other countries facing similar security situations, and for assessing that assistance. Chapter Five concludes by identifying the implications of SFA in Afghanistan for the U.S. Army and provides recommendations for future efforts.³²

³² RAND interviews in Afghanistan, November and December 2009, and personnel attrition data provided by the NTM-A staff, most recently in January 2010.

Overview of Security Force Assistance During the Coalition Era, 2001–2009

After the fall of the Taliban in 2001, the United States and its coalition partners started what turned out to be an extensive effort to rebuild the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police. The initial plans were developed during a time of relative peace and called for relatively small but well-trained army and police forces. As the security situation deteriorated, however, the United States focused primarily on increasing the sizes of these two forces rather than fundamentally questioning whether the structures and approaches of the initial efforts were still appropriate for the changing security environment. Although reform efforts have been undertaken to improve the quality and capabilities of both the ANA and the ANP, both forces face considerable challenges that continue to limit their operational abilities.

The Bonn Agreement and the Establishment of the ANSF

From the outset of the post-Taliban era, the future of Afghan armed forces was a high-level concern. The Bonn Agreement, signed on December 5, 2001, established the first post-Taliban government and highlights the complex nature of the problem. The document specifies that the partners request “the assistance of the international community in helping the new Afghan authorities in the establishment and training of new Afghan security and armed forces,” but also stipulates that the international partners “assist in the reintegration of the mujahedin into the new Afghan security and armed forces,” a euphemistic

term for both sidelining and satisfying militia forces.¹ The central challenge facing the Afghan and coalition governments was to balance the urgent need for an Afghan security force with the imperative to defuse the existing militia-based forces. In effect, the initial mission was to simultaneously stand down and stand up Afghan armed forces.

Some of the most critical militia forces in question were those of the Northern Alliance, which had played a vital role in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and the overthrow of the Taliban. By December 2001, Northern Alliance forces controlled Kabul and most of the northern part of the country. No comparable Pashtun movement existed in the South, which meant that various warlords and their militias were taking control of individual areas where their influence was strongest.² The competition for power among these warlords and militias threatened to fracture the country along deep ethnic and tribal lines before the new government could take office.

By early 2002, there were approximately one million men serving in private militias in Afghanistan, although only a fraction of them served on a full-time basis.³ These anti-Taliban militias were generally referred to as the Afghan Militia Forces (AMF), and it was not clear the extent to which they were considered part of the new national army. Since the Bonn agreement did not clearly define the future role of the militias, the terms of implementation remained open to interpretation

¹ The Bonn Agreement does not provide any guidance on the form, composition, or mission of these new security forces. For the full text of the agreement, see Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-Establishment of Permanent Government Institutions, 2001. <http://www.afghangovernment.com/AfghanAgreementBonn.htm>, accessed March 2010.

² For more on the role of the Northern Alliance during Operation Enduring Freedom, see Stephen Tanner, 2009, pp. 289–309. See also James F. Dobbins, *After the Taliban: Nation-Building in Afghanistan*, Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2008, especially pp. 1–10 and 57.

³ Antonio Giustozzi states that the number of full-time militiamen was between one-fifth to one-tenth of the total number, which would be approximately 100,000 to 200,000 personnel. See Antonio Giustozzi, “Military Reform in Afghanistan,” in Mark Sedra, ed., *Confronting Afghanistan’s Security Dilemma: Reforming the Security Sector*, Brief 28, Bonn International Center for Conversion, September 2003, p. 24.

and became increasingly difficult to negotiate as regional powers grew stronger over time.⁴

Relative Security, 2002–2003

In the immediate aftermath of the Taliban's ouster, the security situation in Afghanistan was deceptively calm. The United States and its partners assumed that the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and their allies had been thoroughly defeated and would not reemerge.⁵ The United Nations (UN) mission in Kabul wanted to encourage Afghans to take as much responsibility for the reconstruction and rebuilding process as possible, and so it advocated that the international community adopt a "light footprint" approach that involved limited international involvement.⁶ This light footprint approach meant that there were two types of international forces in Afghanistan starting in January 2002. The first was the international peacekeeping force called the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which was explicitly limited by the Bonn Agreement to operating in and around Kabul.⁷ The second component involved continued U.S. military counterterrorism operations in the rest of the country, which were increasingly led by Special Forces (SF) under U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) instead of conventional forces under U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM). This

⁴ J. Alexander Their, "Afghanistan," in William J. Durch, ed., *Twenty-First-Century Peace Operations*, Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace and the Stimson Center, 2006, especially pp. 531–532.

⁵ See Howk for an insider discussion of this period and how SFA efforts developed.

⁶ David H. Bayley and Robert M. Perito, *The Police in War: Fighting Insurgency, Terrorism, and Violent Crime*, Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2010, p. 18. For an overview of the light footprint strategy and the U.S. role, see Milan Vaishnav, "The Chimera of the Light Footprint," in Robert C. Orr, ed., *Winning the Peace*, Washington, D.C.: CSIS Press, 2004, pp. 244–262.

⁷ Officially, the ISAF was limited to Kabul under the terms of the UN mandate that authorized the operation, but that mandate explicitly reflects the terms of Annex I of the Bonn Agreement. See United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386 (2001), December 20, 2001.

approach created a large security gap throughout most of the country, since international forces provided population security only in and around Kabul. This meant that regional warlords could operate with impunity throughout most of the country, which strengthened their positions even further. Violent clashes often erupted between the militias of warlords who were competing to expand their areas of influence.⁸

The Afghan National Army

During this time, U.S. military forces continued to search for Taliban members throughout the country, particularly in the south.⁹ Since most of the AMF came from the northern parts of the country, they were not particularly helpful for this mission. U.S. forces started relying on smaller militias, mostly drawn from the ranks of the AMF, which they referred to as the Afghan Security Forces (ASF). Members of the ASF were entirely independent from the national government, and they were trained, deployed, and even paid by the United States. This arrangement was workable as long as the ASF remained small, although it was far from ideal since these forces were ethnically based and operated independent of the nascent Afghan government. Over time, it became increasingly clear that this was not a long-term solution because it could undermine the U.S. objective of strengthening the central government. Consequently, developing a new, nationally based Afghan National Army (ANA) became a more urgent priority.¹⁰

Initial plans for the ANA, developed in early 2002, called for an end strength of 70,000 troops and for the ANA to be able to operate within one year. The first 600 ANA troops were to be trained by mid-March, and 29,000 troops would be operational by June, when

⁸ Vaishnav, pp. 249–250.

⁹ Most Al Qaeda operatives fled Afghanistan after the battle at Tora Bora in December 2001, and al Qaeda no longer posed a major internal security threat to Afghanistan after that time.

¹⁰ Antonio Giustozzi, “Auxiliary Force or National Army? Afghanistan’s ‘ANA’ and the Counter-Insurgency Effort, 2002–2006,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 18, No. 1, March 2007, p. 47.

a *loya jirga* would meet to appoint a transitional government.¹¹ The short-term goal set by U.S. officials was lower but still ambitious: training 12,000 ANA personnel by April 2003 on the way to a total end strength of 62,000 personnel. However, it soon became clear after a few months that this target was too ambitious and would not be met. The revised U.S. goal was to train 9,000 ANA personnel by November 2003—which cut the training throughput approximately in half because fewer soldiers would be trained over a longer period of time.¹² ANA units were deliberately designed to include recruits from all parts of the country, so that they would be ethnically balanced and could become a truly national force rather than one in which specific units had loyalties to particular ethnic or tribal groups.¹³

In April 2002, the Group of Eight (G8) held a security donors' conference in Geneva at which participants agreed on a security sector reform (SSR) program for Afghanistan. Security reform efforts were divided into five distinct pillars, each of which would be overseen by a lead nation. According to the agreement, the United States would lead military reform efforts; Germany would lead police reform efforts; Italy would lead reform of the justice sector; the United Kingdom would lead efforts to combat drugs; and Japan would lead the process of disarmament, demilitarization, and reintegration (DDR).¹⁴ Each lead nation was supposed to manage and support reform efforts in its

¹¹ Ron Synovitz, "Afghanistan: Effort to Build National Security Force Off to a Slow Start," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, February 27, 2002.

¹² Giustozzi, "Auxiliary Force or National Army?" p. 48; Anthony H. Cordesman, Adam Mausner, and David Kasten, *Winning in Afghanistan: Creating Effective Afghan Security Forces*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, May 2009, p. 62.

¹³ It has proved quite difficult over time to assess the effect of mixed-ethnicity units on the ANA. Although there is a lot of anecdotal evidence, Cordesman et al. note that, "There are no unclassified data available on departures from the force due to ethnically related reasons, the impact on effectiveness of ethnic and tribal factors, or problems with loyalty and effectiveness created by such divisions. These issues deserve a great deal of additional reporting and oversight, since they directly affect the future loyalties and capabilities of ANA soldiers." See p. 75.

¹⁴ U.S. Government Accountability Office, "Afghanistan Security: Efforts to Establish Army and Police Have Made Progress, but Future Plans Need to Be Better Defined," Report to the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, GAO-05-575, June

area, with contributions from other countries as well. This model was designed to ensure that at least one country was in charge of each effort while still dividing the burden among many donors. The plan was later criticized for failing to match resources and expertise with the appropriate tasks and for hindering cooperation among the pillars.¹⁵

ANA training officially commenced in May 2002, with the United States as the lead nation for military reform and with other countries providing smaller or specialized training initiatives.¹⁶ The U.S. training was led by the 1st Battalion of the 3rd Special Forces Group, which focused primarily on battalion-level training.¹⁷ Battalions received basic training lasting ten weeks. It was initially estimated that the additional training necessary to create fully capable units would last six months, but no such follow-on training was established. The first efforts to train Afghan trainers began shortly after the official training began, so that there would be an eventual transition from coalition to indigenous trainers.¹⁸

2005, p. 5; Mark Sedra, "Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan: The Slide Towards Expediency," *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 13, No. 1, March 2006, p. 96.

¹⁵ Robert Perito, *Afghanistan's Police: The Weak Link in Security Sector Reform*, United States Institute of Peace Special Report 227, August 2009, p. 2.

¹⁶ For example, France trained three infantry battalions between 2002 and 2003 and then shifted to a program of officer training that reached 5,000 ANA officers. Other examples from 2002 to 2009 include a combined U.S. and French effort to train Afghan special forces commando battalions; British training for ANA noncommissioned officers (NCOs); Spanish facilities construction and training and equipping an ANA company; and Turkish training and equipping an ANA infantry battalion and teaching a 14-week artillery course. See French Ministry of Defense, "French Forces in Afghanistan"; French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Spanish Contribution to the Stabilisation and Reconstruction of Afghanistan," International Conference in Support of Afghanistan, Paris, June 12, 2008; and French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Turkish Contributions to Security and Development in Afghanistan," June 2008.

¹⁷ This was consistent with the usual Special Forces approach of training and advising indigenous forces, although in Afghanistan more emphasis than usual was placed on formalizing processes and establishing funding authorities. Author interview with U.S. military officer involved in early ANA training efforts, September 2009. See also Seth G. Jones, *In the Graveyard of Empires*, New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2009, p. 176.

¹⁸ Giustozzi, "Auxiliary Force or National Army?" p. 48.

Initial training efforts suffered from serious problems in procuring the necessary equipment for ANA units to use, both during training and once they were fielded. As the lead nation for the ANA, the United States decided at the outset that the ANA should be mostly equipped with salvaged and donated Soviet equipment, since Soviet equipment had been widely used by the pre-Taliban Afghan military and by Afghan militias, and several countries from the former eastern bloc were willing to provide Afghanistan with some equipment. However, most of the donated and salvaged equipment turned out to be worn out, broken, or not interoperable with other equipment.¹⁹ As a result, trainers at the ten-week course had difficulty obtaining weapons for soldiers to train with, and most of the weapons they did have were obtained through raids on Afghan villages that were hoarding Taliban weapons. Privates often simulated training rather than using actual equipment, yelling out “Bang!” instead of firing weapons.²⁰

The United States faced bureaucratic challenges providing equipment to the ANA as well. Initial U.S. training and equipping efforts were run through the Office of Military Cooperation–Afghanistan (OMC-A), which was part of the U.S. embassy in Kabul, not the Department of Defense. At the time, the only mechanisms in place to provide funding and equipment to Afghanistan on a large scale were the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and Foreign Military Financing (FMF) programs.²¹ However, these programs were designed for peacetime environments; their process for selling equipment and providing training is complex and requires much cooperation between the Departments of State and Defense. Because these programs were not designed to surge for immediate wartime requirements, there were

¹⁹ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 16.

²⁰ Mitch Frank, “Afghan Boot Camp,” *Time*, August 18, 2002.

²¹ Author interview with U.S. military officer involved in early ANA training efforts, September 2009.

lengthy delays in providing equipment and other forms of support for the ANA.²²

Despite the fact that training and equipping efforts were under way, questions about the ultimate size and shape of the ANA remained unanswered during the first year after the fall of the Taliban. In December 2002, the Afghan government and donor nations met outside Bonn and concluded an agreement that became known as Bonn II. The parties at the conference officially agreed that the ANA should be ethnically balanced, that it should rely on volunteers rather than conscripts, and that it would consist of no more than 70,000 personnel, including all civilian and Ministry of Defense (MOD) personnel. However, they did not specify a time by which the ANA should be complete. After this agreement, U.S. military planners worked with Afghan officials to develop a more detailed force structure for the ANA. Their plans called for

- 43,000 ground combat troops, to be based in Kabul and four other cities
- 21,000 support staff, organized into commands for recruiting, education and training, acquisition and logistics, and communications and intelligence
- 3,000 personnel for the MOD and general staff
- 3,000 air staff, whose purpose would be to provide secure transportation for the president.²³

However, progress toward these long-term goals was complicated by continuing challenges with recruiting and retention. In 2003, fewer than 10,000 recruits entered the ANA,²⁴ and retention problems fur-

²² For an overview of how the FMS and FMF programs work, see Gordon Adams and Cindy Williams, *Buying National Security: How America Plans and Pays for Its Global Role and Safety at Home*, New York: Routledge, 2010, pp. 79–82.

²³ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 6.

²⁴ According to U.S. government data, the ANA recruited 9,671 personnel in 2003. U.S. Department of Defense, *United States Plan for Sustaining the Afghanistan National Security Forces*, Report to Congress in Accordance with the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act (Section 1231, Public Law 110-181), June 2008, p. 19.

ther limited the number of personnel who served in ANA units. For example, the attrition rate during training for an average battalion was approximately 15 percent during the summer of 2003. The yearly desertion rate for the ANA as a whole was 22 percent in 2003 and was largely motivated by concerns about low pay and problems with following military regulations.²⁵ One senior military official noted that most of the ANA recruits had previously been fighters of some sort, but that they had never been part of a formal military.²⁶

The first advisory effort started in late 2002, when a Special Forces team started training and advising the ANA Third Battalion, the first battalion to be deployed outside Kabul. These advisors started working with the ANA battalion as soon as it had completed its ten-week training course, to help overcome the problems that plagued the first two ANA battalions that had completed the training program.²⁷ Special Forces teams were planned to work with every subsequent ANA battalion as it came out of training.

A debate quickly ensued about whether this type of advising should remain a Special Forces mission or whether Army units should take on this responsibility. Then-Brigadier General Stanley McChrystal, who was chief of staff of Combined Joint Task Force 180, which oversaw all OEF efforts, reportedly opposed transferring this responsibility to the Army because he felt that advising indig-

²⁵ The yearly rate includes soldiers who returned after being absent without leave (AWOL) in addition to soldiers who deserted and did not come back. Giustozzi, “Auxiliary Force or National Army?” pp. 50–52.

²⁶ Furthermore, many of these recruits had never been to school, which meant that they were not even familiar with that type of structured environment. Obaid Younossi et al., *The Long March: Building an Afghan National Army*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-845-RDCC/OSD, 2009, p. 18.

²⁷ The first two battalions suffered from problems that included low pay and poor food and living conditions. According to an unnamed senior U.S. officer involved in the training program, “The first two battalions went downhill. They needed mentorship, comradeship, someone commending good behavior and stopping bad behavior.” Carlotta Gall, “Threats and Responses: Rebuilding Afghanistan; In a Remote Corner, an Afghan Army Evolves from Fantasy to Slightly Ragged Reality,” *New York Times*, January 25, 2003.

enous forces was a key mission of Special Forces and should remain so.²⁸ As the ANA was becoming more formalized, however, it was decided that ANA training should be conducted by regular Army forces rather than Special Forces.

The 10th Mountain Division, which was preparing to deploy to Afghanistan during the summer of 2003, was assigned to take on this mission and to develop a plan for advising Afghan forces through embedded training teams (ETTs). Basic training would be provided at the Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC), and ETTs would then join their kandaks (battalions) and brigades to prepare them to conduct operations. ETTs would be scheduled to remain with their assigned ANA units for two years after they completed the initial training course.²⁹ Each ETT would include 16 U.S. officers and non-commissioned officers.³⁰ ETTs reported to Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix, a joint task force that was established in May 2003. Task Force Phoenix took responsibility for educating and training all new ANA recruits, while OMC-A continued to have responsibility for all other aspects of ANA development.³¹ Task Force Phoenix also established a training program to help ANA units overcome the challenges related to ANA reliance on equipment donations from many different countries, particularly Soviet equipment from countries of the former Eastern bloc.³² Task Force Phoenix established mobile training teams (MTTs) that specialized in different types of Soviet equipment and provided training on those systems. The MTTs were staffed by military

²⁸ Author interview with U.S. military officer involved in early ANA training efforts, September 2009.

²⁹ It was later decided that the ETTs would remain until the unit was assessed to be capable of operating on its own, which might be more than two years. Giustozzi, "Auxiliary Force or National Army?" p. 56.

³⁰ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 13.

³¹ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 6; Younoussi et al., p. 30.

³² Relying on equipment donations from multiple countries posed maintenance problems as well as training problems, since many of these systems were not interoperable and required dedicated sources of spare parts.

personnel from several different countries and provided their training at kandak training sites.³³

In September 2003, the Afghan Interim Government (AIG) and the United States decided that the all elements of the ANA should be rebuilt from scratch—from the MOD all the way down to fighting units—rather than continuing to be based on existing structures. The advantage of this decision was that it would strengthen the ability of the MOD to enact needed reforms and make it less vulnerable to corruptions and internal power struggles.³⁴ Then–Major General Karl Eikenberry, who was coordinating security sector reform efforts in Afghanistan at the time, thought that this approach was necessary because, in his words, “There was an existing ministry and a General Staff that had been taken over by members of the Northern Alliance in 2002, but it was dysfunctional and not inclusive of all ethnic groups.” He worked closely with Afghan authorities to nominate candidates for the top leadership positions in the MOD, because he “wanted to create sustainable institutions that were well-vetted with and trusted by the Afghans.”³⁵ The disadvantage of starting from scratch, however, was that this decision came more than a year and a half after the fall of the Taliban and the beginning of ANA training, so it delayed the institutional development of the ANA even further.

The Afghan National Police

At the beginning of 2002, an estimated 50,000 to 70,000 people were serving as police. Some of them were professional police who had been trained before Afghanistan’s civil war, but most were not trained. They lacked equipment, and between 70 and 90 percent were illiterate. Many were former fighters who were loyal to warlords and local leaders rather than to the new central government, and their previous ability to act with impunity was poor preparation to serve in a police

³³ Younoussi et al., p. 33.

³⁴ Younoussi et al., p. 13.

³⁵ Jones, *In the Graveyard of Empires*, pp. 176–177.

force.³⁶ In Kandahar, for example, Amnesty International reported in 2003 that only 120 of the 3,000 police officers in Kandahar had ever received formal training—which had taken place more than ten years previously—and that the force had accumulated a record of human rights abuses.³⁷

The Afghan Interim Authority (AIA), which was headed by Hamid Karzai,³⁸ understood that international assistance would be needed to transform the police into a professional and trained force. Germany had provided significant assistance to the Afghan police before World War II, and both East and West Germany provided such assistance during the Cold War as well. Because these earlier training efforts were seen as positive experiences, the AIA asked Germany to take primary responsibility for reforming the police force.³⁹

Germany therefore started organizing reform efforts for the Afghan police before it was officially designated as the lead nation in this area at the April 2002 G8 meeting in Geneva. In February 2002, Germany organized a meeting of 18 countries and 11 international organizations to discuss international support for the police, at which time Germany pledged €10 million for police reform for the rest of the year. At a subsequent meeting in March, the German government introduced a plan for police reform that included five priority areas: providing advice on the structure and organization of the police force, rehabilitating the Kabul Police Academy (KPA), reconstructing police buildings and institutions, providing equipment such as vehicles, and coordinating all donor activities related to the police.⁴⁰

³⁶ Bayley and Perito, p. 19; Tonita Murray, “Police-Building in Afghanistan: A Case Study of Civil Security Reform,” *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 14, No. 1, January 2007, pp. 109–110.

³⁷ Amnesty International, “Afghanistan Police Reconstruction Essential for the Protection of Human Rights,” March 2003.

³⁸ The Afghan Interim Authority was a six-month administration created in December 2001 to govern Afghanistan until the June 2002 *loya jirga* could select a transitional government.

³⁹ Murray, p. 110; Bayley and Perito, p. 20. See also unpublished manuscript by Olga Olikier, “Building Afghanistan’s Security Forces in Wartime: The Soviet Experience.”

⁴⁰ Mark Sedra, “Police Reform in Afghanistan: An Overview,” in Sedra, ed., in *Confronting Afghanistan’s Security Dilemma*, p. 33.

Germany did rebuild some police buildings and provide some advice on institutional reform, but the cornerstone of its efforts involved standing up the KPA.⁴¹ Germany's plan for police training was based on the European model of police academies. Officer cadets were required to have completed twelfth grade before entering the KPA, which provided a university-level education over three years, and NCO candidates were required to have completed ninth grade before entering the nine-month training program.⁴² When the academy reopened in August 2002, 1,500 officer cadets enrolled in the first class.⁴³ By starting with a focus on the academy, the Germans hoped that efforts to build professional leaders would trickle down and increase professionalism among the rank and file. According to the then-German Special Representative for Police Sector Reform, the German objective was "to start with the backbone; that's why we started with the leaders."⁴⁴

Unfortunately, this approach did not work in practice, for two reasons. First, most of the senior police positions had been rapidly filled by Northern Alliance members through patronage networks after the fall of the Taliban. Many of these officials lacked professionalism and were corrupt according to Western standards.⁴⁵ Most of the rank and file also consisted of Northern Alliance members who lacked even basic education, rarely had any police experience, and often brought a military mindset to their operations, which alienated the population and aggravated existing tensions.⁴⁶

⁴¹ This was consistent with Germany's earlier approaches to this issue: The Germans built a police academy in Kabul after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 as part of efforts to build a new police force. Murray, p. 109.

⁴² Andrew Wilder, *Cops or Robbers? The Struggle to Reform the Afghan National Police*, Kabul: Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, July 2007, p. 4; International Crisis Group (ICG), *Reforming Afghanistan's Police*, Asia Report Number 138, August 30, 2007, pp. 6–7.

⁴³ Bayley and Perito, p. 20.

⁴⁴ ICG, *Reforming Afghanistan's Police*, p. 7.

⁴⁵ Wilder, pp. 3–4.

⁴⁶ Sedra, "Police Reform in Afghanistan: An Overview," p. 33.

Second, focusing almost exclusively on the police academy meant that the vast majority of police personnel received no training at all. Early on, the AIA established a goal of establishing an ANP with 70,000 personnel, and that goal remained unchanged when the transitional government took power after the June 2002 *loya jirga*. But by January 2005, only 41 officers and 2,583 NCOs had completed the full KPA program.⁴⁷ The German emphasis on the KPA as the center of its reform efforts meant that it would take many, many years to graduate the number of officers and NCOs that were needed, and it would take even longer for the supposed trickling down of professionalism to regular patrolmen.⁴⁸ One author has critiqued the entire German approach by arguing that “there was no evidence of strategic thinking in choosing rehabilitation of the police academy, and training officer and non-commissioned ranks, while initially ignoring the mainly illiterate and conscripted soldiers [sic] who have more contact with ordinary Afghans.”⁴⁹

Furthermore, efforts to develop the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) were almost non-existent during this period. Only one German advisor was assigned to the MOI, despite the fact that the ministry lacked even the most basic systems needed to manage and oversee the police.⁵⁰ Amnesty International interviews also revealed that it was unclear who was responsible for the ANP within the MOI.⁵¹ The lack of efforts to reform, advise, and improve the capacity of the MOI posed significant constraints on the development of the ANP throughout the periods discussed below.

The United States played a limited role in developing the ANP in 2002, since it focused on the ANA and Germany had primary responsibility for the ANP. In 2003, however, the State Department contracted with DynCorp International to build and provide a program of

⁴⁷ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 21.

⁴⁸ Bayley and Perito, p. 20.

⁴⁹ Bayley and Perito, p. 20.

⁵⁰ Bayley and Perito, p. 19.

⁵¹ Amnesty International.

instruction at the Central Training Center (CTC) for police in Kabul, which was completed in May 2003, and to build and provide instruction at seven Regional Training centers (RTCs), which were completed in 2004.⁵² The program of instruction focused on basic police procedures and emphasized respect for human rights. Police recruits who had some education received eight weeks of training while illiterate recruits received four weeks. An in-service training course was also developed so that serving police could receive similar training.⁵³ However, the DynCorp contract was led by the United States unilaterally, without coordination with Germany. The fundamental differences between the German and U.S. approaches to police training illustrate the lack of unity of effort that characterized coalition efforts from the very outset of the police training mission.⁵⁴

Aside from the DynCorp contract, funding for the ANP reform effort remained limited. Germany invested approximately \$12 million a year in this effort during its tenure as the lead nation;⁵⁵ as discussed above, most of those funds were used to develop the KPA (now the Afghanistan Police Academy). In May 2002, the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA) was established by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) so that donors could fund police salaries. The UNDP initially asked for \$65 million to be donated to the fund, but by 2004, the fund contained only \$11.2 million. This severe shortfall meant that police went without pay for months at a time. This increased corruption and further damaged public confidence in the Afghan police.⁵⁶

⁵² U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 21.

⁵³ Murray, p. 112.

⁵⁴ As Murray writes, “two different approaches to police-building were developing. One [the German approach] cautious and rational, building on what already existed and extending outwards, and the other [the U.S. approach] bold and sweeping, attempting to tackle a number of pressing problems all at the same time. Both approaches had their merits and their flaws, but were philosophically conflicting and introduced a wedge into what was in any case a fragile partnership.” See Murray, p. 113.

⁵⁵ Scott Chilton, Eckart Schiewek, and Tim Bremmers, *Evaluation of the Appropriate Size of the Afghan National Police Force Manning List (Tashkil)*, Kabul, July 15, 2009, section 3.4.

⁵⁶ Bayley and Perito, p. 22.

Rapid Buildup, 2004–2005

Starting in 2004, the Taliban started returning to Afghanistan from their sanctuaries in Pakistan. Their growing influence was facilitated by the absence of a central government presence outside Kabul, especially in the border regions.⁵⁷ This meant that the prospective security requirements for Afghanistan's presidential elections in October 2004 and parliamentary elections in September 2005 were increasing—creating pressure to build and field ANSF units more quickly than originally planned. ANA training expanded rapidly so that multiple units could be trained simultaneously, and the United States became increasingly involved in ANP training for individual patrolmen and new recruits. The U.S. effort was led by conventional U.S. forces (and contractors, in the case of the ANP), although Special Forces continued to conduct counterterrorism missions throughout the country.

The Afghan National Army

Efforts to train the ANA expanded considerably in 2004. Once the basic force structure of the ANA had been decided, the focus turned to increasing the output of trained soldiers so that the ANA would be able to address growing security threats, including the possibility of violence around the time of the country's first presidential elections in October 2004.⁵⁸

The pace of training grew rapidly. In January 2004, training capacity was increased so that three kandaks could be trained simultaneously at KMTC instead of two. By May 2004, four kandaks could be trained simultaneously, and by January 2005, that number had increased to five.⁵⁹ By 2005, new ANA recruits received 14 weeks of training: six weeks of basic training and six weeks of advanced individ-

⁵⁷ Bayley and Perito note that the local populations in these areas did not resist the return of the Taliban and Al Qaeda because they were not committed to either the new central government or the U.S. coalition. See p. 27.

⁵⁸ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 13.

⁵⁹ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 13.

ual training, followed by two weeks of collective training.⁶⁰ The pace of fielding ANA forces also increased: The planned two-year rollout of four regional ANA commands was scrapped in favor of a plan to simultaneously establish these commands by September 2004, even though some would have as few as 150 troops each.⁶¹ Recruitment numbers remained relatively low, however, with 15,790 recruits joining the ANA in 2004 and 11,845 joining in 2005.⁶²

The push to grow the ANA quickly led to a greater emphasis on the role of ETTs in mentoring and advising new ANA units. However, there were not enough trainers to support the increased numbers of battalions at KMTC. Increasing the number of kandaks being trained simultaneously from four to five meant that the number of personnel required to staff the ETTs also increased, from 410 to almost 700. Since the military services could not provide enough personnel to fill these positions as quickly as needed, some officers already in Afghanistan were reassigned to serve as trainers, and ETTs were temporarily reduced in size from 16 to 12 personnel.⁶³ Lieutenant General David Barno, then the commander of all U.S. forces in Afghanistan, requested extra troops for the training mission to meet the increased demand. In February 2005, an additional 288 U.S. National Guard personnel were deployed to Afghanistan to serve in this role.⁶⁴ Although this nearly doubled the number of trainers, it still fell short of the goal of the estimated requirements of 700 personnel, and these National Guard personnel received only one week of training for this mission before deploying to Afghanistan.⁶⁵ To compensate for some of these shortfalls, starting in February 2005 ETTs were assigned to their units on the

⁶⁰ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 12.

⁶¹ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 13.

⁶² U.S. Department of Defense, *United States Plan for Sustaining the Afghanistan National Security Forces*, p. 19.

⁶³ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 17.

⁶⁴ “U.S. Doubles Number of Troops Inside Afghan Army; Purported Taliban Official Says Harsh Winter Curtailing Attacks,” Pakistani Defence Forum, February 20, 2005.

⁶⁵ “U.S. Doubles Number of Troops Inside Afghan Army.” While predeployment training for advisors has increased since then, limited training has consistently posed challenges for

first day of the Afghan units' training rather than upon their graduation, in the hopes that close relationships and mutual trust would develop before ANA troops were sent into the field.⁶⁶

Command and control challenges also limited the effectiveness of the ETTs. Before ETTs were established, military advisors reported to Task Force Phoenix, which was made up of National Guard units and personnel who worked for OMC-A to train the ANA. In May 2005, responsibility for ANA and ANP training passed from OMC-A to a new U.S. military command called the Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan.⁶⁷ Task Force Phoenix officially reported to CSTC-A after this time, but there was significant duplication and bureaucratic competition between the two organizations. Because Task Force Phoenix retained control over all ETTs, the ETTs were not always well integrated with other CSTC-A efforts. Moreover, battlespace commanders had no command authority over the ETTs working in their area, and coordination mechanisms were not clearly delineated.⁶⁸ Any coordination between the battlespace owners and the ETTs occurred on an ad hoc and informal basis, rather than through any formal process.

During this time, U.S. financial support for the ANA increased to support the greater training and equipping requirements associated with the acceleration.⁶⁹ U.S. funding for the ANA roughly doubled from 2003 to 2004, from \$362.7 million to \$723.7 million, and then

the advising effort. Author interviews with personnel at the 162nd Infantry Brigade, Fort Polk, Louisiana, November 2009.

⁶⁶ Mirtha Villarreal, "Embedded Training Teams Making History in Afghanistan," American Forces Press Service, March 21, 2005.

⁶⁷ As discussed in the next section, OMC-A was briefly renamed the Office of Security Cooperation–Afghanistan (OSC-A) to accommodate the new police mission, before CSTC-A was established in May 2005. Wilder, p. 20; ICG, p. 7.

⁶⁸ Cordesman et al., p. 81.

⁶⁹ Other countries did contribute funds and equipment to support the ANA, but by March 2005 their cumulative contributions totaled \$193 million. U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 10.

more than doubled again in 2005, to \$1.736 billion.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, ANA units continued to suffer from serious equipment shortages during this period—including shortages in weapons, ammunition, vehicles, uniforms and boots, and communications equipment—and U.S. ETT personnel stated that ANA effectiveness and discipline were declining as a result. OMC-A had great difficulty procuring equipment for the ANA for a number of reasons, including the changes in force structure and training approaches that occurred in 2004; lack of historical data on usage rates; constant turnover of OMC-A personnel, who served tours as short as four months; and too few OMC-A personnel trained on security assistance procedures. OMC-A did try to address the equipment shortages by procuring items directly from non-U.S. vendors, but because OMC-A did not set standards of sufficiently high quality, some of these items proved to be faulty.⁷¹

The push to rapidly increase the number of trained ANA soldiers meant that resources were focused on the combat portions of the force, often at the expense of supporting commands. By April 2005, the commands responsible for recruiting, education and training, acquisitions and logistics, and communications and intelligence were only staffed at 10 percent of their authorized levels. This hindered the ability of the newly trained combat forces to operate without external assistance in the short term, and further set back the institutional development of the supporting commands that would enable the combat forces to eventually operate on their own.⁷²

The Afghan National Police

U.S. interest in the ANP started to grow in 2004, since the ANP were to be part of the efforts to secure the October presidential elections. The United States continued to fund the DynCorp contract mentioned

⁷⁰ U.S. Government Accountability Office, “Afghanistan Security: Further Congressional Action May Be Needed to Ensure Completion of a Detailed Plan to Develop and Sustain Capable Afghan National Security Forces,” Report to Congressional Committees, GAO-08-661, June 2008, p. 11.

⁷¹ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, pp. 14–15.

⁷² Sedra, “Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan,” pp. 96–97.

above but generally assumed that ANP development was progressing. As an unnamed European official noted:

Germany was very vocal about its lead role so others did not think they had to worry about funding. The Germans were very quick to deploy, which also led others to think they did not have to worry about the sector.⁷³

As U.S. officials became more familiar with the German approach to developing the ANP, however, they realized that no one was providing basic training for existing patrolmen or new recruits, since the KPA program focused solely on officers and NCOs.⁷⁴ The DynCorp training that started in 2003 was a partial solution to this problem, but it did not include any follow-on training, mentoring, or evaluation, which hampered its overall effect. In early 2005, the first 16 police trainers were sent into the field to work directly with ANP units, provide additional instruction, and help evaluate police performance.⁷⁵ The State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) did examine the possibility of expanding this program throughout Afghanistan but assessed that a nationwide police training and mentoring program would be hindered by high costs, security threats to the police trainers, and the challenges of recruiting enough international police to serve as trainers.⁷⁶

Advisory efforts in the field started around the same time as advisory efforts began in the Ministry of the Interior. At the end of 2004, INL assigned 30 advisors from DynCorp to serve within the MOI. They developed a comprehensive reform package that would start to

⁷³ Wilder, p. 25.

⁷⁴ Wilder, p. 21; U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 19.

⁷⁵ The GAO notes that having international police train local police in the field was one of the critical factors leading to the establishment of professional police forces in Bosnia, Kosovo, and East Timor. U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 24.

⁷⁶ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, pp. 24–25.

address the problems of rampant corruption, pay and rank disparities, and lack of professionalism that plagued the ministry.⁷⁷

During 2004 and early 2005, the ANP also continued to face serious shortages of equipment that further limited its capabilities. An initial German assessment in 2002 found that the ANP had less than 10 percent of the equipment that it needed, so it had started from a very low baseline. Although that figure had increased, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported in early 2005 that the ANP still needed 48,500 side arms, 10,000 automatic rifles, and 6,250 machine guns, as well as 7,400 additional vehicles. Furthermore, fire-arms training was not part of the ANP program because international donors, including the United States, had not provided the necessary weapons and ammunition.⁷⁸

These equipment shortages were caused in part by the limited funding provided for the ANP. From 2002 through the end of 2004, about \$500 million was provided for the ANP, with about half coming from the United States and the rest from other donors—compared to a total of approximately \$1.3 billion for the ANA during the same period. U.S. funding for the ANP grew significantly to \$837.9 million in 2005, but that was still less than half of the \$1.73 billion provided to the ANA in that year.⁷⁹

In April 2005, U.S. government responsibility for developing the ANP was transferred from the State Department and INL to the Department of Defense and OMC-A. As noted above, when CSTC-A was established in mid-2005, it took responsibility for both the ANA and ANP training missions.⁸⁰ Even though CSTC-A managed and implemented the overall ANP reform program, the U.S. ambassador retained responsibility for providing policy guidance, and INL still

⁷⁷ This reform package launched some of the initiatives that are discussed in the next section. U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, pp. 25–26.

⁷⁸ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 23.

⁷⁹ International contributions did not increase significantly in 2005. See U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 10, and U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 11.

⁸⁰ Wilder, p. 20; International Crisis Group, p. 7.

retained contract management authority for police training, mentoring, and advising the MOI.⁸¹ This separation of responsibility for training from policy and contract oversight created bureaucratic problems.

Putting CSTC-A in charge of implementing police reform led to an increase in the number of people and the amount of money dedicated to the police mission. Furthermore, the fact that one organization trained both the ANA and ANP meant that more coordination existed between these training efforts than existed between or among any of the other pillars of security sector reform effort.⁸² Yet this increase in resources did not resolve any of the bureaucratic issues noted above. It did, however, serve as a catalyst for reform efforts within the MOI. In coordination with German and U.S. officials, the MOI adopted several important organizational and structural reforms, including reducing the number of police officers from 15,000 to 6,000, increasing the number of sergeants and constables, and establishing five regional police commands to oversee several provincial police commands.⁸³

In November 2005, the Afghan government officially authorized the ANP to include 62,000 personnel. The Germans had proposed this number because they believed it struck the right balance between Afghanistan's security needs and its ability to financially sustain the ANP over the long term. The number was endorsed in the Afghanistan Compact, which was adopted by Afghanistan and its major international donors at a conference in London from January 31 to February 1, 2006. The compact stated that by the end of 2010, "a fully constituted, professional, functional and ethnically balanced Afghan National Police and Afghan Border Police with a combined force of up to 62,000 will be able to meet the security needs of the country effectively and will be increasingly fiscally sustainable."⁸⁴

⁸¹ Wilder, p. 20.

⁸² Wilder, p. 51. As noted above, the April 2002 G8 meeting divided SSR efforts into five main pillars: military reform, police reform, judicial reform, counternarcotics, and DDR.

⁸³ Murray, p. 113.

⁸⁴ Wilder, p. 7.

Worsening Security, 2005–2007

When the Taliban started returning to villages and towns in Afghanistan in 2004, they encountered no organized military or police opposition. ISAF forces remained limited to Kabul, U.S. military forces remained focused on directed counterterrorism missions rather than population security, and the nascent Afghan forces had little capability to deploy and conduct operations throughout the country. By 2006, the Taliban was well entrenched in numerous parts of the country, particularly in the south.

U.S. and international officials knew about the Taliban's return, but did not understand the depth of the Taliban entrenchment until ISAF expanded beyond northern Afghanistan. ISAF took responsibility for the western region in 2005, for the south in July 2006, and for the east in October 2006.⁸⁵ ISAF forces encountered much more resistance than expected when they moved into these areas, and casualty rates increased as a result. In 2004, 60 U.S. and coalition military service members were killed in action (KIA); that number rose to 131 in 2005, to 191 in 2006, and to 232 in 2007—an almost four-fold increase in just four years.⁸⁶ ANA fatalities increased as well, from 30 KIA between July 2003 and mid-March 2005 (averaging 1.4 per month), to 128 KIA between mid-March 2005 and mid-March 2006 (averaging 10.7 per month), to 50 KIA between mid-March and the end of July 2006 (averaging 12.5 a month).

However, the worsening security situation did not lead to a strategic reassessment of the ANSF's fundamental missions and purpose. Pressure mounted to rapidly increase the size and military capabili-

⁸⁵ See ISAF Placemat, January 2009. ISAF was divided into five regional commands: Regional Command Capital, where command rotated among France, Italy, and Turkey; Regional Command East, commanded by the United States; Regional Command North, commanded by Germany; Regional Command South, where command rotated among Canada, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom; and Regional Command West, commanded by Italy. See the ISAF Placemat archives from 2007 to 2009.

⁸⁶ Coalition casualties also grew as a proportion of total casualties as ISAF expanded. In 2004, there were eight non-U.S. casualties, or 13.3 percent of the total; in 2005, that number rose to 32, or 24.4 percent; in 2006, it rose to 93, or 48.7 percent; and in 2007, it rose to 115, or 49.6 percent. Data from icasualties.org.

ties of the ANA and ANP, but those forces and institutions remained unchanged and continued to be built according to the designs that had been put in place during the period of relative security.

The Afghan National Army

In 2003, ANA training focused on preparing a relatively small number of well-trained forces. In 2004, ANA training focused on rapidly building up as many forces as possible, sacrificing quality for quantity. The next year, the training emphasis shifted back to a focus on quality, because the previous training pace was proving unsustainable. KMTC started training two kandaks per month instead of the previous five because the available funding was insufficient to maintain that rate and the quality of the ANA was suffering.⁸⁷

By early 2007, however, it had become clear that the reduced training pace was slowing progress toward the ANA end-strength goals. Moreover, by that time only half of the personnel serving in the ANA had been through the training program at all. During the summer of 2007, the 14-week program that had been in place since 2005 was replaced by a new ten-week program called Basic Warrior Training, which included one fewer week of basic training and three fewer weeks of advanced individual training. This change meant that KMTC would now be able to train a total of 24,000 recruits a year. A follow-on program called Advanced Warrior Training was also created, which lasted from six to eight weeks and varied depending on the type of kandak that a soldier was being assigned to. The soldiers attending this advanced program received more total training than they would have under the previous program, but its capacity was limited to 8,000 soldiers a year. Thus, approximately two-thirds of ANA recruits were now receiving less training than they would have under the previous approach.⁸⁸

Recruiting and retention problems also constrained the ANA's progress toward its end-strength goals. Recruiting numbers did increase over time, from 11,845 recruits in 2005 to 21,287 in 2006,

⁸⁷ Younossi et al., p. 29.

⁸⁸ Younossi et al., pp. 31–32.

further increasing to 32,135 for the 15-month period from January 2007 through March 2008.⁸⁹ Yet there were signs that quality was again being sacrificed for quantity. For example, the proportion of illiterate recruits rose significantly, from a baseline of 60 percent to 71 percent by early 2005 and to 80 percent by December 2005. Such high illiteracy rates made the training effort even more challenging. And, as may have been the case all along, many new recruits signed up for the ANA because of financial considerations rather than a commitment to serve the country in combat. One soldier explained that he became interested in serving in the ANA because it provided “good uniforms, boots, and socks.”⁹⁰

Reenlistment started to become an issue in the spring of 2005, when the first soldiers who had signed up for the ANA reached the end of their three-year commitment. Initial reenlistment rates were approximately 35 percent, much lower than the 50 percent that was expected.⁹¹ Between March 2006 and February 2008, the average reenlistment rate for ANA combat personnel was 53 percent overall but varied considerably across units—from a high of 71 percent for the 201st Corps to a low of 17 percent for the 207th Corps.⁹² Although these reenlistment rates met initial expectations, they meant that the ANA consistently lost half of its most-experienced personnel—some of whom had considerable combat experience—to be replaced by recruits who had as little as ten weeks of training.

Desertions and personnel going AWOL further exacerbated this problem. Desertions became a problem for units serving in combat areas as early as 2003 and grew worse over time.⁹³ Between September

⁸⁹ U.S. Department of Defense, *United States Plan for Sustaining the Afghanistan National Security Forces*, p. 19.

⁹⁰ Giustozzi, “Auxiliary Force or National Army?” p. 58.

⁹¹ Giustozzi, “Auxiliary Force or National Army?” p. 53.

⁹² U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 24.

⁹³ What causes soldiers to be AWOL is a contentious issue. There are many theories, including poor transportation networks, the inability of a soldier to call back to a unit to let it know that he or she will be delayed, and others. However, there are no data or empirical studies to support any theories.

2004 and June 2005, for example, the 205th Corps in Kandahar lost between 1,200 and 1,500 personnel to desertions out of a total of 2,400 personnel.⁹⁴ AWOL rates were high throughout the ANA, regardless of where units were serving. Between October 2006 and October 2007, official AWOL rates for the ANA as a whole averaged between 12 and 13 percent,⁹⁵ although anecdotal evidence suggests that the rates for individual units could have been much higher.⁹⁶ Interestingly, AWOL personnel posed greater operational problems than deserters did, because units could replace deserters and regain full strength. But they could not replace personnel who were designated as AWOL, which left the units permanently understaffed. During this period, ETTs continued to be embedded with ANA units that had completed training and started conducting operations. In 2006, ISAF established its equivalent of the U.S. ETTs, which were called operational mentoring and liaison teams. The United Kingdom deployed the first OMLT to Helmand province in May 2006, and other countries gradually deployed their own OMLTs.⁹⁷ OMLTs vary in composition, generally ranging from 13 to 30 officers and NCOs, although some OMLTs are larger: French OMLTs, for example, have included as many as 50 personnel. OMLTs are often assigned for a six-month period, and some observers believe that these short deployments make OMLTs less effective than the ETTs, which are assigned to work with their units for a full year.⁹⁸ Some OMLTs have also been limited by national caveats that prevent them from conducting combat operations, which means that certain training and mentoring missions cannot be fulfilled.⁹⁹ ANA senior leaders interviewed by RAND expressed a preference for working with

⁹⁴ Giustozzi, "Auxiliary Force or National Army?" p. 54.

⁹⁵ Younossi et al., pp. 16, 19.

⁹⁶ Giustozzi, "Auxiliary Force or National Army?" p. 53.

⁹⁷ Younossi et al., p. 36.

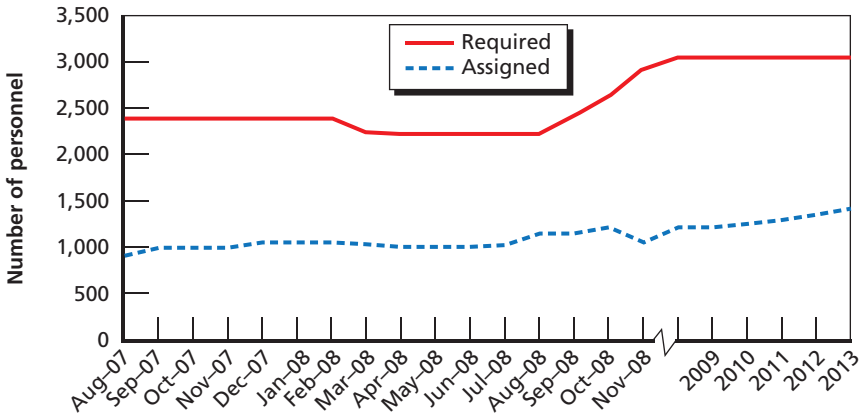
⁹⁸ NATO Public Diplomacy Division, "Fact Sheet: Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) Programme—December 2009"; Daniel Korski and Michael Williams, "Creating a NATO Military Advisory Force," *World Defence Systems*, No. 17, November 2008, pp. 148–151.

⁹⁹ Author interview with former CSTC-A official, May 2009.

the U.S. ETTs instead of the NATO OMLTs, because, as discussed in Chapter Three, the ETTs conducted combat operations with them and many of the NATO OMLTs had national caveats that prevented them from being able to do so.¹⁰⁰

As shown in Figures 2.1 and 2.2, both the ETTs and the OMLTs suffered from a serious shortage of trainers. From August to December 2007, for example, CSTC-A determined that 2,400 ETT personnel were needed, but only 1,000 were actually assigned. During the same period, 70 OMLTs were required but only 20 were fielded.¹⁰¹ These numbers meant that many ANA units were fielded without the mentors and advisors who were supposed to build on the short training

Figure 2.1
U.S. ETT Personnel Required and Assigned, 2007–2013



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 38.

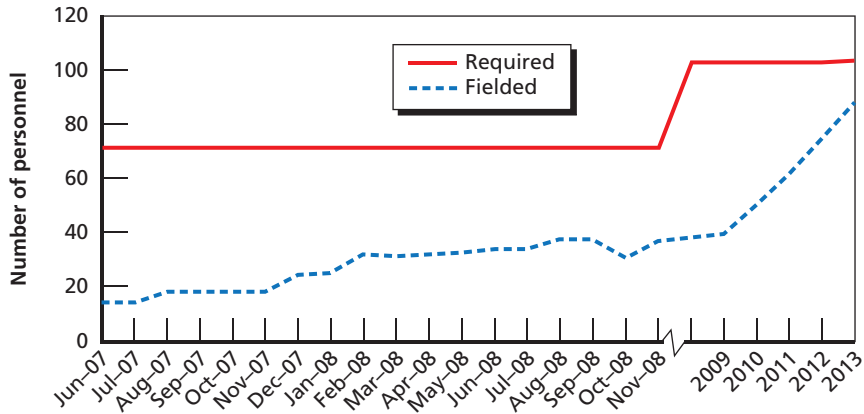
NOTE: Data after November 2008 are ISAF projections.

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¹⁰⁰ Author interviews with ANA personnel, July, September, and December 2009.

¹⁰¹ All numbers are approximate. U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, January 2009, pp. 38, 39.

Figure 2.2
ISAF OMLTs Required and Assigned, 2007–2013



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 39.

NOTE: Data after November 2008 are ISAF projections.

RAND MG1066-2.2

period at KMTC with two years of close collaboration.¹⁰² Furthermore, CSTC-A estimated that the shortfall in ETT personnel and OMLTs would persist throughout 2013; in the case of the ETTs, the significant gap between requirements and assignments would not change throughout that entire period.

Equipping problems further constrained the capabilities of fielded ANA units. After a visit to Afghanistan in June 2006, retired General Barry McCaffrey concluded that the ANA was “miserably under-resourced” and described serious problems with ANA equipment and maintenance. By August 2007, the ANA was equipped with only 53 percent of the items that CSTC-A deemed critical.¹⁰³ These equipment shortages clearly delayed the development of capable ANA forces,

¹⁰²Cordesman et al. argue that the U.S. shortages resulted from high demands in Iraq: “[T]he shortfall in trainers has been one of the most critical areas where the priorities of the Iraq War have previously overruled those of Afghanistan. Most of the qualified U.S. trainers have gone to Iraq, leaving the ANA with a major shortfall of numbers of units with trainers.” See p. 81.

¹⁰³U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 27.

especially since they could not be deemed ready to conduct independent operations unless they possessed at least 85 percent of their critical equipment.¹⁰⁴ Between June 2006 and August 2007, no units were rated as ready to conduct independent operations, and most were rated as either needing significant assistance from coalition forces to operate or unable to conduct independent operations at all.¹⁰⁵

Taken together, all these problems indicated that the ANA lagged far behind the goals that the United States had established, and that they remained very far away from being able to secure Afghanistan alone, particularly since the threat was increasing. In October 2006, CSTC-A commander Major General Robert Durbin submitted a request for a significant increase in funds for the ANSF in order to start addressing these problems, and these funds were approved as part of the May 2007 supplemental appropriation.¹⁰⁶ As Figure 2.3 shows, the total funds spent on the ANA during fiscal year (FY) 2007 skyrocketed to \$4.88 billion—more than 2.5 times as much as had been spent from FY 2002 to FY 2006 combined.¹⁰⁷ During FY 2008, an additional \$1.7 billion was allocated to the ANA, including funds to continue some of the programs started with the FY 2007 funds.¹⁰⁸

More than half of the funds spent on the ANA in FY 2007 and FY 2008 were used to acquire new equipment and improve transportation.¹⁰⁹ Procuring new equipment for the ANA was one of

¹⁰⁴U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 30.

¹⁰⁵A rating of Capability Milestone 1 (CM1) indicates that the unit can conduct most operations on its own, though it might require specific international assistance depending on the situation. No units were rated CM1 before March 2008, and the majority of units at this time were rated either CM3 or CM4, the two lowest ratings. CM ratings are discussed in greater detail below. The ANA's CM ratings between June 2006 and December 2008 are available in U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 42.

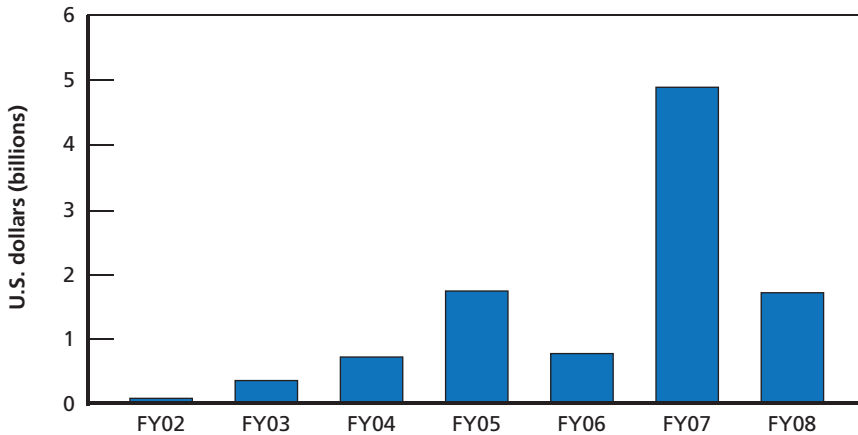
¹⁰⁶Author interview with former CSTC-A official, May 2009. We discuss increases in ANP funding in the next section.

¹⁰⁷U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 11.

¹⁰⁸Cordesman et al., p. 61.

¹⁰⁹Of the remaining funds, 21 percent was allocated to infrastructure improvements, 17 percent to sustainment, and 10 percent to training. Younossi et al., p. 25.

Figure 2.3
U.S. Funding for the ANA, Fiscal Years 2002–2008



SOURCES: U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 11; Cordesman, p. 61.

RAND MG1066-2.3

CSTC-A's highest priorities because it would help minimize the operational and maintenance problems resulting from relying on equipment donations.¹¹⁰ As noted earlier, the donated equipment was often old or obsolete, and it posed considerable training and maintenance issues because the ANA was fielding a wide variety of systems from many different countries. Procuring most equipment from the United States would reduce the amount of variation and improve the overall capability of the ANA. CSTC-A did continue to accept international donations, but in 2008 it received permission from the Afghan government to vet all donated equipment to ensure that it matched identified requirements and that adequate logistical support was available.¹¹¹

The additional funds did lead to some increased capabilities in 2007, even though procuring large amounts of equipment necessarily took time. By February 2008, the ANA had 60 percent of its critical

¹¹⁰Younossi et al., pp. 25 and 40–41.

¹¹¹U.S. Department of Defense, *United States Plan for Sustaining the Afghanistan National Security Forces*, p. 10.

equipment on hand, up from 53 percent the previous August. Yet for 21 of the 55 critical items (38 percent), less than 50 percent of the required equipment was on hand, suggesting that considerable improvements were still necessary.¹¹²

The Afghan National Police

By 2006, the worsening security situation underscored the need to improve the ANP. As Ambassador Helmut Frick, German Special Ambassador for Police Reform, noted, “Before the insurgency there was very little serious interest in the police. We periodically tried to brief EU and NATO ambassadors but there was no interest. Now, since May [2006], there is a lot of interest.”¹¹³

Although the Afghanistan Compact had clearly set the end-strength goal for the ANP at 62,000, the growing insurgency in southern Afghanistan during the first half of 2006 led President Hamid Karzai to authorize a temporary increase in ANP personnel starting in May. An additional 2,100 personnel would be allowed to join the ANP to help address the insurgency, but all of the nations that agreed to the Afghanistan Compact agreed that the ANP force size would go back to 62,000 by the middle of 2011. By the end of 2006, however, the United States had decided that the ANP end strength should permanently increase to 82,000 and threatened to withhold financial support from the ANP if that number were not approved.¹¹⁴ Despite the objections of other international donors and many ensuing debates, the U.S. position prevailed. The ANP end strength officially increased to 82,000 in May 2007, although this increase was designated as temporary and subject to review every six months.¹¹⁵

The ANP training program evolved out of the initial DynCorp training program. By 2006, literate ANP recruits were supposed to

¹¹²U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, pp. 27–28.

¹¹³Wilder, p. 26.

¹¹⁴A CSTC-A information paper stated, “[I]f this force structure is not approved and documented in the 2007 *tashkil*, the effort to rebuild the ANP will be decremented by at least \$300 million in 2007 and significantly more than that in 2008.” Wilder, p. 8.

¹¹⁵Wilder, pp. 8–9.

attend a nine-week training program, while illiterate recruits attended a five-week literacy program before entering the nine-week program, and several follow-on courses were offered as well.¹¹⁶ But the reality was that few police actually received this training. Many of the 60,000 ANP personnel who were designated as having officially completed their training by June 2006 had only attended the three-week course developed for officers already in service, despite the fact that their backgrounds, experiences, and suitability for police work varied considerably.¹¹⁷ Furthermore, no mechanisms existed to track the personnel who had received training, so it was impossible to determine how many trained personnel remained in service or how they performed compared to those who had not been trained or those who received a different training package.¹¹⁸ It was also difficult to compare ANP progress with police training in other countries undergoing security sector reform, which generally lasts a year or more and goes beyond basic training to include field training, specialized training, and supervisory training.¹¹⁹ Police mentoring efforts increased during this time. Initially, U.S. ETTs were simply assigned to work with ANP units instead of ANA units. This soon evolved into the designation of separate Police Mentoring Teams. PMTs included mostly military personnel, because no other organizations in the country had sufficient numbers of personnel to fulfill this mission. Yet even then, there were not enough people to fill requirements: PMTs were assigned to fewer than 25 percent of all ANP units and organizations.¹²⁰ Figure 2.4 shows the significant difference between CSTC-A's requirement for

¹¹⁶Low literacy rates have posed a continuing challenge for the ANP. An assessment from November 2006 estimated that less than 30 percent of ANP recruits could read and write, and that the numbers were even lower in specific areas of the country. Not only did these low literacy rates make training more complicated but, as Wilder notes, "it is also not realistic to expect a largely illiterate police force to effectively enforce and promote the rule of law." Wilder, p. 30.

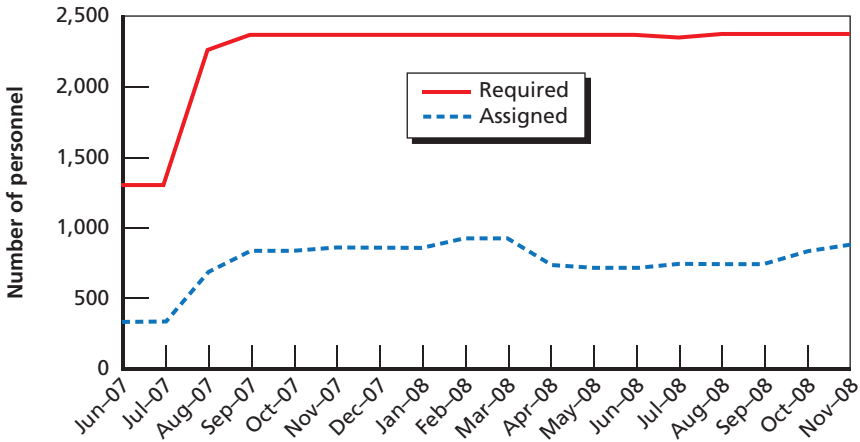
¹¹⁷Wilder, pp. 29–30.

¹¹⁸Wilder, p. 31.

¹¹⁹Email communication with former United Nations police adviser to the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations Mark Kroeker, winter and spring 2010.

¹²⁰U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 44.

Figure 2.4
U.S. Personnel Required and Assigned to PMTs, June 2007–November 2008



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 44.

RAND MG1066-2.4

PMT personnel and the actual number of personnel assigned between June 2007 and November 2008.

In September 2007, the Canadians took some of the personnel serving in its OMLT and turned them into a mentoring team for the police. This became known as a police operational mentoring and liaison team (POMLT), and other countries soon created their own POMLTs.¹²¹ Yet PMT and POMLT staffing still remained low, and in July 2008 the CSTC-A commander stated that he needed 2,300 additional police trainers to meet his requirements¹²²—a gap that was almost as large as the entire requirement for U.S. ETT personnel.¹²³ The lack of embedded police trainers made it difficult for U.S. and coalition forces to verify information provided by ANP units on such

¹²¹Canadian Ministry of National Defense, “Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams,” January 5, 2010.

¹²²Cordesman et al., p. 122.

¹²³As noted above, the United States never came close to providing all of the required ETT personnel.

important issues as the number of Afghan police on duty.¹²⁴ Challenges were further exacerbated by the lack of police equipment among PMT personnel.

ANP equipping problems paralleled those of the ANA. Like the ANA, most ANP units had less than half of their authorized equipment by June 2006. Moreover, 95 percent of the police equipment that had been donated was considered nonstandard, which caused great problems for training, maintenance, and supply of spare parts. Much of it was also of low quality. Since the MOI lacked effective internal systems for accountability, misuse and theft of police equipment became a considerable problem and reduced ANP capabilities even further.¹²⁵ To address these problems, General Durbin's October 2006 request and the U.S. FY 2007 supplemental budget greatly increased the funding for the ANP as well. Although the ANP budget did not grow quite as much as the ANA budget, Figure 2.5 shows that U.S. funds provided for the ANP in FY 2007, which totaled \$2.7 billion, were still more than the U.S. funds from FY 2002 to FY 2006 combined.¹²⁶

Between 2005 and 2007, three main initiatives were adopted to improve policing capabilities in Afghanistan. First, pay and rank reforms were adopted throughout the ANP.¹²⁷ In 2005, an average ANP patrolman earned the equivalent of \$25 per month, which was considerably lower than the cost of living in most parts of Afghanistan.¹²⁸ Pay reforms made ANP salaries more comparable with those of the ANA, in order to improve recruiting and retention and reduce the incentives for corruption.¹²⁹ Rank reforms addressed the top-heavy

¹²⁴U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 36.

¹²⁵Wilder, pp. 36–37.

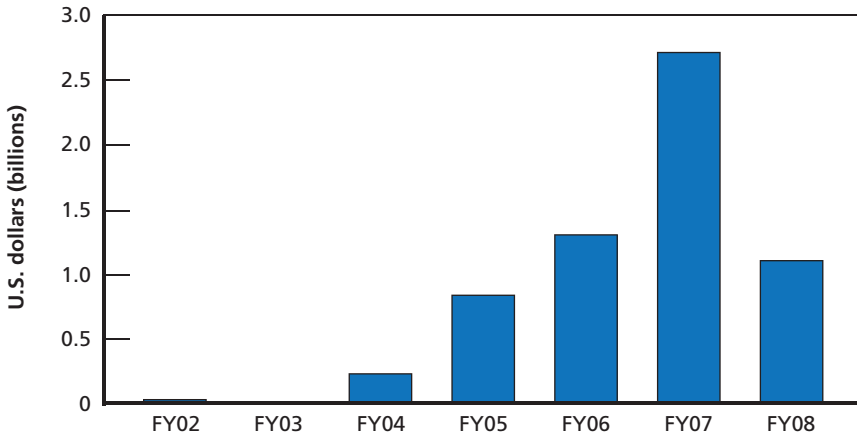
¹²⁶Exact figures for each year are provided in U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 11.

¹²⁷For the details of the pay and rank reforms, see Wilder, pp. 39–42; International Crisis Group, pp. 12–13; and U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 47.

¹²⁸U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-05-575, p. 22; Sedra, “Security Sector Reform in Afghanistan: The Slide Towards Expediency,” p. 98.

¹²⁹Wilder, p. 39; International Crisis Group, p. 11.

Figure 2.5
U.S. Funding for the ANP, Fiscal Years 2002–2008



SOURCES: U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 11; Cordesman, p. 61.

RAND MG1066-2.5

MOI and ANP structure by reducing the number of top positions from 18,000 to 9,000, which would allow more police to be recruited at the often understaffed lower ranks.¹³⁰ Although some in the ANP were dissatisfied with reforms that retained pay disparities between the ANA and the ANP and made no rank or pay distinctions between literate and nonliterate personnel, overall these reforms were viewed positively.¹³¹ However, many police were not receiving their full pay even after the reforms were adopted because of corruption among police chiefs and at the Ministry of the Interior. In 2007, CSTC-A began issuing police salaries electronically to reduce the opportunities for corruption.¹³²

Second, the Afghan National Auxiliary Police (ANAP) was established in September 2006 as a way of temporarily expanding police

¹³⁰Wilder, pp. 7–8; U.S. Department of Defense, *United States Plan for Sustaining the Afghanistan National Security Forces*, p. 25.

¹³¹See, for example, Cordesman et al., p. 120; Wilder, p. 31.

¹³²U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, pp. 39–40.

capabilities to counter the growing insurgency in the south. Governors in 21 provinces were allowed to recruit a total of 11,271 personnel from 124 districts that were mostly in the southern and eastern parts of the country. ANAP personnel would man checkpoints and police local communities so that the ANP could focus on countering the Taliban.¹³³ Each ANAP member signed a one-year contract and received five days of classroom instruction and five days of weapons training, a rifle and uniform, and a salary of \$70 per month. They were also supposed to receive an additional week of training during each quarter of their one-year commitment.¹³⁴

This initiative proved less than successful. The problems that soon surfaced limited the ANAP's capabilities, and in some cases, exacerbated the very problems the ANAP was supposed to address. Planned careful vetting of all recruits proved impossible to implement, and the fact that all ANAP members were locally recruited meant that most owed their primary allegiances to local powerbrokers rather than to the national government. U.S. trainers estimated that one in ten ANAP recruits was a Taliban agent.¹³⁵ Many ANP officers opposed the ANAP, fearing that the ANAP's relative lack of training would further harm public perceptions of the police—especially since the ANAP wore the same uniforms and received the same salaries as the ANP. Additionally, the very existence of the ANAP seemed to relegitimize militias and other local forces, despite a stated policy of disbanding them in favor of national security forces.¹³⁶ The ANAP quickly proved to be ineffective; by May 2008, the decision had been made to disband the entire organization by the end of the year. ANAP members were allowed to become members of the ANP if they had served for at least one year, had been trained for at least five weeks, and were recom-

¹³³ Bayley and Perito, pp. 28–29; International Crisis Group, p. 13.

¹³⁴ Wilder, p. 13.

¹³⁵ Wilder, pp. 13–14.

¹³⁶ Wilder, pp. 13–17; International Crisis Group, pp. 13–14.

mended by their district chief; all other personnel were terminated by September 30, 2008.¹³⁷

Third, the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) was established after the ANP proved unable to quell the riots that broke out in Kabul during May 2006. ANCOP was initially designed to be a national police of sorts that would maintain order in Afghanistan's largest cities, deploy to high-threat parts of the country, and support other police forces with rapid-reaction forces. ANCOP was designed to be a small force of 5,000 men, which would receive better training, equipment, and leadership development than regular ANP units. For example, ANCOP recruits received 16 weeks of training, which was approximately double the training that other ANP personnel were supposed to receive.¹³⁸ This additional training, attention, and effort was designed to make ANCOP a small but highly capable force that could help address the insurgency more effectively.¹³⁹

Despite these reform efforts, the overall state of the ANP remained poor. The problems with ANP training, equipping, and mentoring were compounded by an inappropriate force employment concept that often put the ANP in the forefront of the counterinsurgency campaign. As David Bayley and Robert Perito note,

ANP officers who worked in their own communities formed the frontline defense against terrorism and the insurgency and therefore bore the brunt of the violence. . . . Police were used to man isolated checkpoints and establish a government presence in rural villages. Operating in small groups with no means of communication and no backup, they were no match for insurgent groups that targeted their convoys, checkpoints, and bases.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷U.S. Department of Defense, *United States Plan for Sustaining the Afghanistan National Security Forces*, p. 21.

¹³⁸Wilder, pp. 12 and 57.

¹³⁹As discussed below, the primary mission of the ANCOP has become supporting the police reform program called Focused District Development.

¹⁴⁰Bayley and Perito, p. 28.

The deployment pattern that Bayley and Perito describe applied particularly to the two biggest components of the ANP—the Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) and the Afghan Border Police (ABP).¹⁴¹ Both forces were employed primarily on static checkpoints, with little fire-power or protection.¹⁴²

Not surprisingly, the numbers of ANP personnel KIA have been significantly higher than for the ANA. Table 2.1 shows that ANP KIA rates from 2007 to 2009 were more than three times as high as ANA KIA rates. These high casualty rates have demoralized ANP personnel, dampened recruiting, and deprived the ANP of police with operational experience.

Crisis, 2007–2009

The Taliban continued to pose a significant threat from late 2007 to 2009. Coalition fatalities set a record high of 295 personnel in 2008,

Table 2.1
ANA and ANP Killed in Action, 2007–2009

	ANA	ANP
2007	209	803
2008	226	880
2009	282	646
Total	717	2,329

SOURCE: Ian S. Livingston, Heather L. Messera, and Michael O’Hanlon, *Afghanistan Index*, Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, September 30, 2010, p. 13.

¹⁴¹The ANP includes six different components: AUP, ABP, ANCOF, a Criminal Investigative Division, the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan, and the Counterterrorism Police. U.S. Government Accountability Office, “Afghanistan Security: U.S. Programs to Further Reform Ministry of Interior and National Police Challenged by Lack of Military Personnel and Afghan Cooperation,” GAO-09-280, March 2009, p. 35.

¹⁴²We note that U.S. soldiers do not operate in this way, and that despite their superior training and capabilities, they too would likely sustain large casualty rates if they were forced to place a handful of soldiers in remote locations without any means of backup or support.

and then broke that record again in 2009 with 520 casualties—an increase of 76 percent.¹⁴³ Civilian casualties also reached record highs, increasing from 1,523 in 2007 to 2,118 in 2008 and almost tripling to 5,978 in 2009.¹⁴⁴ The increased casualty rates during 2009 were due in part to increasing military engagements as part of the strategy to provide for population security. In March 2009, President Barack Obama announced a new strategy for Afghanistan that included the deployment of 4,000 additional trainers and explicitly prioritized ANSF development:

We will shift the emphasis of our mission to training and increasing the size of Afghan security forces, so that they can eventually take the lead in securing their country. That’s how we will prepare Afghans to take responsibility for their security, and how we will ultimately be able to bring our own troops home.¹⁴⁵

In December 2009, Obama further announced that 30,000 additional U.S. troops would deploy to Afghanistan to improve ANSF training, target the Taliban, and improve population security.¹⁴⁶

These significant changes enabled ISAF to directly challenge the Taliban more than ever before, and the increased fighting led to increased casualty rates. But the President’s December 2009 speech signaled that the U.S. commitment to Afghanistan was not open-ended and that U.S. troops would start to come home in June 2011. With most European countries refusing to commit additional forces to ISAF, this suggested that there would be a relatively short period of intense activity to weaken the Taliban and improve the ANSF before the level

¹⁴³Data from icasualties.org.

¹⁴⁴United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan Human Rights Unit, *Afghanistan: Annual Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 2008*, January 2009, p. ii; United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan Human Rights Unit, *Afghanistan: Annual Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 2009*, January 2010, Executive Summary.

¹⁴⁵The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, “Remarks by the President on a New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan,” March 27, 2009.

¹⁴⁶The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, “Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan,” December 1, 2009.

of effort started to decrease. Yet the ANSF still had the same basic mission and force structure that it had at the beginning of the coalition effort, with the only significant change once again involving increases in force size.

The Afghan National Army

Since December 2002, the end-strength objective for the ANA had remained unchanged at 70,000 personnel. In 2008, the end-strength objective was increased twice, in February to 86,000 and in August to 134,000, which meant that the end-strength objective almost doubled in six months.¹⁴⁷ As Table 2.2 shows, the target dates were quite ambitious, with the goal of 134,000 to be reached by 2011. CSTC-A adopted an accelerated training program to achieve this goal. Between April and September 2009, the official number of ANA troops increased from 81,000 to 92,000,¹⁴⁸ and the number increased to 100,131 troops by December 2009.¹⁴⁹ However, an official October 2009 DOD report concluded that the ANA was on pace to reach the goal of 134,000 “on or before October 2010,” because CSTC-A was focusing on generating infantry forces and delaying development of some enabling forces until after 2010.¹⁵⁰ The focus on infantry forces at the expense of enabling forces enabled rapid progress toward the end-strength goal, because infantry forces take less time to train. At present, however, it seems likely that delaying the development of such capabilities as logistics,

¹⁴⁷The 86,000 figure includes 80,000 troops and 6,000 personnel on training, transient, holding, and student (TTHS) status; the 134,000 figure includes 122,000 troops and 12,000 on TTHS status. U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 8; Younossi et al., p. 16.

¹⁴⁸U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 22.

¹⁴⁹Special Inspector General for Afghanistan, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, January 31, 2010, pp. 60–61.

¹⁵⁰Infantry forces can often be fielded more quickly than enabling units, since they require less specialized equipment and do not need to be embedded in broader maintenance and supply organizations in order to function. U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 25.

Table 2.2
ANA End-Strength Objectives, 2001–2008

Date	End-Strength Goal	Date Expected to Achieve Goal
December 2001	50,000	2010
February 2002	62,000	2010
December 2002	70,000	2006
February 2008	86,000	2011
August 2008	134,000	2011

SOURCES: Cordesman, p. 60; U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 7; U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 25.

maintenance, and support will further postpone the date that the ANA is able to operate on its own without significant coalition assistance.

The capabilities of the ANA fielded forces seemed to improve during this time, according to ISAF formal ratings. CSTC-A assigns every ANA and ANP unit a Capability Milestone (CM) ratings on a scale from 1 to 4, with CM1 indicating the capability to lead operational missions with limited or episodic assistance from ISAF; CM2 indicating the capability to lead operational missions with routine support from ISAF; CM3 indicating the capability to participate in operations led by ISAF units; and CM4 indicating that the unit is not yet capable of operational missions.¹⁵¹ No ANA units were rated as CM1 until March 2008, despite all the previous initiatives to improve the ANA.¹⁵² In April 2008, only two ANA units were rated CM1, and 38 units were rated CM2.¹⁵³ By December 2008, 18 units were rated CM1 and 26 units were rated CM2,¹⁵⁴ and by December 2009, 34 units

¹⁵¹ For more on these CM definitions, see Chapter Four of this monograph and U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 17.

¹⁵² U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 42.

¹⁵³ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 20.

¹⁵⁴ U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 42.

were rated CM1 and 44 were rated CM2.¹⁵⁵ However, as discussed in Chapter Four, many of the data used to generate the CM ratings are unreliable, since the ANA units provide the data themselves and ISAF is often unable to verify that information. As a result, it is not clear whether these numbers reflect true improvements or inaccurate inputs.

Average ANA recontracting (reenlistment) rates remained at around 50 percent in 2008, approximately the same as they had been for the previous two years.¹⁵⁶ Average AWOL rates dropped from the 12 to 13 percent reported in 2006 and 2007 to between 7 and 8 percent in 2008, although units involved in heavy fighting had higher rates.¹⁵⁷ An unnamed senior Defense Department official estimated that AWOL rates needed to remain below 8 percent for the ANA to achieve sustained growth, which meant that these rates were just barely sufficient for this objective.¹⁵⁸

The tremendous increases in ANA funding in 2007 and 2008 led to improvements in equipping the ANA, but the procurement and fielding process remained slow. By the end of 2009, for example, CSTC-A had fielded 1,791 radios and 980 vehicles, but 13,803 additional radios and 4,174 additional vehicles had been procured but not yet been fielded. Weapons fared better, with 15,097 weapons fielded and an additional 12,305 weapons procured, but these numbers all suggest that fielding equipment remained a slow process.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, the ANA continued to prefer equipment from the former Warsaw Pact,¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁵ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan, p. 63.

¹⁵⁶ U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 39.

¹⁵⁷ U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 39; Younossi et al., pp. 18–19. The DOD report does not directly identify the reasons for the declining AWOL rates, but does state: “increasing emphasis on pay and incentives, better facilities and training, better leadership, and more robustly manned units, AWOL trends are expected to continue to decrease.”

¹⁵⁸ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 22.

¹⁵⁹ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan, p. 65.

¹⁶⁰ U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 25.

which took a long time to procure and which would also complicate maintenance and ammunition supply over the long term.

The shortfalls in both ETT personnel and fielded OMLTs shown in Figures 2.1 and 2.2 remained a major impediment to the ANA developing the ability to operate on its own over the long term, and the increased end-strength goals would only exacerbate this problem.¹⁶¹ By November 2008, the number of U.S. personnel assigned to ETTs was just slightly over half of CSTC-A's requirement, in part because of the need to staff the PMTs.¹⁶² However, these numbers increased significantly after President Obama's March 2009 speech, which stated that 4,000 of the 17,000 additional U.S. personnel deploying to Afghanistan would be assigned as trainers. By September 2009, 2,747 U.S. personnel were serving on ETTs, with more expected to follow.¹⁶³

The number of fielded OMLTs remained low, however. In December 2008, only 42 OMLTs existed despite CSTC-A's requirement for 103.¹⁶⁴ Meeting only a week after Obama's March 2009 speech, the NATO heads of state reaffirmed their commitment to ANSF training and agreed to provide OMLTs to support the increased ANA end-strength goals.¹⁶⁵ By December 2009, 63 OMLTs had been fielded and 21 more were being planned. This was certainly an improvement, but it still fell short of CSTC-A's new requirement for 104 OMLTs.¹⁶⁶

During 2009, NATO also sought to improve predeployment training for OMLTs, which now involved three phases: training in the country of origin; NATO training at either the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) in Hohenfels, Germany, or at the Joint Force Training Center (JFTC) in Bydgoszcz, Poland; and three days of train-

¹⁶¹ U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-08-661, p. 26.

¹⁶² U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 38.

¹⁶³ U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 26.

¹⁶⁴ U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 38.

¹⁶⁵ North Atlantic Treaty Association, "Summit Declaration on Afghanistan Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Strasbourg/Kehl on 4 April 2009," Press Release (2009) 045, April 4, 2009.

¹⁶⁶ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan, p. 63.

ing in Kabul before deploying with ANA units. Yet this new phased training still suffered from several challenges, including wide variations in the size and compositions of OMLTs from different countries and the fact that OMLT members often do not know what tasks they will be required to execute in the theater. Furthermore, some OMLTs deploy without having received national training, because their countries have limited training resources that they choose to devote elsewhere. Some countries have also had their OMLTs skip the NATO training since it is not mandatory.¹⁶⁷

In late 2009, the U.S. and NATO training efforts were brought together into an integrated headquarters. The new NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan (NTM-A) was established to oversee ISAF’s efforts to train the ANSF, including OMLTs and POMLTs, with the NTM-A commander simultaneously serving as the CSTC-A commander. This meant that all training efforts in Afghanistan would report to the same commander and staff for the first time since the training effort began in 2002.¹⁶⁸

At the same time, the IJC was created as the operational command for all ISAF units in Afghanistan. In addition, IJC took on the responsibility for advising (which in many areas was combined with the partnering mission), as well as for assessing ANSF readiness. The logic behind this appears to be that only the operational units have the ability to support the advisory mission well and the persistent presence to adequately assess those same units. As we will discuss in Chapter Three, even with its much greater assets, the IJC is also not able to do this uniformly well.¹⁶⁹

The Afghan National Police

In June 2007, the United States replaced Germany as the official lead nation for police reform (even though CSTC-A had taken responsi-

¹⁶⁷ Author interviews with personnel at the Joint Center for Security Force Assistance (JCISFA), May 2009; Korski and Williams, p. 149.

¹⁶⁸ International Security Assistance Force, “VTC with Major General Richard Formica,” October 8, 2009.

¹⁶⁹ Author interviews with senior ISAF leaders, September 2009.

bility for ANP training two years earlier) and enacted a number of changes. Arguing that the ANP was crucial to help address the challenging security situation in Afghanistan and that German efforts had proven insufficient, the United States shifted the focus of ANP training more toward paramilitary capabilities rather than rule of law policing, so that the ANP would have the ability to operate in more dangerous security environments.¹⁷⁰ The great increase in U.S. funding for the ANP during FY 2007 and FY 2008 shown in Figure 2.5 enabled the United States to push the ANP in this direction and to provide additional equipment.

At the same time that United States took lead responsibility for the ANP, the European Union (EU) authorized a new European Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL), the goal of which was to improve coordination among all the individual police reform efforts conducted by the individual EU member states as well as Canada, Croatia, New Zealand, and Norway.¹⁷¹ EUPOL did not conduct any direct training but instead focused on mentoring and advising the MOI on creating a civilian law enforcement capacity.¹⁷² EUPOL personnel therefore worked primarily at the MOI in Kabul and in provincial capitals, where they were often collocated with a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT).¹⁷³ EUPOL faced great challenges reaching its authorized strength of 400 officers, because continuing public opposition to the war in Afghanistan made many European countries reluctant to provide their pledged commitments. In May 2008, EUPOL included 150 police officers, but by May 2009, that number had only increased to

¹⁷⁰Cordesman et al., p. 100.

¹⁷¹Most of the Europeans who had been working with the ANP under the German lead were reassigned to EUPOL once it was formed. International Crisis Group, p. 8; Cordesman et al., p. 101; European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan homepage, available at <http://www.eupol-afg.eu/>, accessed April 2010.

¹⁷²The EUPOL focus on civilian law enforcement ran counter to the increasing U.S. emphasis on using the ANP to contribute to counterinsurgency efforts. For more on the need for an overarching vision of ANSF roles and missions, see Chapter Four.

¹⁷³International Crisis Group, p. 8.

218.¹⁷⁴ EUPOL also had great difficulty coordinating the various goals and approaches of its contributing countries, which included a number of unilateral initiatives as well as contributions to EUPOL.¹⁷⁵ Taken together, these problems have limited the effectiveness of EUPOL, which remains a minor player in police reform efforts.

In November 2007, CSTC-A launched the most ambitious police reform effort that had yet been attempted. Before that time, those police who received training were trained as individuals. They then reported to police stations managed by leaders who were themselves poorly trained and often corrupt. This made it difficult for even well-trained police to perform effectively. Because this situation was limiting the development of the ANP at a time when the ANA seemed to be making progress, CSTC-A decided that a new approach was needed.¹⁷⁶ The new Focused District Development (FDD) concept was to retrain an entire AUP police force at the same time.¹⁷⁷ After an assessment team visited the selected district and determined what needed to be done, all the district police would spend eight weeks at one of the RTCs while an ANCOP unit backfilled them at home. At the RTC, the district force, working closely with a PMT for the whole time, would be vetted, retrained, and given new uniforms and equipment. The PMT would then accompany the police when they returned to their district and would continue to work with them until they were rated as CM1, meaning that they could conduct basic operations on their own.¹⁷⁸

Initial reports about the FDD program seemed positive. By February 2009, 18 percent of the units that had completed the FDD program were rated as CM1 (none of these units had been rated CM1 in

¹⁷⁴Cordesman et al., p. 124; Perito, p. 10.

¹⁷⁵Perito, p. 10; Bayley and Perito, p. 30.

¹⁷⁶U.S. General Accountability Office, GAO-09-280, pp. 12 and 17.

¹⁷⁷FDD did not apply to the ABP, ANCOP, or other components of the ANP.

¹⁷⁸U.S. Department of Defense, *United States Plan for Sustaining the Afghanistan National Security Forces*, pp. 23–24; U.S. General Accountability Office, GAO-09-280, pp. 12–13.

April 2008).¹⁷⁹ By September 2009, however, the total number of FDD units that were rated CM1 had declined to 12 percent.¹⁸⁰ Moreover, the program moved slowly: Only 65 of Afghanistan's 365 police districts completed the FDD program in its first two years, and CSTC-A estimated that it would take until 2014 for every district in the country to go through the program.¹⁸¹

One of the main factors constraining the FDD program was the limited numbers of PMTs, especially since the program required them to stay with their Afghan counterparts until they reached CM1, regardless of how long that took. In November 2008, CSTC-A had only enough PMTs to work with 25 percent of ANP units and organizations. As Figure 2.4 shows, only 866 U.S. personnel were assigned to PMTs out of the 2,375 required (or 37 percent).¹⁸² By September 2009, however, the deployment of additional U.S. trainers had enabled CSTC-A to fulfill this requirement, with 2,193 U.S. personnel serving on PMTs and 182 international personnel serving on POMLTs.¹⁸³ The increased number of PMTs and POMLTs may remove one important constraint on the FDD program.

Yet even if this happens, other challenges will still limit the long-term benefits of the FDD program. The concept of ANCOP backfilling units undergoing FDD training seems appealing, and local residents reportedly gave ANCOP high marks. Although designated for public order, ANCOP personnel receive more police-focused training than either the AUP or the ABP, and they are also literate, so it is

¹⁷⁹U.S. General Accountability Office, GAO-09-280, pp. 14–15. This report does not specify the number of units rated at each CM level.

¹⁸⁰U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 29.

¹⁸¹That timetable could be affected by changes in funding, end-strength goals, or the security situation. U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 29; Chilton, Schiewek, and Bremmers, section 4.4.

¹⁸²U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 44.

¹⁸³U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 29.

not entirely surprising that locals liked ANCOP.¹⁸⁴ However, ANCOP numbers are not sufficient to backfill all the FDD units. The high operational tempo that resulted from trying to backfill FDD units in as many districts as possible, combined with the poor conditions under which ANCOP personnel must serve when deployed for FDD, has contributed to extremely high ANCOP attrition rates—which were approximately 70 percent by the end of 2009. This, of course, further limits the numbers of ANCOP available. The result has been that not all districts have gone through FDD as a whole, and some units that went through FDD did so with only part of their assigned personnel, contrary to the program's purpose.¹⁸⁵

High attrition rates among the AUP itself create another problem. According to CSTC-A, the ANP loses approximately 25 percent of its personnel each year on average, and they are replaced with new personnel.¹⁸⁶ That means that by the end of 2009, the first units that went through FDD would have lost nearly half of the personnel who completed the program, and that percentage will continue to climb over time. Since it will take several more years for every police district to go through the FDD program at all, it seems unlikely that units will participate in a second round of FDD any time soon.¹⁸⁷ As a result, the positive benefits of the FDD process are likely to be short-lived.

Despite the FDD initiative, the numbers and quality of ANP members remained a considerable problem throughout this period. ANP casualty rates remained high, which contributed to the attrition

¹⁸⁴However, we note that there were also reports of corruption by ANCOP units deployed for FDD. Author interviews with ISAF personnel, September and December 2009.

¹⁸⁵Author interviews with ISAF personnel, September and December 2009; undated loss report breakout spreadsheet provided by NTM-A/CSTC-A (data through November 2009).

¹⁸⁶Because this figure represents a national average, attrition rates for individual units may be even higher. Undated loss report breakout spreadsheet provided by NTM-A/CSTC-A (data through November 2009).

¹⁸⁷By the end of 2009, police forces from the Nad Ali district were the only ones to have gone through the FDD program twice—but this was after district personnel shot and killed British advisors working with them. Author interviews with ISAF personnel, December 2009.

rates noted above.¹⁸⁸ Between January 2007 and September 2008, 1,165 ANP members were KIA, compared to 420 for the ANA.¹⁸⁹ Casualty rates increased further in 2009, as the ANA and ANP joined ISAF in a more robust counterinsurgency campaign. Between April and October 2009, the KIA numbers for the ANSF as a whole increased by 50 percent compared to the same period in 2008, with the majority of the casualties coming from the ANP.¹⁹⁰ On paper, recruiting seemed to be keeping up. By November 2008, a total of 75,954 personnel had been assigned to the ANP, which was significant progress toward the stated goal of 82,000 personnel.¹⁹¹ However, many at ISAF knew that these numbers were of limited utility because they represented unverified reporting. Most estimated that true ANP strength was about 80 percent of the stated numbers.¹⁹² In 2009, MOI and CSTC-A/NTM-A undertook an effort to clarify ANP personnel levels through a Personnel Asset Inventory, which is continuing as of the time of this writing.

As the August 2009 presidential elections approached, CSTC-A and the MOI grew concerned that the ANP would not be able to assist with election security. They approved a growth plan that would quickly add 14,800 additional personnel to the ANP—4,800 to provide election security in Kabul, and the remaining 10,000 to provide election security in key provinces. CSTC-A's effort to reach the 4,800 goal was seen as fairly successful, but reaching the 10,000 goal proved much more difficult due to weak recruiting, rising attrition rates, and a training base that was already operating at near capacity. CSTC-A responded by reducing the training time from eight weeks to three weeks to accel-

¹⁸⁸High casualty levels contribute directly to high attrition rates, and the dangerous operating environment almost certainly further contributes to attrition by increasing fear among ANP members and incentives for desertion.

¹⁸⁹Cordesman et al., p. 101. These statistics may result from problems with ANP employment (such as deploying teams that are too small or that possess insufficient weapons), but this topic was not within the scope of this report.

¹⁹⁰The available data from this period does not provide individual KIA data for the ANA and ANP. U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 14.

¹⁹¹U.S. Department of Defense, *Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p. 35.

¹⁹²Author interviews with ISAF personnel, December 2009.

erate progress; it planned to provide the missing five weeks of training after the elections. CSTC-A was able to recruit 13,500 additional ANP personnel before the elections, with slightly fewer than half receiving full training and the rest receiving partial training.¹⁹³

The push to rapidly increase the size of the ANP did not end after the election. ANP end strength grew from 81,509 personnel at the end of September 2009 to 94,958 at the end of December 2009—an increase of 16.5 percent within three months—and CSTC-A was aiming to have 109,000 ANP personnel serving by October 2010.¹⁹⁴ This period of rapid growth suggests that CSTC-A will once again face the challenge of balancing the increased emphasis on the quantity of forces with the need to ensure that those forces are of sufficient quality to succeed at their mission. In the past, efforts to rapidly increase quantity have been followed by reform efforts to address the quality gaps that resulted, and this pattern may well repeat itself here.

¹⁹³U.S. Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, pp. 22–23.

¹⁹⁴Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, pp. 59 and 65; email from CENTCOM staff, February 2010.

Observations About Recent SFA Efforts in Afghanistan

This chapter identifies three major lessons from the SFA efforts described in Chapter Two that are likely to affect the success or failure of the overall effort.¹ First, we discuss the scope and context of SFA in Afghanistan. Second, we consider assistance to the security ministries and the generating force, and their influence on the operating forces themselves—which they exist to create and maintain. Third, we assess the effects of SFA delivered through advisors and partners of the operating forces. In Chapter Four, we discuss the issue of SFA assessments and how they must be part of the design of SFA efforts if they are to succeed. These discussions will provide useful insights into implications for the U.S. Army as it considers how to prepare units and soldiers for SFA missions, which will be discussed in Chapter Five.

SFA Scope and Context in Afghanistan

Security force assistance in Afghanistan is both a more important and a larger task than in many countries where the United States assists host-nation militaries. It is more important for Afghanistan because the survival of the government depends on the ability of U.S. and coalition efforts to create effective security forces and ministries, and for the United States because our efforts there have been determined to

¹ The observations presented here are derived from the authors' trips to, and interviews conducted in, Afghanistan in June, July, September, November, and December 2009.

be in our vital national interests by our political leaders.² These efforts necessarily involve long-term assistance to both the military and law enforcement institutions, a further departure from normal practice, in which police are usually not part of SFA efforts by the U.S. military.³ Moreover, some argue that SFA in Afghanistan must also include other aspects of the security sector framework that are necessary for a country to effectively defeat an insurgency and lay the groundwork for stability and development—e.g., the judicial system, corrections system, and intelligence apparatus. Although U.S. and ISAF military personnel are not currently leading coalition efforts in most of these areas, the importance of those areas, along with the need for military and police development efforts to align with the broader security sector development and reform efforts, is increasingly recognized. All of this exceeds the usual context in which the U.S. armed forces provide SFA to a nation with an existing government and military forces where the goal is to help those forces improve some aspect of their capabilities. At stake is nothing less than U.S. interests, including the survival of the Afghan government in an environment where the partner institutions with which ISAF works have either been created from scratch (the Army and MOD) or are being fundamentally reconstituted (the police and MOI).⁴ Furthermore, because SFA success depends on the overall success of the ANSF against the insurgents and because the U.S. commitment to provide the troops necessary for SFA is not indefinite, SFA cannot be viewed merely as a process of incremental development as it might be in more stable countries. Nor can it focus on one component of military forces at a time. Rather, if SFA does not produce self-sufficient security forces with reasonable capabilities before U.S. forces depart, the Taliban—or additional decades of lawlessness and

² See President Obama's policy on Afghanistan and Pakistan, published as a White Paper in March 2009. The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "Remarks by the President on a New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan," March 27, 2009.

³ Brigadier General Edward Donnelly, Briefing, "Army Approach to Security Force Assistance," HQDA G-35, September 2, 2009, slide 4.

⁴ For a thorough discussion of the implications for Afghanistan, see General Stanley McChrystal, "COMISAF's Initial Assessment," August 30, 2009.

collapse—may prevail. Once this goal has been achieved, SFA would become an ongoing process, as it is in most other cases, and the United States and its allies would help build the ANSF and forge long-term relationships. In short, SFA carried out simultaneously and as part of a counterinsurgency fight is central to the survival of the nation, and because the security forces must act jointly and with other government institutions, SFA must encompass not simply all of Afghanistan's military, but the entire security enterprise.

As a result, the burden on security force assistance providers is much higher in Afghanistan than it would be in normal circumstances. SFA should be, and is now becoming, the central focus of U.S. efforts in that country, with well over 100,000 soldiers—the entire ISAF force at the end of 2009—in theory playing some role in it. In December 2009, IJC Commanding General David Rodriguez made this point during a briefing in Kabul, in which he made clear that security force development was the number one priority for coalition forces in Afghanistan.⁵ It is the focus of major unit commanders and staffs, not just specialists located at the U.S. embassy or in technical teams that are in country on temporary duty (TDY) assignments. It cannot be done by various forces in isolation or given as a task to one organization; rather, it requires coordination between coalition operational units in the IJC and the NTM-A/CSTC-A.

If done well, SFA represents the principal way in which ISAF can help the Afghans create the security forces they need to protect the population from insurgents and other bad actors. But, because it is under way in the midst of a conflict, it requires that operational imperatives be balanced with the development of the security forces and ministries. For example, coalition soldiers ranging from small unit leaders to commanding generals must make decisions daily on whether to insist that Afghan units lead operations. In some cases, this may mean permitting operations to bog down or even fail so that the Afghan units can learn lessons and develop; in others, it may mean leading operations or performing tasks themselves in order to succeed. Such mundane but essential tasks as supply, transportation, and plan-

⁵ Briefing to the RAND research team, IJC headquarters in Kabul, December 2009.

ning are routinely done by coalition forces to ensure that they are done effectively, but this does little to further the development of the ANSF.⁶ Furthermore, decisions on the types and sophistication of operations have a significant impact on the trade-off between operational effectiveness and developmental content. ANSF units, which have limited planning and support capabilities, simply cannot plan and conduct the types of operations that coalition units are trained for and expect to conduct. For example, highway kandaks (battalions) of the ANA work with U.S. Stryker brigades to secure the highways in Regional Command–South (RC-S). However, the Stryker brigade is arguably the most technologically sophisticated ground combat unit in the world, while the ANA highway kandaks have very few tactical radios and mostly conduct operations in HMMWVs and light trucks (such as Ford Ranger pickup trucks) with cell phones for command and control.⁷ No ANA unit will be able to operate as Stryker units do.

The challenges of creating security institutions for a nation in the midst of an insurgency demand that senior ISAF leaders possess skills that span the security, political, economic, and social sectors; when taken in tandem with the requirement to actually conduct campaigns in Afghanistan, those skills exceed those normally associated with the operational art. Just as ISAF military leaders in the field must balance the immediate success of a mission against ANSF development, the ISAF and IJC commanders must design and execute counterinsurgency campaigns while balancing these requirements with the need to rapidly develop ANSF (and other elements of the security sector) of the proper size and character. Furthermore, senior U.S. leaders—both commanders and diplomats—must not only wrestle with the technical demands of SFA and operations but also help set the context in which both can succeed. These contextual challenges range from helping with the establishment and development of judicial and corrections systems

⁶ During RAND visits and interviews in November and December 2009, the research team saw and heard of many examples of this. For example, the ANA or ANP supply system worked in very few places that the RAND team visited. As a result, ANA or ANP units require support from ISAF forces if they are to operate.

⁷ Interviews with Afghan and coalition soldiers in RC-S, December 2009.

(without which developing police forces is of limited value) to working with Afghan politicians to establish the political and social conditions for success in counterinsurgency. To do this well, senior leaders must work with a host of other actors—diplomats and development specialists from the United States, coalition countries, the UN, other international organizations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and host-nation actors inside and outside of government.⁸

This discussion indicates that the success or failure of SFA in Afghanistan must be measured not by the success or failure of individual programs but rather by the success or failure of the security enterprise as a whole. SFA is a necessary but not sufficient condition for overall success. Furthermore, the converse of this statement is partially true: SFA effectiveness requires a reasonably successful effort to improve the entire security sector. This implies that feedback from fielded forces should inform not only force employment approaches and force design and generation, as discussed below, but also aspects of the security sector that lie outside of the normal domain of SFA or even the expanded domain that includes police forces in Afghanistan. Formal feedback to the intelligence apparatus and the justice and corrections sectors is, at a minimum, essential. And because counterinsurgency involves not only security but also an ability to work with civilian agencies to protect, control and provide for the population, SFA feedback should arguably inform civilian aspects of government as well.

Beyond these current issues with SFA in Afghanistan, there are two longitudinal issues that are critical for success: the need to maintain sufficient flexibility to adapt SFA programs to changing security situ-

⁸ One could argue that the political, diplomatic, and development issues outlined here should be the domain of the coalition diplomatic corps, not commanding generals. However, due to the tight links in COIN between security and these fields, commanders cannot ignore them any more than diplomats can ignore the ongoing counterinsurgency fight. Moreover, the fact that organized violence remains a key tool of politics in Afghanistan, as it is in other states in conflict, makes the commanding general a major political player. This will be the case until and unless unity of command is established under a civilian leader. This has not been done in Afghanistan, and rarely has been done in the history of U.S. foreign interventions. The U.S. intervention in the Philippines in the beginning of the twentieth century and U.S. efforts in Laos in the early 1970s are the only notable exceptions.

ations and the need to ensure, in part through advance planning, that mechanisms are in place to adapt the forces to be those that Afghanistan will need if and when the counterinsurgency effort succeeds (i.e., they will be much smaller and of a different nature).

As discussed in Chapter Two, the situation in Afghanistan was thought to be one of relative security in 2002, under the assumption that the Taliban and other major opposition groups were decisively defeated and would not reemerge.⁹ Given this set of assumptions, SFA plans envisioned the development of a relatively small, professional army that could be built up over time. The development of individual police officers lagged behind, as the old system was left in place and initial efforts concentrated on improving police leadership.¹⁰ Unfortunately, this underlying assumption proved false. Although the threat assessment changed, the design of the ANA—and, to a lesser extent, the ANP—did not. The planned size of the force grew substantially, but the fundamental concept for its structure remained much the same from 2002 to late 2009.¹¹ Specifically, there appears to have been no fundamental reassessment of the mission and requirements of the ANSF as the security situation changed, and consequently there were no fundamental changes in how ANSF are designed, trained or employed. In short, despite growing in size, the ANSF have not evolved with the security situation, either in their design or their use.

The lack of ANSF evolution to match the radical changes in the security situation points to our first observation. To be effective, SFA must help foreign security forces change and develop in potentially significant operational and institutional ways as the security situation changes. This could include either changes in force employment alone or changes in some or all elements of the institutional factors that the

⁹ Interviews with U.S. general officers and senior Afghan officials in Kabul, September 2009.

¹⁰ See Chapter Two for more details on this period.

¹¹ Minister of Interior Atmar has a plan for significant change in the ANP, which, if executed might make significant contributions to security. Unfortunately, RAND analysis indicates that, because of high attrition and low literacy rates, much of his vision is likely not executable. See Kelly et al., “RAND Objective Assessment of the ANSF.”

U.S. Army refers to as DOTMLPF,¹² adapted as appropriate for police institutions. This, in turn, implies that SFA providers need the ability to make assessments and judgments on what change is needed, as well as the ability to alter how they deliver assistance in accordance with evolving security needs. For example, the ability to make personnel changes among SFA providers inside of annual rotation schedules is clearly implied, because changes demanding different skills or capabilities that occur at the beginning of an annual rotation should not wait a year to be met. Moreover, any changes must be thought through to their third- and fourth-order effects: A significant increase in the size of the ANSF, for example, implies a concomitant increase in the number of facilities needed. This in turn implies the need for additional and different engineering capabilities, and thus advisors.

Most important for effective SFA in Afghanistan and similar conflicts, the content of the feedback from operational forces and advisors must provide the information needed for commanders of units providing SFA to make judgments about ANSF and SFA requirements, as discussed below.

The second longitudinal issue is that SFA providers and their host-nation counterparts should plan for a long-term transition to a sustainable force. Specifically, if an insurgency is as large and lethal as it is in Afghanistan, the government will require large, capable security forces to counter it. But once that threat is defeated, the government will be left with a force that it cannot afford to sustain, which itself could pose a threat if downsizing is not properly handled. Thus, transition plans that include disarming, demobilizing, and reintegrating (DDR) existing government (as well as insurgent) forces may be needed, along with a force structure and posture appropriate for national defense and rule of law in a country not wracked by insurgency. Developing such plans

¹² DOTMLPF stands for doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities.

is complicated and expensive. It cannot be done in a short time—or done at all without significant funding and international assistance.¹³

Assistance to Afghan Ministries and Generating Forces

Effective SFA requires more than security forces that are appropriate for the security situation. It also requires assisting those agencies and commands responsible for designing, fielding, and maintaining those forces.

From an ideal, technocratic standpoint, the Ministries of Defense and Interior, including civilian leaders and senior uniformed officers, exist to provide Afghanistan with effective security forces and capabilities. Their role is to set policy and maintain a bureaucratic infrastructure for the military, the police, and the agencies and commands that recruit, train, equip, supply, develop doctrine, and perform other institutional tasks, as well as overseeing those agencies. In concert with the political leadership, they determine the type, structure, and size of the security forces and their overall missions and priorities, and they ensure that all the other capabilities and organizations reporting to them align with the framework they have established. They also coordinate with other relevant agencies in government to ensure that the military and police fit effectively into the broader security framework and that police and military goals are aligned with those of other capabilities, such as intelligence and justice.

The way that this conceptual model translates into reality is significantly affected by the political and social context in which these major players live and operate—referred to in military doctrine as the “operational environment.”¹⁴ To provide effective SFA, advisors and partners for the Afghan ministries and senior uniformed staffs must understand the operational environment in which their counterparts

¹³ Author’s experiences while responsible for DDR programs in Iraq in 2004 and 2006–2007. In particular, creating the indigenous capabilities and capacity to run such programs take several months at a minimum.

¹⁴ U.S. Army Field Manual 3-07.1, *Security Force Assistance*, May 2009, p. 2-1.

operate, and senior leaders must help shape it. The Afghan Ministry of Defense and General Staff provide a good example of how important operational environment is. These institutions were created according to Western concepts, in which civilians in the ministry oversee policy and control the operations of their military counterparts. In Afghanistan, however, civilian control of the military does not have the same meaning and the MOD is not in fact a civilian institution.¹⁵ As a result, the Afghan defense establishment has what amounts to two competing general staffs, which is exacerbated by the fact that each is led by officials from different ethnic and mujahideen backgrounds who do not work well together.¹⁶ Furthermore, ISAF regularly goes directly to the general staff when it needs to get things done expeditiously, rather than working through formal MOD channels. This circumvents the MOD and further undermines the concept of civilian control that is embedded in the defense security design.¹⁷

One result of this dichotomy between the formal system and the reality is that technocratic assessments of progress in the ministries paint a relatively bright picture—a growing bureaucracy with the appropriate organizations and offices—while units in the field are rarely well supported by national-level systems.¹⁸ Further-

¹⁵ Civilian control of the military is a meaningful construct in mature states with stable political and bureaucratic structures in which laws are observed and govern behavior. None of these conditions exists in Afghanistan; as result, there is ethnic and political competition for control of the security forces. Furthermore, of the 780 civilian slots in the MOD, only 16 were filled with civilians as of January 2010. Of those that are not civilian, most are general officers (email exchange and phone calls with NTM-A MOD advisors, January 2010). Even the Minister of Defense bills himself as the only serving four-star general (meetings with Minister Wardak in July and September 2009).

¹⁶ In 2009, then–Minister of Defense Abdul Rahim Wardak was a Pashtun and then–Chief of the General Staff General Bismillah Khan Mohammadi was a Tajik. They served in rival mujahideen parties during the resistance to the Soviet-backed government of Dr. Najabullah and during the civil war that followed this period. According to NTM-A advisors, and senior Afghan MOD and General Staff officials interviewed by RAND, the two barely spoke and their staffs did not cooperate.

¹⁷ Interviews with NTM-A advisors in Kabul, November and December 2009.

¹⁸ For assessments of progress at the ministries, see, for example, “Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan, MOD Ministerial Development Board,” briefing, July 28,

more, most ministry assessments look only at isolated offices, agencies, commands, and programs, not at how these combine to provide the security forces in the field with the support they require to operate.¹⁹ To illustrate this fact, we briefly discuss the process by which ANA accessions, initial training, and new-unit fielding take place and provide some observations on the personnel and logistics systems. These systems are critical to fielding and maintaining effective security forces. We focus primarily on the ANA and MOD, because they are more advanced and proficient than the ANP and MOI.²⁰

A fundamentally important task for any security force is recruiting enough soldiers of sufficiently good quality to man the force. Since 2001, the ANA has consistently faced challenges with both the quantity and quality of recruits. However, the quantity problems appear to be less severe thanks to pay raises and a significant push by Afghan leaders, with significantly more recruits in December 2009 and January 2010 than earlier in 2009.²¹ Quality is particularly important for the ANA to function. Many ANA systems, such as those for personnel management and logistics, are simplified versions of U.S. Army systems that require a reasonable level of literacy and sophistication to implement and navigate. However, the personnel brought in by the ANA Recruiting Command are mostly illiterate and thus not capable of running those systems. As noted in Chapter One, while 43.1 percent

2009, which provides comprehensive assessments and timelines for achieving full operating capability for each major office in the MOD, as well as quad charts for a sampling of programs that provide assessments, status, issues/recommendations and goals for these selected programs. Presentations such as these provide a technocratically positive picture of progress. However, extensive RAND interviews in September, November, and December 2009 in Kabul, RC-S and Regional Command–East (RC-E), and limited interviews in Regional Command–North (RC-N), indicate a very different picture of national level security institutions that are unable to supply units or manage personnel.

¹⁹ The word *technocratic* should not be taken as having negative implications. If technocrats are not looking at the whole picture, it is not because they are technocratic, but rather because their focus is, by design, too narrow. Senior leaders should look at the bigger picture.

²⁰ Author interviews and observations, September, November, and December 2009.

²¹ Quality may also improve as numbers do and the ANSF can be more selective about who it accepts, but it may also decline if new recruits receive insufficient training and are transferred to operational units too quickly. Email exchange with NTM-A staff, January 2010.

of the male population of Afghanistan is literate,²² NTM-A estimates that only 10 percent of the ANA is.²³ Furthermore, Afghan officials at kandak levels have told RAND researchers that they are often saddled with soldiers who are physically or mentally unfit or who are drug addicts. They say they cannot get rid of them,²⁴ despite the fact that there are well-defined standards for recruiting and screening to ensure that only qualified soldiers make it into the force.²⁵ The result is operational units that are hampered by incapable soldiers and systems (e.g., supply, personnel) that are too complicated for illiterate and innumerate Afghan soldiers to operate. Invariably, ISAF steps in to make sure that ANA units can function, but this does not contribute to ANA development.

As described in Chapter Two, newly recruited soldiers attend basic training in a program called the Basic Warrior Course. From there, individual soldiers either join existing units or are combined into new units being formed at the Consolidated Fielding Center (CFC). Basic training is currently eight weeks long and is designed to provide only the most basic soldier skills to new recruits. In theory, embedding partner units with Afghan forces is meant to supplement this training and make up for its shortfalls. And these shortfalls are significant. According to interviews at the Kabul Military Training Center, the Afghan and coalition staffing and support for basic training is inadequate.²⁶ Feedback from interviews in December 2009 with all four brigades in the 205th Corps, two of three brigades in the 203rd Corps, and one of two brigades in the 201st Corps indicates that ANA brigades are running basic training courses of two to four weeks for newly arriving

²² *CIA World Factbook*, "Afghanistan," 2010. Literacy for Afghanistan is defined as the percentage of persons age 15 years or older who can read and write. Almost 100 percent of the ANSF is male.

²³ Interviews with NTM-A staff in Kabul, November 2009.

²⁴ Interviews with kandak leadership in RC-S and RC-E, December 2009.

²⁵ Emails with NTM-A advisors, February 2010. See also ANA Medical Fitness Standards regulations for details. As is often the case, the ANA simply does not enforce its own well-specified procedures—often adopted from U.S. regulations and manuals.

²⁶ See Kelly et al., "RAND Objective Assessment of the ANSF," for details.

soldiers, many of whom cannot shoot straight or perform other basic soldier tasks. The general opinion is that basic training does not produce soldiers with sufficient skills. Coalition advisors at KMTC also make this assertion.²⁷ Furthermore, soldiers who join units that are forming at the CFC are supposed to be met by a cadre of advisors, officers, and NCOs to form units. These units are to be issued their basic equipment (e.g., mortars, trucks, radios, crew-served weapons) and to conduct initial collective training while at the CFC. However, various systems that provide needed equipment and training must be synchronized if units are to be fielded with planned capabilities, but these systems do not operate well and are often not synchronized. For example, materiel is often not available when needed, trained personnel are not available for equipment that is on hand (e.g., trained drivers for trucks) and personnel (ISAF advisors and ANA) do not show up on time. As a result, units frequently deploy from CFC to their gaining brigades without key items of their unit equipment or having successfully conducted collective training.

The situation just described illustrates the importance of understanding the operational environment *before* SFA is undertaken—one of the SFA imperatives articulated in U.S. Army doctrine.²⁸ Because there is a mismatch between the design of ANSF systems and the capabilities of Afghan soldiers and police to run them, the ANSF struggle when they have to function without significant ISAF help, and there are real questions about their sustainability after coalition forces depart. These disfunctionalities are widely recognized by advisors and partner units, but as of December 2009, SFA providers were only beginning to work with ANA leaders to make changes in how ANSF systems are designed, what ANSF doctrine should contain (which, in turn, influences how forces are employed), how institutional training is conducted, how leaders are developed, or any other aspect of DOTMLPF other than the size of the force.²⁹

²⁷ Interviews with KMTC advisors in Kabul, September 2009.

²⁸ U.S. Army Field Manual 3-07.1, Chapter Two.

²⁹ Author observations and interviews, December 2009.

Advisors and Partners in Afghanistan

The Afghan National Army

Coalition plans for advising and partnering with ANSF have evolved considerably since the IJC was created in October 2009. Advisors are coalition soldiers—and in the case of police, some civilians—who work day to day with Afghan counterparts inside of ANSF units. They have no other responsibilities. Partner units are coalition units that form habitual relationships with Afghan units and conduct operations with them. Prior to late 2009, they typically did not have advisory responsibilities, although in some cases ISAF country contingents placed their advisors under the oversight of their maneuver units, which had partner responsibilities as well.³⁰ The mission of advising ANSF units has recently shifted from CSTC-A to IJC in line with the philosophy that the maneuver commanders should be responsible for all efforts in their battlespace.³¹ In some areas, partner units are now responsible for advising under a concept called “embedded partnering,” in which coalition partner units co-locate and work side by side with their Afghan counterparts, without any dedicated ETTs. The latter approach has been adopted in the 203rd Corps sector of RC-E, and is called “combined action” because it combines the advisor and partnering functions under one command.

In addition to combined action, there are currently two other approaches to advising and partnering with Afghan units.³² One is the approach adopted by the British and Canadian contingents in Task Force Helmand and Task Force Kandahar, respectively, in which the advisory OMLTs work for the one-star battlespace commander. These OMLTs are robust in size and skills. For example, Canadian infantry kandak OMLTs are built around company command headquar-

³⁰ For example, the Canadian advisors to the 205th Corps fall under Task Force Kandahar.

³¹ JCISFA research indicates that this works well only if maneuver commanders make ANSF development the top priority. If kinetic operations are the top priority, then SFA is often made more difficult. Emails and discussions with JCISFA staff, January and February, 2010.

³² See Kelly et al., “RAND Objective Assessment of the ANSF,” for a discussion of all three approaches.

ters and staffs (Canadian companies are commanded by majors, and the OMLTs have sergeants major, and full staffs—S-1 through S-4). As such, field grade officers—Canadian majors—advise field grade officers—Afghan lieutenant colonels—and a full range of specialties are represented, including senior NCOs to work with Afghan sergeants. The other approach involves units that claim to perform embedded partnering similar to the combined action model but do not provide the continuous person-to-person approach needed to replicate the advisory function. Some call this “combined operations” since joint efforts are often limited mostly to the execution phase of joint operations.

Our field research about each of these current approaches to advising and partnering in Afghanistan yielded four major observations. First, successful advising and partnering efforts develop the skills of individual soldiers and units. Although these two aspects are clearly not mutually exclusive, there needs to be a distinct focus on developing skills at the individual and collective levels that will remain after the partnering unit leaves. This implies that the advising function should be retained, even if performed by individuals in the partner units. For ANSF units to be self-sustaining, Afghan commanders and staff must be able to perform their jobs and make their major systems (personnel, intelligence, operations and planning, and logistics) function.³³ Commanders have to cause their units to function as units, and units must continue to function—even when commanders, staff officers, and NCOs are replaced. This requires not only advisors and institutions that can provide trained replacements for staff but significant advising vertically throughout units, from the squad to the commander level.

Second, partnering is easier for units of some types than for others, and its effectiveness will vary accordingly. For example, a coalition maneuver unit can partner effectively with its Afghan counterpart when they are both engaged in doing the same tasks (if partnering is working properly). RAND researchers visited a tactical operations

³³ This also places a demand on the generating force, as when partner units and advisors depart and the capability to provide the intensive on-the-job training that they bring is no longer there, the leader development and education systems of the ANSF must provide replacements with the requisite skills.

center (TOC) that was a joint effort between a U.S. battalion task force and an Afghan unit. Here, the TOCs of the two units were combined, and operations and intelligence sections from both sat next to each other and worked on problems together full-time. The U.S. unit and the Afghan unit were working to accomplish missions that overlapped considerably. This type of hands-on effort, if tailored to be appropriate for the ANSF unit (e.g., it does not rely too much on sophisticated equipment and techniques that the Afghan unit cannot replicate or maintain) appears very promising. However, RAND researchers also visited a U.S. brigade support battalion (BSB) that is partnered with an Afghan combat service support (CSS) kandak. The BSB must both work with that Afghan unit to develop its leaders and capabilities and ensure that its parent organization—in this case a U.S. BCT—is supplied, its equipment maintained, and its other responsibilities fulfilled. Unlike the case of partnered maneuver units, in which both the coalition and Afghan units contribute significantly to the success of their shared missions, the Afghan CSS kandak will be unable to contribute much to the mission of the U.S. BSB to support its BCT, but it will remain heavily dependent on the U.S. BSB to perform its mission. Although the portion of the Afghan CSS kandak mission that is shared with the U.S. BSB may be roughly the same as the portion that the Afghan infantry kandak shares with its U.S. counterpart, the BSB has significant other responsibilities that demand the time and attention of its commander, staff, and soldiers. In short, embedded partnering may prove much more difficult for a BSB than for its maneuver brethren, unless it is augmented with a significant number of advisors. Even then, the partnering component of the effort may be less useful and the effort will be more accurately described as advising.

Third, there is one particularly important lesson to be learned from comparing the experiences of advisors serving in U.S. ETTs and ISAF OMLTs. When queried as to which approaches they preferred, almost all Afghan national leaders we interviewed stated that they preferred U.S. teams because U.S. advisors were willing to go into combat with them (some of the OMLTs were precluded from doing so by caveats placed on their employment and force protection by their

home nations).³⁴ Yet, CSTC-A staff made the important point that OMLTs were often better manned with larger numbers and soldiers in the appropriate grades and military occupational specialties (MOS) for the task they were assigned, whereas the U.S. teams tended to be much smaller and not well staffed for their missions.³⁵ Subsequent RAND field visits confirmed this observation, leading us to argue that the best option would be to create advisory teams that are sufficiently large, properly staffed, and able to accompany their Afghan counterparts into combat. These teams would thus both provide the technical skills that are needed and win the trust of their Afghan counterparts.

The fourth and final point addresses the selection of advisors and the preparation of advisors and partner units before they deploy. This is a critical area that needs improvement. Every U.S. advisor we interviewed indicated that he or she had learned a lot about force protection and something about Afghan culture and language from their predeployment training but had received little useful training on how to be an advisor.³⁶ Because advising is at least as demanding as being a principal staff officer for a U.S. unit, and little in a normal career prepares a soldier for advising other than previous advisory assignments, it would

³⁴ Not all OMLTs have these caveats. The Canadian and British OMLTs, in particular, do not. Thus, from the standpoint of transferring skills, some of the OMLTs may have been more effective than the ETTs. The Afghan leaders' preference for the ETTs reflected not the sense that they learned more from them, but rather greater trust and camaraderie as a result of fighting side by side. ANA leaders are the only ones able to compare ETTs and OMLTs. Because individual countries are responsible for different geographic areas of the country, most ANA units have only worked with an ETT or an OMLT from a single country and therefore have no basis for comparison.

³⁵ RAND interviews in Afghanistan, September 2009.

³⁶ As part of this and related research, RAND researchers met with or interviewed dozens of advisors in September, November, and December 2009. All of these advisors had been through predeployment training at Fort Riley. RAND research for this effort did not include an examination of the content or delivery of the training—only the feedback from advisors informs this statement. Yet RAND research for another project indicates that although the changes adopted so far by the 162nd Infantry Brigade have increased the training time and improved the curriculum, questions still remain as to whether the predeployment training provides sufficient preparation. It also suggests that there have not been accompanying improvements in the processes through which the services identify personnel to serve as advisors.

seem that a robust program of preparation is needed.³⁷ Commanders who have been successful at partnering could be particularly helpful in providing timely and relevant predeployment training for units heading to Afghanistan.

Another common theme voiced by advisors we spoke with for our research is that not all soldiers are well suited by character and personality for the advisory role.³⁸ According to those we interviewed, there is nothing in the Army or Marine Corps personnel selection process that seeks to select those better suited for this mission to be advisors.³⁹

Moreover, all participants in SFA efforts should have a common understanding of the goals and purposes of partnering. Our interviews with partner unit representatives or advisors of two Afghan Corps, seven Afghan brigades, and thirteen Afghan kandaks indicate a wide range of approaches and understandings of the partner mission. These understandings range from true embedded partnering, in which coalition units live and work with their Afghan partners, to “drive by” partnering in which Afghans—as units or individuals—are used to meet the requirement for Afghan participation in all operations with no regard to the development of Afghan capabilities. In one Regional Command (RC), the ANSF development team told RAND that they defined partnering in their RC as the “umbrella term for accelerating ANSF capability.” In some ways, these variations are the result of different commanders’ personalities and approaches, but some partnering techniques can be taught and trained on before deployment. A senior IJC leader mentioned to RAND his desire for a common “program of instruction” for partnering. While some flexibility is also necessary, the absence of a template can create confusion.

³⁷ What constitutes appropriate advising is an open question and an active area of research. It is clear from interviews with advisors that available training at the time they went through the advisor’s course was inadequate.

³⁸ FM 3-07.1 specifies a list of character or personality traits that advisors should have.

³⁹ RAND did not review Army or Marine Corps personnel policies to verify these statements.

The Afghan National Police

Partnering with and advising the ANP is more difficult than with the ANA, for several reasons. First, most coalition soldiers and units generally lack police skills and experience working with police forces. Furthermore, the mission of the ANP in most cases is not clearly defined. Many ISAF soldiers interviewed for this and related research thought that the ANP needed better counter-guerrilla skills,⁴⁰ but all civilian police advisors whom we interviewed—some with extensive experience in dysfunctional and underdeveloped countries—believe that this is the wrong approach. Instead, they believe that police should establish law and order and conduct specialized policing missions (e.g., police intelligence), but that soldiers are needed when it is necessary to fight insurgents in numbers. In the face of what amounts to an ill-defined mission, providing successful SFA through advisors or partners is significantly more difficult. Because most advisor and partner units are not law enforcement professionals, they can impart a limited number of skills and capabilities, such as those related to the technical aspects of weapons use and maintenance and good order and discipline. When advising and partnering focuses on skills that are common between police and soldiers (as well as on oversight to limit corruption and other bad behavior), it has more potential to be effective. Civilian police advisors are sometimes placed in PMTs and POMLTs to provide additional skills. However, these civilians often cannot or will not live and work closely with police due to the risks involved. As a result, military units advising police without law enforcement professionals to impart policing skills run the risk of turning police into paramilitary forces with no ability to enforce the rule of law.⁴¹ U.S. military police (MP) are better at this than soldiers from other MOSs, but they are far too few and MP

⁴⁰ The term actually used by these ISAF representatives was “counterinsurgency” rather than “counter-guerrilla.” However, establishing law and order is a critical factor in protecting the population, and thus in counterinsurgency. As such, police who were trained in the rule of law would make a significant contribution to counterinsurgency. Those who used this term meant the ability to conduct kinetic operations against armed insurgents, or guerrillas. We believe it important to use the more precise technical term, “counter-guerrilla.”

⁴¹ See Perito for more on this issue. This point was also made to the authors repeatedly in Afghanistan by both policing professionals and some military personnel, as well as by polic-

units do not typically train for civilian policing tasks. Here, especially, a common program of instruction, combined with some training in policing approaches for prospective partners, could go a long way, particularly when coupled with capable civilian advisors.

Not only does partnering with and advising police forces require different skill sets than advising military forces, it often requires the willingness to take on more risk if the police are operating in insurgent contested areas, and considerably more forces than are currently available. Unlike ANA units, which tend to live and operate in relatively large groups, police are often dispersed throughout contested areas more broadly and sparsely. For example, checkpoints that are smaller than squad size are one of the most common uses of police in Afghanistan and are often far removed from immediate support.⁴² Force protection concerns have caused many coalition governments to impose constraints on their forces that prevent them from partnering with police units, or even with larger contingents that are far from ISAF quick reaction force (QRF) support. Furthermore, there are simply not enough coalition forces to partner with all ANP units as currently deployed. As such, the challenges posed by difficult geography, poor roads, and insufficient forces, in addition to the lack of technical skills, make providing SFA to police units a far more difficult task than providing it to army units.

This additional risk is particularly grave if police are employed independently from ANA units. If joint ANA-ANP efforts could be effectively coordinated—which our field research indicates happens on only rare occasions—the risk to police and police advisors would

ing specialists in the United States. Author interviews in Kabul and Washington, fall and winter 2009.

⁴² These checkpoints are often overrun by insurgents, and the high casualties that stem from attacks on checkpoints are an important component of the argument that police need better counter-guerrilla skills. Yet these casualties result from failures to properly employ the force, not failures of force design or training (these exist as well, but that is a separate discussion). If coalition forces that could not be reinforced were placed at fire team-sized checkpoints, they would be overwhelmed as well, despite their superior training, and the commanders who placed them in these unsupportable situations would likely be relieved of command.

decrease because of the proximity of larger, more-capable ANA units whose mission includes support to the ANP.

As a final note, however, it is important to realize that the task of training, advising, and assisting police is not normally within the scope of military units. If it is to be a recurring function, capabilities will need to be developed and institutionalized. If it is not, alternative approaches must be developed and implemented before institutionalization of suboptimal, and sometimes counterproductive, methods (e.g., training and employing police forces as if they were military units) occur simply as a result of continued practice.

Concluding Observations

Our discussion of the three themes in this chapter (the overall scope and context of SFA in Afghanistan, assistance to the security ministries and the generating force, and the effects of SFA delivered through advisors and partners to the operating forces) suggests important disconnects between what is desired of SFA and what SFA is actually doing. There is no question that SFA in Afghanistan, and perhaps in other conflict zones to which the United States has deployed significant forces, cannot be viewed as independent from the larger effort to win the conflict. It is an integral part of the overall security effort, and so the responsibility for SFA should be an element of the overall commander's approach. SFA during conflict is likely to be much broader in scope than SFA during peacetime or in situations in which large forces are not deployed. Finally, a longitudinal view that recognizes that SFA plans must be adapted to the changing security situation is critical to success.

Thus, understanding the operating environment and its effects on SFA plans—in particular, its effect on the ANSF leadership and generating force—is crucial and central. Without a firm grasp of the key facts and conditions in Afghanistan, SFA plans, however technocratically brilliant, will not succeed. Nor will SFA efforts succeed if they do not develop the institutions and processes necessary to support and maintain ANSF capabilities over the long term. Furthermore, they cannot succeed if they are not sufficiently resourced.

A realistic understanding of the current capabilities, political realities, and basic inputs (human resources, funds, infrastructure) of the host-nation forces is also important to SFA planning and expectations. In Afghanistan, it is likely that creating a fully functioning ANSF that can stand on its own will take longer than currently planned, and expectations for what those forces will be able to do may need to be adjusted to account for the actual conditions in which they must be built and operate.

U.S. policy states that partnering and advising is a central aspect of success in SFA in Afghanistan, so it should not be treated as a secondary mission. The design of the effort, along with preparation of advisors and partner units, is critical to success. In particular, SFA efforts must develop both individuals and units, no matter what partnering and advising paradigm is implemented. Finally, partnering with and advising police units requires skills that are not resident in most military units, and police advisors and partners run greater risks than do those working with ANA units because of how police are employed. These risks could be mitigated by better joint employment of the ANA and the ANP, but the development of the necessary skills in partnering and advising would benefit from some fundamental rethinking of current approaches.

In the next chapter, we address a fourth theme, but one that stands alone. This is the issue of SFA assessments and how they could be better performed. We provide this discussion in an effort to help address the shortcoming highlighted at the beginning of this chapter—the lack of data to support good assessments.

A Framework for SFA and Assessing SFA During Conflict

The discussion in Chapter Three sets the stage for a more detailed look at what a framework for security force assistance—and assessing SFA—might look like in Afghanistan or other countries undergoing conflict. We begin by considering SFA during peacetime, with the goal of determining what types of feedback developing security institutions need to perform their tasks under less stressful conditions. After that, we look at how assessments of the ANSF were conducted in 2009 and provide some thoughts on assessments during conflict in general. We then use this information to derive the characteristics needed in an effective SFA assessment framework for Afghanistan.

SFA can take place during peace, immediately after a conflict, or during a conflict. During peace, “normal” rules for development and training—and assessing them—are appropriate. For example, individuals and units are trained to perform specific tasks that can be articulated through such documents as the U.S. military’s Mission Essential Task Lists (METL). When those goals are incorporated into the SFA program, assessments often focus not only on operational or structural training programs but also on such issues as democratic control and accountability of security institutions, clear roles and responsibilities, integrated approaches to policy development, career structures for personnel, ethnic and social balance, the education and experience of key

personnel, sustainability, and financial management.¹ Some proposed assessment tools oriented to police include measures such as authority and reach, handling of crime statistics, coordination with the justice system, management and oversight, community relations (including human rights and public acceptance), and sustainability.² Others pay particular attention to public opinion.³

Thus, in an ideal situation, SFA approaches are defined by national leaders' visions for what the security forces ought to be able to do, which can be translated into criteria against which institutional performance can be assessed. Most actual SFA efforts do not meet this ideal. Post-conflict, and to a lesser extent regular peacetime, environments present resource constraints, political exigencies, and day-to-

¹ See, among others, *OECD-DAC Handbook on Security Sector Reform*; Report of the Secretary-General, United Nations General Assembly, 2008; Hester Groenwald and Michael von Tangen Page, eds., "Towards a Better Practice Framework in Security Sector Reform: Broadening The Debate," Clingaendel-International Alert-Saferworld Occasional SSR Paper 1, 2002.

² Ylber Bajraktari et al., *The PRIME System: Measuring the Success of Post-Conflict Police Reform*, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, January 2006; Simon Rynn, with Duncan Hiscock, *Evaluating for Security and Justice: Challenges and Opportunities for Improved Monitoring and Evaluation of Security System Reform Programmes*, London: Saferworld, December 2009.

³ Todd Foglesong et al., *Measuring Progress Toward Safety and Justice: A Global Guide to the Design of Performance Indicators Across the Justice Sector*, Vera Institute of Justice, November 2003. The development of effective assessment tools for SFA remains very much a work in progress, and some peacetime programs do not incorporate these elements. Smaller-scale efforts, for instance, those that involve the provision of a single course or train personnel for a given task, either in their own country or abroad, may be difficult to assess for broader impact. They will thus be evaluated more directly—for example, on whether those who completed the course are able to carry out the tasks taught in that course. Weapons or other systems provision and the training of personnel to operate those systems are other examples. However, particularly in post-conflict societies, such approaches are likely to be critiqued for not integrating broader goals into the SFA effort. For a discussion of how defense sector reform has not traditionally been integrated into broader goals and have generally lacked strategically useful metrics, see David C. Gompert, Olga Olikier, and Anga Timilsina, *Clean, Lean, and Able: A Strategy for Defense Development*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, OP-101-RC, 2004.

day needs that make reform—and assessment—difficult. The justice sector, including police, judicial functions, and corrections, generally presents a greater challenge than the military, because these elements must be reformed while their personnel are still on the job. This is more difficult than reforming during training, because there is little time to conduct assessments or absorb lessons learned. In addition, restructuring and retraining must usually occur while organizations continue to operate because there are few opportunities to remove personnel from their full-time work. Persistent problems include the question of what to do with police (or judges, attorneys, prosecutors, or corrections officers) who are already on the job—are they to be retired or retrained, and at what pace and with what allowances for a force that might combine products of the old system with the new?

During a conflict, these challenges are magnified. Not only must existing police, justice, and corrections personnel be retrained and their approaches rethought on the job, but armies must be expanded (or created) and military personnel trained even as they fight. This makes assessments against well-defined global standards unrealistic, for there will be neither the luxury of long-term training to build the best possible force nor the time or circumstances required to conduct assessments in as rigorous a manner as in peacetime (e.g., there will be no “observer-controllers” who follow a unit and evaluate its performance against set training criteria). Furthermore, not only must forces be built in a way that responds to the immediate needs of the conflict, but they also must be built with the understanding that they will be transitioned to a peacetime structure that aligns with future needs when the conflict ends. This creates two standards that may at times be in conflict with one another: Force size, domestic use of the armed forces, and police roles are examples of areas where there may be tension between near-term and long-term needs. Adding further complexity is the fact that a dynamic conflict environment often makes it even more difficult to define the requirements for forces, which may change as the conflict continues.

Moreover, SFA during conflict means that while some SFA efforts will focus on developing and building capable forces, concurrent SFA efforts will focus on actual operations that employ those same forces.

In peacetime, this can also occur, primarily with police, judiciary, and corrections, but during conflict, the often-difficult balance between the two extends to all components of SFA.

In a conflict, SFA, and thus assessment of its effectiveness, must still start from a conception of what is required, but it must also recognize the additional challenges that the conflict context presents. Conflict demands immediate action and thus provides less time for reviewing approaches and fewer opportunities for fine-tuning and fixing mistakes than in peacetime. Furthermore, the ability to successfully accomplish tactical tasks does not necessarily result in the ability to achieve strategic success—i.e., allied forces can accomplish all of their missions successfully but the overall effort may still fail. This underlines how important it is that forces be judged not simply against their immediate tasks but within a context that evaluates whether those tasks are the right ones. Effectiveness in assigned duties is insufficient if the vision for what the security forces must be able to do is flawed. For example, judging whether or not a police force can competently run checkpoints will not be useful if the real need is to collect and analyze intelligence on insurgents who are subverting the local social structure. Feedback about deficiencies in soldiers, police, units, and institutions must be expressed in—or translated into—language and terminology that are meaningful to those responsible for designing, building, and maintaining institutions and that provide insights into needed changes in the nature or size of the forces and support systems being developed.

In Afghanistan, the assessments that were in place in 2009 from the battalion through the ministry level fall under the umbrella title of the Training and Readiness Assessment Tool (TRAT) and assess ANSF potential rather than SFA effectiveness (as discussed below). The TRAT approach provides a different type of feedback than that outlined above. There is an Army version (the ATRAT) and a police version (the PTRAT). Although they use different methods to collect data, they provide similar ratings in terms of what they call *capability milestones* (CMs).

In general, the ATRAT data collection and assessment method used during 2009 was similar to the Unit Status Report (USR) that U.S. Army units submit on their own readiness. It provides a number

of criteria that are meant to capture whether or not a unit is ready to perform its mission. These include

- personnel status (e.g., number of officers, NCOs, and soldiers assigned and present for duty with respect to those authorized—though not by military occupational specialty (MOS), AWOL status and reenlistment—what the ANA calls recontracting)
- command and control (the reports provided to RAND contain only overall assessments, rather than data on specific aspects of command and control)
- training (the reports provided to RAND contain overall assessments rather than data on specific aspects of training)
- sustainment and logistics—particularly ammunition stockage status
- equipment on hand compared to what is authorized
- equipment readiness.⁴

CM assessments for individual functions that units perform are defined as follows:

- Unit functions rated CM1 can be conducted by the ANA unit with limited external assistance.
- Unit functions rated CM2 can be conducted by the ANA unit with routine support from ISAF.
- Unit functions rated CM3 can be conducted by the ANA unit within the context of ISAF-led operations.
- Unit functions rated CM4 cannot be conducted by the ANA unit in an operational setting.

In addition, units receive CM ratings overall. These are defined as follows:

- CM1 units are capable of leading operational missions with limited or episodic assistance from ISAF units.

⁴ These categories and the descriptions of them come from or are derived from the actual TRAT briefings themselves.

- CM2 units are capable of leading operational missions with routine support from ISAF.
- CM3 units are capable of participating in operations led by ISAF units.
- CM4 units are not yet capable of operational missions.

According to those responsible for compiling the ATRAT at the regional command and national levels, the ANA generally provides the data for the ATRAT to advisors or partner units. All advisors and partner unit personnel with whom RAND researchers spoke for this project believed that many of those data are unreliable. They stated that coalition personnel have very limited ability to independently verify the data for two reasons: (1) They do not have enough personnel to verify key data, such as inventories of equipment. (2) Afghan units are not under U.S. command and therefore need not—and often do not—cooperate with them. As such, those responsible for these reports, from sergeant to general, indicated that they do not believe they reflect reality.

PTRATs have a similar format and function as the ATRAT, but are not identical. CM definitions are the same as for ANA units, and assessments are made on four dimensions:

- personnel
- training
- equipment
- facilities.

The PTRAT reports on personnel and equipment status provide less detail than the ATRAT but include other items of particular concerns to the ANP. For example, the PTRAT rendered in November 2009 included information on whether or not police districts had gone through the FDD program and whether pay issues exist.⁵

Most of those with whom we spoke indicated that the same problems exist with the PTRAT as with the ATRAT. For the PTRAT, too,

⁵ See Chapter Two for the details of the FDD program.

most of the information regarding personnel and equipment comes from the ANP. Partners and advisors often have even more difficulty verifying it than ANA partners and advisors do, because they have fewer opportunities to directly observe the ANP. Few ANP partners and advisors are co-located with the ANP in any meaningful way, and few visit the units they work with regularly. Because ANP personnel are, by and large, not meant to be on site at all times but rather are deployed at checkpoints or other tasks throughout the area of responsibility, headcounts and weapon counts by ISAF partners and advisors are rare. Recent efforts to carry out an equipment inventory resulted in widely divergent results.

Questions of accuracy aside, it is important to note that these data, like the USR data for the U.S. Army, provide information on one principal thing—whether or not a unit has the potential to perform its mission. The assumption that the units are of the right type, that authorized personnel and equipment are right for their tasks, that doctrine and prescribed training are appropriate and sufficient, and that these units are deployed and employed in ways that will help address security concerns. A further assumption is that the forces have a degree of maturity and stability, or at least that changes in the aforementioned characteristics need not be considered, because they provide no information that would inform such a consideration. In short, assessments of this type provide neither insights into the actual operational performance of military units or police forces nor any feedback that would identify problems with their design, preparation, or employment—i.e., any aspect of institutional performance (to be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter) that is not an input to the TRAT.⁶ These assessments provide but scant feedback to Afghan or ISAF senior leaders—those charged not only with fighting the conflict but also

⁶ DOTMLPF is a concept developed for military institutions but with modifications is also applicable to police institutions (e.g., doctrine might take the form of checklists for individual police or small groups, rather than guidance for employing large military formations). However, in its essence it is about designing and managing systems of systems that apply to any large organization. We use the term for both military and police formations with this understanding and without further caveats.

with building forces and institutions to do it—on several critical issues that may require their attention and resources.⁷

Assessments also need to address the realities of how programs are implemented and conditions on the ground. For example, knowing whether an ANP district has been through FDD is less important than knowing what proportion of the unit's current personnel have undergone that training. Because of a number of constraints, FDD is often implemented with subsets of units rather than their full complement, and high attrition rates for the ANP mean that within a year of FDD, many of those who were trained are no longer on the job (or at least not in that district).

In general, an assessment methodology for security forces in conflict should start with the goal of the effort and work toward increasingly more-specific criteria for success until a point is reached where the performance of individuals, units, organizations, and programs can be clearly defined.⁸ This should include information that could lead to judgments about their appropriateness for the task at hand as well. In a well-formed approach, individuals, security forces, and institutions must accomplish well-defined goals (or “ends”), and operate according to conceptual approaches (or “ways”) to solving the problem, such that if they perform well, the goal should be achieved. The methodology can be viewed as a hierarchy of objectives and tasks that at the top addresses whether the end goal of the effort is being achieved and is developed further down the hierarchy through greater levels of specificity. If individuals, units, and institutions are performing their missions as defined but the goals are not being met, the inescapable conclusion is either that the conceptual approach is flawed in some manner

⁷ As further evidence of the inadequacy of TRAT data, our interviews indicated that many ANA units and ANP precincts are not able to perform basic missions above the small-unit level. As such, an assessment approach that helps determine actual operational capabilities is essential.

⁸ We present here an effects-based assessment taxonomy. Other methodologies are possible.

or that the means available for performing it (e.g., individuals, forces, institutions, resources) are inappropriate or insufficient.⁹

The success or failure of the overall effort, as well as of the ways and means for achieving success, are connected through measures of effectiveness (MOEs) that assess progress toward achieving the overall objective, and measures of performance (MOPs) that assess the performance of individuals, units, organizations, and programs. Input measures are also important, such as whether enough resources—people, units, funds, or other assets, are available to execute the conceptual approach to the problem. We illustrate this with an Afghan example.

The effectiveness of an ANA unit in 2009 can be summed up by its ability to contribute to the goal of protecting the population—the ultimate MOE. It does not do this alone—indeed, it is but one of several important players in this endeavor, including the ANP, the National Directorate of Security (NDS), and the judiciary and corrections systems. The ANA, along with other assets and the ways in which they are employed to achieve their goals, should be viewed as components of a whole as illustrated in Figure 4.1.¹⁰ However, if SFA fails, the overall effort fails. To achieve this goal, there ought to be an overarching concept for employing all forces and other government and nongovernmental assets so that they all work in unison to protect the population.¹¹

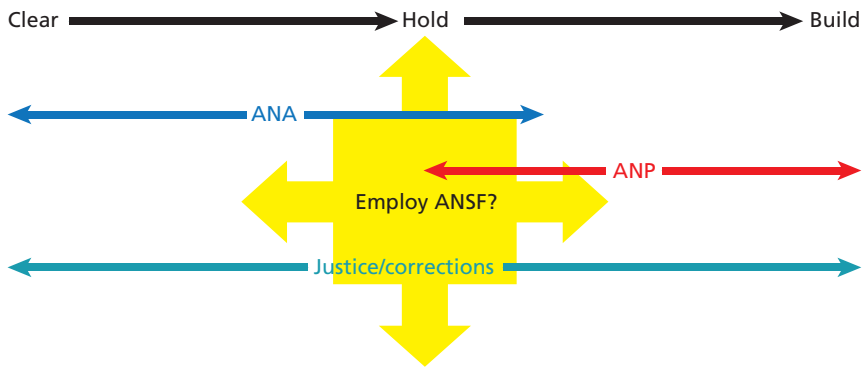
Within this concept, specific tasks will be assigned to individual units, forces, and assets of various types. Whether or not those tasks are accomplished well would be determined by applying appropriate MOPs for a given unit. For example, an MOP for an infantry kandak

⁹ This is the classical “ends, ways, means” construct for strategy development. “Ends” are the goals, to be measured by measures of effectiveness; “ways” are the conceptual approaches that succeed or fail based on the performance of their parts, assessed by measures of performance; the “means” consist of the inputs.

¹⁰ This figure is not meant to be comprehensive or prescriptive. Rather, it illustrates the need for several institutions to act together over time to protect the population. We note that most players depicted in this figure will play roles throughout all stages of the effort. Depicted here are the phases of an effort in which they will have primary responsibility.

¹¹ Our fieldwork in September, November, and December 2009 indicates that no such overarching force employment concept existed at that time.

Figure 4.1
Protecting the Population in Afghanistan



RAND MG1066-4.1

(battalion) in a given operation might be whether it can conduct a sweep of an area looking for weapons caches or control access to a village along a major supply route according to some acceptable standard. These measures determine whether or not a unit (or other organization or individual) can or cannot accomplish its mission. In this case, they are outcome-oriented (i.e., whether the intended effect happened), but they could also be output-oriented (whether a required product was provided—e.g., a supply unit might be assessed on its ability to move a certain number of metric tons per kilometer per day). Although the specifics of these MOPs may differ to some degree depending on a given operation or context, they should not differ in kind. Other MOEs and MOPs are also important, such as respecting human rights and minimizing corruption that harms the Afghan government's legitimacy. These are operational tasks, and the success or failure of an individual, unit, or some other organization to accomplish them only becomes evident as the result of success or failure in operations. Assessments of these determine whether an operation can succeed within reasonable expectations.

But the capabilities of units and forces are only a part of the story. Much of SFA necessarily focuses on institutional development, as noted

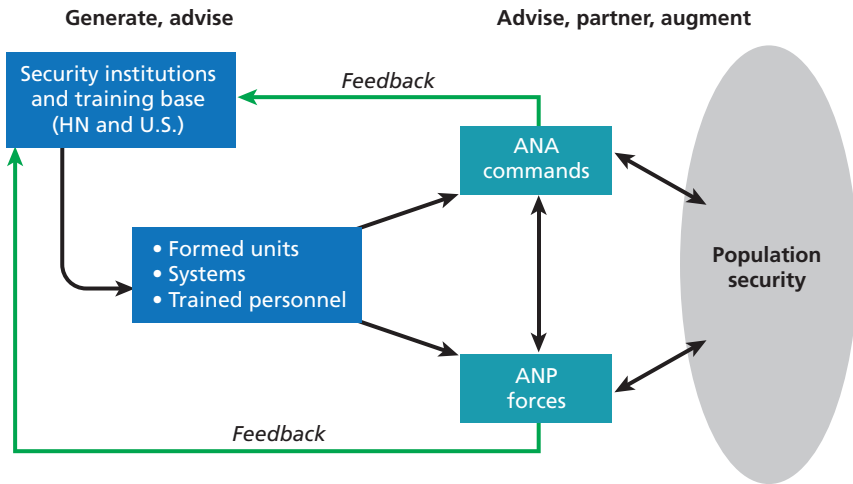
above.¹² That is, the general set of operational tasks that units of a particular type will need to perform should be well defined; together with other data about the force (e.g., literacy rates, communications capabilities), they should inform doctrine, organization, training, equipment requirements (materiel), leadership and education, personnel, and facilities—institutional considerations characterized by the acronym DOTMLPF.¹³ Institutions must be capable of defining and refining needs and enabling forces to meet those needs. This may create a tension among SFA providers charged with helping Afghans operate the forces and those charged with helping to develop the force, since operators may not have the time or training to provide feedback that is useful to the force developers. However, the force developers cannot do their jobs effectively without this feedback. Clearly, judgment will have to be exercised in determining how much information of what type to demand of advisors and partner units. But it is strategically essential that operational forces—which until recently have been distinct from the force developers but now share in that responsibility with NTM-A/CSTC-A—provide feedback to those charged with institutional SFA in a manner that is useful for improving the overall SFA efforts. Figure 4.2 shows one way that this feedback could operate. This feedback would also be provided to the operational forces through the IJC, which has a significant advisory function.

The assessments of successes and shortcomings must help those charged with the institutional aspects of force development make decisions not only on whether the host-nation forces should change and adapt but also on whether their own efforts should change as well.

¹² SFA tasks such as “employ” do go beyond institutional development, but even they are assessed with respect to host-nation unit capacity, not just whether or not forces are employed—which can happen regardless of their capabilities, as we saw in Iraq in 2004 (author’s observations while a member of the Coalition Provisional Authority Office of National Security Assistance, 2004).

¹³ Field Manual 3-07, *Stability Operations*, dated October 2008, defines security force assistance as “the unified action to generate, employ, and sustain local, host-nation, or regional security forces in support of a legitimate authority” (p. 6-14). In this regard, we find the U.S. Army doctrinal manual, Field Manual 3-07.1, *Security Force Assistance*, May 2009, only partially useful. Its focus on the brigade combat team captures the tactical aspects of SFA well, but it fails to capture the higher-level aspects that are critical in Afghanistan.

Figure 4.2
SFA Feedback Loop in Counterinsurgency



NOTE: Feedback should inform SFA providers across DOTMLPF.

RAND MG1066-4.2

These assessments could have implications for any of the dimensions of DOTMLPF, so they must go beyond simple statements of whether or not operational tasks were accomplished to identify what improvements and changes are needed. In Afghanistan, these data must be used to assess the employment of the security forces as a whole, as well as each of their parts, and the ability of those forces to work with intelligence, courts, corrections, and development efforts. For example, military or police forces that are charged with protecting a population in a given area must be trained to understand the relative contributions of all available assets and how those assets contribute to overall success. This is a highly sophisticated set of skills that even Western forces struggle with. On the other end of the spectrum, feedback on such basic skills as marksmanship, weapons maintenance, and fire control is needed—and in Afghanistan, not provided regularly. For example, RAND interviews with ANA brigade commanders and staffs in December 2009 revealed that most Afghan brigades are running basic training courses from two to four weeks in length to correct deficien-

cies of soldiers coming out of the training base, but this was unknown to the training base leaders.¹⁴

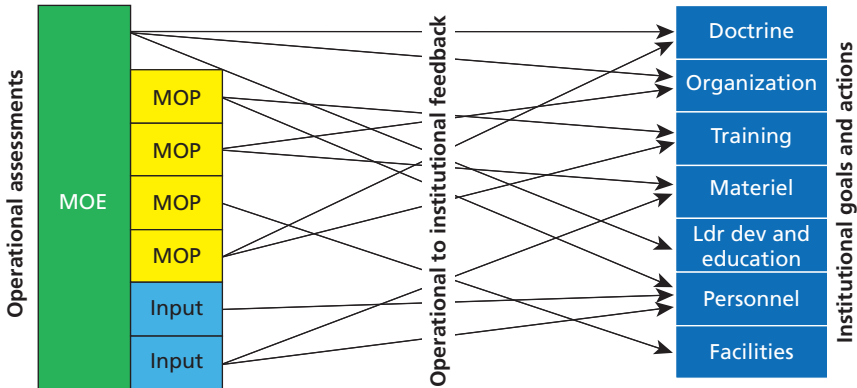
Thus, MOEs for operational forces must not only identify which effects are being achieved but must also address the conceptual approaches that are being used and the institutional development of the force. For example, if the force is too small or improperly employed or configured to achieve the nation's goals, this has implications for doctrine, organization, training, and leader development and possibly other areas as well. If soldiers and police are unable to perform required tasks that are well defined or if leaders are unable to employ forces in ways that will succeed, this has implications for training and leader development and education. If capabilities are needed that do not exist in the force, this has implications for personnel, training, and materiel. And while the specifics for each conflict will differ, the general principle should not.

Figure 4.3 illustrates this point by means of a conceptual map. It illustrates the contents of the feedback loop shown in Figure 4.2 with lines that connect MOEs, MOPs, and input measures to the elements of DOTMLPF. However, each of these feedback lines can and should be further developed in conjunction with the specific MOEs, MOPs, or input measures being used. Although the content of the feedback loop will be different for each distinct element of the security forces, some standard questions should be raised in these assessments, and the assessments must provide the information needed to answer them. These questions could take the form of a checklist, which would cover several key categories, such as the following:

- Is the approach adopted by the ANSF likely to produce population security, and, if not, what specific problems appear to preclude it from doing so?
- Does the ANSF have doctrine that provides guidance on how to employ forces according to the adopted approach?

¹⁴ After the research for this report was completed, NTM-A adopted a number of measures that helped remedy some of these deficiencies.

Figure 4.3
Contents of the Feedback Loop: Mapping MOEs, MOPs, and Input Measures to Institution Building in SFA



NOTE: As used here, DOTMLPF—appropriately modified for policing components—is meant to also signify aspects of accountability and transparency, human rights, coordination with other security forces, contextualization within broader justice sector, rule of law, and other critical issues.

RAND MG1066-4.3

- Does the ANSF have the capabilities and capacity to do what is demanded by that doctrine (e.g., in terms of personnel, materiel, funding)?
- If not, what changes are possible/required?¹⁵
- Is training appropriate to the doctrine, and are the materiel and facilities sufficient for training?

This feedback should come as the result of well-structured approaches that build assessments into SFA programs that help achieve the desired end state (MOEs, MOPs, etc.). Doing so will require SFA providers to think through the logic behind their approaches and will make it easier for them to adjust those approaches if they are not working. For instance, to determine whether the adopted approach is likely to produce population security, one must have an operational defini-

¹⁵ This question could follow the normal force development train of logic that looks at what is easiest to do and progresses through possible changes that are increasingly difficult and expensive until it gets to what works.

tion of what population security is and how the ANSF will go about achieving it. It is a matter not simply of measuring security itself but of explicitly defining how current approaches are meant to contribute to it.

Because of the inherent difficulties of producing assessments that are meaningful to those who are developing the forces during conflict, assessment approaches should be designed into SFA efforts.¹⁶ Advisors and partner units do conduct monthly ATRAT and PTRAT assessments, but these are not as meaningful for SFA providers as they could be. What is lacking is a security-sector-wide, DOTMLPF-wide set of information demands. Those responsible for SFA should articulate what input they require to develop the whole force, based on the status of the current force and the current conflict, and what that force will need to be able to do when SFA programs are no longer provided. Those responsible for SFA should use these inputs to develop more comprehensive assessment mechanisms.

In this way, every step of force development—doctrine development, institutional development, training, partnering, advising, and operations—will include consistent assessment components. Ideally, these can and should be shared with the recipients of the assistance to help them build a self-assessment capability that SFA providers can then draw on to complement their own assessments and that will eventually stand on its own.

Conclusions

This chapter asserts that while SFA during conflict will necessarily differ in important ways from SFA during peacetime, the information required to build institutions effectively will not differ in kind. In fact, it will be based on the more realistic factors of success during conflict rather than a projection of what capabilities and skills might be required in the future should conflict arise. However, care will be

¹⁶ This should be done from the outset wherever possible, to enable evaluation and adaptation throughout the course of the entire effort.

needed with respect to police requirements so that police retain their essential character as law enforcement officers even during conflict—in particular, that they are not militarized to the point at which they are police in name only. Furthermore, assessments of security forces will be harder to produce because the demands of conflict may preclude some types of precise measurements, such as those that can be performed at training centers. Nonetheless, assessments of the ANSF should provide information to SFA providers that will assist them in making judgments about the changing requirements for ANSF and their own changing needs.

Importantly, assessments must be built into SFA efforts and should provide feedback that is useful for SFA providers who work with both the operating and generating forces. Unit Status Report–type feedback is useful for mature, steady-state forces, but it is not useful for determining if fundamental changes in employment or DOTMLPF considerations are needed. To provide such information, feedback must contain content that is in the language of those that must use it—in this case the language of those developing the institutions, for example, DOTMLPF—or that can be easily interpreted. SFA providers must also adapt their approaches as the needs of the operational force change.

Implications of SFA in Afghanistan for the U.S. Army

U.S. Army Doctrine and Lessons from Afghanistan

In this chapter, we examine what U.S. doctrine tells us about security force assistance and how to assess it. We then apply the insights from the previous chapters to help understand the implications for the U.S. Army as it tries to develop its abilities to conduct and assess SFA. We acknowledge that lessons from Afghanistan will not be universally applicable and observe that security sector reform (SSR) and SFA overlap to a much larger degree in Afghanistan than in some other places. In countries with a functioning security sector, SFA may contribute to SSR, but both SFA and SSR will also have other goals.¹ However, in Afghanistan (and Iraq and in a number of post-conflict states), it is not a great overstatement to assert that no security sector existed to be reformed. Rather, one needed to be created from the ground up. In such a context, SSR must be integrated with SFA and must incorporate it to a large extent, or both SSR and SFA risk ineffectiveness and failure. However, SFA may be undertaken for goals other than reform.

U.S. Army Doctrine

Field Manual 3-07, *Stability Operations*, provides a sophisticated discussion of SSR,² and Field Manual 3-07.1, *Security Force Assistance*,

¹ SSR addresses the entire security sector, which is much broader than SFA. SFA usually focuses on the military and occasionally on the police, while only rarely addressing intelligence and the justice sector.

² FM 3-07, especially Chapter Six.

provides a good—if incomplete—discussion of the framework for SFA.³ These two documents indicate that the U.S. Army generally understands the need to create fully functional security forces and ministries. However, that understanding has not been reflected on the ground in Afghanistan until recently (perhaps because these comparatively recent publications in part reflect how much has been learned there and in Iraq). However, FM 3-07.1, in particular, has important deficiencies that the Afghanistan case brings to light. First, it focuses almost entirely on BCTs and below. Other than a broad and general discussion of the SFA framework, it does not capture the critical issues of designing and adjusting the institutions needed to plan, field, maintain and develop the foreign security forces (FSF) and ministries. It leaves out some of the most critical players in very large operations like Afghanistan, such as the NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan, as well as “normal” SFA in countries where no operational forces are deployed. Because it focuses primarily on improving the execution of SFA rather than its design, it covers important issues in general but leaves out most of the details needed to implement the framework provided in Chapter Two of the field manual. Yet both design and execution are critical for successful SFA efforts.

Furthermore, most of the discussion of assessments in FM 3-07.1 indicates that assessments are needed but provides insufficient guidance on how to conduct them so that they are useful to all major SFA providers. The discussion of brigade operations in Chapter Three provides some guidance on the type of assessment information required, which touches on many critical aspects of assessment (as discussed in Chapter Four of this monograph).⁴ However, the field manual does not make the connection between the results of these assessments and the concerns of those responsible for creating the institutions that produce the forces and are therefore ultimately responsible for the factors assessed (doctrine; organization; training; materiel and equipment;

³ FM 3-07.1. Chapter Two of this manual presents a high-level overview that is reasonably complete, but the majority of the manual addresses only those elements of SFA that a BCT would address.

⁴ FM 3-07.1, paragraphs 3-56 to 3-72.

leadership and personnel; command, control, communications, and intelligence; and operational effectiveness).⁵ Additionally, some aspects of the assessment approach that are recommended would likely be difficult to implement or might not be wise to implement.⁶

Synthesis of Observations from Afghanistan

We have identified five other important lessons from Afghanistan that bear on the U.S. Army as an institution. First, if the United States plans to undertake nation-building efforts on the scale of Iraq and Afghanistan in the future, using largely military personnel, the U.S. military must be prepared to help create entire security institutions as well as to perform more traditional SFA. This task is of an entirely different magnitude than that considered in doctrine. In Afghanistan—and Iraq—it is the job of three- and four-star generals, not BCT commanders. It entails the ability to align U.S. strategic goals and practical expectations with what is achievable in a way that meets requirements. Alternatively put, the mission is not merely to assist foreign forces but to design entire security institutions in such a way that they meet U.S. national interests and align with the political, social, and security realities of the host nation. This must be done in conjunction with—and as an integral part of—fighting ongoing conflicts that are existential to the host nation and important to the United States and that are primarily political in nature but also have economic, social, and psychological components.⁷ This requires strategic thinking on a regional and in some cases global level, as well as the melding of SFA with the operational art to design and conduct campaigns.

⁵ FM 3-07.1, paragraph 3-62.

⁶ For example, the field manual recommends that training be assessed against FSF mission essential task lists (METLs) if they exist, or U.S. METL if they do not. However, U.S. general officers with extensive field experience, to include a division commander in Afghanistan, tell RAND that METL assessments are very difficult if not impossible to implement in a combat environment. Furthermore, U.S. METL will in many cases not be appropriate for FSF, which have different capabilities and constraints.

⁷ See, for example, U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24/U.S. Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.5, *Counterinsurgency*, December 2006, paragraph 1-3.

The skills needed by the leaders of these efforts and their staffs are significantly different from those that are needed by corps and army commanders in the traditional kinetic aspects of general war.⁸ To succeed, these leaders must be able to work with other U.S. government agencies, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and, perhaps most important, with the host-nation government and political leaders. Furthermore, these leaders must understand not only how to employ U.S. and coalition forces but also how to develop host-nation forces and employ them with coalition forces in such a way that both host-nation and U.S. interests are met (including the resources needed to maintain appropriate forces, the missions those forces must perform, and the tasks they are capable of performing). They must also ensure that these forces are developed on a time line that meets U.S. requirements to end the conflict in accordance with political direction. This is a tremendous challenge under the best of circumstances. At present, it is even more difficult because the necessary skills are not ones that have traditionally been part of the U.S. Army's leader development approach. But they should be, if the Army wants to create the organic capabilities to perform this type of SFA well.⁹

The second major lesson is that a thorough understanding of and appreciation for the operational environment is absolutely essential if U.S. and other coalition forces are to adequately design, build, and assist FSF. A few examples help illustrate this point. When, as in Afghanistan, SFA includes the requirement to train an almost entirely illiterate force in a country where tremendous incentives exist for such self-serving behavior as corruption, success will require a planning approach that incorporates realistic expectations of what is possible. But developing such an approach is something with which few outside of the special operations community have had any experience. Even in

⁸ General war is defined as part of the spectrum of warfare in U.S. Army Field Manual 3-0, *Operations*, February 2008, page 2-1.

⁹ RAND did not look at the current curricula of the DOD intermediate leader education (command and staff colleges) or senior service colleges as part of this study. The research team is, however, aware of what these curricula looked like prior to the most recent conflicts. As a result, this statement is about what is required to establish this capability, not a critique of current practice.

Iraq, where the United States played the major role in building security forces from scratch, literacy is a prerequisite for joining the Iraqi Security Forces. Thus, large parts of the training model used by U.S. forces in Afghanistan, which relies heavily on having literate indigenous partners to train, may not be directly useful. Service personnel and forces that conduct SFA as advisors or partner units must be trained on how to instill, develop, and reinforce skills in Afghan personnel who may be illiterate. Efforts to train advisors, partners, and trainers must be designed to account for factors such as these from the beginning, rather than simply applying existing approaches that work with Western soldiers.

Third, the idea that leaders should place the welfare of their soldiers above their own is a foreign concept in Afghanistan. This means that the entire ethos of leadership that is taught in the U.S. military will be difficult to instill in Afghanistan's security forces in the short term—cultures change more slowly than the duration of most interventions. It also means that SFA providers must plan with forces whose leaders may be corrupt and must be prepared to curb corruption (e.g., the theft of soldiers' pay and their food rations by self-serving leaders) as part of their duties. Moreover, corruption is not unique to Afghanistan; large-scale corruption also exists in many other underdeveloped countries, as well as some developed countries in which Western concepts of leadership do not prevail.

Additionally, planning for increased transparency and checks on leaders will necessarily require skills not normally found in U.S. service personnel and units and will almost certainly slow down the tempo of FSF efforts, from operations to logistics. Advisors and partner unit leaders must understand both how to foster better leadership models, design efforts to facilitate transparency and accountability, and how to understand what the appropriate responses should be when faced with blatant corruption and bad leadership. They must also understand that this will affect their own unit operations.

A continuous challenge in current SFA efforts is the requirement both to develop police and military forces and to integrate the SFA effort into broader security sector reform. According to current doctrine, the U.S. military's mission in police development is principally

to support the lead agency, but in Afghanistan, military personnel have found themselves the lead actors in a substantial portion of the police development effort. Incorporating SFA into SSR efforts, on the other hand, is an appropriate practice under any conditions and has too often been ignored in the past.¹⁰

The mission of developing the police creates substantial challenges and raises questions about long-term missions. Although some military personnel may have varying degrees of police experience, they are not police officers and their efforts to train police, as evidenced by the experience in Iraq and Afghanistan, face tremendous challenges.¹¹ Not only is policing inherently different from military operations, but policing in a conflict or post-conflict environment has unique requirements.¹² Incorporating a clear understanding of those requirements, and adjusting plans accordingly, is crucial. Although we could argue that military personnel are simply wrong for this mission and that the U.S. government as a whole has important choices to make about how to develop and resource police training capabilities and how to integrate them into SFA, the military continues to have this job in Iraq and Afghanistan because it is the only organization capable of performing it at all. Unless and until a better approach is developed and

¹⁰ It is important to note that SSR is a major effort that may involve not just technical, but also political, economic and social efforts (e.g., budgeting for security forces, the concept of rule of law and those who are responsible for it in a society). SFA, on the other hand, more often encompasses technical programs and tactical operations. See, for example, the appendix to Terrence Kelly et al., *Security Cooperation Organizations in the Country Team: Options for Success*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, TR-734-A, 2010, for a lengthy list of security cooperation and assistance programs.

¹¹ Principal among these challenges is how they are employed—in particular, where and when they can be employed. Police are not soldiers, and if they are used as substitutes for soldiers they take high casualties. However, reports from Afghanistan indicate that training police as paramilitary forces to increase their survivability limits their ability and inclination to act as rule-of-law police.

¹² MP units could be trained to provide this type of training, or other types of police forces provided. For a discussion of options, see Terrence K. Kelly et al., *A Stability Police Force for the United States: Justification and Options for Creating U.S. Capabilities*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-819-A, 2009.

implemented, military personnel must be given appropriate guidelines, training, and capabilities.

SFA efforts must also straddle a carefully calibrated and continuously recalibrated line between building the forces needed for the fight and ensuring the transition to a sustainable force structure when the fight is over. This requires continued reassessments of needs and the ability to adjust SFA efforts as needs calculations shift. This is tremendously difficult in a dynamic conflict environment, and it demands savvy leadership and close interaction with host-country political and security force leaders to ensure that definitions and approaches are both correct and flexible. Effective SSR is also crucial to ensuring that the force will be able to transition to peacetime; it should lead to significant trade-offs in thinking about the right force structures, employment approaches, and training.

U.S. forces should understand that using Western political and social models to design and develop FSF may have unintended and undesirable outcomes. On the political level, civilian control of the military is an important concept in democracies, but it will have very different implications in tribal and authoritarian political systems. Civilian control of the military in these situations may result in one political party placing its adherents in a majority of the leadership positions in the security force and so capturing its loyalty and ensuring it stays in power (state capture). It will also often result in something other than a system of assignments and promotions based on merit. Instead, personal, ethnic or party loyalties are likely to be the conditions for important assignments and promotions. In Afghanistan, we see positions that have the potential for illicit profits from corruption being sold.¹³ On the individual level, we see that some soldiers and police charged with protecting the population have loyalties to individuals or social structures other than the nation, and these loyalties need to be taken into account when designing and implementing SFA for FSF and ministries. These factors imply a need for training that pre-

¹³ The reports of such sales are numerous. Then-Afghan Minister of Interior, Hanif Atmar, told RAND researchers in September 2009 that in Afghanistan district and provincial chief of police positions are often sold and that this practice must stop.

prepares leaders and units to help FSF professionalize and make decisions on FSF design and development that recognizes these critical issues but does not compromise U.S. goals. It also has implications for U.S. leader development and education programs. For example, case study readings and seminar discussion in the U.S. Army War College might focus on such situations and trade-offs.

Fourth, the Army needs to provide realistic predeployment training that not only prepares deploying units for the technical aspects of advising and partnering, as discussed above, but also sets expectations for what the partnering mission means for U.S. unit operations. In particular, the tempo and sophistication of U.S. units will need to change if they are to partner with FSF, and predeployment training will help unit commanders, staff, and soldiers understand and train for these changes. For some units, this could be a particularly difficult concept to implement: Existing practices and Army culture provide incentives for units that execute their traditional missions to high standards; for success at partnering, however, units will need to focus on getting their FSF partners to develop and improve at the expense of this high performance. Additionally, unit commanders will need to strike an appropriate balance between FSF development and their independent missions so that FSF are not used simply as adjuncts to U.S. missions.

If advisory teams are to be used, a clear lesson is that they ought to be trained as a group, deployed as a group, and kept together as a group. Prior to October 2009, Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix oversaw the advisory and assessment mission.¹⁴ Every advisory team with which the RAND team met in September 2009 complained that although they went through training as a team, (1) they were often given missions in areas that were different from those they trained on before deploying; (2) teams were often broken up in-country and personnel were often reassigned to staff positions; and (3) teams were moved from one Afghan unit to another during their short time in-country, thus making the establishment of strong relationships diffi-

¹⁴ Task Force Phoenix was incorporated into the IJC when it was established in October 2009, but as a bureau not a separate command. It is now called the ANSF Development Assistance Bureau (ADAB). For more on Task Force Phoenix, see Chapter Two.

cult. The validation training team (VTT) echoed these complaints.¹⁵ According to these advisors and VTT members, this type of management of the overall advisory effort hurts performance.

Finally, a consistent theme from the advisors interviewed for this study is that, by personality and inclination, some people are better at working with FSF than others.¹⁶ Advisors report that the manning documents for advisory teams do not specify in great detail what military occupational specialties are required for specific advisory tasks but rather convey requirements for personnel based on broad categories (e.g., “combat arms officer”).¹⁷ Furthermore, Army personnel systems do not capture the personality characteristics that some feel are associated with success at advising, and therefore personnel cannot be selected based on the criteria articulated in doctrine.

Implications for the U.S. Army

As argued above, the design and implementation of plans for assisting FSF and ministries should consider such factors as the selection of advisors, preparation of U.S. soldiers and units to perform the mission, and the applicability of Western training models to FSF. These implications can be characterized in a DOTMLPF format, with particular emphasis on U.S. doctrine, training, leader development, and personnel (no significant materiel or facilities implications are called into question by the Afghanistan experience).

¹⁵ Validation training teams were established to validate the CM ratings of ANSF units across Afghanistan. The purpose, according to General Robert Cone, the CSTC-A commander under whom they were created, was to provide a way to ensure uniform ratings, particularly for units that were to be designated CM1, across different commands in Afghanistan.

¹⁶ See FM 3-07.1, p. 7-3, for a list of personality traits that the Army has identified as important for advisors.

¹⁷ These sentiments were echoed by personnel serving in the 162nd Infantry Brigade, which took responsibility for training advisors in September 2009. Author interviews with the 162nd Infantry Brigade, Fort Polk, Louisiana, November 2009.

Although doctrine is solid at a conceptual level and detailed at the BCT level, it does not provide adequate guidelines for situations such as in Afghanistan, in which SSR and SFA are nearly synonymous and major commands run by senior generals play fundamental roles in designing, fielding, training, and maintaining the FSF. In addition, doctrine does not adequately cover the fundamental differences between raising and training mature forces and raising and training forces that are confronted with a changing threat.

The “organization” category of DOTMLPF is a different matter. Some have asserted that the Army requires organizational changes to adequately address SFA requirements—the most extreme of these being a call to create an Advisory Corps.¹⁸ Although our research highlights important shortcomings in how SFA has been implemented in Afghanistan, it is not clear that such a drastic approach is necessary. At minimum, less drastic and expensive approaches should be attempted before the need for a significant reorganization of the Army can be assessed. Other organizational solutions are currently being implemented in Iraq and Afghanistan in the form of what the Army calls modular brigades augmented for security force assistance. Yet the operational concepts for how such brigades should conduct the SFA mission continue to shift. For example, the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division (4/82), deployed to Afghanistan during the summer of 2009 to serve as one of these augmented brigades. But by December 2009, its mission had shifted from being strictly advisory with no responsibility for battlespace to having both assigned battlespace and a partnering mission.¹⁹ No firm results can be asserted about its performance to date.²⁰

¹⁸ See, for example, John Nagl, “Institutionalizing Adaptation: It’s Time for a Permanent Army Advisor Corps,” Center for a New American Security, June 2007.

¹⁹ Author interviews with 4/82 commander and staff prior to deployment, interviews with staff members in Kandahar in September 2009, and observations of some elements of the unit in December 2009.

²⁰ RAND is currently conducting research on the preparation of modular brigades augmented for security force assistance and on specialized versus multipurpose forces for various missions. The results of this research should be available in late 2010 or 2011.

However, the Army may need drastic organizational changes if it assumes principal responsibility for developing police forces, as it has in Afghanistan and Iraq. While current thought on this issue is that the Army will play a supporting rather than the lead role, other U.S. government agencies have not been able to provide police training on a large scale in active conflict zones. This task has often fallen to the U.S. military by default; absent substantial changes in the capacities of other U.S. agencies, it will almost certainly fall to the Army in the future. If the Army is to develop police forces without significant organizational change, it will need new approaches—for example, deploying large numbers of MPs who, though not ideal for this task, are more capable than other Army units, or using substantial contracting mechanisms (which also present their own problems). In the discussion below, we assume that police training will remain a supporting task for the Army, although we recognize that substantial changes in the U.S. government approach to police development will be necessary for this to actually become the case.²¹

Although we did not examine training for U.S. trainers and advisors in detail, it does not appear to provide adequate preparation for the advisory tasks required of teams embedded with the ANA or ANP—at least according to the advisors we talked with. This training should follow the framework outlined in Chapter Two of FM 3-07.1 to adequately prepare advisors for tasks that will be carried out under conditions very different from the normal experiences of U.S. military units—even units that have been deployed to combat in Afghanistan or Iraq. This means that technical advisor training and cultural skills must be identified and adequately presented. U.S. Army units must understand that their partnering role requires them to impart skills to the host-nation forces they are working with, even though their operational role may involve other objectives as well.

Leader development and education efforts should better prepare soldiers to understand the difference between direct action and FSF

²¹ For more discussion of these issues, see Nora Bensahel, Olga Oliker, and Heather Peterson, *Improving Capacity for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-852-OSD, 2009, and Kelly et al., 2009.

development and, at their best, should provide the background to prepare senior generals to be effective in orchestrating SSR, SFA, and combat operations.

Personnel systems may also need to adapt if the Army is to be effective at SFA on this scale. In particular, such characteristics as personality type and inclination to work with FSF, which our research indicates are important, are not currently captured in personnel records in an easily searchable format. Furthermore, advising FSF should be a career-enhancing opportunity if the Army wants its best people to sign up for it.

The institutional implications for the U.S. Army of SFA in Afghanistan as identified by our research are summarized in Table 5.1.

A Final Word on Assessments

As argued in Chapter Four, assessments are a critical part of SFA. To understand what works and what does not, well thought out assessments of SFA efforts are needed. These should, necessarily, focus on the capabilities and progress of the FSF and provide feedback across DOTMLPF systems to those charged with developing institutions, but they must also inform U.S. DOTMLPF considerations. If the Afghan SFA experience teaches one thing clearly, it is that assessments require planning and a clear understanding of the mission and operational environment. Data must be collected and saved over time to permit analysis of progress. Assessments that are modeled on U.S. Army self-assessment approaches—or those of any mature security force in a relatively peaceful society—are likely to miss important issues. To be meaningful, assessment efforts of FSF should, at a minimum, include the following components:

- Capture the “state” of the FSF in terms similar to the U.S. Army USR (i.e., what is currently captured in the TRAT systems).
- Capture operational capabilities of FSF measured against standards appropriate to the host country’s needs and constraints.

Table 5.1
Institutional Implications of Afghan SFA for the U.S. Army

DOTMLPF Category	Implication
Doctrine	<p>The SFA framework outlined in doctrine is broad but lacks details that could help in implementation</p> <p>Doctrine does not recognize SFA overlap with SSR in large-scale efforts or pay sufficient attention to the challenges of building a force that can both respond to current conflict needs and transition to what is necessary in peacetime</p> <p>Doctrine may be insufficient to guide efforts in the context of substantial social and economic constraints</p> <p>Focus on BCT operations leaves out institution-building factors</p> <p>Assessments outline is useful, but lacks implementation details</p>
Organization	<p>The organization of advisory teams should reflect the skills that they will require—generic MOSSs are not sufficient</p>
Training	<p>For advisors: Technical skills on working with FSF, as well as the cultural skills and background needed to adequately assess the operational environment and its impacts on the advisory mission</p> <p>For partner units and commanders: In addition to the categories above, the ability to judge the trade-offs between U.S. Army imperatives for high performing units and the requirements to reduce operation tempo and sophistication so as to best develop FSF</p>
Leader development and education	<p>Develop senior leaders who are capable of combining SFA tasks with campaigns as part of an expanded operational art</p> <p>Develop junior and mid-level leaders with a firm understanding of the importance of FSF development and the trade-offs needed with kinetic missions to ensure this happens in a way that forwards U.S. interests</p>
Personnel	<p>Develop ways to identify personnel with natural talents for working with host-nation forces</p> <p>Design selection processes that assign these identified personnel to key advising and partnering positions</p>

- Translate the state and capabilities of the FSF into terms that are meaningful to advisors, advisees, and both assistance providers and recipients responsible for developing institutions (e.g., DOTMLPF).
- Establish and validate links and disconnects between SFA approaches and intended goals.
- Be able to adjust standards and requirements as needs shift and approaches shift with them.
- Include mechanisms for validating data provided by FSF or other host-nation officials.
- Be implementable by a limited number of advisors and partner units.

U.S. SFA efforts in Afghanistan indicate that, in lieu of a well-planned assessment protocol, U.S. forces are likely to implement processes that are a lot like American ones, despite the fact that these processes are designed for mature, high-performing forces. Such assessment tools may fail to recognize the developing nature of the FSF—in terms of capability, organizations, and character—and may not signal the people developing security institutions that they need to make major adjustments. To avoid this pitfall, assessment mechanisms with the characteristics above should be designed into SFA efforts from the planning stage onward.

Selected Literature and Documents Reviewed

U.S. Government Sources

- U.S. commanders' briefings, including CSTC-A/NTM-A commanders
- CSTC-A/NTM-A assessments and briefings, including ATRAT and PTRAT data; Afghan National Army Training Command plans, including those from KMTC and CFC; and doctrine
- ISAF documents
- ETT and VTT documents
- Congressional Research Service reports
- Government Accountability Office reports
- Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) reports
- U.S. Field Manuals, policy documents, and contingency plans
- selected holdings from the Center for Army Lessons Learned

International Sources

- organization charts
- Afghan public opinion data
- European Union study on ANP Tashkil
- Soviet and Russian historical reports and data

Nongovernmental Sources

- Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit reports and assessments
- Center for Strategic and International Studies reports and assessments
- International Crisis Group reports
- RAND reports and assessments
- Assessments from other specialists

Selected Interviews

Interviews Outside Afghanistan

Organizations

- Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance
- Army Security Force Assistance Proponency staff
- Joint Staff J-5 personnel
- 4/82 BCT commander and staff
- Center for Army Analysis

Current and Retired U.S. Military Personnel

- LTG (Ret.) David Barno, former commander of Combined Forces Command–Afghanistan
- LTG William Caldwell, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center
- LTG (then-MG) Robert Cone, former commander of CSTC-A
- LTG (Ret.) James Dubik, former commander of Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq
- BG (Ret.) Andrew Twomey, former CSTC-A Deputy Commanding General for Programs
- Former commander of the Validation Training Team for the ANA

Afghan Experts

- Current and former Afghan officials, including former Minister of Interior Ali Jalali
- Western experts

- Russian experts and participants in Afghan force development during the Soviet period

Interviews In Afghanistan

Afghan Officials

- Minister of Interior Mohammad Hanif Atmar and key MOI staff
- Minister of Defense Abdul Rahim Wardak
- Chief of Staff General Bismillah Khan Mohammadi
- Former Minister of Defense Shahnawaz Tanai
- Deputy Minister of Interior LTG Mongal
- Former Deputy Minister of Interior Khalid
- Former LTG and MP Oolumi
- Former Deputy Minister of Interior Helal
- ANA and ANP nation, provincial, and unit leadership and personnel
- Training center leadership and key organization leadership throughout the country

Coalition Officials

- U.S. Ambassador Karl Eikenberry
- LTG David Rodriguez and IJC staff
- MG Richard Formica and LTG William Caldwell, CSTC-A commanders, and staff
- CSTC-A/NTM-A generals and staff
- Key CSTC-A/NTM-A organizations, including
 - VTT members
 - KMTC and CFC
 - Regional Training Centers
 - Counterinsurgency (COIN) academy
 - Afghan Regional Security Integration Commands (ARSICs)
 - ETTs

- PMTs
- 4/82 personnel
- Key ISAF organizations, including
 - Afghan Assessment Group
 - Strategic Advisory Group
 - CJ-3
- EUPOL chief Kai Vittrup
- INL officials

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