
Research Report

Engaging Community Resilience for Security, Development and Peace building in Afghanistan

December 2013

Funding Agencies

United State Institute of Peace
Rockefeller Brothers Fund
Carnegie Corporation of New York

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Project Research Report

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Introduction

Future Generations is an international non-government organization, founded in 1992, dedicated to promote community-led development, partnering with government to improve people's lives and communities. The core of Future Generation's work, a *process that communities and governments can use to shape their futures*, is called SEED-SCALE¹. This process is used to support communities and partner agencies worldwide through an integrated approach of:

- (a) **Researching** *how* communities change
- (b) **Demonstrating** a *process* of community change in target countries:
 - i. Creation of 19 nature preserves (as in Tibet, China)
 - ii. Facilitation of rapid forms of *sustainable* social change among the geographically isolated “unreached” (as in northeastern India)
 - iii. Extension of health services through maternal and child health programs (as in Peru)
 - iv. Enable local societies to rebound from conflict (as in Afghanistan)
- (c) **Teaching** applied application as a fully accredited *institution of higher learning*. As the educational arm of Future Generations (www.future.org), the Graduate School offers a two-year Master's Degree in Applied Community Change with concentrations in conservation and peacebuilding.²

Future Generations Afghanistan (FGA) signed a joint contract with the United State Institute of Peace (USIP) and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF) to implement the project, *Engaging Community Resilience for Security, Development and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan*. The project aim was to examine the influence of community, as the primary nexus of effective Security, Development and Peacebuilding. The project sought instances of successful conflict resolution and negotiations of local security, as well as available access to community development services, and defined these communities as “positive deviants”. These *positive deviants* were identified by bringing together Afghan non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and community governance councils. In addition the project incorporated past & present academic research efforts, as well as the current service delivery programs of the United Nations agencies and the primary line ministries of the government of Afghanistan.

The project first collected data about these communities, which was then independently validated for statistical and qualitative assurance. Using this data, a classification system was developed for identifying common “best practices” in accordance local principles, practices and methods in relation to conflict resolution i.e. *positive deviants*. This data was then assimilated for discussion among national practitioner agencies and individuals. Finally, this national dissemination process of exchanging “lessons learned” and adaptation of identified *positive deviants* has led to the creation of an action and learning network of Afghan organizations. Training workshops, joint authorship and peer review of program articles and research papers are the cornerstones of this network's work

Key objectives of the “*positive deviants*” project are:

¹ <http://www.SEED-SCALE.org>

² Founded in 2003, the Future Generations Graduate School (www.future.edu), a 501(c)3 non-profit institution of higher education, is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and a member of the North Central Association.

1. Identify positive “best practices” in security negation and peacebuilding within conflict regions and attempt understand what makes them successful.
2. Produce, refine, and test new approaches and methodologies based on identified “best practices” through lessons learning within prior field applications.
3. Evaluate field experiences and the subsequent dissemination of results, within international academic publications, as well as subsidiary journals and media outlets in Afghanistan and elsewhere.
4. The establishment of an Afghan-led action network and advocacy committee for requisite policy changes, which is committed to amplifying the impact successful community strategies in security, development and peacebuilding.

The *positive deviance project* evolved into a nine-step implementation framework that was divided into a 3-phase process, with each phase consisting of three out of the nine steps, as illustrated within the conceptual framework graphic below.

3 typos in graphic below: first row 4th block Analyze. Second row first block Positive, last row 4th block Dissemination

Positive Deviance Process Conceptual Framework (Figure 0-1)



Phase 1—Inception:

The purpose of the inception phase was to collect quantitative data among communities in eastern and southern Afghanistan that are presently facing insecurity and/or conflict. The first step within this phase involved community outreach efforts within the target regions. Based on establishing credible relationships at the local level, the second step of phase one was to work with individuals and governance systems within the community to produce basic profiles for each district and region within the project focus area. Lastly, mixed-method data collection was used to identify composite variables, which served as key indicators to assess and identify “positive deviance” among communities in regard to security, development & peacebuilding (SDP).

Phase 2—Positive Deviance Inquiry:

The second phase of the project was subsequently conducted in selected communities, based on the assessment findings described previously, targeted as possessing characteristics of “positive

deviance”. The first step, within this phase, was the selection of communities, based on the previous assessment and identification of target regions. FGA then worked in partnership with local governance systems and development agencies to investigate the existence, causality and impact of specific methods of conflict resolution and security practices within selected communities. Based on the investigative portion of phase two, the final step was compiling all relevant findings—quantitative & qualitative—to provide as much data as possible for the assessment of “positive deviance” practices. Specifically, this third step involved identifying the most distinct/unusual behavior patterns and understanding what made them successful. These findings were then assimilated into case material to further disseminate the project results.

Phase 3—Evaluation:

The intent of the last project phase was to evaluate the project findings and provide evidence, recommendations, and instructional case material to stakeholders to replicate the identified “positive deviances” among insecure and “at-risk” communities throughout Afghanistan. The first step here was to design a set of community interventions, with action plans, based on the findings of the positive deviance inquiry. Next, the actions plans were implemented in “non-positive deviance” communities, identified during the project’s Inception Phase, that were selected as being “potentially vulnerable” or historically resistant to sectarian violence. Lastly, the final step of the project was to re-assess the action plans and also re-design the proposed interventions; based on how effective an impact they had within the non-positive deviance communities.

Future Generations Afghanistan managed the project with technical support and assistance provided by selected Afghan research agencies and NGO practitioners. As the project management agency, FGA led and coordinated the interpretation and assessment of all field data, based on the joint-review of a predetermined research framework by project stakeholders. Mr. Ajmal Shirzai, Country Director—Future Generations Afghanistan—served as Principle Investigator as well as Project Director for the research study. As previously mentioned, the research results from the project analysis were disseminated through a series of workshops in Afghanistan to government and non-government stakeholders. Moreover, the project findings have been shared with a broader audience among the recent graduates/students of the Future Generations Graduate School residing in over a dozen countries—many of which are also “at-risk” for conflict & insecurity—for further application and field-trials of the Positive Deviance Method by partner NGOs with students enrolled in the Future Generations MA degrees—*conservation & peacebuilding*.

The following report has been prepared in three sections:

- Section 1 addresses the *quantitative* research findings that were conducted during the Inception Phase of the project in Nangarhar.
- Section 2 presents the *qualitative* findings of the social research completed within the second project phase, described previously as the Positive Deviance Inquiry.
- Section 3 provides a project evaluation report as well as summary of the overall research findings and recommendations to the United State Institute of Peace and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Prepared by an external evaluative consultant, this evaluation report provides a detailed description and assessment of the project findings as stipulated in the guidelines of the contract agreement awarded to Future Generations Afghanistan.

Section 1.

Inception Phase Report

The first section of the report presents the results as well as an analysis of the quantitative data collected from the 189 communities in Khogyani District, Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan, during the inception phase of the project, February to November 2012.

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December 2013

Chapter One

Positive Deviance: History³ and Definitions⁴

History:

The term Positive Deviance (PD) initially appeared in nutrition literature with the publication of a book entitled “Positive Deviance in Nutrition” by Tufts University professor, Marian Zeitlin, in the 1990s. Zeitlin and her colleagues advocated for the use of the positive deviance concept to address childhood malnutrition by identifying instances of healthy local nutrition practices and then attempting to expand these successful behaviors by replicating them in corresponding communities.

Jerry Sternin, a visiting scholar at Tufts University, and his wife Monique, experimented with Zeitlin’s ideas through their field work in Vietnam throughout the 1990’s, helping to institutionalize the Positive Deviance concept as a recognized approach to social change. At the start of their pilot program, 64 percent of children were malnourished. Using the Positive Deviance approach, the Sternins discovered that it was in fact the poorest families within the community who had the most nourished children. This was the result of a number of uncommon, yet successful indigenous strategies that evolved from being unable to participate in the mainstream social economy. These poor families collected the majority of their food, such as sweet potato greens, shrimp, and crabs—foods considered by more prosperous communities to be inappropriate for children. In addition, these destitute families, often living in marginal dirty conditions, had adapted healthy behaviors such as washing their children’s hands before meals and feeding them three to four small meals, as opposed to the traditional two large meals per day.

Without knowing it, these families had incorporated the healthiest foods available in their communities into their children’s diet, providing them with important nutrients (protein, iron and calcium). Based on their findings, the Sternins created a pilot nutrition program that was patterned upon the healthy behaviors of the poorer families. Instead of simply telling participants what to do differently, they designed the program to help enact an alternative approach to thinking about nutrition that was not based on technical expertise, but successful local practices that were already in place. At the end of the two year pilot, malnutrition fell by 85%.

Since the initial work of Zeitlin and the Sternins, the international aid community has scaled-up the Positive Deviance approach to over 40 countries with numerous trials and demonstrations in different sectors such as public health, agriculture, conservation, child protection, education as well ongoing use in the field of nutrition. Given the widespread success of the Positive Deviance approach across social sectors, the aim of Future Generations Afghanistan project was to apply this method toward security, development and peacebuilding. Anecdotal evidence suggested that throughout the violence in Afghanistan, some communities have found ways to effectively protect themselves as well as their newly constructed development infrastructure from violence, while the majority of others have not. It is the hypothesis of Future Generations that these locally protected communities are the “positive deviances” of peace and security in Afghanistan.

³ http://www.positivedeviance.org/about_pdi/history.html

⁴ “The power of Positive Deviance: How unlikely Innovators Solve the World’s Toughest Problems” by Richard Pascale, Jerry Sternin & Monique Sternin, June 2010, Harvard Business School Publication, Boston, Massachusetts, USA.
http://www.amazon.com/dp/1422110664/ref=rdr_ext_tmb#reader_1422110664

Definitions

- **Deviance**—*concerned with the process whereby actions, beliefs or conditions come to be viewed as different (or deviant) by others.*

Deviance is relative to time and place because what is considered *different (or deviant)* in one social context or time may not be considered as such in other times or places. Sociologists typically view *social deviance* as “the departure of certain types of behavior from the norms of a particular society within a particular time.” Specifically, the “*violation of social norms, values or roles that takes place between local variances in a particular culture as opposed to another.*”

- **Positive Deviance concept**—*is based on the observation that in every community or organization, there are a few individuals or groups whose uncommon but successful behaviors and strategies have enabled them to find better solutions to problems than their neighbors who face the same challenges, barriers and have access to the same limited resources or less.*

- **Positive Deviance approach**—*a strengths-oriented, community-driven process for adapting local behaviors and fostering sustainable social change.*

The Positive Deviance approach enables communities to harness the successful behaviors already in place to address other existing problems. The positive deviance approach differs in this regard from traditional "needs based" approaches, which attempt to first identify and then address problems, using external resources that cannot be sustained. Meanwhile, most forms of traditional development either ignore or even dismantle local systems that are already in place and working. The process utilized within the positive deviance approach invites the community to identify and optimize existing solutions from within the community, speeding up adaptation, innovation and sustainable growth.

- **Positive Deviance inquiry**—the process whereby the community seeks to discover the demonstrable and noteworthy positive behaviors and successful strategies among its members. *Positive deviances* typically refers to individuals or groups that demonstrate special or uncommon behaviors and strategies, which enable them to overcome specific problems that others cannot without special assistance or resources. However, it is noteworthy that a person or group is defined as possessing *positive deviance* in the context of a specific problem or situation, so it is essential to *inquire/evaluate* not only *what* deviants are effective, but also *how* and *where*.

- **Positive Deviance process**—*the entire journey encompassing the use of experiential learning methods and skilled facilitation applied to the four steps of the Positive Deviance design.*

The result is community mobilization and ownership, discovery of existing solutions, creation of peer-to-peer action/learning networks, as well as the sustained emergence and adaptation of new initiatives as the result of pre-existing community solutions.

- **Positive Deviance Methodology**—consist of six steps that are applied in two phases:

A. Assessment Phase:

1. **Define** the problem, current perceived causes, challenges and constraints, common practices and desired outcomes.

This process occurs with the community at the center of defining the problem for themselves. This can sometimes lead to situations where the community's perceived

definition of need differs from outside “expert” opinions of the situation. However, it is important to note that through the self-definition process the community is simultaneously providing a quantitative baseline evidence and solution strategies from within the community as opposed theory or distant pilot demonstration. This provides an opportunity for the community to reflect on the problem given the evidence at hand and measure the progress toward their goals. Additionally, this process of community engagement and dialogue helps identify critical stakeholders and people of influence regarding the issue at hand.

2. ***Determine the presence of Positive Deviance individuals or communities.***

Through the use of relevant data and interaction within target region, communities establish whether there are examples of significant Positive Deviances present and what they are. Moreover, they begin reaching out to those identified as positive deviances, forming links with them as well as other available successes or local resources.

3. ***Discover the uncommon but successful behaviors and strategies through inquiry and observation.***

Specifically, this process has been introduced earlier as the Positive Deviance Inquiry. The community, having identified positive deviants, sets out to identify the successful behaviors, attitudes, or beliefs that they would define as their “positive deviances”. The focus of this process is on *successful strategies*, not on making a local hero out of an individual or telling the success story of one community. This method allows people to discover and share their own successes with other groups, who like them, have found successful solutions that overcome problems without an influx of outside technical interference or resources.

B. *Application phase:*

4. ***Design and develop initiatives and action plans that leverage the identified “positive deviances” to extend among an entire community or new communities.***

Now that the community has identified successful strategies, they must decide what strategies they would like to adopt/adapt for themselves, and whether they want to participate in extending their activities to help others access and practice. It is important to discern that the program design model is not actually focused on directly replicating “best practices” as the typical model village approach suggests. Instead, the goal is to help individuals and communities “adopt a new way of thinking, based on doing what they know works.”

5. ***Discern the effectiveness of intervention (Monitoring and Evaluation).***

Positive deviance informed projects must be monitored, not only to measure success but to ensure that programs are having an effective impact. Moreover, experience has demonstrated that monitoring activities are most effective when they engage community planning and utilize a participatory process of evaluation that considers “lives impacted” as opposed to measuring project outputs. Therefore, monitoring and evaluation tools as well as processes must be adapted and adjusted to be appropriate to setting. True participatory engagement allows even the illiterate community members to participate through survey mechanisms such as pictorial monitoring forms or audio records. Additionally, engaging the community to assist with the evaluation process enables the community to see the progress they are making towards their goals and reinforces the impact of changes they are making in attitudes, behaviors and beliefs.

6. *Disseminate and share “lessons learned” to stakeholders and broader constituency of change agents.*

This is the process of scaling-up the impact, results and adaptation of a specific set of positive deviance practices. According to Future Generations definition of “sustainable scale,” scaling-up is not limited to numeric growth in size, but requires improvement in quality as the result of growth and adaptation. The process of disseminating positive deviances evokes the classic notion a “ripple effect,” where one community does something successful, other communities observe that success and engage in projects of their own. It can also take place through strategic coordination of NGOs, local government or the private sector. Critical to success is the adaptation of new behaviors, attitudes, and knowledge by all stakeholders, as opposed to control of specific outputs or quality control measures.

It is worth mentioning here that the positive deviance inquiry process must begin with some form of official invitation from a community, reflecting a desire to improve a specific aspect or value set from within. It is essential for the community to embrace ownership of the social change that they will be expected to lead.

Positive Deviance Principles

Positive Deviance is an asset-based approach toward behavior and social change that is based on the following principles:

- Community owns the process. Communities possess the best solutions needed to solve their own problems.
- Groups and individuals who are part of the problem are also part of the solution. The positive deviance process involves all parties who affect the problem. *“Don’t do anything about me without me.”*
- Communities have the ability to self-organize human resources and social assets to solve virtually any problem, as long as they can agree upon shared set of values.
- Communities can find ways to practice and amplify successful behaviors and strategies to unleash social innovations.
- Sustainability is the cornerstone of the positive deviance approach. It enables communities, organizations and individuals to recognize that unless a solution can create equitable and lasting change as well as adapt and endure the iterations of time, then it is not actually a solution. It merely delays the problem.
- Behavior change is easier to produce as the result of action rather than by winning arguments or presenting academic evidence. *“It is easier to act your way into a new way of thinking than think your way out of an old way of acting.”*
- Positive Deviance aims to expand existing networks, while iteratively integrating new components and resources. It is an inclusive as opposed to exclusive method of social change.

When to Use Positive Deviance

Positive deviance should be considered as a possible approach when a concrete problem meets the following criteria:

- The problem is not exclusively technical but also relational and requires behavioral and / or social change.
- The problem is complex, seemingly intractable, and other solutions haven’t worked.
- Positive deviant individuals or groups exist and solutions are possible.
- There is sponsorship and local leadership commitment to address the issue.

Chapter Two

Research Context

Challenges:

Today, an urgent need exists for effective methods of assisting citizens and communities with local engagement in conflict resolution and peacebuilding skills within contexts instability or post-conflict reconstruction. Afghanistan's history has demonstrated that peace agreements alone will not create permanent stability, nor has the arrival and decade-long presence of the international security assistance forces or influx of international aid monies. Lasting peace must be the product of the transformation of a functional relationship between the interests of the state and society. Although peace agreements and international interventions are often perceived as necessary stimuli, achieving stable state society relations requires the partnership of people and government. The dysfunctional relationship between attempting to control national state building efforts through international interventions, military or otherwise, has been extensively addressed in recent scholarship. Despite the fact that track two and three peacebuilding initiatives have recently received greater attention⁵ and praise—it remains widely acknowledged that they have yet to engage the role of broad-based, community-driven peacebuilding, which has been widely overlooked, but always essential in demonstrations of successful peacebuilding efforts.

As mentioned previously, this study aimed to address, *the role of engaged citizens and communities in security, development and peacebuilding*. Through the collaborative engagement of bottom-up agents of change within the community, the experiences of scholars, vertical practitioners and policy-makers, Future Generations Afghanistan facilitated the formation of partnerships for peace between communities, governments and external actors. The data collected this project, reflects instances of citizens and communities working across social divisions to achieve positive impacts for peace and security. In particular, the project identified a common set of challenges and principles that operate across various stages as well as types of conflict, which in turn led to the identification of feasible methods for communities to face and resolve instances of local conflict and instability.

The vision for conflict transformation or peacebuilding within the Positive Deviance project was defined as, “emanating from within the community, considering what is appropriate and achievable within the particular context at large.” According to the social scientist Tongeren, “Building peace in contests of rising instability or fragile post-conflict environments needs to be informed by the dynamics of the context and a vision of what peace would mean to contending groups in that society⁶.” Due to the fact that most violent conflict arises out of inter-group relations, conflict transformation and peacebuilding begin with these elements coming together to build social cohesion – trust, reciprocity, cooperation, active coexistence, and tolerance.

⁵ Paul van Tongeren and others, *people building Peace II* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005), and Mary Anderson and Lara Olsen “Conforming War: Critical Lessons for Peace Practitioners,” (Collaborative for Development Alternatives, Inc. 2003).

http://www.cdainc.com/rpp/archives/2003/01/confronting_war.php.

***** Note: this URL did not load for me

⁶ See Larissa A. Fast and Reina C. Neufeldt, “Envisioning Success: Building Blocks for Strategic and Comprehensive Peace building Impact Evaluation.” *Journal of Peace building and Development* 2, no. 2 (2005).

The research findings of this project demonstrated how the multiple and varied factions of people and communities are able to come together and contribute to the overall dynamics of stability and peace. Meanwhile, this project also demonstrated that although building relationships plays a critical role in the “re-knitting of social fabric” in war-torn societies, it alone is not a sufficient condition for creating durable and lasting peace. For this, larger economic, political and security forces play critical roles that must be considered as well.

In Afghanistan the conflict and peace situation has rapidly deteriorated since 2006. Large segments of the country have become inaccessible to government service providers and humanitarian organizations; meanwhile kinetic operations by the military are being escalated. Nevertheless, Afghan government and civil society organizations continue their efforts to maintain activities in permissive environments, while extending services and development programs into insecure areas. Within the current environment of violence, uncertainty and ineffective aid services, there are many lessons to be learned. The United States government plans a significant increase in peacebuilding and development resources, yet the impact of this investment is liable to disappoint unless it can seize upon local knowledge of actors who are demonstrating their effectiveness despite the deteriorating conditions.

The Positive Deviances process finds out what works for communities struggling amidst conflict: *Study those communities that have managed their security and development needs and are enjoying relative peace and analyze how they have approached their relations with outside actors.* It seeks to better understand the successful community strategies employed for preservation of local peace and the security ecologies in which they exist. Afghanistan’s long history of conflict must be seen as its source of the solutions, not the root of its problems. Considerable experience and wisdom has emerged on how to engage communities in a conflict-sensitive manner. In fact, many aspects of the *Do No Harm* movement for greater conflict sensitivity in humanitarian assistance, used to good effect throughout much of the conflict world, originated in Afghanistan’s previous conflict periods.

Future Generations Afghanistan attempted to pioneer a new application of the Positive Deviance method to peace and security, a field to which it had heretofore not been applied. It demonstrated that throughout insecure regions of Afghanistan, some communities are finding ways to effectively protect or exempt themselves from violence, while most are not. The project attempted to understand: *what worked* for these communities and why? It then attempted to learn: *how* to engage other communities to apply these “positive deviances.”

Study Objectives:

Two primary study objectives were as follows:

- How have communities that have successfully managed to mitigate the impact of the conflict done so?
- What are the attitudes, behaviors and practices of security management, governance, and development that have served these peaceful communities so well?

Quantitative research focused on answering the first study objective. Conducted during the inception phase of the project, from February to November 2012, its purpose was to collect numeric data from conflict-affected districts of Nangarhar province. And then analyze the data, based on composite variables for security, development and peacebuilding. Based on this analysis, working

definitions were established for what entailed a “positive deviance” in districts suffering from the impact of conflict.

The second study objective—to discover the attitudes, behaviors and practices towards security management, governance and development—was subsequently addressed in the second research phase, Positive Deviance Inquiry qualitative phase.

Site Selection:

In social-scientific terms, the broader selection areas for this study are target districts of Nangarhar province, specified by their legal geographic boundaries, with analysis measured in deviances among block-units, as defined by the National Solidarity Program (NSP), represented by local Community Development Council (CDC).

Study areas were selected based on the following parameters:

- Conflict affected areas in eastern and southern regions (Ghazni & Nangarhar).
- Districts and CDCs qualify as insecure defined by NSP high-risk strategy.
- Presence of local autonomy or governance system in the area.
- Ability of community to resolve conflict through methods of nonviolence.
- Strategy of non-violence has high chance of local replication.

A comprehensive literature review indicated a very limited amount of statistically sound quantitative data for both the region as well as at a broader national level. Due to limitations in obtaining adequate information, FGA decided to use NSP data previously collected. Sufficient data for Khogyani district in Nangarhar and Andar district in Ghazni was made available through this survey mechanism, enough to form basic social security profiles as well as develop composite variables for measuring key indicators relating to *security, development & peacebuilding*. The initial aim in entering the communities was to identify a baseline of the similarities and differences among CDC regions regarding security context, demography & topography, as well as access to available social infrastructure such as schools, clinics and mobile communications. This information helped to provide a comprehensive social profile of the target communities and identify unique circumstances or services existing within a specific community.

Research Methods:

Mixed method research analysis was completed, combining both qualitative and quantitative data evaluation processes. Primary quantitative data such as name and location of CDCs as well as basic geographic, demographic & topographic information was gathered from the central and provincial records of the National Solidarity Program. FGA researchers working in consultation with NSP field staff and CDC leaders reviewed and updated the data. Quantitative information regarding development services was collected from the appropriate government ministries such as functional health and education facilities. Data relevant to security conditions such as the existence and eradication of poppy fields or monthly incidents of criminal activity was collected from INSO⁷ monthly and quarterly reports as well as security briefings by district and provincial security forces. Additionally, security information was reviewed by community leaders and members with

⁷ INSO is a non-profit charity, assisting NGOs to conduct their humanitarian operations safely and to minimize the risks faces by their staff and beneficiaries.

qualitative specifics, usually through direct observation or personal encounter. The table below illustrates data sources:

Table 1: Source of Data

Type of Data	Sources of Data
Name of CDCs	MRRD/NSP Data
Security situation	MRRD/NSP, INSO
Accessibility to CDCs - <i>Distance and travel time of CDCs from district center.</i> - <i>Accessibility to CDCs in winter season</i>	NSP / FGA Data
Demography - <i>Population (# of male, females and families)</i> - <i>Tribal groups (main tribe, sub-tribes etc.)</i>	NSP/ FGA
Access to development facilities - <i>Access to health facilities (district hospital and BHC)</i> - <i>Access to Schools</i> - <i>Access to communication (mobile phone)</i>	Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Education, Private sectors (Roshan, MTN, Etisalat etc.)
Poppy cultivation	Focus groups discussion with community leaders
Other: <i>Communities involved in the social movement in Andar District of Ghazni Province.</i>	Interview with community leaders and head of Afghan local police - Andar

Construct Composite Variables and Data Analysis

FGA researchers used the insecurity variables from NSP high-risk strategy as key indicators in this study. According to the NSP high-risk strategy document, CDCs are determined as insecure if they meet the following criteria:

- Weak or no government presence (limited to district center and/or few other scattered check posts across the district).
- Weak or no security military presence (limited to district center or a few scattered check posts across the district).
- Located along a recognized insurgency corridor.
- If CDC members can disclose their identities, but are unable to engage in obvious government or international sponsored programs, due to personal risk.
- Occasional or permanent presence of armed criminal group in the area or located on proximate roads leading from the community to district center.
- Registered threats exist from hostile insurgent groups or other types of armed actors, directed toward the CDC members, NSP or NGO personnel.

The study variables used to assess *development* were identified as follows:

- Access to communication facilities (mobile phone)
- Access to education facilities (schools for male and female)
- Access to health facilities (district hospital, basic health centers & health posts)
- Access to NSP block grants without hostile or financial threat
- Accessible by road during the winter season.

Study criteria for “Peacebuilding” were determined as:

- Existing security in the area—little or no violent conflict within past 6 months
- Existence of a functioning local governance structure and leadership system to address matters of internal conflict as well as external security threats.
- The existence of functional Community Development Councils that successfully completed at least one NSP block grant initiative.

Scope and Limitations

The study was conducted within pre-existing program areas of Future Generations Afghanistan in Nangarhar province where it is perceived as a trusted organization, due to the fact that the Positive Deviance process is established on building relationships and linkages within unstable communities. Establishing trust with the communities living in such an uncertain environment requires substantial effort, forming long-term relationships with community leaders.

Future Generations selection of the specific target areas for this study was aided by the availability of quantitative data, gathered during the implementation of NSP. The largest limiting factor within the positive deviance study was a lack of supporting quantitative evidence or data available at the district and village levels. Additional limitations of significance to the study were low interest or commitment from partnering NGOs, implementing service delivery contracts in the region as well as problems with staff retention as a result of working in “at-risk” regions.

Chapter Three

Socio-Political Context of Study Areas

Nangarhar province is located in eastern Afghanistan. It borders Kunar and Laghman provinces to the north as well as Kabul, Logar and Paktia to the west, while eastern and southern borders form the Durand Line⁸, the international boundary with Pakistan's western state of Pakhtunkha. The majority of the population in Nangarhar and *Pakhtunkha* share tribal structure, language and religion, along with cultural customs and traditions. Its terrain is extremely mountainous, making up approximately 55% of area encompassing the 22 districts of Nangarhar province.

Tribes and Population: The province has an approximate population of 1,261,900. Ethnically the province is dominated by Pashtuns, consisting of approximately 90% of the total population; a small number of Pashayes, Arabs⁹, Tajik and ethnic minorities making up the remaining 10%. The primary language spoken is Pashtu with some of the ethnic minorities speaking Pashaye or Dari. The traditional Pashtun tribal code of honor—*Pashtunwali*¹⁰—is both applied to, and respected by, all ethnic groups regarding social and civic affairs.

There are three main tribes:

- a) Khogyani—primarily located in Sherzad, Khogyani and Pachir Wa Agam districts with smaller population pockets also living in Chaprehar and in Surkhrod districts. Historically, the Khogyani have held tribal feuds against the Shinwari and Ghilzai tribes as well as a renowned history of opposing the British. They are classified as being members of the Karlanri tribal group and are often consider being a Pashtun “Hill Tribe.”
- b) Shinwari—largely settled in Chaparhar, Achin, Naziyan, Shinwari (Spin Ghar), Dur-Baba, and Deh Bala districts. They have held historical tribal feuds with Khogyani also hold a reputation of opposing “external occupiers” —the British, Soviets and central governments held in Kabul. They were considered to be “a major thorn in the side of “Iron Amir” Abdur Rahman Khan in the 1880s. They are classified as members of the Sarbani Pashtun tribal group.
- c) Mohmand—the people of the Mohmand tribe are also members of the Sarbani Pashtun tribal group, inhabiting Rodat, Kot, Bati Kot, Goshta, Lalpur, and Mohmand Dara districts of Nangarhar province.

The other tribes such as the *Pashaye* are located primarily in Dara-e-Nur and Kuz Kunar districts with small numbers also living in Khewa and Behsud districts. Yet another tribe inhabiting Nangarhar is the *Ghilzai* with the majority of its population located in Hesarak district.

⁸ Created by British in 1893, the Durand Line separated Afghanistan from British India; it had the unanticipated effect of attempting to divide Pashtun tribal identity for reasons of nationalism. In many areas, especially tribal territories of Pakhtunkha, the local population still does not recognize this border and views its recognition as an extension of colonial rule.

⁹ The Central Asian Arabs are a Dari-speaking group who are mainly semi-nomadic. Although they continue to be identified as Arab, they have not been directly connected with the Middle East since the 14th century.

¹⁰ The *Pashtunwali* code of honor is a set of commonly agreed and socially accepted values and common aspiration.

Security Situation: The province can be divided into three zones in terms of security and political influence:

1. Hezbi Islami Hekmatyar dominated zone/districts—Bati Kot, Rodat, Chaparhar, Dur Baba, Deh Bala, Khogyani and Lalpur.
2. Hezbi Islami Khalis dominated zone/districts—Hesarak, Pachir Wa Agam, Naziyan, Mohmand Dara and Ghosta.
3. Jamiat Islami dominated zone/districts—Khewa, Dara-e-Noor and part of Kama and Behsud.

The Hezbi Islami Hekmatyar and Khalis zones are primarily dominated by the Taliban and are widely considered to be among the least secure districts in the region with virtually the entire region falling outside of government control. Additionally, security both within and along bordering districts of Pakistan is fragile as a result of the free movements of anti-government elements—primarily, Taliban—back and forth across the border. The majority of provincial security incidents occur within the following districts: Khogyani, Sherzad, Chaparhar, Deh Bala, Pachir Wa Agam, Achin, Naziyan, Lalpur and Hesarak. The majority of these districts border with Pakistan and have mountainous landscape, ideal for the guerilla tactics employed by Afghan insurgent groups. It should be of note that historically these districts hosted Jihadi fighters during the Soviet wars during the 1980s-‘90s.

The situation has been deteriorating over the last two years in Hesarak, Sherzad, Pachir Wa Agam, Chaparhar, Batikot and Khogyani districts. Armed groups and clashes have been reported; armed groups (Taliban) make temporary mobile check posts on roads linking districts with Jalalabad city in search of individuals believed to have connections to government, US military or NGOs. These groups are skilled at establishing deep-rooted local ties that they use to expand their activities by strengthen their links among the communities and recruiting new members or targeting community members that support the government. Moreover, adding to security problems of external insurgents, many of these districts are torn with tribal conflicts over land and water often dating back multiple generations. For example, even in recent years there has been a growing land conflict within two major clans of the Shinwari tribe that resulted in the death of nine people.

Socio-economic development: Approximately 90% of population in Nangarhar is engaged in agricultural activities. Main crops include wheat, rice, sugarcane and vegetables. Livestock is another income source within the agrarian economy. Nangarhar was declared a poppy-free province in recent years by the central government in Kabul; however, there are still reports that the populations both along and within the bordering districts have extensive poppy cultivation. Additionally, cross-border trade with Pakistan provides further economic stimulation for the region above that of many of the more isolated provinces, even those that are more secure due to their isolation. Good road networks with Pakistan have positioned Nangarhar as the primary eastern trade route for this land-locked country. For this reason, Nangarhar’s deteriorating security conditions have significant implications for the stability of the national economy. Another noteworthy factor that has contributed to the provincial economic growth in recent years is the presence of the international community, implementing and funding development activities throughout the province and across various sectors. International NGOs and for-profit contracting agencies currently employ thousands of people, engaged in construction activities, ranging from laborers to contractors.

According to recent data produced by the Ministry of Education, there are approximately 511 educational facilities within the province. They include: 249 primary schools, 117 lower secondary schools and 145 high schools. In addition to these, there are 10 privately run schools located in Jalalabad, bringing the total number of educational facilities up to 521. Authorities estimate that approximately 85% children have access to local school facilities as well as numerous higher education facilities.

Nangarhar University has nine faculty offices that consist of: Medicine, Engineering, Agriculture, Law, Economics, Religious Law (Theology), Literature, Veterinary and Education. There is also a Vocational High School for Agriculture (Shahid Abdul Haq Agriculture Vocational High School) as well as a teacher training institute.¹¹ The 2007 UNDP Human Development Report rated Nangarhar's literacy rate to be 27%.

Ministry of Public Health records show that there are several health facilities in the province, with five hospitals: 1 regional, 1 provincial and 3 at the district level. And a total of 107 health facilities: 61 Basic Health Centre (BHC), 19 Comprehensive Health Centre (CHC) and 27 health sub-centers as well as 10 mobile clinics and 814 health posts. According to the Provincial Department of Public Health, approximately 90% of population has access to basic health services with an annual maternal mortality ratio of 748 per 100,00 live births and the child mortality ratio—children under 5—is estimated to be 12,235. It is estimated that 57.5% population has access to potable water with an 83.7% coverage rate of polio vaccination.¹²

Provincial Government: Government influence is present near the provincial capital and along major highways. However, there is little or no government presence beyond these urban centers in the more remote regions of the province. Despite the fact that district governments have been displaying an increasing amount of authority becoming key players in conflict resolution and issues of system management and development, within these more isolated regions, tribal influence is the primary form of functional governance. Increasing institutional activities are expected to help communities' transition away from traditional tribal structures, taking a more active role in participatory governance.

National as well as international organizations play an active role in promoting development activities within the province with 14 UN agencies and 45 registered NGOs presently involved in reconstruction and development projects including—education, health, cultural, social affairs, water, sanitation, agriculture, animal husbandry, and micro finance. People are generally supportive of NGOs and government programs, however there is increasing resentment towards physical infrastructure projects of the government, due to accusations of corruption and poor workmanship.

Khogyani District Profile

Khogyani district covers 673km², it is located 40 km from provincial capitol in southwestern Nangarhar. Khogyani borders Pachir Wa Agam to the east, Sherzad to west as well as Chaparhar and Surkhrod districts to the north; it also shares a 25km border with Pakistan to the south. The district population entirely Pashtun, is estimated to be approximately 255,704 (103,879 male &

¹¹ MIS - Ministry of Education.

¹² MIS - Ministry of Public Health

124,906 female), consisting of 52,231 families with 189 CDCs. The weather is cold compared to the rest of the province and in some parts there is snow during winter.

According to Ministry of Education, Khogyani has 38 schools for which 8 are high schools, 7 are middle schools and 23 are primary schools, providing education facilities for 37,018 students (25,519 boys and 11,499 girls). The health facilities in Khogyani district comprises of a district hospital, 5 BHCs and 2 health sub-centers. All education and health facilities are functioning in the districts and none has been closed.

The personal security in Khogyani has worsened. A high percentage of people continued to fear attacks from a range of sources, including personal enmities. While more people had heard of Afghan Local Police (ALP) in the district, it was not trusted, and its effectiveness rated low.

Figure-1: Map of Khogyani



Chapter Four

Data Interpretation, Key Results and Lessons Learned

Interpretation of Security Variables:

The security situation of Khogyani District was studied based on security variables (taken from NSP high-risk strategy document) as well as statistical analysis of correlations and consistencies between *Security Incidents* and the following indicators:

1. Distances of CDCs/communities from the district centers (security compounds)
2. Topographical features of the area including infrastructure or lack thereof
3. Demographic make-up; the existence of “sub-tribal” groups/loyalists
4. Poppy production/trafficking.

(a) *Security and Community Distance:*

The study was carried out within Khogyani’s 189 communities (CDCs) where FGA has been facilitating NSP since 2007. Analysis showed that distance plays the most significant role in relation to the overall security of the communities. It is evident and also reasonable to assume from these study findings that remote communities, located in isolated regions far from district/security centers, are much more vulnerable to security threats/incidents. The following table clearly indicates this trend, with the only secure communities being located near a district headquarters:

Table 4-1: Security Measured by Distance From District HQ

Distance	Total CDCs	Secure CDCs	Insecure CDCs
0 – 15 km	130	81	49
16 – 30 km	33	0	33
31 – 45 km	13	0	13
46 – 60 km	7	0	7
61 – 75 km	5	0	5
76 & above	0	0	1
Total	189	81	108

- 43% of the communities in Khogyani (81 out of 189) are considered *secure*
- 57% of the communities in Khogyani (108 out of 189) are *insecure*
- 30% (49 out of 130) of communities located within a 15 km proximity to district centers are *insecure*.
- 100% of communities outside a 16 km proximity to surrounding district centers are acknowledged as *insecure*.

The following table indicates the security situation of communities located within a 0 – 15 km distance proximity to district compounds:

Table 4-2: Security Measure by Distance Between 0-15km from District HQ

Distance	Total CDCs	Secure CDCs	Insecure CDCs
0 – 5 km	38	38	0
6 – 10 km	49	36	13
11 – 15 km	43	7	36
Sub-total	130	81	49

- 100% of communities within a 0—5 km distance from district compounds are *secure*.
- 73% of communities within a 6 to 10 km distance from district compounds are *secure*.
- 16% of communities within an 11—15 km distance are considered to be *secure*.

The above analysis indicates that:

- The government is losing or has lost control of the district beyond 5 to 10 km proximate distance from district and security centers.
- There is a direct correlation between security and distance in relationship to district and security centers. Indicating that a community’s proximity to district centers has a direct impact on the condition of its security. Corollary findings illustrate that out of 130 communities located 5 to 15 km from district centers, only 30% are *insecure*, while this rate increases astronomically among communities located beyond 16 km, where it goes up to 100% of communities that are considered to be *insecure*.

(b) Security and Topographical Relations

Results of the study demonstrated that topographical features are a primary factor concerning local security throughout Khogyani province. Correlation of data from these communities in relation to security and topographical features showed that out of 189 communities, plain areas were more secure than communities located within hilly or mountainous regions. Looking at data in the below table, there are 115 communities that are located upon plain topography, out of which 74 (64%) are considered secure, while 41 (36%) are insecure. Whereas, the 20 communities located within mountainous areas are considered to be 100% insecure. Hilly areas seem to be slightly safer with 7 (13%) communities considered, despite the fact that the remaining 47 (87%) estimated to be insecure at present, out of the 54 communities located in hill regions of the district. These results further indicate that topography not only plays a contributing factor in the movement and presence of insurgent/criminal groups, but also greatly limits the ability of government movement and control.

Table 4-3: Security and Topographical Relations

Topography	Total CDCs	Secure CDCs	Insecure CDCs
Plain	115	74	41
Hilly	54	7	47
Mountainous	20	0	20
Sub-total	189	81	108

(c) Security by Sub-tribal Grouping

Social analysis of the correlations between security incidents and sub-tribal groupings within the district indicate that there is no determinant influence of tribal grouping, at least at the “sub-tribe” level, in relation to security conditions. It should be noted that there are clear correlations between the demographic and topographic layout, and as noted in the preceding discussions of distance and topography; both were noted to have an impact on security. However, given the preceding influence of these two conditions—distance and topography—corollary data between security and sub-tribe make-up was inconclusive as to whether ethnicity plays a contributing role to security beyond its geographical and social placement of tribal sub-groups.

Table 4-4: Security and Tribal Groups Linkages

Tribal Groups	Total CDCs	Secure CDCs	Insecure CDCs
Kharboni	111	56	55
Sherzad	15	13	2
Wazir	57	12	45
Others	6	0	6
Sub-total	189	81	108

The table above indicates that the Sherzad have the lowest rate of security incidents with only 13.4% of their communities in insecure areas, the Kharboni have an increased rate (49.5%) of communities within insecure regions, while the Wazir have the highest rate at 79%. Several other very small groups have settled in recent years, making up a small portion of the remaining population, all of which reside in insecure regions of the district. The study also attempted to analyze the correlations between sub-tribes and topographical make-up of communities in relation to number of security incidents. Refer to the following table:

Table 4-5: Linkage Between Security, Sub-tribes and Topography

Khogyani Sub-Tribes	Plain	Hilly	Mt.	Total
Kharboni	65	38	8	111
Sherzad	12	3	0	15
Wazir	37	11	9	57
Others	1	2	3	6
Sub-total	115	54	20	189

Among the 111 Kharboni communities—56 are classified as secure and 55 are insecure—65 of these communities are located upon the plains, while 38 are located in the hills and the remaining eight are located in the mountains. The Sherzad population consists of 15 communities—12 are located on the plains with the remaining 3 located in the hills. Of these communities two of the hill regions are insecure, while the rest are secure. The Wazir have a total of 57 communities —12 are secure and 45 insecure—of which 37 are located in the plains, 11 in the hills, and 9 in the mountains.

(d) Poppy Cultivation and Insecurity Correlation:

Study findings suggest that poppy cultivation is very high within Khogyani district with 180 communities out of 189 currently engaging in cultivating poppy activities. According to interviews with community members, government eradicated all poppy fields located within 42 of the secure communities, but cannot conduct eradication campaigns in the remaining 138 communities (95 insecure and 13 secure) reported to be cultivating poppies. During the study period, 138 communities were observed by project staff to be actively cultivating poppies in their fields. The following table indicates the current levels of reported poppy production within the district:

Table 4-6: Poppy Cultivation and Eradication

Topography	Total number of communities	No. of CDCs having poppy in their fields	No. of secure CDCs where the poppy eradication campaign was launched
Plain	115	77	37
Hilly	54	53	5
Mountainous	20	8	0
Total	189	138	42

The research findings in this project showed that there is a clear correlation between high security areas and regions known to be actively engaging in poppy cultivation. Moreover, poppy cultivation is found within all of the 108 communities that are considered insecure within the district. The government’s poppy eradication campaign has been successfully launched in only 42 communities all of which are considered to be secure. It is clear that poppy cultivation is taking place throughout all insecure areas of the district, in addition to some secure communities as well. The government’s efforts at eradication have been weak and relatively ineffective.

Interpretation of Development Variables

District development was analyzed using variables related to the issue “safe access” to available development opportunities. The study showed that there have been community development efforts in all secure and insecure communities. Educational and health facilities in Khogyani are functioning and the population in both secure and insecure areas utilize communication facilities and have successful records of implementing NSP block grants. The result is shown in the following table:

Table 4-7: Community Access to Development Service

Access to Development Opportunity	CDCs do not Access	Location of CDCs with no access to development opportunities
Communication Networks (Roshan, MTN, Etisalat)	17 CDCs	12 CDCs are located in mountainous area. 4 CDCs are located in the hilly area 1 CDC in plain (located next to Khogyani military base)
Health Facilities	2 CDCS	Ibrahim Khil = 48 km (mountainous) Bandoki = 50 km (mountainous)
Education Facilities	1 CDCs	Bandoki = 50 km
NSP Coverage	5 CDCs	1- Shakoor khil (5km), 2-Bar Arghoch (6km) 3-Babakar Khil (8 km), 4-Band Kali (20 km) 5- Chardigan (8 km)
Seasonal Accessibility	16 CDCs	All 16 CDCs are located in the mountainous area and travel by vehicle is impossible during winter season

The analysis of development variables shows the following results:

- 99.5% of Khogyani populations have access to education facilities (30 schools). Armed groups have not closed or destroyed any school in the last 10 years and no threats have been received by students or personnel related to their educational endeavors. The only community that does not have access to a school is *Bandoki*, located 50 km away from the district center in remote mountainous area.
- 99% population of the district has access to health facilities (one district hospital, five Basic Health Centers and two health sub-centers). To date, armed groups/Taliban have not closed any health facility in the district, nor have they made any threats against health personnel or vaccinators. Two communities, *Ibrahim Khil* and *Bandoki*, located in the mountains lack access to health facilities.
- 97% of the CDCs have access to NSP block grants and are implementing over 600 community-led development projects. According to NSP field staff and community leaders, “the problems preventing the 5 remaining CDCs from implementing block-grants is temporary and due to confusion over population size that is being resolved.”
- 91% of the communities have access to communication systems or mobile phone coverage. Out of the 17 communities with limited or no access to mobile communication systems of any kind 12 are located in the remote mountainous area, 4 in the hills and 1 in the plains.

The one on the plains is located next to an IMF military base: limited access to mobile communications is a result of security restrictions.

- 91% of the communities can be accessed during winter. Roads to 16 communities in the mountains remain closed for approximately two-months, during the winter, but it is not reported to have a significant impact on economic development in the area.

Interpretation of Peacebuilding Variables:

The analysis of security and development variables indicates that the communities in both secure and insecure areas seem to have more or less equal access to development opportunities, and are doing so regardless of security conditions. Significantly, this could indicate that many of these insecure communities have managed to mitigate the impact of conflict to some degree in order to build, utilize and protect the development infrastructure and utilize services within the unstable insecure situation, making them examples of Positive Deviants.

Selection of PD Communities:

To determine the successful behaviors and practices that enable these communities to access and utilize the development services, a clustering sampling method was used to select communities. Khogyani’s communities were broken into three groups based on distance:

- The first group included 38 secure communities within 5 km distance of the district compound: 3 communities—representative of each sub-tribe—were then randomly selected for the study.
- The second group was comprised of 125 communities, both secure as well as insecure, located from 6 to 30 km outside the district center with 6 communities selected to participate at random in the study.
- The third group consisted of the remaining 22 insecure communities that are located 30 km or more from the district center. Out of these, 3 were selected for the next phase of the study.

The following table indicates the list of selected communities:

Table 4-8: Number of Selected Communities

Cluster	Kharboni		Sherzad		Wazir	
	Secure	Insecure	Secure	Insecure	Secure	Insecure
0-5 km	Koz Roshan kot	-	Utman Khail	-	Khalo Kalai	-
6-30 km	Landie	Mamoor Samad	Bar Ador	Bar Miagan	Ghairat Khail	Bahadar Kali
<30 km	-	Kadow	-	Zanglian	-	Shen Kandaw
Sub-total	2	2	2	2	2	2

In total 12 communities (50% secure CDCs) in three distance intervals were selected for the Positive Deviance Inquiry phase of the study.

Table 4-9: No. Of Selected PD Communities

Cluster	Secure CDCs	Insecure CDCs
0-5 km	3	0
6-30 km	3	3
<30 km	0	3
Sub-total	6	6

Conclusion and Lessons Learned

The assessment and data analysis of 189 CDCs of the NSP in Khogyani indicated that topography played the largest contributing role related to security of the region. Communities located within the hills and mountainous areas are virtually all considered insecure as are communities located a far distance from district security compounds. Similarly, poppy cultivation also seems to play negative role in relation security. Despite its charge and efforts, claiming to have eliminated poppy production provincial wide in year 2010-'11, study findings demonstrated that the government poppy eradication campaigns have only been successfully executed within secure areas of the district.

All the three sub-tribes within Khogyani appear to be suffering equally from the rising levels of insecurity, suggesting that the violence is not directed either from or toward a particular ethnic group. While it is clear that different sub-tribes live in different topographical areas, which as noted contributes toward rising insecurity, there was no clear evidence within the study to suggest that these security incidents are the result of ethnic groups or sub-tribes as opposed to geographic and topographic isolation.

Both secure and insecure communities in Khogyani seem to have relatively equal access to health, education, NSP block grants and communication facilities. Development projects have been permitted in all communities with a very low number of communities with little or no access to these development opportunities. Traditional forms of local governance and peacebuilding exist among these communities, which has also served as a social mechanism for managing development efforts and resolving local problems. The communities report that they maintain good relationship with both sides of the conflict—government and armed groups/Taliban. This has enabled them to be successful in the construction, utilization and protection of development infrastructure.

The lessons learned of this phase of the study are summarized below:

- *Presence of Positive Deviance Motives*: Study results indicate that armed groups (Taliban) control the majority of the district, virtually everything beyond a 5 km geographic radius of the district compound. Despite this, people report that they generally reject any form of governance from these armed groups and “manage to take care of ourselves.” The study further indicated that the communities are managing to successfully implement ongoing and new development projects as well as utilize, maintain and protect the majority of development infrastructure and services as well. Based on our interpretation of these findings, these successes—the maintained authority of community governance and successful extension of development and social services—are illustrative examples of “positive deviance motives” and suggestive that identifiable positive deviance social practices are present within Khogyani communities.
- *Determination of Positive Deviance Communities*: The study examined a total of twelve communities—six insecure and six secure within the Positive Deviance Inquiry (PDI) phase of the project. As mentioned previously, the aim of the PDI project phase was to discover unique or specific attitudes, practices and behaviors present within communities that are believed to contribute to their successes in conflict resolution and dialogue with hostile forces, allowing them to continue development efforts and reject governance authority from armed groups/Taliban.
- *Definitions for Security Development & Peacebuilding*: Working definitions for *security, development and peacebuilding* were developed to serve as key variables within the PDI study phase. The aim was to provide project definitions that were more applicable within the

existing security context of Afghanistan. They were developed through collaborative engagement efforts with prominent Afghan academic researchers as well as the project steering committee members. The final definitions used within the PDI phase of the project are as follows:

- **Security:** The absence of direct violence or threats against the community, its members, and its social identity from external forces or actors. The violence or threat of violence may be directed at the physical and territorial integrity of the community as a whole. It also might be manifested by emotional threat or fear for safety by individuals for themselves or their family because of vulnerability to crime, attack, act of war, victimization, or discrimination. The source of insecurity can be government, insurgents, criminal networks, or the international military.
- **Development:** The progress of collective efforts to meet the community's basic needs and advance its socio-economic well-being. This encompasses issues such as community infrastructure, food security, water, agriculture, health, education, disaster management, environmental protection, as well as economic opportunities and linkages to external markets. It presumes good community governance as being essential to success, leaders and community members working together through local decision-making structures that are viewed as culturally legitimate and inclusive to participation.
- **PeaceBuilding:** A state of relationships, within communities, or between communities and external actors, in which differences are resolved through dialogue and negotiation without violence. Differences are accepted and tolerated. Justice is achieved for victims when they are wronged.

Section 2.

Positive Deviance Inquiry Study Report

The second section of the report presents the results as well as case studies of PDI, the qualitative data collected from the 12 communities selected in Khogyani District, Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan, during the “PDI Research phase” of the project, January to July 2013.

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Chapter Five

Positive Deviance Inquiry

The inception phase, described previously in part one of this report, helped identify characteristics or traits that are suggestive of Positive Deviance tendencies. The quantitative data assessment provided a statistical profile of the study region. It also guided the selection process of the 12 communities that participated in the second research phase. As mentioned in the report's introduction, the aim of the PDI research phase is to identify specific attitudes, practices as well as social, cultural and theological perceptions that contribute to local successes such as warding off incidents of violence or maintaining a grasp of local governance.

The Positive Deviance Inquiry phase consisted primary of *qualitative research* efforts that were conducted in the 12 selected communities. The purpose was to discover demonstrative examples of local attitudes towards development and conflict negotiation, cultural tendencies of resilience as well as behaviors and social practices which have either directly or jointly contributed to the community's security and peacebuilding efforts. The study was conducted over a six-month period from January 1 to June 30, 2013. It focused on understanding "what has worked" to build and support local resiliencies in the realms of security management, governance and community development in Khogyani district. This was accomplished by identifying instances of Positive Deviance, which were then collected and assimilated through group interviews and informal community dialogue into qualitative case manuscripts.

Research Methodology:

Objective: The primary objective of this study was to understand the attitudes, behaviors and social practices of the people residing within Khogyani district and the impact these social traits have had upon their efforts to promote security, development & peacebuilding. In other words, Positive Deviance Inquiry research seeks to understand *how* the community has successfully managed to:

- mitigate the impact of conflict in their areas
- maintain local governance systems
- advance and sustain local development initiatives in unstable and insecure environments

Research Method: The primary research focus of the PDI was on qualitative research. To accomplish this, the study drew upon key informant interviews conducted between February and November 2012 and again from January to June 2013, as well as sporadic follow-up interviews throughout the duration of the project. These were supplemented by INSO¹³ Security Data and critical observations of FGA project staff from meetings, workshops and discussions with the field staff and community leaders.

Selected Communities: As described in the previous chapters, the 12 communities were chosen based on quantitative data analysis and composite variables measuring *security, development & peacebuilding*. The study also collected the people's perceptions and allowed them to define the most important issues affecting their communities. Specific study tools included informal conversations, focus group discussions, community and professional workshops, and participant observations from social mobilizers, community leaders and external professionals.

¹³ INSO is a non-profit charity, assisting NGOs to conduct their humanitarian operations safely and to minimize the risks faced by their staff and beneficiaries.

Focus Groups: Focus groups for this study consisted of community elders (community and religious leaders), women and youth. Table 5-1 indicate the focus groups and tools used in this study.

Table 5-1: Focus Groups and Tools Used in Study

Target Groups	Number of Focus Group Discussions or informal meeting in every communities	PDI tools used in each community
Community leaders / elders	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups discussion • Informal meeting • Workshops • Observations
Religious leaders	3	
Youth	3	
Women	At least one FGD in each selected community	

At least nine focus group discussions were held in each community; a total 108 focus group discussions were conducted with focus groups across the 12 target communities. The FGA team also conducted 12 additional focus group discussions (one in each selected community) with groups of women in private.

Checklist for Informal Meeting: The checklist, which was used by field staff during their informal meetings and focus group discussions were constructed using the working project definitions of *security, development and peacebuilding*. Please refer to Table 5-2 to see a sample of the checklist used in this study.

Ethnic Considerations:

The PDI study consistently adhered to the principles of “do no harm.” Before starting work in each selected community, permission was sought from the community leaders who were asked to provide introduction to community members. The team explained the objectives of the study and managed social expectations. Respondents and participants were assured of their anonymity and the confidentiality of their interview responses. Verbal consent was ascertained prior to conducting any in-depth interview or focus group discussion.

Limitations:

Research was a sensitive topic and building trust among the community members proved to be a challenge. Elders often appeared unwilling to talk. Some respondents reported feeling hesitant when talking about the past and current issues, largely due to the presence of Taliban and government. Respondents were reluctant to admit the existence of prevailing tensions between people and communities, simply insisting that relations were good. Issues such as their relationships with insurgent groups were difficult to explore. Addressing these challenges, the team tried to be as clear as possible on goals of the study. Throughout the course of the PDI study, the team maintained a constant presence in the area, strengthening relations and building trust.

Interviews with women proved to be a particular challenge due the conservative nature of the Khogyani communities. Consequently, only one focus group discussion was held. Women in this area were also reluctant to disclose information. They frequently were unable to answer questions because it was something new and felt them to be poorly educated. Building trust proved to be the key to helping these women begin to express their views.

Table 5-2: Working Definitions, Key indicators and the Checklists Used in PDI Study

Working Definitions	Key Indicators	Checklists / questions used during FGD and informal meeting with the target groups
<p>Security: The absences of direct violence or threat against the community, its members, and its identity from external forces or actors. The violence or threat of violence may be directed at the physical and territorial integrity of the community as a whole. It also might be manifested by emotional threat or fear for safety by individuals for themselves or their family because of vulnerability to crime, attack, and act of war, victimization, or discrimination. The source of insecurity may the government, insurgents, criminal networks, or the international military.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Absence of direct violence 2. Presence of physical & emotional threats to community as whole. 3. Vulnerability of community to crimes, attacks, victimizations, discriminations, etc. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. What is the reason that no public service center has been closed or destroyed in your community within the past 3-5 years? 1.2. What has been the role of people in bringing security and reducing violence? 2.1 Are there any internal and external threats to communities from government forces, insurgents groups, and criminals? If yes, what types? If not, what is the reason behind? 3.1 Is the community vulnerable to crimes, attacks, etc.? 3.2 What is the influence of insecurity conditions of the neighboring villages on your community?
<p>Development: The progress of collective efforts to meet the community's basic needs and advance its socio-economic well-being. This encompasses issues such as community infrastructure, food security, water, agriculture, health, education, economic opportunities and linkages, disaster management, environmental integrity, and the like. It assumes that good community governance is essential. Leaders and the people work together through decision-making structures that are locally legitimate and broadly inclusive.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Collective efforts of communities for socio-economic-political wellbeing. 5. Positive changes at result of collective efforts. 6. Community leadership and governance. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 What types collective works exist in your communities? (In connection to agriculture, irrigation water, health, education, local dispute resolution, safety-net, etc.) 5.1 What changes were generated in the communities as a result of these collective efforts? 6.1 What is the role of local council and its members in SDP?
<p>Peacebuilding: A state of relationships within communities, or between communities and external actors, in which differences are resolved through dialogue and negotiation without violence. Differences are accepted and tolerated. Justice is achieved for victims when they are wronged.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Community relationship (inter/intra, external actors). 8. Peaceful resolution of conflict by communities. 9. Community tolerance on differences. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7.1 How are community relations with government authorities, Taliban etc.? 7.2 How is the relation among community people? If they are good, what is the reason behind? 7.3 Is there any conflict between your community and the neighboring villages? If yes, what is the cause behind? 7.4 Was there any conflict in your community in the last 2 years? If yes, how it was resolved? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through councils or a leader - Referred to government - Referred to Taliban

Chapter Six

Profile of the Selected Communities

Community Outline:

The 12 selected communities are located between 4.5 to 47 km distance from the district center. In terms of topography, seven of these communities are located in plain areas, three in hilly and two communities (Shen Kandow & Kandow over 35 km) in mountainous areas. The total population of the community is 15,039, out of which 7,929 are male and 7,115 are female. The number of families is estimated to be 3,000, of which a very small number are recent returnee families. All are Pashtun, primarily from the three Khogyani sub-tribes (Kharboni, Sherzad and Wazir). Their income sources are agriculture production, animal raising, small businesses (shops), daily wages from outside the community and government employment. Some family members collect firewood from the mountain and sell it in Khogyani's bazaar. The communities' quantitative research profiles are shown in the following table:

Table 6-1: Profile of the selected communities

No	Village Name	Distance from District Centre	Control by	Population			Sub-tribes	Topography
				Male	Female	Total		
1	Bahadar kali	8 km	Taliban	520	322	842	Wazir	Plain
2	Bar Ador	10 km	Government	1105	950	2055	Sherzad	Hilly
3	Bar Miagan	9 km	Taliban	561	400	961	Sherzad	Plain
4	Ghairat khail	10 km	Government	750	681	1431	Wazir	Plain
5	Kandow	35 km	Taliban	200	182	382	Kharboni	Mountainous
6	Khalo Kalai	4 km	Government	600	585	1185	Wazir	Plain
7	Koz Rokhan Kot	5 km	Government	830	805	1635	Kharboni	Plain
8	Landie	10 km	Government	684	512	1196	Kharboni	Plain
9	Mamoor Samad kali	8 km	Taliban	810	919	1729	Kharboni	Plain
10	Shen Kandaw	30 km	Taliban	750	816	1566	Wazir	Mountainous
11	Utman khil	4.5 km	Government	614	610	1224	Sherzad	Hilly
12	Zangalian	47 km	Taliban	500	333	833	Sherzad	Hilly
Sub-total				7929	7115	15,039		

Security Situation:

According to quantitative research variable (presence of government and security forces), the above table shows six communities have stable security situations, while the other six communities are insecure.

According to the PDI variables (absence of direct violence and physical threats to community), the security conditions in the 12 selected communities are relatively good and dependent upon socio-political situation of the area in general, the neighboring villages in particular.

According to INSO monthly incidents' report, the security situation in the selected communities is linked with its neighboring villages. Incidents in neighboring communities effect the security environment in the selected communities. Military search operations typically lead to local arrests of suspect people. As a result, the populations in these communities feel the ISAF troops to be a threat. Some communities located close to Pakistan border such as Bar Miagan Kalai become havens for Taliban hiding from military forces, moving easily back and and forth.

Other factors contributing to insecurity are related to opium production and eradication operations against opium producers by security forces. Once such operation resulted in an attack

on anti-narcotics teams, ending with several casualties to both sides. Please refer to INSO security reports in the following table:

Table 6-2: Security Incidents in the Selected Communities

No.	Name of Communities	Distance from District Center	Topography	Detonations & Attacks		Criminal		Operations IMF/ANP		Total Incidents	
				2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011
1	Bahadur Kaiali	8 km	Plain	1	1	0	1	0	2	1	4
2	Bar Ador	10 km	Hilly	3	0	1	0	0	0	4	0
3	Bar Miagan	9 km	Plain	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
4	Ghairat Khil	9 km	Plain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Kandow	35 km	Mt.	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	2
6	Khalo Kalai	4 km	Plain	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
7	Koz Roshan Kot	5 km	Plain	5	0	2	1	0	0	7	1
8	Landi	10 km	Plain	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	3
9	Mamor Samad	8 km	Plain	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	3
10	Sheen kandaow	30 km	Mt.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Utman Kahil	4.5 km	Hilly	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
12	Zanglian	47 km	Hilly	1	1	0	2	3	5	4	8
Total				10	5	6	9	3	11	20	25

Source: INSO Reports

According to above ISNO report, the number of incidents in the 12 selected communities has reduced from 25 incidents in 2011 to 20 in 2012. But the level of detonations and attacks by Taliban groups has increased from 5 to 10 incidents in 2012, while IMF/ANP operations have reduced from 11 to 3 over the same time period. Showing the influence of Taliban in the selected communities; the level of criminal activities is reduced from 9 incidents in 2011 to 6 in 2012.

The table above indicates an increased number of Taliban attacks in 2012 as well as increasing criminal activities in communities located near the district center. They launched five attacks in 2012, while IMF had no operations in 2012 and only two operations within these communities in 2011. Communities located between 6-30 km from district center are even more unstable with an increased number of Taliban attacks from 3 to 5 in 2012. The level of criminal activities remained almost the same, while the military had no operations in 2012 and only four in 2011. The security situation in the remote communities, over 30 km distance from the district center, seemed more stable as a result of low occurrences of Taliban operations or criminal activities in 2012, despite the fact that military operations in these communities also decreased by 50% in 2012.

Data shows an increased number of attacks launched by Taliban in the plain areas in 2012, while the number of criminal activities remained the same with the military also conducting operations in these areas. Hilly areas are less secure as the result of increased Taliban attacks and resulting military operations. Mountainous areas are the most secure with no operations reported by either insurgents or military forces.

The following table indicates the deteriorating security situation in Nangarhar province in 2012. Taliban attacks increased by 151% in 2012 compared to 2011. Criminal activities and IMF/ANP operations also increased by 104% and 127% respectively in 2012; in comparison, the security situation of the selected communities is better than most of Nangarhar.

Table 6-3: Security Incidents in Nangarhar Province in 2011 and 2012

Month	Detonations & Attacks			Criminal			Operations IMF/ANP			Others			Total Incidents		
	2012	2011	%	2012	2011	%	2012	2011	%	2012	2011	%	2012	2011	%
Jan.	49	46	106.5	33	29	113.7	36	12	300	7	17	41.1	125	104	120.1
Feb.	73	52	140.3	36	27	133.3	28	17	164.7	10	21	47.6	147	117	125.6
Mar.	67	39	171.7	37	26	142.3	23	12	191.6	27	7	385.7	154	84	183.3
Apr.	79	51	154.9	41	34	120.5	26	9	288.8	5	33	15.1	151	127	118.8
May.	68	45	151.1	51	37	137.8	22	15	146.6	6	37	16.2	147	134	109.7
Jun.	84	67	125.3	61	50	122	19	15	126.6	3	15	20	167	147	113.6
Jul.	101	72	140.2	53	61	86.88	28	26	107.6	4	18	22.2	186	177	105
Aug.	86	43	200	69	65	106.1	6	15	40	2	24	8.3	163	147	113.9
Sep.	81	45	180	54	53	101.8	15	17	88.2	11	8	137.5	161	123	130.8
Oct.	100	74	135	60	68	88.2	13	18	72.2	7	14	50	180	174	103.4
Nov.	86	52	165.3	48	78	61.5	14	20	70	3	12	25	151	162	93.2
Dec.	90	51	176.4	64	58	110.3	32	30	106.6	3	5	60	189	144	131.2
Total	964	637	151%	607	586	104%	262	206	127%	88	211	41%	1921	1640	117%

Source: INSO Report

Local leaders and people in the selected communities always try to maintain good relationship with government officials and Taliban to maintain security in their villages. One member of Ghairat Khail community said “*that our relationship with Taliban is not to work for them; we have positive ideas to improve life and security for our community.*”

Development:

Most houses are reconstructed and agriculture land is prepared for cultivation. Schools are open for boys and girls. People participate in their own community affairs and help with development projects. The number of returning families is lower in Khogyani compared to other districts of Nangarhar province as a result of little job opportunities and high unemployment. Health services are provided either by the NGOs or the government health directorate. The communication network is active. Road are asphalted or graveled. Communities under the National Solidarity Program have implemented projects.

Table 6-4: Development services in the selected communities

#	Village Name	Distance From District Centre	Control by	Topography	Access to Development Opportunities			
					Health	Education	Communication Networks	NSP Block Grants
1	Bahadar Kali	8 km	Taliban	Plain	Wazir Ahmad Khail BHC	Wazir Jihadi High school	MTN, Roshan Etisalat	On-going
2	Bar Ador	10 km	Government	Hilly	District Hospital	Andor Middle School	Roshan, Etisalat	Completed in Aug. 2013
3	Bar Miagan	9 km	Taliban	Plain	District Hospital	Tangi Miagan High school	MTN, Roshan Etisalat	Completed in Sep. 2013
4	Ghairat khail	9 km	Government	Plain	Wazir Ahmad Khail BHC	Wazir Jihadi High School	MTN, Roshan Etisalat	On-going
5	Kadow	35 km	Taliban	Mt.	Zangalian SC	Zangalian Middle School	MTN	Completed in Aug. 2012
6	Khalo Kalai	4 km	Government	Plain	Wazir Ahmad Khail BHC	Wazir Jihadi High School	MTN, Roshan Etisalat	Ongoing
7	Koz Rokhan Kot	5 km	Government	Plain	District Hospital	Miagan High school	MTN, Roshan Etisalat	Completed in June 2011
8	Landie	10 km	Government	Plain	Lokhi BHC and District Hospital	Lokhi High school	MTN, Roshan Etisalat	Completed in June 2013
9	Mamoor Samad kali	8 km	Taliban	Plain	District Hospital	Sordog High School	Roshan, Etisalat	On-going
10	Shen Kandaw	30 km	Taliban	Mt.	Wazir Tatang Sub Center	Miagan High school	Nil	On-going
11	Utman khil	4.5 km	Government	Hilly	District Hospital	Kilagho High school	MTN, Roshan Etisalat	Completed in Aug. 20/13
12	Zangalian	47 km	Taliban	Hilly	Zangalyan Sub Center	Wazir Tatang High School	MTN, Roshan	On-going

(Source: MoPH, MoEd and NSP/FGA)

According to the above table, the entire population of Khogyani has access to education and health services. Communities located 0-10 km from the district center receive the health services from the district hospital and Wazir Ahmad Khail basic health center. Communities in remote areas, over 30 km from the district center, access Wazir Tatang and Zangalian health sub-centers. All the communities have access to schools, with 4 high schools and 4 middle schools.

All the selected communities have been implementing the National Solidarity program. Six communities have already utilized NSP block grants and completed projects in their communities. NSP operations are in progress in the remaining six communities. They include construction of protection wall, intake, pathway, drinking water wells, canal, culverts and deep wells. All the above communities except Shen Kandaw have access to communication networks.

Chapter Seven

Community Perceptions in the Selected Communities

Three separate focus group discussions and information conversations were conducted in Khogyani district. These focus group interviews consisted of the following demographic units:

1. Community Elders (males): Tribal & Religious Elders typically range in age from 35-70. The primary concerns of this group are security (unemployment), government corruption and cultural maintenance.
2. Youth (males): Youth participants range in age from 19-25 consisting of mechanics, students, drivers, farmers and shopkeepers. Their primary concerns are government corruption, security (unemployment), personal safety and freedom of movement.
3. Women: Female participants range in age from 23-50 all of whom were housewives. The primary concern of this group was the security of their children and menfolk, freedom of movement.

Perception on Security and Freedom of Movement

The security providers listed by participants across all focus groups included the ANA (Afghan National Army), ANP (Afghan National Police), ALP (Afghan Local Police), American troops, Taliban and militia groups. The ANA were seen in a positive light across all focus groups and factor cited included in the fact that they're Afghans, know the local language and show a lot of respect and care towards women. In contrast, police forces received less positive feedback. Trust levels on ALP were low and they were not very well respected by the majority of the participants across the focus groups. *"We haven't seen district police here, because they can't get out of their district compound,"* is a quote from the women's group.

The elders and youth see the Taliban more positively:

"The Taliban aren't against school and education." They also said, "If you are kidnapped, you are gone; there is no one to take care of you, but Allah. Taliban are given orders from the Mullah Omar to not harass. It's all Americans committing violence and then Taliban get blamed." They also said, "This is clear that only maybe two actual Taliban die in American bombing or airstrikes. The rest are all local people, who become victims to it, and roadside bombs, and other incidents."

In regard to sources of insecurity, the elders stated the main causes are poverty, unemployment, corruption and injustice. According to elders groups, *"The Americans have created the biggest insecurity.. They reported, "The Americans, based on the false reports, arrest and kill innocent people."* The youth cited violence, the problem of personal militias and irresponsible gunmen as their main sources of insecurity. They also cited unemployment and indiscriminate killing by both insurgent groups. Similarly, participants from the women group listed bomb explosions, night operations that lead to arrests without any reason, and harassment from Taliban as the primary sources of insecurity.

Responses from participants across all three focus groups indicate that the security situation is not good and has worsened over the last two years. Participants from all focus groups also reported instances where they were personally harmed; perpetrators of these incidents include security providers, anonymous men and the Taliban.

Participants from all groups reported compromised freedom of movement at the district level, yet many mentioned a lack of individual fear moving locally. For instance the women groups said

“Our village is pretty calm and we don’t have any fear. The clinic is close to us and we go there without any fear.”

In general, participants reported a high level of fear with regards to provincial movement, due to harassment by various parties including the Taliban, American troops, and even the government. Bombing and landmines were also cited as contributing factors. It is worth mentioning here that the deterioration of freedom of movement is not only limited to people, but also livestock since places where animals can graze are become vulnerable under American threats.

The deterioration of freedom of movement greatly restricts culture and traditions. The following quotation provides a different example how communal and private lives have been disrupted.

“We have limited our social activities to a greater degree, and we have stopped activities in regions of danger. Before the Americans were in this district, all people would attend wedding and funerals and other social gathering without any worry and fear. But now that the Americans are here, they bomb wedding, funerals and other village gathering. So we can’t participate in all these social activities as much as before due to fear of being bombed.” Stated within youth focus group.

“Before women would celebrate, and sing songs during the nights and go to other villages to celebrate weddings. But it isn’t the case today. Similarly, a wedding would be delayed for months until the victim’s family sanctioned it. But today there would a wedding at one household, while three corpses in other. This is how traditions have changed.” Stated within women’s focus group.

Perception on Development Program

Elders and youth groups were more critical on the past and current development projects. Development projects were seen as enabling corruption, with little benefit going to intended beneficiaries. There was also a lack of trust in regard to funding sources; where funding is coming from and for what purposes? Women groups indicated that drinking water wells and roads have been constructed in some places, but also stated the lack of completed development projects in their villages. Female participants provided concrete examples of what they would like to see, citing long-term projects for women including activities such as tailoring, embroidery and carpet making. They also mentioned livelihood projects such as getting loans for chicken farms, and buying cows and other homestead activities that are culturally acceptable for women to manage. They further reported that the men in their communities would be open to government services and NGO activities if they provided long-term jobs.

Similarly youth groups felt that the government should invest in larger development projects such as constructing power dams over Kunar river, irrigation canals, and bridges. Unlike older members of the community, they felt that small-scale infrastructure such as building wells or flood-walls are not effective in promoting long-term economic gains. They also argued that these small projects cannot resist severe floods or change the social and economic situation of the people.

It is worth mentioning here that the majority of participants see opium production as a stable and lucrative means of providing a livelihood for themselves and as a solution to community

unemployment. The contentious twin issues of opium growing and its simultaneous eradication have led to an even more complex situation as demonstrated by the following testimony from participants across all focus groups:

“We plant opium, so we can get married, buy a car and house, and don’t have to resort to fighting. That’s how economy and security are linked to each other. If one of them is unsatisfied, the people are under threat and face challenges. Security is linked with opium. When it’s eradicated, security will worsen because opium provides employment for a lot of people here. Losing it will create unemployment and insecurity.” Said by youth group.

In general, participants stated that,

“Improvement of the security situation is paramount to improving the current social, economic, political and cultural situations.”

The following views glimpses into the future they would like to see contingent on the improvement of the security situation:

“If security improves, it will bring a deep change in people’s lives. Government officials will live without dangers, development projects will come here, education will develop, and elections will be facilitated. Certainly people’s perceptions will change positively.” Said by elders group.

“If security is good, the well-off people here will invest and establish factories, people will be employed, and unemployment will end. Everyone’s livelihood will improve, and they can invest for their profit.” Said by elders and youth group.

Perceptions on Governance:

Overall, the government is seen as complicit towards the situation that the country is in, and is viewed as incapable of responding to the needs of its people or of protecting their livelihoods. In some cases, it was also seen as inept and detrimental towards its own people. According to general consensus of the elders’ group, the government has not delivered on its promises; that is the main reason they are not trusted or highly respected.

“The national cricket team was trained in three years, and it brought home many wins. But Karzai government in his 11-year life hasn’t made a functional team yet.” Told by a group of elders.

The youth groups had an even harsher view on the government, with participants using the words “non-existent” and “incapable” in describing it. Women stated

“There is no government rule here. It’s our elders who have maintained somewhat organization. They (the local council) resolve many of our problems. It is expensive to refer to the government as you have to keep going back and forth.”

Perceptions across all focus groups indicated that the government is perceived to have minimal control over the district. The Taliban and the Americans are seen to having some control over the district, but as a women participant summed it up:

“We all think that no one of the group can govern properly.”

Trust levels in official government institutions were low with some derision and humor thrown in when male participants expressed their views. Tribal elders were seen as a viable and preferred alternative to the official government, especially in terms of regulating local justice. The Taliban were also mentioned as an alternative. As said by women, *“Whomever works with the government, supports it. And others either labor or support the Taliban.”*

The following anecdotes from a member of youth group depict the current situation best.

“A kid asked his dad, ‘What are government, parliament, and administration and people?’ The father responded, ‘I am like government, your mom is administration, your elder brothers and sisters are parliament and you are the people.’ During the night, the kid had to go the bathroom. He asked his brothers and sister for help, but they were asleep. When he went to his parents’ bedroom, seeing his parents cuddled up embarrassed him. He did ‘the deed’ at the corner of the room. In the morning, his dad inquired about it, and the kid replied, ‘When the government is cuddled on top of administration, and parliament is asleep, the people had to take off its deed.’ That is our situation too.”

Perception on local level Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding

The district government is perceived as weak, corrupt and ineffective by participants across all focus groups. Participants from the women’s groups were the most succinct and hard-hitting in their responses.

The elders had mixed opinions about the efficacy and trustworthiness of local councils. According to the elders the local council responsibility is to facilitate communication between people and the government, and bridge the gap. However, the government at the higher level causes failures because when a case is referred up to them, they do not take action. Even if the council does its job, the government doesn’t cooperate with them. That is why people do not trust the government.

Youth groups were more positive and felt that the local councils were responsive, effective and fair in resolving issues. Likewise, participants from the women’s group in general saw local councils as a better alternative than going to the government, despite the lack of female representatives on the local council. The following statements illustrate the general feeling of the youth and women groups toward local councils and their decision-making capacity:

“My family had dispute with a villager over land, and it was referred to the government. No one’s issues get resolved in the government. So our elders, led by head of the council, gathered. They took power and permission from both sides in written statements, took over our issues from the government, and resolved our issue appropriately. Their decision was acceptable to both of us, and we are pleased with these elders.”

Perception Toward Taliban Shadow Government

The Taliban shadow government in the district was set up in 2009 and consists of two commissions, (a) *Mulki* (political) commission, and (b) *Nizami* (military) commission. The political commission is comprised of district shadow governors and a judge who are charged with addressing complaints of the villagers and oversight of all development projects and service institutions. The Taliban system of justice is intended to ‘hook’ sections of the local population by resolving disputes thereby giving the beneficiaries a vested interest in supporting the Taliban. The system functions as mobile courts as the elders noted:

“Judges are mobile and do not have a fixed location. Sometimes they meet in people’s houses, sometimes in the mountains, sometimes in the mosques.”
According to local elders, *“The Taliban justice system is easily one of the most popular and respected elements of the Taliban insurgency by local communities.”*

An elder commented on the advantage of the Taliban courts:

“Disputes over land and water create significant problems for rural communities. You have to sell 20 Jerib of land to pay the expenses to resolve issues in the government courts. But the Taliban can solve disputes between people in two or three hours.”

The Taliban’s military commission at district level is led by local commanders and reports directly to the military commissions in Peshawar and Quetta. This commission is allowed to recruit and train combat groups from rural areas.

“The Taliban’s military structure has been centered on two military commissions, both based in Pakistan: one in Quetta and the other in Peshawar. In principle, these two commissions have divided territorial responsibility between themselves, with Quetta being in charge of the west, south and north and Peshawar of the southeast, east, northeast and the Kabul region”.

Chapter Eight

Positive Deviant Stands and Strategies Within Khogyani Communities

Introduction

Conflict in Afghanistan has been in a constant state of flux over the last 30 years. This conflict has had a varied impact upon the delivery and access of development infrastructure as well as other primary social and economic services. Areas less affected by conflict seem to have better access to services, while conflict-heavy areas are extremely limited in the services available. Results from the *Engaging community Resilience for Security, Development and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan* project demonstrated several critical findings:

- Communities reported “conflict” to be the primary disruption to services, regardless of which actors are involved. National security forces create conflict and are therefore part of the limitation to social services, despite their alleged intent.
- Findings from Khogyani district demonstrated that communities have successfully managed to mitigate the impact of conflict and are able to access as well as operationalize aspects of their development infrastructure.
- The following seven cases reflect positive deviants among the Khogyani communities illustrating attitudes, practices and strategies, which served them to better manage social and economic development assistance over the past twelve years of war.

The communities in Khogyani District have managed to construct development infrastructure and maintain functional schools and health clinics in their villages. They also created a social safety net to support the most vulnerable and disadvantage groups in their areas. The community attitude combined with local leadership skills generated during the decades of war are the foundation for their successes in negotiating mutual resolutions to their social and economic problems. Interest in education and desire for health services have created shared social goals among the community, stimulating collective work and establishing local solidarity regarding security, development and peacebuilding.

Case Study No. 1: Construction of Wazir Jihadi School in Ahmad Khail Village

Wazir area in Khogyani District is comprised of 57 communities, consisting of three sub-tribes (*Pera Khail, Khowaza Khail, and Ahmad Khail*). Government security forces control only 12 of these communities, while the Taliban are present in the remaining 45 communities.

Ahmad Khail village considers itself neutral and has managed to keep relatively good security conditions, even during the worst periods of regional conflict. They maintain a collective sense of civic duty that they use to both protect and expand upon their local infrastructure.

“The internal disputes of families used to keep us from recognizing local aspirations and then being able to pursue them to completion. We recognized that internal enmities prevented us from achieving our ambitions. But with the help of good leadership, we were able to overcome and resolve these internal disputes peacefully. We have also refused to take sides in regional disputes and conflicts that originate between warring factions. As a result, we have been able to do something for our communities. We have made it clear to Taliban and the government that we

recognize functional leadership, not violence.” Personal correspondence from community elders during meeting with FGA research team.

During the government of president Daud Khan (1972-1978), the Ministry of Education agreed to provide the village with a school, if the community could donate a piece of land. A community fund was created, taking donations from families, in order to purchase four Jeribs (8000 square meters) of land for the construction of a middle school, Wazir School.

The school was subsequently burned by the Mujahidin during their conflict with the Russians, which started in 1979. The three tribal groups came together and decided to create a local leadership system to collectively reconstruct the school and resolve community social and economic problems. They formed a local council in the village and divided the construction work among the community people. The rebuilt building was renamed ‘Wazir Jihadi School.’ By this time, the current Mujahidin government, becoming increasingly dysfunctional, was not in the position to provide any supplies or teacher salaries. Therefore, the local leadership council asked for donations. The communities provided floor cover and books and Eng. Mohmmood, a former commander of the area, agreed to pay the first six months of salaries to four teachers. Later on, during the Prof. Borhanudin Rabani government (1991-1995) and the Taliban regime (1995-2001), conflict soared to its highest levels between different Mujahedeen groups and then again with Taliban. Throughout, the local council asked the communities to donate teachers’ salaries. The families agreed to pay teachers in shares of their crop yield as salary. The community reported this system of salary was in place at one point for over six consecutive years during the worst conflict periods and in the absence of viable economic markets.

After the collapse of the Taliban in 2001, the community approached the new government and requested that they rebuild the school and expand Wazir Jihadi middle school to include high school. Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) constructed a new building. The government also asked the communities to provide land for construction a *Madrasa* (religious school), but the community refused and instead proposed the construction of girl’s school in Wazir area. However, the government was unable to allocate funds. Therefore, the community leaders decided to contribute money and buy a piece of land close to the boy’s school in order to construct a girl’s school using local capacity and volunteer labor. Teacher salaries were paid exclusively using local income for the first six months, before an NGO began donating the running costs of the girl’s school.

After both schools started functioning they were informed that the Taliban would destroy the PRT funded building and banned the girl education in Wazir’s area. The community elders came together and contacted the Taliban, negotiating for education and the continued functioning of both schools.

The Taliban gave assurances for the security of school employees and students. The community’s unity and strong leadership convinced the Taliban mindset to allow the boy and girls to continue their education in these schools. The schools are still opened and functional. Both boy and girls’ schools are now registered with Ministry of Education.

The community with the help of school personnel has been establishing a school and parent management committee. The roles of this committees are to (a) prepare and implement school improvement plan, (b) build trust between community, schools authorities and the Taliban, (c) encourage families to send their children particularly girls to these schools, and (d) protect school’s assets and property. Presently the following 17 communities have access to Wazir Jihadi School:

Table 8-1: List of Communities access to Wazir Jihadi Schools and Health Center

#	Name	Control by	Population			Sub-Tribes
			Male	Female	Total	
1	Aziz Khail	Government	611	600	1211	Kharbonai
2	Bar Loi Kali	Government	750	673	1423	Kharbonai
3	Dosaraka	Government	400	392	792	Sherzad
4	Ghairat Khail	Government	750	681	1431	Kharbonai
5	Karam Khail	Taliban	1000	868	1868	Wazir
6	Pacha Kalai	Taliban	684	500	1184	Kharbonai
7	Kashmeer Kali	Taliban	800	731	1531	Kharbonai
8	Khalo Kalai	Government	600	585	1185	Sherzad
9	Mala Noor Kali	Taliban	753	700	1453	Kharbonai
10	Malak Sadoor Kali	Taliban	750	566	1306	Kharbonai
11	Mama Khail	Taliban	580	439	1019	Wazir
12	Moche Kali	Taliban	810	710	1529	Wazir
13	Razi Kali	Taliban	993	900	1893	Wazir
14	Sahebzadgan	Taliban	616	820	1436	Wazir
15	Sra Kala	Taliban	715	660	1375	Kharbonai
16	Tale Khail	Taliban	700	691	1391	Kharbonai
17	Zawara	Taliban	716	645	1361	Wazir
Total			12,228	11,161	23,388	

The above table indicates 5 out of 17 communities are located in the Government areas while the Taliban groups are presence in the 12 communities. Students from both Government and Taliban areas have used the school for their education. This has created common ground for students and next generations of both communities to come together in this school and have friendly relationships, which obviously contributes to peacebuilding in the whole district.

Case Study No. 2: Construction of Wazir Basic Health Center

Residents of the village took steps to construct a health center in Waziri area. The local council came together and collected (\$9,000 USD) to purchase land and contributed free labor as well as construction materials for the clinic. Two local residents also trained as medical doctors agreed to work voluntary in this clinic. They worked for more than six months until clinic was taken over by an international NGO. At present, it receives medical supplies and has assigned personnel from the government.

At the invitation of the local council, Taliban authorities visited the clinic and met with health personnel and community leaders. As a result, they have allowed the clinic to be functional in the area and promised not to create problems for the government health personnel. In addition, Taliban issued a letter to the community, allowing vaccinators and health worker to freely carry out their job providing polio vaccine. As a result of the community efforts, the health center is a secure place.

During the presidential and provincial council elections in 2009, both the Wazir Jihadi schools and the health center were used as voting centers for male and female voters. Both facilities received serious Taliban threats, but the efforts of communities' elders prevented these threats from happening. This effort made the Wazir community unique in resolving their issues with own sub-tribes and conflicting parties through their own local councils and leadership.

Case Study No. 3: Water Dispute Resolution Among Wazir Tribe

The Wazir community has good system for water management and control during the water-shortage-season.

“When we face shortage of irrigation water or if any issue comes up with water distribution we resolve it based on our existing system in our villages. We have assigned Mirab¹⁴ (local water manager, controller) for this problem. When problems arise during water distribution, the Mirab with the help of community elders resolve the issue”.

Conflict over water is very common in Khogyani district. During fall season the surface water becomes inadequate for irrigation, so disputes arise amongst the farmers that mostly end in fighting, sometimes creating long-term enmity among the villages. Therefore, a *Mirab* is elected to manage an irrigation scheme serving a cluster of villages. He is paid by the community and during the spring he calls the people in villages to voluntarily rehabilitate and maintain the irrigation system. In addition, the *Mirab* is responsible for working with community elders to resolve any disputes that arise over usage.

The *Mirab* and *Co-mirabs* with the support of elders organize the farmers in groups based on their land's holding pattern (50 acre per group). Each of this group is called “*Wand*” that has the right to get water based on a specific time allocation. This means that the water will be distributed to *Wand* or group of famers (not to individual farmers). For instance, if there is hundred Jerib of land (50 acres) this is divided into five portions and each portion in size of 20 Jerib (10 acre) is equal to one *Wand*. Each *Wand* has its own *Khandadar* who is assigned by community people to work closely with village *Mirab* to manage and control water distribution at *Wand's* level during the fall seasons. With the establishment of this system water related disputes are reduced and every farmer receives the required amount of water for their agriculture fields. In case any issue arises between farmers the *Mirab* together with *Khandadar* with the support of elders if required discuss the issue and then decide how to resolve it.

The most interesting point in this system in relation to the study of positive deviants is the community agreement to tolerate and avoid all their internal enmity. According to local people this system has become a traditional system, which is not used in most communities in other provinces.

Case Study No. 4: Road construction link Hakim Abad Village to Provincial Capital

Hakim Abad village is one of Khogyani District's villages, located 13 km from the district center. This village consists of two villages called Bar Kalai Hakim Abad and Malakano Kalai Hakim Abad. The people that live there dwell in 596 households.

This village has had a transportation problem and could not take patients to the hospital and their agriculture products to major markets in the provincial capital. One of the major successes of the community was they had been able to convinced the Taliban authority to allow the construction of a new road into their village, in spite of fears that it would be used to launch a military offensive road.

¹⁴ *Mirab* (Master of Water), *Khadadar* (Co-mirab), is the controller of community water, *Mirab* is responsible for maintenance of the main canal and the *Khadadar* is responsible for secondary canals in an irrigation scheme.

This road links Hakim Abad with district center and its neighboring villages. Taliban showed divergence at the outset of the project. They saw it as a threat to their positions and seriously opposed it. Specifically, they believed the road would be used by military forces to raid their isolated positions.

In order to resolve this issue, the local council approached Taliban. During this meeting:

1. The local council argued that the current risk of the community from isolation was a greater threat than the Taliban's alleged safety. Denying the road to the community would suggest that the Taliban think they are more important than the people, rather than being "of the people" as they like to claim.
2. Moreover, the local council reminded them that road construction is the duty and need of any government, so that when they regain power the burden will fall to them. Why not let the road be built in advance and save you the effort when you come back to power.

The Taliban replied a few days later and agreed to the road construction project.

In term of PD initiative the case study shows the community's stand, as they were able to negotiate from a strong position with an armed Taliban group.

Case Study No. 5: Supportive Safety Net for Poor and Vulnerable People

The people of Khogyani district during the periods of war have suffered hardships as they have been forced to migrate in and out of the country. Many of the households lost the only earning members of their families. As a result the number of poor, widows and orphans increased in the villages. Thus, community councils decided to help these disadvantaged people and alleviate their further suffering. In response to this situation, the community called on the tribal leaders for a general gathering to discuss the issue and decide how to overcome the economic problems of these vulnerable groups.

It was decided to collect *Usher*¹⁵ (one tenth of agriculture products) from rich farmers and distribute equally among vulnerable and needy families including poor, orphans and widows, instead of giving to *Mullahs*¹⁶ or mosque and Taliban as in the past

- It was approved that council distribute *Zakat*¹⁷ (2.5 percentage of saving) to the vulnerable families (poor, widows and orphans) which had previously been given to *Mullah* or mosques and relatives in the past.
- It was approved that from now onward the skin and third of the meat from *Qurbani*¹⁸ animals, previously given to *Mullah* or mosques, would now be distributed to disadvantaged and needy people in the village.

This case indicates the inversion of community from their traditional norms and beliefs. Presently in most of rural Afghanistan, the Taliban and armed groups ask the families to pay *Usher* to them and most this revenue is used to feed their fighters. The Khogyani communities

¹⁵ *Usher* means "one tenth" and is a source of revenue in Islam. Muslims have to pay 1/10th of their products from irrigated land.

¹⁶ *Mullah* is a religious leader who lead prayers, give sermons, and have the power of moral judgment in the community, also involved in resolving conflicts from the point of view of Shria's Law.

¹⁷ *Zakat* means growth or development or purification, and it is levied at the rate of 2.5% in all year saving and that should be spent on poor and the needy people.

¹⁸ *Qurbani* means sacrifice. Every year during the Eid-UI-Azha festival, the Muslims slaughter an animal (a goat, sheep, cow, camel) and one third of the meat from the animal must go to poor or vulnerable people.

have stopped this practice, which was imposed by Taliban on all families in the district. As a result of these decisions, the economic lives of poor, widows and orphans have improved.

Peacebuilding efforts and Mediation

Case Study No. 6: Mediation between Government and Taliban

Another PD initiative in this community, which was explained by an elder focus group, is their local ability to work as mediators between Government forces and armed groups.

Almost two year ago in 2011, a violent clash occurred between Taliban and the Afghan National Army in *Ghyrat Khail* and *Bar Miagan* villages. Both sides received heavy casualties. The Taliban captured two Afghan soldiers. The government planned to launch a huge military search operation in the area. Realizing the devastating impact such a military operation would have, the local council decided to resolve the problem peacefully. The community started negotiation processes with both sides. The Taliban set the captives free under the condition that the government troops would halt further searches within the villages. Local council's efforts in mediation between the two sides were effective and prevented future bloodshed in the area.

Case Study No. 7: Thieves handed-over to Government

Due to armed criminal groups' operations in the villages, community life was disturbed day and night, creating insecurity in the area. These criminal groups looted property and community belongings. If a family resisted, they were killed. The community discussed these criminal activities with the Taliban and Hezib-e-Islami armed groups. They asked these two groups to be united if they wanted to stay in their area, because they could not differentiate the criminal armed groups from the Taliban groups. As a result of these community efforts both Taliban and Hezib-e-Islami groups were united. They presently use a white and green flag. In other parts of Afghanistan, the Taliban carry a white flag and Hezib-e-Islami uses a green flag. But in Khogyani the flag of armed group is half white and half green, a sign of their unity.

Since that time, the armed group (Taliban) captured the thieves and handed them over to local councils, who in turn handed them over to government authorities. This system remains in Khogyani community, the sign of their success in maintaining peace and security in the area.

Chapter Nine

Conclusions and Lessons Learned

Research conducted in these selected communities shows that the people within a community are determined to change the situation for the better. They try to initiate negotiations among and outside the community to meet their needs and resolve their problems collectively through non-violent means. Despite the gradual increase in insecurity around the community, people continue to work collectively to create an enabling environment for co-existence.

The Deviant motive here is the shared social value within collective work. Furthermore, improved internal relations have a wider positive social impact, ensuring security, fostering local development and facilitating peace and calmness of Khogyani villages.

Security began deteriorating in the area during the Mujahideen State. When the Taliban captured the area, security improved briefly, but then rapidly declined as a result of their strict regulations and lack of social service outreach. As a result, the community began to move itself away from the violence, worrying that regional incidents would once again plunge their society into chaos. They came to expect all actors in local conflict, whether internal or external, to mandate that the use of violence would not be recognized as a legitimate form of governance.

The key variable that had a positive impact upon non-violent conflict resolution was engaging the Taliban and local authorities, assuring the safety of education and health staff as well as visitation of girls and women.

In term of development the communities have a history of ‘collective work’ as a social expectation, which has helped to construct or reconstruct their own infrastructure, making it clear that they are not dependent upon outsiders. Demonstrations of this include:

- Sharing money & resources amongst local tribal groupings (*Ahmad Khail, Pera Khail & Khowaza Khail*) for the purchase of communal land.
- Voluntarily work & material contributions in the construction of health clinic as well as schools.
- Collection of crops to provide teachers’ remuneration, which is not traditional in Afghanistan.
- Community success and capacity to negotiate with the Taliban for permission to construct a new road in Hakim Abad village.
- Establishing a water management system during the water shortage season, promoting a tolerant attitude among community members and avoiding internal enmity.

These practices have provided the communities with opportunities to create good relations among nearby villages, keeping themselves in a non-violent position.

In term of peacebuilding, the communities focused on cultivating non-violent conflict resolution tactics with internal and external actors. This has enabled them to communicate, negotiate and resolve differences. The community’s ability to mediate between government forces and armed groups has reduced violent conflict as well as criminal activities in the villages. According to

dialogue among community members, this is primarily a result of their early efforts to improve local governance through inter-tribal coordination. Thus, these tribal groups, many of which have historical rivalry amongst one another, were able to resolve their differences and embrace their “traditional enemies” in order to preserve their well-being against the external aggression of recent years.

Other factors are as follows:

- Capable and strong leadership in the communities and their commitment to non-violent resolution of conflict.
- Control of the discussion narrative regarding development services, forcing both government and Taliban to see the community benefits in contrast to themselves.
- Other forms of social structures, such as school management committee, parent groups and health councils, help facilitate dialogue and get local buy-in.
- Community is the most effective forum for resolving regional conflicts. Violence at the local level occurs through the indirect relationships between Taliban and government.

Functional Analysis

- Khogyani communities possess a strong interest in children’s education, healthcare and developmental work. This shared interest was deemed more important than the political or social differences.
- Despite the tense security situation in the surrounding communities, the people in Khogyani joined hands and worked collectively to create a non-violent social environment to enable change.
- The Khogyani community has a history of internal conflict resolution as described in the previous case studies such as the boy and girls’ schools, health clinic as well as maintaining their infrastructure with no external assistance. This community has demonstrated itself able to negotiate with Taliban and even change their mindset about core issues of conflict such as education and healthcare for girls.

It is evident that the community’s tendency to work as a collective has paved the way for this report with key security personnel. As is evident from the following statement:

“ ... We depend on government and government depend on us, ...and about Taliban we cannot stay away from them and have to keep links with Taliban as well, sometimes in the form of secret session or meeting and often through mobile phone with them in one way or another. When there is a problem we communicate with them. It also happens that they send us word through third party. We do this when we see the matter is for the benefit of community.....that is why no one has created obstacle in front of our community development work.” - from a community elder

Sustainability Analysis

The community has developed a system of cooperation (collective work) that has strengthened community relations. Moreover, as demonstrated from the historical cases, during the worst periods of conflict, the community was able to sustain its school as well as start its own clinic because it did not rely on external monetary assistance of any kind. Instead, using its social value base around collective goals, it fostered a system of local inter-dependency to find an alternative way to raise teachers' wages. This reflects not only local sustainability, but also suggests an ability to expand this inter-dependent system of social capital among surrounding communities.

Future Generations considers "inter-dependency" to be one of several critical criteria for assessing sustainable social change. It is noteworthy that the findings of Future Generations operations research demonstrate it to be the hardest social community asset to foster externally, unless already present in social attitudes, behaviors and practices.