

**Civil Assessment
URUZGAN Province, Afghanistan
Executive Summary**

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for use by:

- Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Dutch Ministry of Defence;
- Taskforce Uruzgan, including Provincial Reconstruction Team & Australian Reconstruction Task Force; and
- Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and AUSAID

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Introduction

The Civil Assessment of Uruzgan Province in Afghanistan is intended to be one of the guiding documents for all activities, both civil and military, in Uruzgan in the coming period. This Executive Summary contains the main findings and conclusions only and refers where required to the main text.

Part One provides an analysis of Uruzgan Province in geographic, socio-cultural and economic terms, followed by conclusions for the mode of operation for the PRT in Part Two. Part Three discusses focal areas for the activities of the Task Force Uruzgan and the PRT, while the Fourth Part is concerned with funding options.

For an effective implementation of development and reconstruction activities it is important that the recommendations, targets and proposed activities of the Civil Assessment are in line with the national policy framework and the ISAF mandate to support the country to obtain stability, democratic governance and development (the three 'D-s' of Defence, Diplomacy/Democracy and Development). The TFU will initially focus its effort on strengthening and consolidating its position in Tarin Kowt and Deh Rahwod. For a successful approach it is essential that activities of national programmes implemented through the Provincial administration, (local) NGO's and the TFU/PRT are complementary.

Part One : An analysis of the provincial context

With an area of 28,522 km², the central Afghan province of Uruzgan covers app. 70% of the Netherlands. In 2005, the population of the province stood at 375.000, with some 20.0000 in the capital Tarin Kowt. The climate of the area is continental, with hot summers and cold winters.

Agriculture and animal husbandry are the key economic activities, with poppy as an increasingly dominant crop. Long periods of drought and neglect of agricultural infrastructure have forced many young men to seek employment outside the province. Construction and other work are severely affected during the poppy season, as labour is directed towards the poppy harvest.

Given the depressed state of the economy, many Uruzganis have migrated - some on a temporary basis - to the towns of Kandahar and Kabul and to Quetta in Pakistan in search of employment. Remittances play a key role in the survival of many poor families in the province

Poppy cultivation has increased over the past years, in particular as a result of drought, the ample supply of agricultural inputs and implements by drug traffickers and coercion by outside forces, either the drugs mafia or insurgents.

Uruzgan ranks 30th out of the 32 provinces in Afghanistan in terms of human development. Health infrastructure and service delivery are poorly developed. In 2006, the province had two qualified doctors; the population therefore depends largely on traditional midwives and traditional healers, present in every village.

Around 20% of children between 7-13 years attend school, 97% of which are boys. There are no formal pre-schools and secondary schools in the province. Support programmes in the field of education are largely absent, with school buildings frequently burnt by the Taliban. Education is discouraged by the Taliban and seen as an attempt by the international community to instil western norms and values in Afghanistan.

Formal government structures and the traditional social and political structures based on tribal conventions continue to exist side by side, greatly contributing to the complexity of government in the province.

The Governor, the elected Provincial Council and the Provincial Development Committee consisting of the heads of government ministries and main stakeholders in the province, chaired by the Governor are the main institutions of the formal government structure. At present, these do not sufficiently represent the ethnic and political composition of the Province and therefore have limited influence. Local meetings presided over by tribal authorities are of great importance for the acceptance of government by the inhabitants of the province. The Governor will need to establish his authority and will need to be accepted also within the tribal structures of the province. This is a long and delicate process, explaining much of the complexity of politics at the provincial level and below.

The lack of stability, governance and development in Uruzgan province is not only due to its marginal location and geographical characteristics, but has multiple dimensions that developed historically: ethnic, presence of competing tribal militias, conflicting political and ideological inclinations, fundamentalist religious groups, presence of drugs syndicates, access to natural resources (land, water, wealth), and insurgency from outside the province supported from within. Any effort in the field of security, governance or development will have to take these local dynamics into full account.

Part Two: Conclusions for mode of operation of the PRT

The detailed analysis of conditions in Uruzgan as made in Part One has led to a number of conclusions for interventions by the PRT with support by the Embassy of the Netherlands in Kabul. These conclusions follow the three “D” approach, Defence, Diplomacy and Development, as outlined in ISAF’s mandate.

In the area of Diplomacy, the emphasis is on improved governance leading to enhanced legitimacy of the central, provincial and district authorities in the eyes of the local population.

Priorities in the Diplomatic field include:

1. support for governmental programmes and activities to increase participation by alienated groups in the political process in the province as well as in socio-economic development, thereby contributing to dialogue with those forced by the Taliban to support their cause;
2. assistance to increased co-operation and dialogue between central government, provincial and district authorities and the population of Uruzgan by engaging with alienated districts and groups and delivering concrete solutions;
3. support to implementation of reform measures within Uruzgan, in particular regarding civil service and judicial sector reform;
4. formulation and implementation of the provincial policy in the fields of security, governance and development through existing ministries and with civil society; and
5. increased communication with the population of Uruzgan on the mission of ISAF and the PRT’s.

In the area of Defence, the emphasis is on establishing stability through a permanent presence of national security forces in the province acting in support of the population.

Priorities in the area of Defence include:

1. the formulation of a long term strategic security plan with ISAF, the ANSF, ANA and the provincial government to ensure a consistent approach . This requires:
 - a. enhanced effort to accelerate development, equipment and modernisation of the ANSF;
 - b. an expanded police presence;
 - c. acceleration of the construction, equipment and staffing of a joint coordination centre in Tarin Kowt;
2. the preparation of institutional arrangements and physical facilities for detainees.

In the area of development, priority will be given to poverty alleviation, thus providing a more favourable perspective to rural families and in particular to the younger generations.

Priorities in the field of Development include:

1. the provision of support in strategically important zones where improvements in security and governance will create conditions conducive to socio-economic development;
2. the creation of an enabling environment for the private sector and support for productive activities and income generation;
3. capacity development, both inside and outside government, including the creation of improved prospects for Uruzgan's youth;
4. to facilitate development of the health sector;
5. increased involvement of communities and local authorities in preparation and execution of developmental activities; and
6. support for the implementation of national programmes.

The above priorities will be carried out in full recognition of the agreement reached by Afghanistan with the international community in the Afghanistan Compact, signed in 2005 in London, which includes the following points:

1. respect for the pluralistic culture, values and history of Afghanistan, based on Islam;
2. work on the basis of partnership between the Afghan Government and the international community, with a central role for the United Nations;
3. pursue fiscal, institutional and environmental sustainability;
4. build lasting Afghan capacity and effective state and civil society institutions, with particular emphasis on building human capacities of men and women alike;
5. ensure balanced and fair allocation of domestic and international resources in the province;
6. recognise in all policies and programmes that men and women have equal rights and responsibilities;
7. promote regional cooperation; and
8. combat corruption and ensure public transparency and accountability.

The above mentioned conclusions and recommendations are in line with the Dutch and Australian approach which can be characterised by the following elements:

1. a participatory approach with regard to reconstruction and development to promote Afghan ownership, empower local communities and enhance the legitimacy of the central, provincial and district governments;
2. aid and humanitarian assistance must be delivered on the basis of established needs in Uruzgan Province, with the understanding of tribal dynamics and in recognition of the urgency of a balanced and fair allocation of resources;
3. infrastructure work in insecure areas should not create targets for insurgency and undermine the population's security;
4. a package of interventions is formulated in dialogue with different partners and at different levels:
 - security interventions in close collaboration with the Afghan armed forces, police forces and other security institutions;
 - activities to enhance good governance and the legitimacy of the state through the provincial and district administrations and the social services delivered by government;
 - activities in the field of reconstruction and development through, or in close cooperation with, existing government institutions, village committees and tribal elders, civil society organizations, NGO's and other actors in the Province; and
5. the immediate objective of the Dutch/Australian intervention is to develop positive relations with the leaders and population at large of Uruzgan province; undertake immediate measures to build a secure and safe environment for the local communities; enlighten the plight of the population by showing visible results in the field of development; support the establishment of a stable and sustainable institutional environment characterised by good and transparent governance and reliable service delivery of good quality, based on a legal and diversified rural economy.

Part Three: Focal areas for the Task Force Uruzgan and the PRT

The Dutch and Australian presence is in support of reconstruction and development in Uruzgan. To attain the stable security environment required for development and reconstruction, Security Sector Reform (SSR) is a priority and should include reform of the armed forces and police forces as well as support for good governance, including establishment of the rule of law. Proposed activities in these fields are detailed below, followed by an overview of proposed activities in the areas of reconstruction and development. All selected activities were formulated in due recognition of Afghanistan's national policies, provincial priorities and in consultation with the local authorities and communities involved.

Activities related to governance and credible civil administration

The district and provincial governments lack legitimacy in the eyes of the inhabitants because of the occurrence of poor governance including rampant corruption, lack of service delivery, favouritism and alignment with criminal elements in the province. The authorities have not been able to ensure safety, governance and development outside the main urban centres.

General

1. to organize training and capacity development for District and Provincial staff, based on national policies and existing programmes;
2. to train financial-administrative and technical staff in accountability, budgeting and computer skills;
3. to provide technical support for participative planning processes;
4. to provide the Provincial Council with office support;
5. to support the Provincial Development Committee (PDC), through capacity development, equipment and outreach to the districts; and
6. to develop a Provincial Database and Profile for the Ministry for Rural Rehabilitation and Development.

Information Campaign

1. to closely co-operate with and facilitate NGO's working in Uruzgan in conflict management, human rights, respect for traditional values and in providing an informed picture on ISAF's mission in terms of stabilization and reconstruction; and
2. to establish an information network through radio communication throughout the province, facilitating the production of appropriate programmes.

The fight against drugs

Within the context of the ISAF Operational Plan the Netherlands supports the policy of the Afghan authorities with regard to poppy production and narcotics. Opium production and trade are supported by significant vested interests. In view of the security challenge facing the TF-U as a result of instability, poor governance and the insurgency, activities in this field will be gradually developed. Activities will include the following:

1. to assist in consultations at provincial and national level aimed at achieving co-ordination between eradication and implementation of programmes for Alternative Livelihoods in close contact with relevant stakeholders.;
2. to stimulate implementation of national programmes for alternative livelihoods and the 'Justice for All'-programme within Uruzgan province;
3. to investigate possibilities of co-operation between the Netherlands Police Force and the Counter-Narcotics Police of Afghanistan;
4. to initiate research on the opium trade sector and poppy production in Uruzgan Province; and
5. while identifying and implementing Quick Visibility Projects as well as CIMIC projects, the drugs strategy will be taken into account;

Activities related to defence and security

Afghan National Army (ANA)

1. to assist in increasing ANA's presence in the province;
2. to provide training through embedded liaison officers and by joint activities in the field; and
3. to provide necessary equipment and assist in the building of an intelligence structure.

Afghan National Police (ANP)

1. to contribute to the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA), with special attention for the programme in Uruzgan;
2. to promote enrollment of policemen from Uruzgan in the Regional Police Training College of Kandahar;
3. to provide Basic Police Skills Training for members of the ANP in Uruzgan in close co-operation with Germany, supporting higher level police and the US, supporting lower level police;
4. to upgrade and supplement equipment for Tarin Kowt police;
5. to equip police workshops in different areas in the province; and
6. to provide training in a variety of fields including computer and literacy courses.

Activities related to reconstruction and development

The following priorities have been identified so far:

- agriculture, including irrigation and rural infrastructure;
- animal husbandry;
- employment based on a locally sustainable economy;
- education, both informal and formal where feasible; and
- facilitation of improved healthcare, including water, sanitation and hygiene.

Agriculture including irrigation

Agriculture is the main economic activity in Uruzgan province. Due to severe drought over the past six years and in view of labour shortages, existing traditional systems and infrastructure are in decline. The province's potential for irrigation is high. The following short and medium term activities have been identified:

1. ensure availability of agricultural inputs including seed, fertiliser, pesticide and farming tools well before the farming season through existing private sector channels and village councils;
2. identify possibilities to set up a rural finance and credit system in Uruzgan;
3. support NGO's working within the agricultural production chain, from production to marketing;
4. strengthen agricultural infrastructure through cash for work and community support programmes (NSP);
5. support the WFP 'winterization' and school food distribution programme for vulnerable communities during the coming winter when areas become inaccessible; and

6. support improvement and rehabilitation of fruit orchards, including processing and marketing of dried fruits.

Animal husbandry

Large numbers of livestock, in particular goats and sheep graze the mountain slopes. In the southern lowlands, cattle are more prevalent. Due to the long period of drought over the past six years, herds are affected and rangeland has deteriorated. The following short and medium term activities have been identified:

1. allowing for the security situation, commission a team of experts to review traditional livestock in the province and make recommendations for strengthening of this economic sector; and
2. adopt the recommendations of the livestock survey in so far as these lead to sustainable livestock development, both in terms of environmental sustainability and independence from foreign funding or interventions

Formal and informal employment, opportunities and obstacles, private sector, market structures

According to the field survey of Uruzgan province, alternative economic sectors should be explored including stone mining. Private sector development so far has been hampered by the insecure situation within the province. A recently established provincial chamber of commerce is starting its operations in the province. The following short and medium term activities have been identified:

1. as soon as the security situation permits, undertake a needs assessment with the business community at district and provincial level on a strategy to revamp the private sector in Uruzgan;
2. support community activities in the field of income generation through NGO's and locally based organizations;
3. cash for work programmes and community public works contracts to generate income for the rural population; and
4. improve market infrastructure, functioning and access, also in terms of security.

Education

While education is a main priority for the province and the population of Uruzgan attaches high importance to education, particularly in *madradas*, it is also seen as an instrument of the international community to instil western values and ideas in the Afghan people. Schools and particularly girls' schools have been under attack from the Taliban. Given the deplorable conditions in existing maddrasas and the lack of other educational facilities, many parents have sent their children to neighbouring countries. Activities identified include:

1. support to the Ministry of Education and the provincial administration for curriculum reform;
2. support to the Ministry of Education for a Teachers' Training Centre in Uruzgan;
3. establishment of centres for vocational training, both for boys and girls;

4. provision of essential materials to primary schools, and
5. support to village initiatives and initiatives by NGO's to establish classrooms, teachers' staff houses and schools, when staff and running costs are guaranteed and protection is forthcoming from a parents' committee.

Facilitation of healthcare, including water for drinking and irrigation

While healthcare is seen as a priority by the population, the adverse security situation and lack of proper facilities in rural areas, make it difficult to attract qualified medical staff. The following short and medium term activities have been identified:

1. to undertake an inventory of health problems in the province, starting in the districts of Tarin Kowt and Deh Rawood;
2. to assist in preparing a medium term health plan for the province;
3. to assist in improving existing health facilities and provide equipment;
4. to provide capacity development (training) of health staff in Tarin Kowt hospital and health centres in the districts; and
5. to assist in the rehabilitation and upgrading of irrigation systems and to provide drinking water

Part Four : Funding options

To finance activities in Uruzgan, four channels are currently available; three of these, the programme for Civil Military Cooperation, the programme for Quick Visibility Projects and the Reconstruction Assistance Fund are administered in Afghanistan by the PRT Uruzgan or the Dutch Embassy, while the Stabilization Fund is administered in The Hague. The PRT and the Embassy will continue to develop the programme in Uruzgan in continuous and close co-operation.

Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) projects are intended to support security and enhance acceptance of the foreign military presence in Uruzgan. CIMIC enables the military to finance small highly visible activities. Decisions relating to activities up to Eur 50.000 are made by the Task Force Uruzgan with advice provided by the OSAD.

Quick Visibility Projects are intended to facilitate structural reconstruction in the province. A fund for these small projects has been created with decisionmaking delegated to the Embassy in Kabul. Identification and implementation will be co-ordinated with the Task Force Uruzgan and the PRT to avoid overlap with CIMIC and to generate synergy with CIMIC where possible.

The Reconstruction Assistance Fund is a larger facility delegated to the Embassy in Kabul. This fund supports infrastructural and sectoral programmes through local authorities as well as through NGO's.

The Stabilization Fund is intended to provide activities in the areas of peace, security and development. It is administered by the Ministry in the Hague and is open for activities identified by the Embassy in Kabul.