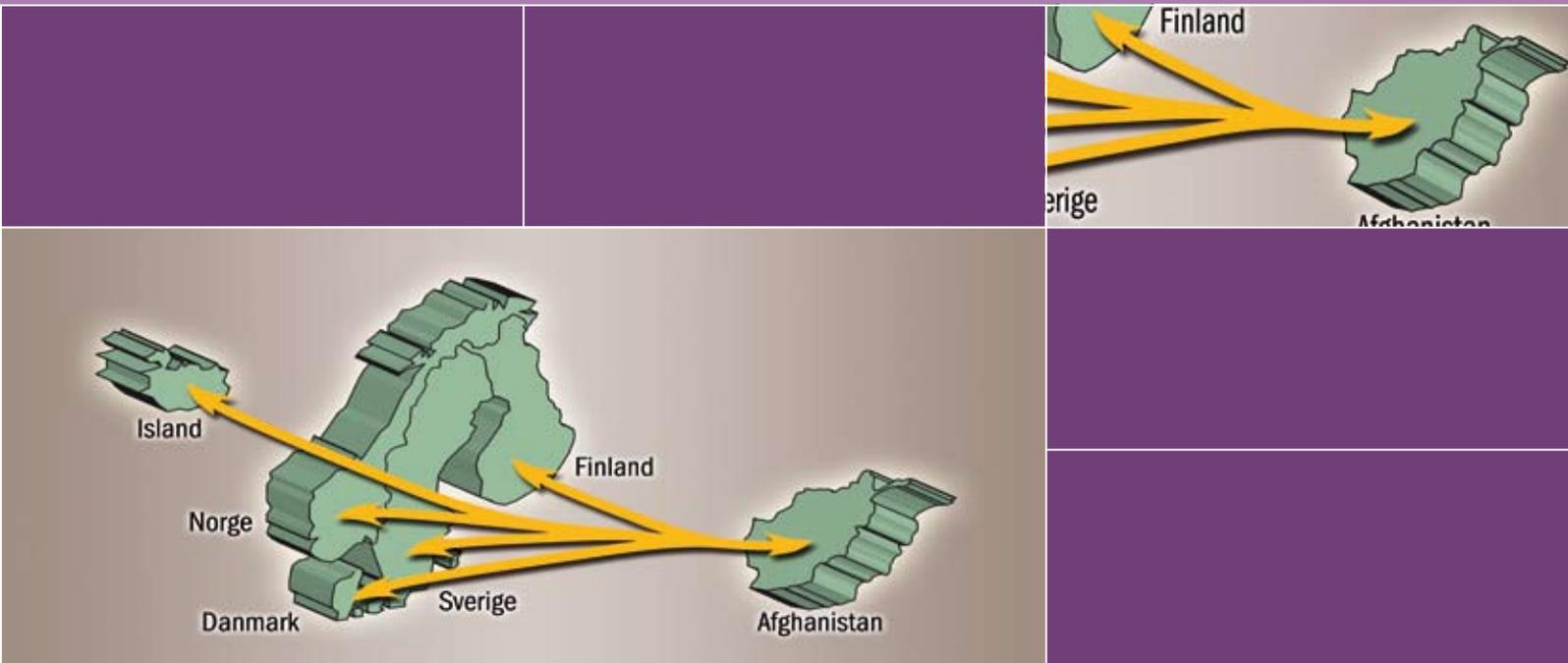




Strengthening Nordic Development Cooperation in and with Afghanistan

March 2009



Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

P.O. Box 8034 Dep, NO-0030 OSLO
Ruseløkkveien 26, Oslo, Norway
Phone: +47 22 24 20 30
Fax: +47 22 24 20 31

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Strengthening Nordic Development Cooperation in and with Afghanistan

Petter Bauck (Norad) and Arne Strand (Chr. Michelsen Institute)

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Abbreviations

ACT	Action of Churches Together
AIHRC	Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission
ANDMA	Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
AREU	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
ARTF	Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CG	Consultative Groups
CERF	(UN) Central Emergency Response Fund
CIMIC	Civilian Military Co-operation
CNTF	Counter Narcotics Trust Fund
DACAAR	Danish Committee for Assistance to Afghan Refugees
EQUIP	Education Quality Improvement Project
EUPOL	EU Police Mission in Afghanistan
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
JCMB	Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board
LOTFA	Law and Order Trust Fund
GoA	Government of Afghanistan
MISFA	Microfinance Investment Support Facility for Afghanistan
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NIMA	National Institute for Management and Administration
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NSP	National Solidarity Programme
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
QIP	Quick Impact Project
SCA	Swedish Afghanistan Committee
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
SSR	Security Sector Reform
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan
UNDCP	United Nations Drugs and Control Programmes
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service

Introduction

The meeting of the Nordic Foreign Ministers in Stockholm on 18 April 2008 adopted a Plan of Action for Nordic Cooperation in Afghanistan to enable them to be a more concerned partner for the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) and the international community. The countries indicated that a joint study should be undertaken to identify differences and similarities in development strategies for Afghanistan, and the possibilities to strengthen this cooperation over time.

The overall aim of an increased cooperation in the development field is to achieve a stronger impact in sectors of particular importance to the Nordic countries. A more efficient organisation of development work should ease the workload for each country. Furthermore, a strengthened Nordic cooperation would enhance cooperation among donors in general, and strengthen the role of the Afghan government in taking overall responsibility for the development of Afghanistan.

The Nordic countries identified the following sectors as possible fields of increased cooperation:

- good governance;
- administrative reform;
- capacity building;
- education;
- respect for human rights, with a particular focus on women;
- justice sector;
- fight against drugs.

It was noted that the Nordic countries differ when it comes to the delegation of authority to the embassies in Kabul, and in how decision making is related to political issues and development. These differences create certain challenges for the Nordic countries at different levels in reaching a common understanding and cooperation on specific development efforts.

This assessment should take into account the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS), the Afghanistan Compact, the Paris Declaration, Afghan ownership, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board-structure (JCMB), the role of the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), and the "Nordic Plus - Practical Guide to Delegated Cooperation". In addition to an understanding of the main development processes and realities in Afghanistan, it was pointed out that it will be important to address the plans of the different donor countries in regard to sectors, aid volume and time perspective. Decision procedures should be outlined.

Based on this Plan of Action, a Terms of Reference was developed and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs requested Norad to assume responsibility for the study. Norad appointed Petter Bauck (Norad) and Arne Strand (CMI) to undertake this task. This report is based on the review of documents received from the Nordic countries, and interviews in Kabul during December 2009 with embassies, Afghan Ministries and Directorates, the United Nations, the World Bank and international and national non-governmental organisations. A series of meetings were held in the Nordic capitals in January 2009 with the Afghan Ambassador to the Nordic Countries, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and other ministries, departments and agencies involved with assistance to Afghanistan.

The Development Framework

Many Nordic countries have had a tradition of humanitarian and development engagement in Afghanistan since the early 1980s, when solidarity and non-governmental organisations provided assistance within the country and supported Afghan refugees in Pakistan. These engagements generated knowledge on Afghanistan in the Nordic countries, and today a number of Afghan employees of Nordic NGOs have ended up in influential positions in the Government of Afghanistan (GoA), other institutions and in civil society organisations.

The countries included in this report have, in addition to the decision leading to this review, a number of other affiliations that frame their developmental interventions in Afghanistan beyond the Nordic Council engagement. However, the Nordic countries have agreed on an annual rotation to call for Nordic meetings in Kabul, and to hold the Nordic chair in the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB). In the development field, a long lasting cooperation has developed into “The Nordic Plus”, where all Nordic countries are represented with like-minded donors such as the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Canada, and “The Nordic Plus Plus”, which also includes the United States. A Practical Guide to Delegated Cooperation has been developed. Moreover, Denmark, Finland and Sweden are members of the European Union (EU), and as part of their wider engagement in Afghanistan they contribute, together with Norway, police officers and support staff to the EU police force (EUPOL Afghanistan). Denmark, Iceland and Norway are members of NATO, but all Nordic countries provide personnel to Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), with differing degrees and arrangements as to their humanitarian and development engagement.

All countries have expressed their commitment to the Afghan Compact (2006) and the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (2008). Except for Iceland, all take part in coordination efforts through the JCMB structure, and provide substantial financial support through the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), having provided 10.5% of ARTF’s total budget support by September 2008. All countries support the UNAMA to varying degrees, while also provide funding for core grants and the activities of UN agencies, the World Bank and the ICRC.

All countries emphasise the need for the geographical distribution of assistance, while at the same time channelling funding to the areas of their PRT location. Denmark does this for the Helmand province in the south, whereas in the north Norway and Iceland have provided support for Faryab province, Iceland has assisted in the Ghor province since 2006, while Sweden and Finland cover the Jowzjan, Balkh, Sar-e Pol and Samangan provinces.

What varies to a certain extent with each country is the delegation of executive authority to their embassies, with Norway (having the embassy with the largest staff) and Denmark delegating substantial decision making authority to their embassies. Sweden has delegated decision making for SEK 10 million (out of SEK 400 million) of their funding to their embassy, the same has Finland for € 1 million, while Iceland remain with the operative responsibilities in the capital. There are variations in the separation of responsibilities for development programmes and humanitarian assistance among the Nordic countries, as well as between the assistance provided through civilian and military structures. To mention some characteristics, Sweden has the clearest distinction, with Sida assuming full decision making authority for development assistance based on a long-term strategy. Denmark’s funding for Danish NGOs in Afghanistan is independent of their framework budget for development

assistance. Moreover, there are differences in budget definitions; while NSP is labelled as rural development by most donors, Sweden defines it as democratisation support.

There are strong variations in the cooperation between the Afghan and Nordic civil society organisations, researchers and research institutions. It appears that the countries that have had the strongest solidarity engagement since the early 1980s have maintained an active civic engagement through their Afghanistan Committees (Denmark, Norway and Sweden), while research cooperation and expertise is currently the strongest in Denmark and Norway.

What all five countries have in common has been a steady increase in funding and engagement from 2001 until today and with the exception of Iceland they have all made commitment for further increases.

Denmark¹

Denmark has a major development engagement in Afghanistan, and has delegated decision making to its embassy in Kabul. Denmark differs from the other Nordic countries in having a PRT located in southern Afghanistan, and by providing direct budgetary support to the Ministry of Education. Denmark is positive to strengthening Nordic cooperation.

Overall objective

The overall objective that guides the Danish strategy in Afghanistan is to contribute to national, regional and global security, by preventing the country from again becoming a safe haven for terrorists.

Denmark's engagement also aims to contribute to the growth of a stable and more developed Afghanistan that can take charge of its own security, and can continue its democratic development and promotion of respect for human rights.

Denmark's humanitarian assistance and development support through Danish NGOs are independent of the Danish Afghanistan strategy.

Development priority areas

Denmark has chosen to focus its efforts (beyond security and capacity building of Afghan security forces) on state-building, education and improvements in living conditions. Conditions and the rights of women, counter-narcotics and good governance are cross cutting considerations.

Denmark prioritises support to the whole of Afghanistan by ensuring that a substantial part (a minimum of 85%) of its assistance enters into national development programmes, and targets support to the areas where large groups of repatriated refugees have returned. Geographically, part of Denmark's efforts will be focused on the Helmand province (including PRT-led stabilisation efforts). As long as the Danish contingent is concentrated in Helmand, there will be resources set aside in part for smaller projects, and in part for long- term efforts, such as the education sector in which Denmark is the lead donor. This special development effort in Helmand will ensure the full integration of Danish political, civilian and military efforts. In addition, civilian advisors are integrated into the UK-led PRT in Helmand. This contribution

¹ For additional information see Annex I

is flexible, and will be adjusted in light of the security situation, as it allows for increased reconstruction and development activities to take place in Helmand.

Representation

Denmark has an embassy in Kabul, its staff has been gradually expanded and it expects to reach its full capacity of 11 staff members by April 2009. The embassy is delegated decision making authority within a policy and budgetary framework for funding allocated for development and humanitarian assistance (DKK 325 million for 2009). An additional DKK 75 million has been allocated annually for the Regions of Origin programme (“nærområde bistand”), a joint strategy developed between the embassy and the humanitarian section of the MFA, with the embassy maintaining the responsibility for its implementation. Denmark has employed staff with Afghanistan competence, both at the embassy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Denmark has entered into a partnership agreement with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GoA) for the period from 2008-2010.

Budget

Denmark's overall engagement within the strategy period from 2008-2012 will amount to approximately DKK 1 billion per year. Within the development field, this entails a doubling of Danish efforts for the strategy period. In 2008, the development assistance increased to DKK 300 million, and from 2009-2012 will increase to DKK 400 million per year. In addition, support is channelled through Danish NGOs and will be allocated for extraordinary humanitarian contributions if the situation requires it. From 2009-2012, approximately DKK 50 million will be spent annually in Helmand province, which amounts to about 15% of its overall support.

Trust funds

Denmark has doubled its support as channelled through ARTF from the Afghan budget year 1385 (2006-2007) to 1386 (2007-2008). The support for year 1387 (2008-2009) is DKK 70 million.

Coordination

Denmark is an active partner in the Afghan, Nordic, EU, UN and JCMB coordination efforts, and in 2008 held the Nordic seat in the JCMB. Denmark is the lead agency in regard to all donor support of AIHRC, introduced the idea of a civil society fund, and held the joint Danish/Norwegian seat for the Elimination of Violence against Women (EVAW) Trust Fund until the end of 2008. Denmark considered applying for a permanent seat, as Norway has been granted, in the JCMB, while continuing to emphasis coordination among the Nordic countries to ensure a strong Nordic impact.

***Finland*²**

Finland has a substantial involvement in Afghanistan, though more recent than that of most other countries. The Finnish Embassy has a small staff, with the UN and ARTF being the preferred channels for its funding. Finland is positive to strengthening Nordic cooperation.

² For additional information see Annex I

Overall objective

The overall goal of Finland's current engagement in Afghanistan is *to contribute consistently and effectively to Afghan reconstruction, with a view to preventing Afghanistan from slipping back to war*. Finland's engagement in Afghanistan draws on the internationally shared awareness that without security there can be no development, and without development there is no long term security (Finnish Afghanistan Strategy adopted on 23 November 2006 and the EU-Afghanistan Joint Political Declaration adopted on 16 November 2005). Finland is preparing two white papers on Afghanistan. The first is a Finnish-Afghanistan Strategy for 2009-2013, and the second a development plan, with both papers to be ready by spring 2009.

Development priority areas

Finland has two priority areas with the most direct bearing on preventing the return to war:

- 1) Rule of law (particularly police), governance and counter-narcotics;
- 2) Rural development.

Representation

Finland has an embassy in Kabul, with a diplomatic staff of three persons as of January 2009.

Budget

Finland has allocated a minimum of €50 million to be contributed under the Afghanistan Compact (2006-2010), with allocations of €11.9 million for 2008 and €12.1 million for 2009. If all additional allocations under MFA are included (civilian crisis management, humanitarian and refugee assistance), the total allocation for 2008 is €17 million and for 2009 €18 million. The annual increase thereafter is expected to be €1-2 million.

Trust funds

Approximately half of Finland's €50 million minimum contribution, as per the Afghanistan Compact (2006-2010), will be channelled through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, with 50% of its ARTF support of €3.2 million further allocated for the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) in the amount of 1.3 million and the Microfinance Investment Support Facility for Afghanistan (MISFA), in the amount of 1.9 million. Finland will also allocate a multi-million euro contribution to the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA). Starting in 2009, the percentage will be 50% to the general pool, 25% to the NSP and 25% to MISFA.

Coordination

In keeping with the Paris Agenda, Finland seeks to harmonise its reconstruction support with other donors under the overall coordination of the JCMB. In order to maximise its aid effectiveness and donor coordination, Finland's new Afghanistan Strategy will concentrate on fewer programmes, and aim to channel their contributions through centralised funds administered by the World Bank and UN agencies.

Finland has taken part in two consultative groups (CGs) under JCMB, namely *governance, rule of law and human rights* (CG-2), with an emphasis on sub-national governance and police, and *rural development and agriculture* (CG-6), which specifically focuses in the area of alternative livelihoods to poppy farming.

Iceland³

While being the Nordic country with the smallest financial contribution and no embassy in Kabul, Iceland is committed to continuing its support for Afghanistan and to further and strengthen the Nordic cooperation. Iceland acknowledges that in their support of the Nordic effort, they might consider different funding options and the possible secondment of staff to Kabul.

Overall objective

Iceland aims to contribute its funding to projects in reconstruction and development, in order to support the ongoing provincial work in various districts of Afghanistan (Ghor and Faryab in particular), where living conditions are harsh.

Development priority areas

Iceland aims for a three-year strategy that will focus on projects to stabilise and support economic development and the quality of life, with an emphasis on gender issues, aviation and the energy sector. The strategy will be implemented in cooperation with NGOs and the Afghan authorities, in coordination with an emphasis on ANDS, with Iceland looking to increasing its support for UNIFEM and UNFPA.

Their development support includes seminars for midwives and birth attendants, construction of 15-20 Micro Hydro power projects (from 2007 to 2010) at a value of approximately € 240,000 and support for legal aid, assistance and representation for those jailed or accused (also at approximately € 240,000). There is an ongoing project with USD 160,000 for the NGO PARSA, to train and develop childcare/care for orphans and fatherless children and USD 100,000, to be contributed in the fight against drugs and narcotics through the Counter Narcotics Task Force.

Budget

The amount contributed towards DAC for approved development support in 2007 was ISK 294 million (€ 3.36 million), for 2008 ISK 217 million (€ 1.70 million), with the budget estimate for 2009 tentatively set at ISK 130 million.

Representation

Iceland has no embassy in Kabul. They have two advisers seconded to ISAF HQ, Development Advisers based with Norwegian PRTs and a three member team in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to handle Afghanistan.

Trust funds

Iceland has contributed USD 100,000 to the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA). Iceland prioritises its funding through regular UN partners, rather than funding through ARTF.

Coordination

Coordination is undertaken by the various advisers in ISAF and PRT, including contact with ministries, local authorities and the UN.

³ For additional information see Annex I

Norway⁴

Norway has the largest financial contribution to Afghanistan and the highest number of staff at their embassy in Kabul, providing opportunities for taking on coordination and support responsibilities on behalf of the Nordic countries. Norway is positive to strengthened Nordic cooperation.

Overall objective

The purpose of the Norwegian engagement in Afghanistan is to participate in a UN-led international effort to support the elected Afghan government to secure enduring and stable peace through increased security, good governance/respect for human rights and economic and social development.

Development priority areas

The three main Norwegian priority areas are:

- 1) Good governance at central and local levels, including the fight against corruption;
- 2) Education (main programs are EQUIP and NIMA);
- 3) Rural development with a priority for agriculture, water supply, energy (oil and gas) renewable energy and increased income generation.

Women rights and gender equality is a cross cutting theme, including support for the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan, with a study on the follow-up of UN Security Resolution 1325 ongoing. Health is mainly an area for the humanitarian assistance, and a review is underway to make sure health concerns are not negatively impacted by the Norwegian-backed efforts in this field. Support will also be ensured for culture, peace-building, human rights and humanitarian assistance.

Acknowledging Afghanistan's complex emergency context and limited humanitarian space, Norway will work to improve its coordination and policy coherence towards peace-building, human rights and humanitarian assistance, and to ensure linkages between short- and long term assistance.

Norway's development efforts in Afghanistan are to be aligned with the overall Norwegian development policy priorities, and with the Paris Declaration.

Budget

The development budget was increased by 50% in 2008 to NOK 750 million, with a similar amount expected to be allocated annually from 2009 through 2012, with the expectation that up to 20% might be allocated towards projects in the Faryab province, including through national programmes. The budget is divided between a number of various activities. In 2008, NOK 309 million was spent on humanitarian assistance (described separately), NOK 437.9 million for regional development allocations (handled by the embassy), and smaller allocations earmarked for the support of civil society, peace, reconciliation and human rights.

Representation

Norway has the largest embassy among the Nordic countries with a diplomatic staff of 16. Additionally, one political and one development adviser are embedded with the PRT in Faryab.

⁴ For additional information see Annex I

Norway has entered into three sector MOUs with GoA.

Trust funds

Norway prioritises its support for its recurrent window and development programmes, including the justice programme. There has been a steady increase in support over the past three years, which is planned to continue in 2009. The main part of the contribution is unspecified, although the preferred areas are education (including EQUIP for Faryab), and the National Solidarity Programme.

Coordination

Norway places a strong emphasis on donor coordination, particularly on a strengthened Nordic cooperation. Based on a joint Nordic decision, Norway will assume the lead role for the Nordic support to the planning and implementation of the 2009 and 2010 elections. Another aspect is the aim to strengthen the strategic dialogue between the Nordic embassies in Kabul to enhance coordination and policy development. This is done to ensure that the Nordic engagement is complementary, and to clarify where tasks and responsibilities might be divided between which countries. Norway acknowledges that its comparatively large diplomatic presence indicate a responsibility to take such coordination efforts forward.

Sweden⁵

Afghanistan is one of the major recipients of Swedish development cooperation funds, an area where Sweden has had a long tradition of providing humanitarian support through NGOs. Sweden has delegated the authority over a limited part of its funding to its embassy in Kabul, and is positive to strengthened Nordic cooperation.

Overall objective

The goal of Sweden's development cooperation with Afghanistan is to contribute to creating the preconditions for poor people to improve their living conditions. The aim of the new Swedish development cooperation strategy, which goes into effect from 1 July 2009, is to:

- Strengthen the country's chances for reducing poverty in the long term and in a sustainable way;
- Developing and strengthening the preconditions for democracy and respect for human rights, including strengthening the status of women in society;
- Contributing to the development of a civil society;
- Contributing to the strengthening of external and internal security.

All contributions will be made with a particular respect in regard to the situation concerning women and girls.

A new strategy is currently being developed for the period from 2009-2013, with an emphasis on coherence, cooperation and consistency. It priorities:

- 1) Education, with a focus on girls;
- 2) Governance, to promote democracy and human rights, good governance, anti-corruption and strengthen the role of women;
- 3) Private sector development, with a focus on creating job opportunities and economic growth.

⁵ For additional information see Annex I

Development priority areas

Sweden prioritises its support for education (particularly that of girls), sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), disabilities, the strengthening of public institutions, private sector development and the respect for human rights.

Representation

Sweden has an embassy in Kabul, with a development staff of three Swedes (to be increased to four by mid-2009) from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and one nationally employed, and a diplomatic staff of four from the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There is currently one Development Adviser (DEVAD) assigned to the Swedish-led PRT, which will be increased to four, with one to be an Afghan national.

With the exception of the special fund allocated for northern Afghanistan, all decisions regarding development projects are made by Sida in Sweden.

Sweden has considered entering into a partnership agreement with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in 2009.

Budget

Afghanistan is one of the largest recipients of Swedish aid. The 2007 contribution from Sida was SEK 353 million (including support for Swedish NGOs) and 27.5 million for humanitarian assistance. In 2008, the support for development assistance and Swedish NGOs was SEK 374 million, with a further 86.6 million for humanitarian assistance. The 2009 budget is SEK 400 million, including 20 million for Swedish NGOs and further humanitarian support based on assessed needs. In 2010, there will be an increase to SEK 450 million, including the expected NGO support, with a further increase to SEK 500 million in 2011. Sweden intends to remain a large contributor to the multilateral organisations in Afghanistan, with an allocation of SEK 50 million for the 2008 core budgets of UNHCR, WFP and CERF.

A directive from the Swedish government says that 15-20% of its development cooperation with Afghanistan will be concentrated in the north. A special local fund of SEK 30 million is allocated for a three-year period. The plan for these activities has been developed in cooperation between the embassy in Kabul and development advisers based in Mazar-e-Sharif. Decisions on fund allocation are delegated to the embassy in Kabul.

Trust funds

Sweden channels a substantial portion of their support through ARTF, with a contribution in 2008 of SEK 110 million. A preference is made for the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) for northern Afghanistan, and for EQUIP from 2009. Sweden has further contributed to the development of the Afghan Central Bank (*Da Afghanistan Bank*) through the IMF and MISFA.

Coordination

According to Sweden's Policy for Global Development, developmental cooperation projects are to be coordinated with other activities supported by Sweden. In Afghanistan, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is an important partner. Sweden takes part in a coordination effort within the EU and the Nordic countries, with programme coordination on i.e. election support. A recent assessment of the Swedish development cooperation with the Afghan state that further gains towards development effectiveness "...will require improved coordination with other donors", whereas one scenario recommends "...the establishment of a

formal body of like-minded donors, wherein their combined representation of these like-minded donors can significantly amplify their position”, and lastly for Sida to “...pursue a more active role in donor coordination and alignment.”

Humanitarian assistance⁶

All Nordic countries provide humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan. The UN agencies/ Emergency Trust Funds, national Red Cross organisations and ICRC are the major channels of assistance, complemented by national, international and Afghan NGOs. Years of conflict, forced migration and drought have left the Afghan population in need of a broad range of assistance. Moreover, the country is prone to natural disasters, and a weak governmental structure is lacking sufficient planning, mitigation and response capacity within the humanitarian field.

The Nordic countries are making use of many of the same channels for delivery of their humanitarian assistance, beyond the assistance provided through national Nordic NGOs. Humanitarian efforts are coordinated through various Afghan Ministries, UNAMA, OCHA (when operational) and NGO coordination bodies. Most of the funding is allocated towards emergency assistance and refugee/IDP support, with comparatively less going to advocacy and human rights initiatives.

The area where it appears that the Nordic countries can make a substantial difference is at JCMB’s policy decision level, in and towards UNAMA, OCHA and the various UN agencies and funds, including the initiatives to establish an OCHA-managed Emergency Fund. The Nordic policy initiatives could include safeguards for humanitarian space, and to ensure that assistance provisions comply with the principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence, while safeguarding the rights of women and children. And to coordinate and diversify types of funding and funding channels used, in order to maximise the impact and usefulness of the assistance provided.

Possible benefits and obstacles

There is a high degree of formal and informal cooperation between the Nordic countries on Afghanistan, be it at meetings between the ministers, staff of the various ministries and ambassadors and development advisors at the embassies and PRTs. This builds on a long tradition of formalised Nordic cooperation in international organisations and development banks, where one country is selected to hold the “Nordic seat”. This is currently the case at JCMB, though Norway has additionally been assigned a separate seat. There is extensive cooperation on thematic issues and programmes, as witnessed by the cooperation within EUPOL and in regard to the upcoming elections. Several possible areas of cooperation are under discussion, such as the establishment of a civil society fund (though some countries have expressed scepticism to a Nordic limitation on such a fund) and for undertaking joint evaluations.

Possible benefits for Afghans

Afghan ministers and deputy ministers who were interviewed were very positive towards strengthening the Nordic cooperation in Afghanistan. Several ministers recalled how much time was used in contacting different donors, and they foresaw that a strengthened

⁶ For additional information see Annex II

cooperation between the Nordic countries would reduce the burden on the ministries. They also regarded such an action as being an inspiration to other donors to strengthen the general coordination within the donor community, and towards Afghan authorities.

Some ministers raised concerns about a strong donor focus on the province where each country had their military presence. This was best exemplified by the Minister of Education, who showed that one donor's emphasis on school construction in Faryab had led to increased frustrations within the population of a neighbouring province, where the construction of schools was not prioritised. Through a Nordic cooperation, they hoped for the possibility of countries moving towards a stronger national and regional focus.

Possible benefits for the Nordic donors

Among the Nordic countries, two different opinions were identified as to the question of Nordic cooperation and what benefits it could achieve:

- Nordic cooperation on and in Afghanistan is an achievement in itself, fulfilling the overall Nordic ambition of increased cooperation;
- This cooperation is only useful if it produces some tangible results for the Nordic countries, for the donor community at-large, and for the Afghans to increase the efficiency and outcome of the assistance provided.

Obviously, both these approaches to Nordic cooperation needs to be addressed when the arguments for, and the possible results of, a strengthened Nordic cooperation are assessed.

With regard to the possible tangible results of a strengthened Nordic cooperation, several possibilities were suggested by the different countries:

- The sharing of the workload in the already established practise of one country taking the lead, and representing the others in a sector or on a particular subject or project;
- Increasing the strength of the Nordic voice on issues of common concern and interest in the donor community at large, towards multilateral organisations in various coordinating bodies, or towards Afghan authorities by developing a joint platform and presenting common proposals;
- Achieving a stronger understanding in the donor community at-large for coordination in accord with the Paris Declaration, producing more tangible results as a consequence of the development efforts;
- Individual Nordic countries could benefit from the involvement of other countries in a sector, or from support to a particular project or issue without having to start from the beginning, but rather through channelling financial or political support to other Nordic countries.

Possible benefits for the donor community at-large

In the donor community in general, among important multilaterals like the World Bank, UNAMA, UNDP, UNODC and within the NGO community as represented by ACBAR, there was a positive reaction to the possibility of a strengthened Nordic development cooperation. The main argument is that this could mobilise the donor community at-large for a more coordinated approach in Afghanistan. The general impression communicated from these organisations is that present coordinative attempts, through both the EU and JCMB, have had a very limited impact. JCMB was characterised as primarily a forum for political positioning, though there was hope for improvement with the changes that were suggested. The EU's coordination was regarded as very limited.

One shared concern was that some of the key donor partners involved in the security and development efforts in Afghanistan were, to a great extent, making their own decisions and establishing cooperation and allocating funds, with no input or coordination from either the Afghan government or the donor community. The Nordic countries could use this as an opportunity to set a different practise, and advocate for a stronger interaction between the donor community and their Afghan counterparts.

Several multilateral donors regarded the strengthening of a national approach, over a provincial focus, as vital in countering developmental challenges. UNAMA emphasised the particular challenge of water shortages and drought experienced in the north, and for the need of a regional water resource study as is also proposed by other reports.

Possible obstacles to increased cooperation

Despite the similarities and ongoing cooperation between the Nordic countries, there are a number of differences that needs to be taken into account in establishing a realistic discussion for the possibilities of increased Nordic cooperation.

The differences in organisational set-up and distribution of responsibility among the Nordic countries

Today, four of the five Nordic countries have an embassy in Kabul. All of them, additionally, have civilian personnel attached to the different PRTs. Denmark has a Senior Representative and five advisers in Helmand, Sweden has one (soon to be increased to four) in Mazar-e-Sharif, Finland has four attached to the Swedish PRT, and Norway has two in Faryab (with a possible increase to three in 2009). Iceland has allocated two persons to ISAF Headquarters, in addition to one Development Adviser to the Norwegian PRT.

For Denmark and Norway, a substantial level of decision making authorisation re development cooperation within approved strategies and budgets, has been allocated to their embassies. Finland and Sweden have allocated funding for their embassies to conduct independent projects, while for Iceland authority rests with its ministry in its capital city.

The difference in financial and human resources

The country profiles for the Nordic countries illustrates that they have varying degrees of financial allocations for development and humanitarian assistance, as well as differences in personnel resources in Afghanistan and their own capital cities. As a result, the ability to involve themselves in the support of a Nordic cooperation, and to fund new or common activities, will vary from country to country.

Another consequence of the varying degrees of their presence in Kabul is the ability of each country to represent the Nordic countries as the lead donor, to its representation on boards, etc. It is obvious that Iceland, which currently has no official representation in Kabul, would have a lesser ability to represent the other countries, as compared to Norway which holds the largest representation. But this concern might be compensated for by initiating an active recruitment policy for each country, securing personnel with particular competence and experience to fulfil the duties of a Nordic coordinator. Iceland has indicated that it might assign such personnel to a position in Kabul to assume a Nordic coordination task.

The difference in geographical focus

While Denmark has its military focus in southern Afghanistan, the other Nordics countries have focused on different provinces in the north. All the countries have, to a certain degree, a

limited geographical prioritisation of their funds, with Finland planning to increase its funding for the north, which is in excess of 10% of its allocation.

However, all have argued for a national approach, and channel most of their funding through either national programmes, ARTF or various UN organisations. Due to the security situation in the south, Danish NGOs do not operate there, but instead cover the eastern, western and northern parts of Afghanistan. Danish support is also provided for Afghan NGOs which operate all over Afghanistan.

The difference in thematic focus

Given the differences in size, geographical focus and historical experience, the Nordic countries have a somewhat different approach and focus for their humanitarian and developmental activities.

Still, it is obvious that all the Nordic countries have several themes and activities in common such as education, human rights, democracy (including elections), gender, police and livelihood. But within these common sectors, or focus areas, we do find different priorities and categories of support. Norway, Denmark and Finland define support to NSP as support to livelihood and rural development, while Sweden categorizes it as support to governance and democratic development.

All the Nordic countries define gender as a cross cutting issue. Norway and Sweden in particular, have focused on the education of girls. Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark have all participated in an ongoing assessment on how PRT activities could be enhanced in support of UN SC resolution 1325: Women in Conflict.

The difference in decision making modalities

One main difference in decision making is between the countries, namely Norway and Denmark, which have delegated extensive authority for decision making to their embassies in Kabul with approved strategies, annual plans and budgets. In Finland, Iceland and Sweden the authority still rests with the ministry or agency in their capital city, with delegation of some funding for use by the Swedish and Finnish Embassies.

In Sweden, the decisions on developmental issues are taken by Sida, the Swedish development agency. The decisions are made according to approved long-term strategies and are, to a limited extent, influenced by day-to-day political considerations. This differs in Norway, Denmark and Finland, where there is not the same clear-cut division of responsibility between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the development administration. Here, decisions on development efforts might, to a larger extent, be influenced by changing political considerations. Exceptions are for humanitarian assistance in general, the Danish NGO funding that is provided outside of the framework of the Danish Afghanistan Strategy and major parts of the Norwegian NGO funding under the global allocation for support through NGOs.

In all the countries development involves several entities, both within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in other ministries, which are subject to internal coordination. Depending on the size of the total administrative capacity involved in Afghanistan, different countries report challenges in achieving a smooth internal communication and coordination within their respective foreign ministries, and with other ministries involved in and between the capitals

and their respective embassies in Kabul, given the large workload and challenging and rapidly changing working environment.

The difference in choice of channels for funds

Three of the Nordic countries have a nearly three decade long history of involvement in Afghanistan through non-governmental and solidarity organisations. Sweden continues to use these channels as part of its overall strategy, while Denmark and Norway indicate a more diverse attitude, focusing on the aim of enhancing its cooperation with the Afghan government. Finland and Iceland support a number of NGOs, including three from the other Nordic countries.

Due to the weak Afghan administration and the concern of an increase in corruption, all the Nordic countries have shown a preference for using different UN or other multi-donor channels for its funding, including national programmes like NSP. Only Denmark has made the decision to channel its support for education directly through the Ministry of Education, while the other Nordic countries have used the World Bank-led ARTF, UNICEF or different NGOs for their educational support.

The message from the Afghan ministries is clear: they endorse the Nordic policy of support through the government or trust funds, and want the international community to channel more funds to its various line ministries through the Ministry of Finance. They regard the use of ARTF as the best alternative for those who have still not established the necessary confidence in the Afghan administration.

Rotation of staff

Nordic cooperation will, to a significant extent, be based on the personal relationships established between responsible desk officers in Kabul and their capitals. Mutual trust is something that is gained through experience, and the ability to meet and exchange views and experiences. With a high turnover of staff, not least of all at the embassies in Kabul, this is a challenge that needs to be dealt with to ensure a continued strengthening of the Nordic cooperation.

The prominence of non-Nordic cooperation

All Nordic countries, whether it be in Kabul or their capital cities, has emphasised the importance of a cooperation with other countries or bodies beyond the Nordic region. Three of the Nordic countries are NATO members, and three are members of the EU. Throughout the development era different forums for cooperation have emerged, such as the like-minded Nordic Plus, Nordic Plus Plus and more ad-hoc relationships. Consequently, it seems to be widely agreed that a strengthened Nordic cooperation should not be developed at the expense of existing cooperation arrangements, but rather as a tool to strengthen these arrangements.

Given:

- The possible benefits and varied obstacles to a strengthened Nordic cooperation in Afghanistan;
- The overall political intention voiced by the Nordic Foreign Ministers in April 2008;
- The current weak coordination in the donor community of Afghanistan at-large;

- The tremendous challenges ahead in achieving the stated results of development efforts,

there is a need to continue and further improve the systematic and continuous follow-up, with the intent of strengthening the Nordic cooperation at the political and governmental level in the Nordic capitals, and between the Nordic embassies and their representatives in Kabul. The Nordic cooperation should be seen in its entirety, where all five Nordic countries maintain an important role, despite the differences in their representation and funding. Therefore, the respect for each other's agreed responsibilities in the development and humanitarian fields, and an expressed willingness to highlight and emphasise the Nordic voice and position will be decisive in achieving the desired results.

Conclusion

Preconditions for a successful Nordic cooperation

Given the difference in how the Nordic countries organise their development cooperation with Afghanistan, it is deemed to be necessary that there be agreement on the political level as concerns the following:

- The overall purpose and aim of increased Nordic development/humanitarian cooperation in, and with, Afghanistan;
- The key choices in division of labour;
- Organisational arrangements and enhancement mechanisms;
- Secondment of the operation and implementation of the plan to the embassies/Icelandic representation.
- Regular (half yearly) reporting on the achievements.

Output matters

Nordic cooperation is regarded as a positive by all countries, and there is a common understanding and position on a number of issues relating to human rights, humanitarian and donor principles and development strategies.

Still, given the challenging task the countries face in Afghanistan, it is deemed to be of high importance that a Nordic cooperation adds to the impact of its involvement and assistance, and helps to reduce the workload and "transaction costs".

Nordic cooperation must not add any new coordination bodies or further bureaucratic levels, but rather help to divide the responsibilities and workload among the countries, and secure the necessary professional expertise to increase the quality and impact of Nordic assistance.

Organisational arrangements

To ensure the implementation and continued development of the cooperation, we see a need for regular meeting points between the various representatives of the Nordic countries, to allow for a dynamic development of the cooperation, which could include:

- Semi-annual discussions at the ministerial level to assess the overall development of the Nordic cooperation, and address particular issues raised from lower level meetings;
- Quarterly meetings between Nordic ambassadors in Kabul, which on the development side primarily focuses on policy and strategically important

matters, including joint positions towards the Afghan government and other donors and issues to be addressed at JCMB and other coordination forums in Afghanistan and internationally;

- Monthly meetings between the Nordic development staff in Kabul to ensure the regular flow of information, joint programming, division of labour, and to prepare issues for the ambassadors meetings;
- Quarterly meetings in the initial stages, and then semi-annual meetings between the Nordic Afghanistan teams at the capital level to facilitate the exchange of information, follow-up issues raised by the representatives in Kabul, and the common planning, prioritisation and policies to be furthered to the UN, the World Bank or other common representations.

Give and take

Given the unequal representation at both the embassies in Kabul and the staffing of the ministries, it is important that the five countries agree on how responsibilities and tasks should be divided and shouldered.

This also goes for the appointment of lead country in various thematic and programme areas where one country represents all, and for establishing common policy positions or for pooling resources towards projects or new initiatives. For this to occur, countries will need to allocate the resources necessary to fulfil the lead responsibility, as well as allowing for some “give and take” when it comes to dividing the tasks, as several countries are involved in the same areas (as human rights, gender, education, rural development, police reform and election support), or channel funding through the same funds and organisations.

A national approach

There has been an increase in the trend to prioritise funding to provinces where PRTs are located, including through national programmes. While understanding this policy, it remains important to underline the need for a broader national outlook to ensure a more equal distribution of resources across provincial borders. Not least as some of the humanitarian and development challenges Afghanistan faces are regional rather than provincial such as drought, drug production and smuggling, water supply and infrastructure. A larger cooperation across provincial borders might also help to foster a better cooperation between provinces, and more effectively address the challenges each are faced with.

Prospective sectors and themes

Through the discussions in Kabul and in the capitals, we have identified a number of sectors and themes that appear to offer the possibility for an increased Nordic cooperation:

- Aid effectiveness - Given the importance of ensuring the highest possible effect for the assistance provided, the Nordic countries should appoint a lead country to take this theme further;
- Anti-corruption – Develop an agreement on a common strategy towards the Afghan government and the various trust funds, and common guidelines for project support/tendering and the appointment of lead donor;
- ARTF - A joint Nordic proactive effort on policy issues such as gender and anti-corruption, and active follow-up of projects with strong Nordic support, such as NSP and EQUIP;
- Education - While this is an area with an involvement from several Nordic countries, there are differences in their support and implementation modalities. If a lead donor is

- to be appointed there needs to be agreement on an overall strategy and possible prioritisation areas (or division of areas between the donors);
- Elections - Continue the appointment of Norway as the lead donor towards the UNDP ELECT programme, and the continued political, financial and technical support for the election processes and information campaigns;
 - Gender - The appointment of a lead donor and agreement on a common strategy that strengthen efforts to ensure the human and development rights of women and girls, including a possible cooperation in the support of UNIFEM;
 - Governance - A Nordic governance dialogue with key Afghan partners (i.e. MoI, IDLG, the Parliament), leading to the identification of key areas of increased effort, and the possible appointment of a lead donor(s);
 - Humanitarian assistance - A joint Nordic effort to support returning refugees and IDPs, and for the capacity development of ANDMA, including the capacity to identify and analyse disaster threats which could be seen as either humanitarian support, or as support for capacity building within the Afghan administration;
 - Human rights - Continue the appointment of Denmark as lead donor to AIHRC and the support for the capacity building of AIHRC and human rights/advocacy organisations;
 - Police services - The continuation of the ongoing and planned Nordic support for EUPOL, to ensure the support and development of inter-linkages in the judicial system with police, attorneys, judges and prisons;
 - UNAMA and other UN agencies - Joint efforts to strengthen coordination towards the Afghan Government and donors, and between UN agencies and other development and humanitarian actors;
 - Water resources - Nordic cooperation with UNAMA, WB, EC and GoA on a study of water resources in Afghanistan, enabling development of a long-term regional water management strategy.

Implementation and presentation

Given the daily pressures facing the embassies and ministries, and to allow for the different countries to get the necessary human/organisational resources in place, we suggest a step-by-step approach. This will require a common agreement on the division of responsibilities, established jointly by the embassies (with Icelandic representation at the meeting), and an agreement by the ministries and agencies to acknowledge the fact that less work for four or fewer countries implies larger tasks and responsibility for one. Within this process, each country needs to identify which areas they see themselves holding a comparative advantage in taking the responsibility for, and what form of expertise and resources they control. Based on these assessments, the countries will need to agree on the division of responsibilities at different levels, and agree on a common frame and organisational structure for the cooperation.

Such an arrangement will need to clarify the role and responsibility of the lead agency, especially in handling funding on behalf of the other countries, or representing them on policy matters where positions might differ among countries.

The intention and practical arrangements of a Nordic cooperation needs to be presented and communicated to all stakeholders in the Afghan development process, not the least of which is the intent to increase the efficiency of Nordic support, thus reducing transaction costs in order to supplement and strengthen the existing cooperation arrangements and efforts.

Possibilities to further enhance Nordic cooperation

Acknowledging the complexity of the Afghan situation and challenges the conflicts pose in implementing humanitarian and developmental assistance, it is further suggested to invest in joint training/experience exchange sessions for staff of the Nordic embassies and the PRTs.

This could include an annual meeting on conflict analysis/assessment, and discussions on conflict sensitivity in the programming of assistance provision. Based on needs identified by the staff, there could be more regular sessions on subjects seen as being particularly relevant in understanding Afghanistan, and the challenges that development assistance are faced with. Examples of this are gender relations, traditional community organisations, migration history, resettlement challenges or the presentation of research projects and evaluations. Here, expertise at the embassies, as well as from Afghan specialists and visiting researchers and experts, can be drawn on.

The same training, jointly arranged in a Nordic context, could be offered annually to the staff of foreign ministries to help initiate a debate on issues of common interest to all countries. Another area of importance in the development of knowledge could be in research within areas of common Nordic interest, or where an increased Nordic engagement is envisaged.

Nordic countries could also identify and find ways to collaborate on assessments, appraisals, and the evaluation of programmes and issues which are of interest to a number of countries. At present, a dialogue among capitals has been initiated regarding a joint approach in a planned assessment of support to UNIFEM.

Further issues noted

An informed debate in the Nordic countries on the development of, and developmental challenges in Afghanistan, could help enhance our knowledge on the activities of each Nordic country individually and as a whole. Given the high involvement and engagement of Nordic NGOs, they could be a key component in sharing information on the activities of the Nordic countries as it relates to the developments in Afghanistan and to their humanitarian engagement.

The fact that several countries are looking for a new location for their embassies in Kabul, and taking into consideration the costs entailed by each country for the necessary logistical arrangements and security measures, one suggestion brought up in the discussions has been to consider establishment of a Nordic Embassy in Kabul. This could help in pooling resources, easing daily cooperation and establishing a more favourable context for the strengthening of Nordic cooperation in Afghanistan.

Suggested next steps

We have purposely avoided suggesting a division of lead donor responsibility and other division of tasks as we regard this as a process and a negotiation that should take place among the embassies in Kabul, including Icelandic representation. Then to be followed by a meeting at the Nordic capital level, where recommendations are discussed, agreed upon, and followed-up on with the necessary allocation of required resources.

We recommend, however, that if the suggestions we have listed are approved in principle for strengthening Nordic cooperation, the process in Kabul should be initiated at the earliest possible moment to make use of the innovations generated by the interviews and debates in this report.

Annex I: Country profiles

Denmark

Support for the UN and the EU

Denmark contributes to the strengthening of international coordination, and to the securing of an integrated strategic approach in the stabilisation and development in Afghanistan, including ensuring that the UN fulfils its lead coordination role and establishment of a presence in the whole of Afghanistan, including in the south.

Furthermore, ensuring that the EU enhance its political and development assistance profile in Afghanistan with due consideration to the UN's role, including increasing the support to capacity building of the police.

Police services

Since 2007, Denmark has contributed to EUPOL, and starting in May 2008 sent eight police trainers to the Kabul, Helmand, Uruzgan and Kunduz provinces, increasing that number to 13 by December, including one civilian. Additionally, Kai Vittrup of Denmark has served as the Head of Mission since October 2008. The Danish contribution is valued at approximately DKK 12 Million (€1.6 million) annually.

Civilian PRT component

Denmark contributes military personnel and civilian advisors to the UK-led PRT based in Helmand. A senior Danish representative is the PRT's deputy responsible for civilian military planning (with a rank equivalent to a one star civilian), below the British Diplomat (two stars) heading the team but equal to the Task Force Helmand Commander (one star). Denmark also has five advisers, including two in education, based in Lashkar Gar where Denmark hold a lead within the PRT and three more based in Gereshk, and a CIMIC detachment. Denmark's engagement is guided by an annual Helmand plan, developed in cooperation between the civilian and military actors. A total of 400 projects have until now been implemented in Badakshan (exit planned for end of 2009) and in Helmand. The goal has been to create rapid and visible results, thus increasing the population's support for ISAF and GoA. The Danish CIMIC detachment has further contributed to the implementation of more than 150 stabilisation projects in the Helmand province, which are financed by the UK.

Human Rights

Denmark has supported AIHRC from its establishment, and also provides support for two Afghan human rights NGO's, the Civil Society Human Rights Network (since 2006), and Da Qanoon Ghostonky, which provides legal aid and counselling for women. Denmark places special emphasis on the conditions and rights of women, with its goal being to ensure that human rights are incorporated as an element in all national strategies.

Democratisation

Denmark has supported the establishment and strengthening of the Afghan Parliament since 2004 through different UNDP-led programmes.

Finland

Support for the UN and the EU

Finland supports UNAMA's coordination efforts, provides financial support for UNODC and actively supports efforts to enhance the EU's role in Afghanistan, particularly in the fields of police and the rule of law. An expert on human rights and gender equality is seconded to the office of the EU Special representative in Kabul.

Support for NGOs

Through the MFA's Unit for NGOs, the following NGO projects have been supported through Finnish-based organisations:

1) Legal counselling in Women's Development Centres, with Afghanistan's Women's Lawyers Councils; 2) Livelihood development for self-employment and job creation with UNIFEM Afghanistan; 3) Training of female journalists with the New Afghanistan Women's Association; 4) Basic capacity building in primary mental health projects with the International Assistance Mission (IAM); 5) Systematic personnel learning and development with IAM; 6) Community development programme with IAM; 7) Health education women's programme with SERVE Afghanistan; 8) Empowering the disabled, and equipping partners' project with SERVE Afghanistan; 9) Disaster relief with the Finnish Red Cross; 10) Community Development Programme with the Norwegian Church Aid.

Police services

Finland actively supports the EU's role in Afghanistan, particularly in the fields of police and the rule of law. Presently, Finland is the fifth largest contributor of personnel to the EU Police Mission. Finland is preparing a Police and Prosecutor Coordination Rule of Law Training Programme in conjunction with the Crisis Management Centre in Finland, to be conducted in close cooperation with EUPOL and the International Police Coordination Body. Finland is also preparing an Improved Explosives Device Disposal training for the ANP.

Civilian PRT component

The four Finnish civilian experts (political adviser, development adviser and two police advisers) at PRT in Mazar-e-Sharif, together with the Finnish PRT contingent, identify and design small-scale projects in security sector reform and other areas of need.

Human rights

Finland annually supports the AIHRC with €0.9 million.

Drug eradication

Finland donates €1 million to UNODC's Programme for Strengthening Provincial Capacity for Drug Prevention.

Health

Finland support Marie Stopes International (MSI), which works in the field of reproductive health and provides help to almost 200,000 Afghans annually.

Other activities

Finland supports the exchange programme for members of the Afghan Parliament.

Iceland

Support for the UN

Iceland supports the efforts of UNAMA, UNIFEM, UNDCP and UNHCR.

Police services

Iceland is presently not contributing staff to EUPOL, but they follow EUPOL meetings and are considering staff contributions later in 2009.

Civilian PRT component

Iceland has seconded one Political Adviser on development, one Spokesperson and Public Diplomacy Adviser at ISAF's headquarters, and one Development Adviser with the Norwegian-led PRT in Meymaneh. Currently, six experts are deployed at the Kabul International Airport (KAIA). This includes experts in the aviation sector, with Iceland being the only Nordic country to assist with capacity building at the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation.

Norway

Support for the UN

Norway fully supports the UN and UNAMA's coordination role, and contributes in addition to strong political support with funding of positions and secondment of personnel to ensure that UNAMA is in a position to fulfil its tasks.

Capacity building

This field include a range of activities including the support of sub-national reforms, education and the training of civil servants through the Ministry of Education, increasing the capacity of the police and judicial sector (see below), and support for building the national capacity in managing and exploring Afghan oil and gas resources.

Police services

Norway has deployed 18 police officers in Afghanistan, with 14 police officers stationed in Kabul and 4 in Meymaneh (Faryab).

The Norwegian police project NORAF was established in 2003 to provide assistance in the development of a civil Afghan police force. In addition to NORAF, six Norwegian police officers are now participating in EUPOL, five in FDD (Focused District Development) and one in UNAMA.

Justice sector

Norway has previously assigned judges, prosecutors and attorneys from "Styrkebrønnen" (The Norwegian Pool of Rule of Law Advisers) to strengthen the judicial system assigned for handling drug related crimes. However, this activity was terminated at the end of December 2008. At the same time, Norway has had two prison experts deployed in Meymaneh, an assignment that will continue in 2009. Norway also supports ARTF's justice programme.

Civilian PRT component

One development and one political adviser from MFA are assigned to the Faryab PRT, maintaining independence from the military contingent in their project identification and decision making, but in consultation with PRT, local authorities and elected bodies. The projects are managed by the embassy and channelled through national programmes and NGOs (including Norwegian NGOs and their Afghan partners). A civilian coordinator is about to be assigned to Faryab to strengthen the civilian development component.

Human rights

Norway was one of the first nations to support AIHRC and has maintained this support, being in constant contact with the Afghan government concerning matters such as the handing over of prisoners to the authorities from ISAF forces, the rights of religious converts and conveying a clear stand against the death penalty.

Sweden

Support for the UN

Sweden supports UNAMA's coordination efforts and has donated SEK 16 million to UNDP's Counter Narcotics Trust Fund (CNTF), in part to fund projects designed to help farmers find alternative sources of income with a UNICEF-led education programme. The National Rural Access Programme is implemented through UNOPS, and currently support for UNIFEM is assessed. UNDP has previously received support for their election assistance and will be supported for the upcoming elections.

Public administration

Sweden helps to strengthen the governmental apparatus by supporting the World Bank's Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), which provides funds for the running costs of government administration and the development programmes that the Afghan government wishes to prioritise.

Education

Sida support education projects through the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) (previously together with Norway), as well as the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan's (SCA) education programme, along with their healthcare programme and the Rehabilitation of Afghans with Disabilities (RAD).

Road improvements

Sida has supported the improvement of roads and bridges in Afghanistan, with its current focus on road safety and the smaller roads in northern Afghanistan.

Health

Support for the health sector is provided through the SCA's mother and child health programme, under the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) programme.

Capacity building

Sweden regard their support channelled through the ARTF as a contribution towards capacity building, as they also do for their support for the development of transport and education sectors. The development of the Afghan Bar Association serves as an example of Swedish organisational capacity development building.

Democratisation and human rights

Democratisation and human rights, including support for AIHRC, are the two primary areas of Swedish support. This includes the running of general elections and support for the Parliament (Support Effective Afghan Legislation) and RAD.

Police services

Sweden contributes to the work being done by the EU (EUPOL) in supporting the police and judicial sectors of the region. The Folke Bernadotte Academy is currently undertaking the planning of a possible joint Nordic police training initiative under EUPOL, drawing on established Nordic cooperation in this field.

Civilian PRT component

Sweden leads the Mazar-e-Sharif based ISAF unit, which is responsible for the Jowzjan, Balkh, Sar-e Pol and Samangan provinces in northern Afghanistan. One Development Adviser (DEVAD) is assigned here, with an increase to four advisers by early 2009. The PRT has a budget allocated from the Ministry of Defence for SEK 200,000 for projects they identify. Based on recommendations from DEVAD, the embassy in Kabul decides on grants up until SEK 10 million, which are earmarked for northern Afghanistan.

Through this fund, which is allocated from the Ministry of Defence (“Lokale Fonden”) and was established on 1 April 2008, assistance is provided to northern Afghanistan through Women for Afghan Women, the Institute for War and Peace Reporting, and Rädna Barnen Sverige-Norge. Islamic Relief (2008-2010), Marie Stopes International (2008-2010) and the Central Statistics Office which is supported by UNIFEM, have been selected for support with the first two receiving funds.

Research

Sweden supports the research activities of the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU).

Peace and security

Sweden supports mine clearance through the Danish Demining Group, and the process of transferring the demining programme to the Afghan authorities.

Annex II: Humanitarian Assistance

Denmark

Beyond what is defined as humanitarian assistance, Denmark has two other global budget lines through which organisations involved in Afghanistan are supported. The first is the “Region of Origin Initiative” and the second, the support of Danish NGOs. The total budget for 2008 was just above DKK 98 million. Included in the humanitarian assistance budget of DKK 35 million is support for the World Food Programme, the ICRC/IFRC/NGOs, demining through the Danish Demining Group and support for CIMIC-related activities. It should also be mentioned that Denmark contributed DKK 60 million in funding to the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), from which grants were awarded in response to the ongoing food crisis in Afghanistan.

The Region of Origin Initiative is for refugee return and reintegration, with a budget of DKK 43 million in 2008 which is to be increased to 75 million in 2009. The organisations supported were UNHCR, Danish Assistance to Afghan Rehabilitation and Technical Training (DAART), IOM, AIHRC and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).

The support for Danish NGOs was DKK 19.5 million, channelled through the Danish Committee for Assistance to Afghan Refugees (DACAAAR), the Danish Afghanistan Committee and Mission Øst. A grant of DKK 0.5 million was used for personnel support.

Finland

Since 1990, Finland has been primarily delivering humanitarian aid to Afghanistan through UN agencies, but also through NGOs. The annual needs-based allocation for humanitarian aid in 2008 was € 1.2 million, with € 1 million for NGOs and an additional € 1.5 million for humanitarian demining through the United Nations Mine Action Services (UNMAS), in addition to the €0.6 million annual allocation. The main beneficiaries of Finnish humanitarian assistance have been women and children, returnees, internally displaced persons and the malnourished.

Finland supports both Finnish and local NGOs operating in Afghanistan, with a special focus on the needs of the most vulnerable groups and the reproductive health programmes of Marie Stopes International.

Iceland

In 2007-2008, Iceland contributed a total of € 200,000 to ISAF’s Post-operations Humanitarian Fund. Iceland intends to support appeals from UNHCR and is looking into providing funding for humanitarian purposes through the Icelandic Red Cross, Save the Children and the Actions of Churches Together (ACT).

Norway

The provision of humanitarian assistance is identified as a Norwegian priority area, with an extraordinary allocation of NOK 309 million in 2008. The level of humanitarian assistance in the coming years is expected to be NOK 130 million as development spending is correspondingly increased. The assistance is directed towards refugees (Norwegian Refugee

Council), mine action (Halo Trust and ICRC), crisis prevention initiatives (UNDP and ICRC), and health and human rights (including AIHRC). Included in its support was UN organisations, Norwegian NGOs and their partner networks, including NOK 86 million for activities in Faryab.

Sweden

Sweden provided a range of contributions from MFA and Sida in 2008:

- A) Support through multilateral channels for SEK 50 million as part of the Swedish core contribution for UNHCR, WFP and CERF;

- B) Support in response to appeals, secondment and additional funding for a total of SEK 86.64 million for:
 - SEK 29.37 million for the World Food Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organisation and Action Against Hunger to mitigate the food crisis;
 - SEK 55 million for the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Swedish Red Cross;
 - SEK 2.28 million from 1 January 2009 for the Svenska Räddningsverket Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap (MSB), including secondment of staff to the UN.

Annex III: Overview of sectors and funding channels

Below is an overview of what main sectors each country supports, and their selection of funding and implementation channels. However, some countries' sectors might be cross cutting (as respect for human rights) and it differs among countries what sector programmes are defined as (i.e. NSP, which Sweden defines as support for democracy development and the other countries define as livelihood support).

	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden
SECTORS					
Good governance	x	x		x	x
Capacity building	x	x	x	x	x
Livelihoods	x		x	x	x
Education, incl. school building	x			x	x
Health		x	x		x
Respect for human rights	x	x	x	x	x
Energy			x	x	
Aviation			x		
Police support, incl. EUPOL	x	x		x	x
Counter narcotics incl. courts	x	x	x	x	x
Humanitarian assistance	x	x	x	x	x
Civilian PRT component	x	x	x	x	x
FUNDING CHANNELS					
ARTF	x	x		x	x
LOTFA		x	x		
UN	x	x	x	x	x
ICRC/National Red Cross	x	x	x	x	x
NGOs	x	x	x	x	x

Annex IV: Selected list of reviewed documents

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Annex V: Interview list

I) KABUL

Ministry of Education

H.E. Minister Farooq Wardak

Sarwari Hussain, Deputy Minister, Literacy Programme

Mohammad Suleman Kakar, Deputy Minister Admin/Finance

Eng. Mohammad Salim Quaym, Deputy Minister Technical and Vocational Education

Dr. Attaullah Wahidyar, Policy Programme Adviser and Chief of Staff

Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development

H.E. Minister Mohammad Ehsan Zia

H.E. Deputy Minister Wais Barmak

Eng Mohammad Hakim, Adviser

Ajmal Shirzai, Adviser

Ministry of Agriculture

H.E. Minister Mohammad Asif Rahimi

Ministry of Economy

Nehmatullah Bizhan, Database Manager

Ministry of Finance

Abdul Razaq Vahidi, Director General

IDLG

Jelani Popal, Director General

AIHRC

Fahim Hakim, Deputy Chair

UNAMA

Sheilagh Henry, Humanitarian Affairs Officer

Mark S. Ward, Special Adviser on Development to the SRSG

UNODC

Patrick Halewood, Project Coordinator

UNDP

Paul Lundberg, Programme Manager ASGP

Dimitry Pozhidaev, Provincial Coordinator ASGP

World Bank

Qasi Azmat Isa, Senior Rural Development Specialist

Hamish Nixon, Sub-national Governance and Service Delivery Specialist
Hugh Riddell, Operation Officer ARTF

Embassy of Denmark

Ambassador Reiner R. Nielsen
Ivan M. Nielsen, Counsellor
Gorm Pedersen, Senior Development Adviser

Embassy of Finland

Ambassador Timo Oula
Sam Karvonen, First Secretary, Development Cooperation

Embassy of Sweden

Mette Sunnergren, First Secretary, Development

Embassy of Norway

Ambassador Kåre R. Aas
Mari Skår, Counsellor Minister
Merete Dyrud, Counsellor

ACBAR

Anja de Beer, Director

NGOs (disaster preparedness)

Mohammed Naeem Salimee, Director General CoAR

II) NORDIC COUNTRIES

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark

Kristian Kirkegaard Edinger, Senior Technical Adviser, Focal Point Education, Department for Technical Advisory Services-Development Assistance
Mathilde Gry Nielsen, Head of Section, Department for Asia and Latin America
Kristian Rasmussen, Head of Section, Department for Security Policy
Lars Adam Rehof, Senior Technical Adviser, Focal Point for Fragile States, Department for Technical Advisory Services – Development Assistance
Stephen Schönemann, Head of Section, Team Afghanistan, Department for Asia and Latin America
Signe Skovbakke Winding, Head of Section, Department for Human Rights
Thomas Thomsen, Chief Advisor, Department for Humanitarian Policy and Assistance and NGO Cooperation
Catherine Hall Uttenthal, Head of Section, Team Afghanistan, Department for Asia and Latin America

Ministry For Foreign Affairs, Finland

Rauli Suikkanen, Deputy Director, Unit for Asia and Oceania
Niko Heimola, Associated Desk Officer, Afghanistan, Unit for Asia and Oceania

Maria Osamitsu-Lindstedt, Assistant, Unit for Asia and Oceania
Oskari Eronen, Adviser for Security and Development, Unit for Security Policy and Crisis Management,
Sara Enlund, Assisting Desk Officer, Unit for Security Policy and Crisis Management,
Ulla-Maija Finskas, Director, Unit for Humanitarian Assistance
Leo Olasvirta, Director, Unit for Non-governmental Organisations

Ministry of Defence, Finland

Rasmus Hindren, Adviser, International Defence Policy Unit

Defence Command Finland

Mika Varvikko Researcher, Plans and Policy Division, Defence Command Finland

Ministry of Interior, Finland

Helinä Kokkarinen, Senior Adviser, International Affairs Unit
Mikaeli Langanvainio, National Coordinator, Civilian Crisis Management Training
Risto Lammi, Police Academy in Tampere
Ari Kerkkänen, Director, Crisis Management Centre

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Iceland

Jónas Gunnar Allansson, Specialist, Iceland Crisis Response Unit
Anna Jóhannsdóttir, Director of Iceland Crisis Response Unit
Elín R.Sigurðardóttir, Adviser, Department for International Development

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway

Bente Bingen, Senior Adviser, Section for Afghanistan and Pakistan
Paul Øystein Bjørdal, Trainee, Section for Humanitarian Affairs
Torunn Dramdal, Senior Adviser, Section for Security Policy and SUS-countries
Eilef Gundersen, Senior Adviser, Section for Security Policy and North America
Ingrid Glad, Deputy Director, Section for Multilateral Bank and Finance
Ingerd Haugen, Adviser, Section for Multilateral Bank and Finance
David Jourdan, Trainee, Section for Security Policy and North America
Janis Kanavin, Deputy Director General, Section for Afghanistan and Pakistan
Jan Erik Leikvang, Ambassador, Section for Afghanistan and Pakistan
Cathrine Løchstøer, Senior Adviser, Section for Security Policy and North America
Nina Schjelderup, Senior Adviser, Section for Afghanistan and Pakistan

The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), Norway

Hans-Peter Christophersen, Senior Adviser, Energy Department
Jan-Petter Holtedahl, Senior Adviser, Civil Society Department
Hans Olav Ibrekk, Climate Coordinator
Margaret Myklebust, Senior Adviser, Economics and Public Administration Department
Björg Skotnes, Acting Director, Peace, Gender and Democracy Department
Marit Vedeld, Senior Adviser, Education and Research Department

Ministry of Justice and the Police Directorate, Norway

Torgrim Moseby, Head of Section, International Section, National Police Directorate

Else Mette Næss, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Justice and the Police
Ole Anton Utvær, Assistant Chief of Police, International Section, National Police Directorate

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden

Johan Carlsson, Desk Officer, Division for Global Security
Henrik Nilsson, Deputy Director, Department for European Security Policy
Mathias Otterstedt, Deputy Director, Department for Asia and the Pacific
Ulrika Reuterwall, Desk Officer, Security Policy Department

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), Sweden

Samer Al Fayadh, Senior Adviser Transport Issues, SIDA
Sara Gustafsson, Analyst, Country Team Afghanistan
Anders Hagwall, Country Director, Country Team Afghanistan
Linda Larsson, Program Officer, Country Team Afghanistan
Sofia Orrebrink, program officer, Country Team Afghanistan
Gun Eriksson Skoog, Department for Economic Development, SIDA
Gunnel Unge, Humanitarian Team

Afghan Embassy to the Nordic Countries

Ambassador Jawed Ludin

Annex VI: Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference – Strengthened Nordic cooperation in Afghanistan

1. Background

The Plan was decided upon in the meeting of the Nordic foreign ministers in Stockholm 18th April 2008. Point 3 in the Plan of Action covers the coordination of the development efforts of the Nordic countries and indicates that a joint study should be done to identify differences and similarities in the development strategies (for Afghanistan) and the possibilities for over time to strengthen the cooperation. In point 4 and 5 the questions of increased coordination of the efforts of the Nordic countries within the justice/legal sector and related to fighting drugs. These efforts should be related to the increased coordination of the developments efforts.

The Nordic countries differ when it comes to delegation of authority to the embassies in Kabul. They differ in how decisions are made related to political issues and to development. This has created certain challenges for the Nordic countries at different levels to reach a common understanding and cooperation on specific development efforts.

The Nordic countries have identified the following sectors as possible fields of increased cooperation:

- Good governance
- Administrative reform
- Capacity building
- Education
- Respect for human rights with a particular focus on women
- Justice sector
- Fight against drugs

2. Responsibility for follow up

Norway has indicated a willingness to take a lead in this work and our Ministry of Foreign Affairs has requested Norad to carry out this task. Norad has been requested by the Ministry to communicate with the respective embassies in Kabul and the different foreign ministries and agencies regarding this.

As a starting point Norad has agreed with the Ministry to conduct a mapping of existing strategies and plans for the development sector as a whole or for parts of it in the different Nordic countries. We would add that any strategies related to humanitarian assistance should be included. It will also be important to relate to how the different Nordic countries earmark their funds for development efforts in areas where they are involved in the PRTs. Sector approach and geographical earmarking should be clarified.

As a result Norad received relevant documents from Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway. A synthesis of these documents is being prepared as a base for:

- A dialogue with the Nordic embassies in Kabul and relevant Afghan and international stakeholders.
- A dialogue with the Nordic Foreign ministries

Division of work/responsibilities

3. The parties and key personnel

- Through a simplified tender process in Norway, Norad has received offers from two research institutions. Based on the criteria outlined in the invitation, the Christian Michelsens Institute, P.O.Box 6033 Postterminalen, 5892 Bergen has been chosen. Senior Researcher Arne Strand will join the team.
- The assessment will be done under the leadership of Norad, Senior Advisor Petter Bauck.

4. The assignment

The overall aim with increased cooperation in the development field should be achieve a stronger impact in sectors of particular importance for the Nordic countries. Furthermore a more efficient organising of the development work should ease the workload for each country.

The assessment should be based on the "Afghan National Development Strategy" (ANDS), Afghanistan Compact, the Paris declaration, Afghan ownership, JCMB and the CG-structure, the role of UNAMA with its increased mandate, and "Nordic Plus- Practical Guide to Delegated Cooperation".

In addition to an understanding of main development processes and realities in Afghanistan it will important to address the plans of the different donor countries both in regard to sectors, aid volume and time perspective. Decision procedures should be outlined.

5. Reporting

With reference to the point above, a report of maximum 15 pages, with necessary attachments should be written. Recommendations should be focused. These should be concrete and outlined in a way suitable for immediate follow up, with necessary decisions and implementation.

6. Travel and accommodations

- A visit to Kabul is scheduled from the 5th to the 12th of December 2008.
- A visit to the Nordic capitals will be organised from 12th to 17th January 2009.
- Travels and accommodations in the Nordic countries will be arranged by Norad/Oslo in close cooperation with Arne Strand
- Travel to Kabul will be arranged by each team member to Dubai. The Norwegian Embassy in Kabul will book tickets from Dubai to Kabul and return.
- Accommodation in Kabul will be arranged by the Norwegian Embassy in Kabul.

- Transportation in Kabul will be arranged in close coordination with the Norwegian Embassy.
- Visa to Kabul is the responsibility of each team member.
- Each team member will, before traveling to Kabul, have to go through an extend first aid training. (Reference is made to guidelines for employees and consultants working for Norad when traveling to Afghanistan.)

7. Time schedule

- The work starts immediately after Norad has concluded the tender process – primo November 2008.
- A draft report with recommendations will be circulated around 1st of February 2009 for comments.
- A final report will be forwarded to the Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs within 28th February 2009.

8. Budget

A separate budget will be outlined for the contract with CMI, with the frame of NOK 300.000

Med vennlig hilsen

Janis Bjørn Kanavin
avdelingsdirektør

Nina Schjelderup
seniorrådgiver

Norad

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

Postal address:

P.O. Box 8034 Dep, NO-0030 OSLO

Office address:

Ruseløkkveien 26, Oslo, Norway

Tel: +47 22 24 20 30

Fax: +47 22 24 20 31

postmottak@norad.no

www.norad.no

