Strategic Communications in

Afghanistan's Transition Context

Jamil Seddiqi

October, 2012

Abbreviations

ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
APRP	Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program
CPJ	Consultative Peace Jirga
DEFID	Department for International Development
GMIC	Government Media and Information Centre
HPC	High Peace Council
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
ISAF	International Security Assistance Forces
IWPR	Institute for War and Peace Reporting
JANIB	Joint Afghan-NATO Inteqal Board
MICIT	Ministry of Communication and Information Technology
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOI	Ministry of the Interior
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSTWG	Non-Security Technical Working Group
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAN	Pajhwok Afghan News
RTA	Radio and Television of Afghanistan
SCWG	Strategic Communication Groups
TCC	Transition Technical Commission
UNAMA	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Abstract

It is commonly held in development communications literature that strategic communications are effective means of fostering growth, governance and peace and helping overcome development challenges because they facilitate both individual and social level changes. Yet this realization has not been simple, particularly for Afghanistan, operating in a highly challenging and complicated environment.

Following a decade of extensive international involvement and arduous fighting, Afghanistan is currently going through a significant Transition intended to enable Afghans to assume responsibility for their own security, development and governance. In addition to opportunities, this process provides significant challenges to the Afghan society and its development partners. This study raises awareness of the role and potential of strategic communications to address some of these challenges and aid Afghanistan's Transition objectives beyond the timeframe set for 2014. In treatment of this topic, this study provides a theoretical and historical overview of communication for development, Afghanistan's pre- and post-2001 situation with reference to the use of important channels of modern and traditional communications, and examines pertinent perspectives on the importance of strategic communications, particularly in strengthening Afghanistan's Transition context. In addition, this study focuses on the contribution of strategic communication in non-security matters, particularly governance and peace promotion, and identifies some major challenges where the potential of strategic communications to contribute has remained underexploited.

Drawing on these discussions, the results indicates that, in spite of some measures put to the fore, the Afghan government lacks an overarching strategic communications framework integrating multi-media, multi-outlet and public outreach to help in achieving the Transition goal; a stable Afghan state. Pointing clearly to the need for such an integrated campaign, the dissemination of negative perspectives, such as that suggesting that Afghanistan would collapse after 2004 (ICG, 2012), has given space to insurgents propaganda, a challenge which can be addressed through effective strategic communications. In the conclusions, this study argues on the importance of strategic communications as an strategic tool to aid Afghanistan development agenda particularly in the Transition context and presents some practical recommendations to the Afghan government and its deployment partners for effective use of strategic communications in view of a holistic approach aimed the strengthening development of Afghanistan and particularly the Transition process.

Acknowledgments

I would never have been able to finish my dissertation without guidance of my faculty members, help from friends, and support from my family. I am deeply indebted to my supervisor, Dr David Bewley-Taylor whose help, stimulating suggestions and encouragement helped me all the time and provided me with a friendly environment for doing my dissertation. I would like to specially thank the UK government, Foreign and Commonwealth Office for awarding me the prestigious Chevening Scholarship to fulfil my dream of pursuing a Master's degree in the UK.

This study would not have been complete without the contributions made by many senior staff from the Afghan government and non- government institutions, including but not limited to the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Independent Directorate of Local Governance, High Peace Council, Government Media and Information Centre, Office of the President, Technical Transition Commission, the UN Office and private media organisations, who recounted their experiences and shared their views. Their inputs into the study shed light on the importance of strategic communications, as well as the government's strategic challenges in this respect, which otherwise would not have been reflected upon. Finally, I would like to thank all my friends in Kabul and the loveable city of Swansea for always cheering me up through the good times and bad during my academic life here in Swansea.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER I:

Introduction

Following the start of "Operation Enduring Freedom"[1] on 7 October 2001 in Afghanistan, which resulted in the overthrow of the Taliban Regime, the international community made massive efforts to democratize Afghanistan. This operation was conducted by the US and several counterparts in response to the attacks of 9/11, aimed at destroying the terrorists' shelters and infrastructure within Afghanistan, the capture of Al-Qaeda leaders and ending terrorist activities in the country. With much of Afghanistan in a parlous state after more than two decades of conflict and civil war, the fall of the Taliban regime paved the ground for a new era of democracy and development, with significant international involvement in building and strengthening Afghanistan's security, development and governance institutions. After a decade of extensive international assistance and military presence in the country, the government of Afghanistan and its international partners, including the USA and UK, decided at the Kabul and Lisbon Conferences in 2010 that it was appropriate for Afghanistan to go through a major security and development Transition – the Inteqal.[2] This has been planned to be completed by the end of 2014.

Because the international presence will significantly be reduced and limited, which will have considerable impacts on Afghanistan's economy and political backdrop, it is argued that the year 2014 will mark a critical juncture in Afghanistan's future. The Transition will enable Afghans to take over security and development responsibilities and the international community will play an assisting role for the Afghan government (World Bank, 2011). However, from the context of Afghan-NATO and the dominant Afghan views, the Transition firmly focuses on security areas, while similar transitions in other areas, such as governance, development and peace, have not been clearly defined and integrated into the Transition planning. In addition, the commonly held misperception is that the Transition will put an end to international aid in Afghanistan, the Taliban will re-emerge, civil war is likely to happen, the fragile stability will deteriorate and the future will remain uncertain. In

---

[1] Military operation conducted in Afghanistan by the US government and its counterparts under the umbrella of the Global "War on Terror"

addition, some international reports, including the most recent one, "Afghanistan: The Long, Hard Road to the 2014 Transition", released by the International Crisis Group, warns that Afghanistan's government could collapse after 2014. In today's world, with information accessible through many sources, it is easy for misinformation or negative constructions of news to confuse Afghans, create misconceptions, and derail the Transition progress. In this respect, strategic communications help in providing people with the information they need and contribute in positively assisting Afghanistan's Transition, its leadership, programs and activities.

To this end, this study provides a brief theoretical and historical context to development communication and explores the role of strategic communications in addressing such misperceptions and barriers among Afghans to enable a peaceful Afghan-led political transition. It argues that in Afghanistan's Transition context, strategic communication has an important role to play in terms of providing citizens with access to information, creating an understanding of the Transition's benefits and its potential adverse consequences, and helping the public to make informed choices on matters that affect their lives. Also it seeks to assess the Afghan government's problems in using strategic communication activities – including modern mass media and traditional channels of communication, particularly in improving governance and peace-building efforts. Strategic communication will contribute in building a broad-based understanding for policies and programs that will ultimately underpin the overall implementation of the Transition and beyond.

In an attempt to provide a snapshot of communication for development, particularly in Afghanistan's Transition context, this study focuses primarily on post-2001 Afghanistan; the country's rapid communication and media development following the fall of the Taliban regime, and strategic communication's contribution in the Transition process, a critical junction in Afghanistan's recent history. To conclude, this research will attempt to describe why strategic communication is important in the Transition process, identify some Transition related strategic communication challenges and propose a number of recommendations for the Afghanistan government and international development partners on taking some important measures regarding the use of strategic communications, not only to facilitate the Transition process but also to improve development of Afghanistan beyond 2014.

1.2 Methodology

This study draws upon and interprets a range of relevant theoretical and disciplinary perspectives, as well as first-hand information collected through conducting semi-structured interviews with key informants from the government of Afghanistan and other organisations in the capital, Kabul. This research also involved analysis of pertinent academic literature on the topic of development communication and other relevant documents, such as reports on policies and strategies developed by both the international community and the government of Afghanistan.

In addition, this study explores approaches used by the High Peace Council and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance with regard to the application of strategic communication activities to get messages across to various audiences. The reason for selection of these two institutions is their relevance to this study, which focuses on the role of strategic communication in promoting governance and peace. The Afghan government's communication and public relations offices have dealt with development and peace, but an integrated strategic communication framework is yet to be developed. Personal communication with some government spokespersons and communication officers shed insights into types of coverage and change they want to see by targeting their messages to local, national and international audiences. Examining government documents and donor reports on Afghanistan's communication and media sector, aided by semi-structured interviews with government communications practitioners offers evidence that despite a number of achievements recorded so far, the Afghan government still lacks the means to strategically use different media and traditional channels of communication to support the overall development of Afghanistan and in particular the Transition process.

Due to time limitations and the unavailability of key relevant officials, fewer interviews than planned took place. However, key informants included spokespersons and senior communication officers from the Ministries of Interior, Finance, Rural Development and Development, the High Council of Peace, Transition Technical Commission, Government Media and Communication Centre, Office of the President, as well as individuals from non-governmental organisations such as UN.

1.3 Study Organization

Beyond this introduction, the dissertation is organized in the following three chapters:

CHAPTER II: Communication and Media Development in Post-Taliban Afghanistan

This chapter provides a summary of Post-Taliban Afghanistan, following the fall of the Taliban Regime and examines the rapid development of the communication and media sectors. It further assesses the range of media and traditional channels of communication used for development in the country.

CHAPTER III: Strategic Communications and the Inteqal in Afghanistan

This chapter describes Afghanistan's Transition approach and the role of strategic communications in strengthening and validating this process. In addition, this chapter describes the role of strategic communications in improving Afghanistan's local governance and peace-building efforts and sheds light on the problems that the Afghan government has faced in using communications strategically to strengthen Afghanistan's development agenda and, importantly during the Transition period and beyond.

CHAPTER IV: Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter provides an overview of why communication is important in Afghanistan's Transition context, identifies important challenges related to the use of strategic communication activities in this process and presents some recommendations to enable the government of Afghanistan and its development partners to use strategic communications as means of achieving Afghanistan's development goals in particular those related to the Transition process.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

Development communication is a broad field of immense international, national and regional interest, drawing attention of students, practitioners and scholars across disciplines as a special field of academic study (Prasad, 2009). It has its roots in post-war international aid programs to developing nations in Latin America, Asia and Africa that were struggling with various economic, educational, political and social problems (Waisbord, 2000). After the Second World War, development communication emerged as a strategy for foreign aid interventions, designed by different organizations in the North and West to promote modernization among Third World countries. Several approaches were used as part of development communication to advocate the promotion of communication and media to contribute to the modernizing of developing nations through bringing individual and structural changes. The idea of development communications gained prominence within the framework of the contribution that it made in supporting the development process in Third World countries (Wilkins, 2008). Some scholars believe that development communications initially emerged in the 1950s with the hope to use communication channels such as radio and television to support economic and social improvements in the world's most disadvantaged countries (Melkote and Steeves, 2001).

Development experts, sociologists, and communication professionals provide various definitions for development communications, while such definitions vary from region to region depending on the development viewed. Nora Quebral (1975) defines development communication as the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth and makes possible greater economic and social equality and the larger fulfilment of human potential. Quebral describes the origins of the term development communication as initially emerging from agricultural communication, and that was later devised to include areas of broader development, such as health, education, the economy and infrastructure, etc. (Quebral, 1975). In other words, development communication is a social process that encourages dialogue between the government and the governed, aimed at developing and implementing policies and programs that improve the quality of life for the wider population (McCall, 2010).

5

Development communications in the context of developing countries, as Fraser and Villet (1994) argue, involves strategic use of communication strategies, activities, and media to help people make the change happen and guide it. All those who are involved in studying and applying communication for development would probably conclude that development communication is intimately concerned with the sharing of information and knowledge for the purpose of reaching a consensus for decisions that address the needs, interests and capabilities of all key stakeholders (Servaes, 2002). Development communication had been predominantly concerned with rural problems, but deals with urban problems too (Mefalopulos, 2008). Primarily it has two crucial roles: firstly as a transforming role, as it attempts to achieve social change for a higher quality of life and values within a society, and, secondly, a socialization role as it seeks to maintain and promote some of the established values of a society that are consistent with development work. In playing these roles, development communication seeks to bring about an enabling environment for change, as well as promoting new practices through which a society may shift to make changes happen. The ultimate objective of development communication is a higher quality of life in a society through social and political reforms (Kumar, 2011).

Development theorists and researchers realized that disseminating information and knowledge about development interventions alone would not support development; nations rather need information, education and communication (IEC) within their cultural context and, additionally, motivation is needed to make the development acceptable (Narula Uma, 1994). Development communication is not merely used for the purpose of transmitting information on how to undertake development work in a better way using the available resources. It is much more than the exchange of information and knowledge about problem solving. It involves the generation of education and understanding, the raising of expectations, the introduction of new skills, and a strengthening of local participation in development initiatives. In this respect, it contributes in helping the local population streamline their mental framework in analysing specific scenarios and phenomena and to interact with the outside world. To this end, to be effective, communication activities for development must be interrelated with other socio-economic and socio-political issues (Moemeka, 1989). Development processes require both rural and urban citizens in the

public, private and other sectors of society to build innovative social relations with each other. The development communication process therefore seeks to aid the evolution and development of such interactive relationships among people. Both the mass media and other forms of communication, including interpersonal interactions, if incorporated into total development process, are vital in creating and sustaining such relationships (Parker, 1977).

Development communication is derived from theories related to development and social change that identify the main problems in countries in the area of development and/or improvement compared to those of western countries in the post-war era. Theories of development and social change have their origins in a mid-20th century optimistic framework with a view that the post-colonial nations to a larger extent would ultimately catch up with Western countries (Waisbord, 2000). According to Waisbord, the following core approaches are concerned with the study and application of development communication:

1.4.1 The Dominant Paradigm

This old paradigm originated from the idea of development as a modernization strategy, and gained prominence immediately after World War II and has been known as the dominant paradigm because of its persistent influence on most aspects of development. The key idea of this paradigm was to address the development problems of Third World countries through "modernization" – helping the underdeveloped countries on how to catch up and resemble the richer or more advanced countries (Mefalopulos, 2008). This model links the problem of inadequate development to lack of information; and describes culture as a potential obstacle to social development. It also highlights the importance of information dissemination and communication (via mass media) in introducing modern values, changing opinions, attitudes and individual behaviours (Waisbord, 2000). This has been the paradigm of reference for the diffusion standpoint, which has often been embraced to encourage behaviour changes through using media and information campaigns (Mefalopulos, 2008).

The dominant model of development underwent pervasive criticism and interrogation in the 1970s by development experts and scholars across disciplines throughout the world. Latin American scholars strongly opposed the modernization approach and its associated communication paradigms and posed perhaps the most significant challenge to the dominant model of development (Huesca, 2002). The critics of the dominant paradigm argued that the problem of underdevelopment is caused by inequalities of power rather than drawing on communication and information - and behaviour-oriented theories. This approach stands for a participatory view of communication. "Popular branches" of this have included dependency theory, participatory theory, media advocacy and social mobilisation approaches (Waisbord, 2000).

1.4.2 Dependency Theory

Dos Santos (1970:231) defines dependency as a conditioning situation in which the economies of one group of countries are conditioned by the development and expansion of others. This approach suggests that the developing countries are politically and culturally dependent on richer and more developed countries in the West; urban and dominant powers which control the media and communication in developing nations are more concerned with making profit rather than bringing about social change (Waisbord, 2000). On that account, 'dependistas' do not recommend the transmitting of information through mass media. Rather, priority is given to efforts such as crafting national communication policies to address the social roots of underdevelopment and marginalisation. Dependency theory refutes the marketing paradigms of development communication applied to promote and advocate the technological, economic and political values of the West. Contrary to the Dominant Approach, dependency theorists argue that underdevelopment is caused by the expansion of capitalism (Melkote & Steeves, 2001).

1.4.2 The Participatory Theory

This model stresses the importance of participation at different levels; indigenous knowledge and the cultural identity of local communities as being valuable in fostering the development process (Huesca, 2002). Paulo Freire (1983), a key communication scholar, gives prominence to participatory communication, arguing that active grassroots contribution in a democratic environment takes into account cultural identity, trust and commitment. This approach often urges use of face-to-face interactions over mass media for the exchange of ideas and stresses the importance of involving members of the society in the development efforts. This approach gives importance to reciprocal collaboration across all levels of participation, and stresses that development efforts must be anchored with local empowerment, mutual trust, listening to what others say, building on the experience of the people, drawing on their strengths, and active participation in the task of making a difference in the society (Xavier Institute, 1980:11).

While many development communication theories and approaches offer a wide range of tools for identifying problems and developing communication strategies, fewer, if any, approaches help countries operating in highly challenging and complicated environments like Afghanistan to choose appropriate communication mechanisms and channels to achieve a certain strategic goal, and to transit from a state of dependency to political and social independency. There are a number of theories that can be applied to choose appropriate communication strategies, such as Situational Crisis Communication Theory (Coombs, 1998). However, the reality is that existing communication theories have been limited in their potential to help in choosing appropriate media and varied communication channels to strengthen the development process through use of strategic communications. In addition, strategic communication literature has been lacking research on how it can be used in strategic communication campaigns in situations where people are in a state of fear, confusion and uncertainty (Draft & Lengel, 1984). Drawing on pertinent literature and disciplinary views, this study attempts to shed light on the need for strategic communications in Afghanistan's development process and particularly within the Transition context.

1.5 Strategic Communications

According to Fortune and Bloh (2008), strategic communication refers to a set of rules or a roadmap by which an entity or a government institution communicates using media and other various communication instruments in an organised manner, with an anticipated result on a particular policy, strategy or process. It requires both vertical and horizontal approaches for information dissemination. Vertical channels refer to a two-way flow of information from the government to the governed on essential policies, and the people responding to the government. Horizontal communication refers to dialogues within and across different social groups, and is a method that links communities and creates understanding around the issue being debated. Both vertical and horizontal channels of communication are critical for the citizens to understand and trust the policies that are being introduced (Servaes, 2002).

Strategic communication brings about a constructive environment for promoting a feedback loop from the public to the leaders, one which furthers active dialogue between the government and the governed (Fortune and Bloh, 2008). This approach can aid Afghanistan's transition (see Chapter III), as it seeks to improve both transparency and accountability (Fortune and Bloh, 2008). For the purposes of this research, strategic communication will initially focus on the development, governance and peace building aspects of the transition process, among others, in Afghanistan. As prescribed by the dependency theory of development, and supported by the new development paradigm, strategic communication enables both individual and social change to achieve larger development goals, rather than merely writing press releases, using radio dramas, advertisements or visual aids. This apparently contradicts the dominant paradigm approach of development that recommends use of communication in importing modern values and cultural products to address the problems of underdevelopment (Waisbord, 2000).

Depending on the nature of a mission and the country specific context, strategic communications can serve multiple development goals. According to one professor at Kabul University, "strategic communication is an integrated application of multiple media and tools [to] promote a certain agenda and influence the decision-making process". In other words, it is about dealing with challenges that might

jeopardise an organisation's survival (Bloh, 2008). In Afghanistan's Transition context (see Chapter III envisioned to face several challenges (World Bank, 2012), strategic communication will serve as a strategic tool to address some of these challenges by helping the Afghan governmental institutions communicate with a wide range of target audiences, using new media and traditional channels of communication. This is therefore within an integrated approach, capable of strengthening Afghanistan Transition objectives beyond the timeframe set to 2014.

Currently the Afghan government attention remains too much focused on day-to-day communications, such as carrying out some outreach campaigns, writing press releases and producing audio or visual aids rather than working on the basis of a strategic framework which provides a clear direction for the way forward. In support of this statement, in an article "what is strategic communications" posted in Idea Website on 2011, Tom Kelleher (2011) argues that writing news releases and seeking media coverage can be useful, but without an inclusive master plan, there is a risk of misdirecting efforts. This is a problem, particularly for those government institutions that pay too much attention to communication activities (e.g., how many people watched our advertisement on the TV) instead of actual outcomes. A professor from the Journalism Department of Kabul University defines strategic communications "as absolutely having to have a master plan, not 'simply reacting and responding'. Typically, that master plan should include promoting the reputation of an entity, persuading people to do specific actions or advocating particular policies". Based on this argument, it can be argued that if communication activities in the Transition period are not effectively devised on the basis of a solid agenda and master plan, it is highly possible that the intended impacts of the Transition will be limited and minimized.

"As is true with most of the post-conflict states, the channel of communication between the Afghan government and [the] citizens is narrow, so strategic communication will broaden this narrow space and in turn benefit Afghanistan's Transition beyond 2014", said a Mohammad Ackbar Jahid of GMIC. The year 2014 is the deadline set by the international community and the Afghan government for the transition of development, governance and security to become the responsibility of the Afghans themselves. However, despite its proven impact, particularly in the post-conflict development and governance process (GTZ, 2006); strategic communications

have rarely been integrated in the initial planning of the Transition process as a strategic tool. This has limited the government's capacity to make maximum use of it in an organized manner. In addition, some key informants talked about ambiguity in the roles and responsibilities of government institutions in implementation of the Transition process. To address this problem, they prescribed strategic communications as an effective approach to define such roles and responsibilities for all those involved in this process. Furthermore, strategic communications is regarded to be a core mechanism or 'lifeblood' of any strategic intent (OECD, 2002). In this respect strategic communications will help in aiding Afghanistan's Transition process as it seeks to further collaboration among key stakeholders, which is critical in achieving success.

As argued by most of the key informants, some of the strategic communication challenges during the Transition period include: lack of awareness and education, inactive involvement of the citizens in the decision making process, existence of different views and interests, lack of communication capacities, and most importantly lack of collaboration and coordination among key national, regional and international stakeholders. Having an integrated strategic communications approach, powerful messaging, consistent use of modern mass media, traditional channels of communications, public relations opportunities and social events will significantly help the government of Afghanistan in addressing some of these challenges. Developing, devising and implementing effective strategic communications requires a profound understanding of a country's recent history, particularly its culture, political environment, important sources of news and information and an understanding of how the government institutions communicate to aid the development process. Therefore, the following chapter provides a brief overview of the communication and media development in post-2001 Afghanistan, including its channels of communication and the context of communication for development in Afghanistan.

CHAPTER II:

Development of Communications in Post-Taliban Afghanistan

2.1 The Taliban

Following the 9/11 incident, the US launched a war against the al-Qaeda network. It was presumed that 9/11 was masterminded by this network, in collaboration with the Taliban government in Afghanistan. On September the 20th, the US government called for the extradition of Osama bin Laden, who was being sheltered by the Taliban in Afghanistan (Katzman, 2012). In response, the Taliban Movement asked for evidence from the US authorities to justify a trial of Osama bin Laden, and demanded that this be handed to an Islamic court. The US government denied the need to provide evidence and, in October 2001, the US and NATO forces invaded Afghanistan as part of the so-called 'Operation Enduring Freedom' (Mastoor, 2010). This massive military intervention eventually led to the collapse of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

The emergence of the Taliban, according to Noorzai (2006), is still largely a mystery, although Hanifi (2002) in an article 'Afghanistan and the Emergence of Taliban' argues that the origins of the Taliban movement are clearly grounded in the Cold War, the Islamic Revolution of Iran, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the United States' decision to humiliate and disgrace its Cold War foe, and when that was achieved, to abandon the region, leaving behind a disintegrated Afghanistan, and a paralyzed government in a fragile Pakistan. After the Soviet Union's forces departed Afghanistan, in 1989, the US government and international community abandoned Afghanistan,as well as tens of thousands of Afghans and non-Afghans (mostly Arabs) recruited by extremist leaders like Osama Bin Laden, a CIA figure who had been recruited, trained and equipped for the so-called 'Jihad' against the infidel Russian army (Hanifi, 2002).

The Taliban ideology initially emerged in the 1990s in Northern Pakistan following the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. A predominantly Pashtun movement, the Taliban gained prominence in Afghanistan in the Autumn of 1994 when different political factions were fighting the central government for power in Kabul (BBC, 2012). By September 1996, the Taliban militia entered Kabul with little resistance from the central government. This was a time when extreme violence had erupted as the Taliban government started practicing their own version of Islam, which was extremely inflexible, and strict and commonly perceived to have been intimately derived from Pashtunwali, the Pashtun Tribal Code, rather than from an actual interpretation of the Quran (Women's Aid International, 2003).

The Taliban ruled most parts of Afghanistan until the US and NATO invaded Afghanistan. On November 13, 2001, the Northern Alliance took control of Kabul and ended the regime of the Taliban (Abrams, 2007). On the same day, the United Nations Security Council held a meeting to discuss post-9/11 Afghanistan and thereby authorized the UN Secretary General to convene inter–Afghan talks, which later become known as the UN Talks on Afghanistan (UN, 2001). The collapse of the Taliban movement in Kabul, in December, 2001, represented the achievement of one of the US's foreign policy objectives. The US and its counterparts shifted, though nonchalantly their efforts towards post-Taliban democratization, and rebuilding of the war-torn system of government, assuming that preventing Afghanistan from becoming a hideout for terrorists again, required creation of strong institutions, democratization and economic advancement (Mastoor, 2010).

2.2 The Bonn Agreement

On the 29th December 2001, prominent Afghan leaders representing various ethnic groups gathered at Bonn, Germany, to negotiate the implementation of a UN-drafted framework for a transition to democracy in war-torn Afghanistan. The negotiations among four ethnic groups, as Abrams (2007) informs, included the multi-ethnic Northern Alliance - representing Tajiks, Hazaras, and Uzbeks - and three Pashtun factions including the Rome group, Cyprus Process, and Afghan exiles from Pakistan, and these negotiations continued for seven days. The Bonn Agreement (Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-Establishment of Permanent Government Institutions) was signed at the end of the conference by the participating

representatives and was endorsed by Resolution 1383 (2001) of the UN Security Council with a determination to put an end to the tragic conflict in Afghanistan and promote national reconciliation, a durable peace, stability and respect for human rights in the country. The participants also reaffirmed the need for the independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan, and respect for the principles of Islam, democracy, and social justice (Bonn Conference, 2001).

The Bonn Agreement was the initial one in a series of agreements aimed to re-create the State of Afghanistan following the US invasion in Afghanistan, on the pretext of responding to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. However, Ali Ahmad Jalali, a former Afghan interior minister, argues that "Bonn was an urgent setting [but] not of peace talks, because the Taliban was not invited as a party [to those talks]. Exclusion of the Taliban, as an important opposition faction, despite undermining its inclusiveness, is criticised as a great opportunity missed" (cited in Ahwar, 2011). Nevertheless, the Bonn agreement is considered as a fundamental accord which defined Afghanistan's direction in the post-Taliban era. Particularly important was that this agreement provided a constructive environment for the participating representatives of the conference to select a chairman, vice chairman, and other important members of the Interim Administration (Ahwar, 2011).

The Bonn Conference is regarded as having provided a highly practical platform for the post-9/11 Afghanistan. At the Bonn Conference crucial decisions were taken on the system of government, leadership, power sharing mechanism, partnership with international allies, as well as status of ex-mujahidin leaders and the Taliban. The Bonn Conference also called for the establishment of a 6 month Interim Authority; convening of an Emergency Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) to select a two-year Transitional Authority for the adoption of a new constitution and to conduct fair elections for the president, parliament and provincial councils in Afghanistan (Noor ul Haq, 2005). Hamid Karzai, the current president of Afghanistan, was sworn in as Chairman of the Interim Government. Afterwards, he was elected in 2002 by the Loya Jirga as the Interim Head of the State. The *Loya Jirga* adopted a new constitution for Afghanistan in January 2004 that provided the foundation for instituting a presidential system of government. Therefore, it was a crucial milestone in the political history of Afghanistan in post 9/11 era.

As a result of the elections held in October 2004, Hamid Karzai became the first popularly elected president of Afghanistan, nearly three years after being appointed the country's interim leader. In September 2005, parliamentary and provincial elections were held that marked the culmination of the Bonn agreement, representing a major step in rebuilding the country's shattered institutions and underpinning the basis of the participatory system of government in Afghanistan. Irrespective of deficiencies and flaws, this political process is regarded to be a major turning point in the political life of the war-ravaged Afghanistan. The Bonn process also established an agreement for the deployment of the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) to assist the Afghan government in establishing its writ and to ensure security, first in Kabul and surrounding areas, and later to other areas in the country. Accordingly, ISAF was created in December 2001 by resolution 1386 by the United Nations Security Council (Noori, 2005). Despite the tremendous security, economic and political challenges still prevailing in the country, with international assistance the post-Taliban Afghan government has created a period of reconstruction and development and very importantly provided the environment for a free flow of information. This period has also seen Afghanistan's communication and media sector flourish tremendously, in contrast to that under the Taliban regime, when media and communication channels were firmly restricted.

2.3 Taliban Approach towards Media and Communication

Following the fall of the Soviet-backed Afghan communist government in 1992, and as conflicts between different political and ethnic factions erupted; Afghanistan's fragile media and communication sector experienced a dramatic collapse, except a few newspapers published initially to promote political and religious propaganda. The Taliban militia, who captured Kabul from the Northern Alliance[3] in September 1996, further contributed to this collapse by imposing severe restrictions on the media and communications in Afghanistan. They banned all external and internal information and entertainment sources, including music, sports and media of all kinds, including Afghanistan's national TV station (Hairan, 2007).

---

[3] The Northern Alliance was a military-political organization established by the Islamic State of Afghanistan in late 1996 to fight as a resistance force against the Afghan Taliban.

During the Taliban regime, there was only one radio station, *Shariat Ghagh* (Voice of Sharia) and a few local propaganda periodicals and newspapers published to promote the Taliban ideology and to communicate religious messages (UPSI, 2008). There were no computers at all and therefore no access to the Internet. The Taliban exploited religious and traditional networks of communication to gain support of those suffering Afghans who wanted to see an end to the anarchy and factional conflicts. Conversely, what the general population gained, as a result, was oppression from the Taliban's austere interpretation of Islam in Afghanistan The Taliban regime did not issue news releases, policy statements or convene press conferences, thereby the faces of the Taliban leaders remained unknown to the general population, and indeed the rest of the world (Rashid, 2000). This period not only disconnected Afghanistan from the global communication system, but also kept the country in full political and economic isolation from the rest of the world, including the globalisation process, for almost a decade (Saikal, 2004).

2.4 Communication for Development in Afghanistan

After several years of continuous conflict and tyrannical Taliban rule, and amid on-going hostilities, post-Taliban government began to rebuild its political and social institutions with the support of the international community. A vibrant and free media and communication sector constitutes an important element of a democratic society which was virtually non-existent during the Taliban reign. However, the development of media and communication in the post-Taliban era, since 2001, has been one of the most successful aspects of the reconstruction process in Afghanistan (Soulé, 2009). The international community has been an active part of this success. They not only supported development of private media but also contributed in strengthening governments' ability to increase the free flow of information into and out of the government institutions, increase the quantity and quality of government's messages to broader audiences, and communicate its policies and strategies in support of the development programs at the local and national levels (USIP, 2008).

This period, post-2001, as Kamal (2007) terms it 'the third boom' in the country's media and communication development history, has created a cycle of international assistance and support in Afghanistan. During this time, the process of media development has been exceptionally rapid (Kamal, 2007). According to the *Afghan Media Synthesis Report* (Altai, 2010), "Over 75 television channels, 175 radio stations and 800 publications can be counted in the country as of September 2010", which shows a remarkable and extraordinary growth in the media sector of Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001. They are broadcasting news, entertainment, educational, religious, sports and cultural programs, with each channel having its own audiences. In spite of various social and political challenges still manifested in Afghanistan, the media and communication outlook is promising, representing maturity, diversity, strength and professionalism; this also manifests a glorious example of Afghanistan's partnership with the international community to provide a better future for a war-ravaged Afghanistan.

Today, Afghanistan's media are commended as a development success story, given the challenges and hurdles the country experienced after the Taliban regime was overthrown in 2001. Despite continuous efforts of Taliban remnants threatening security, development and stability in the country, the post-Taliban government of Afghanistan managed to pave the way for creating the environment for a free flow of information and a remarkable number of media and communication outlets capable of informing the population. In the years following the collapse of Taliban rule, the newly established Afghan government demonstrated that, despite a long history of prolonged conflict and restricted information, development in media building was attainable and success achievable (UPSI, 2008).

The availability of a remarkable number of private media outlets, products of professional journalists and their organisations and public outreach can be regarded as pragmatic impacts of the media development undertaken in Afghanistan. The newly passed Afghanistan's media law is believed to be one of the most liberal in the region, guaranteeing the right to freedom of expression within the framework of the Islamic culture (Hakimi, 2009). This law has been developed in light of Article 34 of Afghanistan's constitution, which was ratified in 2004. It articulates that "every Afghan has the right to print or publish topics without prior submission to the state authorities in accordance with the laws (Hakimi, 2009).

Consequently, there is the availability of several hundred independent periodicals and newspapers published across the country, tens of private TV channels accessible locally in Afghanistan and through satellites nationwide, as well as hundreds of community radio stations that reach even the most remote areas. Additionally, there are new media: hundreds of news and entertainment websites run by Afghan journalists and media outlets. These are supported by thousands of local reporters, editors, disk jockeys, producers and communication professionals, distribution networks and printing presses. The latter are owned and operated by local Afghans, with women playing important roles in many of these organisations, representing a noticeable shift in Afghanistan's post-Taliban media and communication sector (Soulé, 2009).

TV has increasingly gained importance in urban areas, with most main towns and cities now having television broadcasts on many channels, including the state-owned television (RTA) and several other commercial channels. Although TV viewership is rapidly increasing, it has not replaced radio; this is particularly the case in rural Afghanistan, where residents use radio as the most important source of information. Television is considered as one of the most important sources of information, entertainment, education and development news for local Afghans, with most of its audiences in the urban areas of Afghanistan (Altai, 2010). Television as a mass medium has a huge application for ordinary Afghan people therefore, both the government and non-government institutions use television to communicate and motivate them to contribute in developmental programs throughout the country. Despite plentiful broadcasting of imported TV dramas and series (e.g., soap operas) and music, there are some television programs that provide documentaries, development campaigns, and open forums with government officials, as well as updates on reconstruction programs in various parts of Afghanistan. Such programs underline both the efforts of the Afghan government and those of the international community on various projects such as infrastructure, health, education, environment, agriculture, human rights and civic engagement in the social and political process.

The most popular TV station in Afghanistan is *Tolo* TV, accessible nationwide by satellite and with comprehensive coverage of the country. It was established in 2004 with the support of the international donor community. Also with

wide coverage is *Ariana TV*, the second most popular TV station, and this is followed by *RTA*, the state-owned TV channel, dedicated to propagandising the actions of the government. It maintains a following due to its privileged access to key government and other powerful figures. *1 TV* is a newly established TV (2010) which ranks fourth in terms of viewer figures. It has achieved a remarkably fast growing audience because of its news and current affairs programmes and imported TV series (dubbed into local languages). There are many other commercial TV stations operating 24 hours, and these can be viewed by cable and satellite all over the world (Altai, 2010).

Radio is probably the most important and widely cited source of information, news and entertainment in Afghanistan and is the best and fastest means of getting information all around the country. Virtually all villages in Afghanistan have access to radio, and villagers have listened to radio as a lifeline over the past decades (Altai, 2010)because it reaches the most remote parts of the country, is easily accessible and inexpensive to run. Radio in post-Taliban Afghanistan has played an important role in bonding the people of Afghanistan and instituting social networks, trust and reciprocity and education without bias (Altai, 2010). Availability of a great number of radio stations in Afghanistan has exponentially increased the variety of information to local communities. The variety of radio programs across Afghanistan responds to local demands, not only providing people with information and entertainment but also contributing to the development process in post-Taliban Afghanistan [USIP, 2008].

According to Altai (2010) report "Radio Afghanistan, a state-owned station was the most popular, with an audience share of 18 per cent. This was followed by Radio Azadi (14%); Arman FM, a Kabul-based commercial station (8%); BBC (7%); Ashna (6%) and Killid (5%)." The Afghan media assessment report nevertheless reveals that "the BBC and VAO are among the most trustworthy sources of news and information for Afghanistan". This is believed to be fallout from the Soviet and Civil War eras because, at that time, the BBC and VOA were the only sources of information and news other than the Afghanistan government. However, this is disputed by the fact that Afghans usually do not trust foreign news sources.

In addition to the TV channels and radio networks, the print media is an important source of detailed information for a great number of educated Afghans. There are many newspapers and magazines; most of these are published in Kabul and

the larger cities of Afghanistan. Even though the number of publications is greater than the number of radio stations and TV channels, print media have distribution problems and high cover prices, and their low readership and impact is yet to remain limited and modest in their role throughout Afghanistan; however, it is perceived to influence the policy-making process (BBC, 2012). Since news is almost exclusively disseminated by television channels and radio networks, newspapers and magazines focus mostly on providing opinions and analysis, and in some cases they tend to reflect on various development programs (BBC, 2012).

With the emergence of the Internet, most popular magazines and newspapers in Afghanistan now produce online editions f their contents, which has to some extent also addressed the problem of circulation in the country. Additionally, there is a handful of informative government and non-government websites which provide a significant amount of political, social, cultural and developmental information, as well as news and analysis for the educated Afghan urban elite. Use of social media sites, including Facebook, Twitter, Weblogs and YouTube, is also rapidly growing and becoming an important part of urban life in Afghanistan. The educated Afghan elite are using social websites for wider communications and debates on various social and political issues. This wave of progress has not only provided better opportunities for faster communications for development but also encouraged freedom of speech to a surprising scale (MTC, 2012). The development of new media in Afghanistan is promising. However, access to the Internet, although a very important tool that could contribute in shaping the new media and enable Afghanistan's part in globalisation, is limited to the educated urban elite. Only 6 per cent of Afghans have access to the Internet; mostly concentrated in the capital cities (BBC, 2010).

International aid to foster the development of the media sector in Afghanistan has been significant in the past nine years. The Afghan media and communication sector has received substantial financial, technical and institutional support from international organisations aimed to promote political stability and strengthen a pluralistic and democratic society. Such interventions have helped in building the media institutional infrastructure, establishing publications, providing training for Afghan journalists and government public relations units, and creating distribution networks (Kumar, 2011). According to Altai Consulting's (2010) report,

USAID/OTI, the European Commission (EC), the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (UK DFID) and parallel ministerial level organisations in other European countries have contributed considerably to the development of the media sector in Afghanistan. The BBC World Service Trust, Internews (US), IWPR (UK), UN, as well as other organisations such as the Goethe Institute, and Heinrich Boll have also played an important role in Afghanistan's media and communication development and the training of Afghan journalists.

2.4.1 Traditional Communication in Afghanistan

Despite the impressive growth in the emergence of new forms of media and communications in post-Taliban Afghanistan, the traditional channels of communication are still being used, particularly in rural areas of the country. Afghanistan's traditional forms of communication originally came into existence because of constant years of civil war, destruction of media facilities and presumably the high levels of illiteracy. This provided the ground for development of local institutions and procedures that enabled ordinary citizens to participate in political and military decision-making debates (Grevmeyer, 1985 as cited in Rawan, 2002). Despite the enormous growth in Afghanistan's post-Taliban media and communication technologies, traditional channels of communication have not been replaced but are rather complemented.

For the majority of Afghan people, particularly those living in rural Afghanistan, the traditional forms of communication include informal settings such as markets and family assemblies, as well as more formal tribal and village gatherings, such as the jirgas (tribal assembly) and religious institutions including meetings in mosques, and so on which are convened as necessary by the local populace. All of these traditional settings provide opportunities for exchanging ideas, identifying problems, making complaints, resolving conflicts, and contributing in addressing common problems (MacBride & Abel, 1984). The Jirga institution functions both as a governing body and as a channel of communication (Rubin, 2002). Through jirgas, participating representatives provide advice, make decisions on important issues, discuss, exchange and disseminate information and ideas on development issues at different levels (Rawan, 2002).

In addition, the mosque serves as a significant pillar of traditional communication, where people worship the Almighty, interact, and get to know each other, gain and exchange information about important issues in the society (Naficy, 1993). Because of its central position in Islamic society, the government institutions use the mosque to communicate to the local population both the administrative decisions and news about development projects. Additionally, mosques serve the purpose of being education institutes for people to learn spiritual and societal values and even worldly scientific knowledge is being taught. The mullah, a religious scholar or the leader of the mosque, has a special status and considerable influence in the society. He is responsible for promoting the spiritual values of the society, helping locals in addressing day-to-day problems, and talks about matters of significance in the society (Ahang, 1970). Jennifer Brick (2008), describes mullahs (village lawgivers) as "one of three key customary organizations in rural Afghanistan, the others being jirgas (village councils) and maliks (village executives)".

Local leaders, including religious and opinion leaders, have huge influence over the population, and play an important role in forming the opinion within traditional network of communication in Afghanistan (Steul, 1981), especially in rural areas, where the media is less active and less trusted. Because of their social status within Afghan traditional society, the majority of local people listen to them and seek their advice in all sorts of issues (Wiebe, 1978). Recent studies also show that the traditional opinion and religious leaders are regarded as the prominent forces in forming opinions and influencing the decisions taken by a local population (Brick 2008).

The rapid development of the media sector and availability of multiple channels of traditional communication in the country together herald a great opportunity that the Afghan government and its international development partners can use to support Afghanistan's development process, helping to bring peace and stability and improve the lives of Afghans in the long run. To enable this to happen requires that the government of Afghanistan craft effective communication strategies to aid development, governance and peace building efforts, particularly within the Transition context and beyond.

CHAPTER III:

Strategic Communications and the Inteqal in Afghanistan

3.1 The Inteqal

Transition or "Inteqal" (the Dari word for transition)" has recently entered Afghanistan's literature of security and development as a new phenomenon. Transition in Afghanistan's context theoretically means that the time has approached for Afghans to assume leadership and to take over the responsibilities of ensuring security, stability and providing development and governance to their country since the international security forces are gradually leaving Afghanistan. The international Kabul conference and Afghanistan's strategic partnership with NATO has paved the ground for the implementation of the Transition in Afghanistan. The timeline for Transition has been set at 2014, such that, by that time, Afghans themselves will take over security, development and governance responsibilities. However, the international partners will play an assisting role to the Afghan government, though from the context of the NATO-Afghanistan strategic partnership, the concept of security transition focuses firmly on security domains, while similar transitions in other areas such as governance, development, peace building and politics have not been sufficiently addressed (Wahidi, 2010).

3.2 Joint Framework for Inteqal

The first steps in formulating the Transition were taken in the London Conference in 2010, where the Afghan government and its international partners gathered to talk about future of Afghanistan. In addition to other essential decisions, the partners pledged to "formulate, in the Kabul conference, a comprehensive plan for phased Transition to the Afghan lead" (The London Conference 2010) Consistent with London Conference Communiqué, the government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, together with international partners, came up with a Joint Framework for Inteqal[4] to facilitate a gradual transfer of security and development responsibilities

---

[4] The official document outlining the Transition

to the government of Afghanistan. According to the Joint Framework for Inteqal, the Transition process involves two main stages: (i) a general assessment which will form the basis for a joint decision as per the conditions in the ground and an announcement by the Afghan government that Transition will be commenced in a particular province or set of provinces; and a (ii) A phased implementation process, which requires provincial administrations to achieve particular milestones to contribute in completion of the transition to full ownership of Afghan government and its citizens across all main functions of government (Kabul Conference, 2010).

According to the Joint Framework for Inteqal, the Transition is envisioned to be an irreversible process based on the conditions on the ground. It is governed by five main principles: First, the Transition must strengthen Afghanistan's independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity, giving an effective system of defence for Afghan rights and liberties; it should therefore consolidate Afghanistan's position as a free, proud and peaceful nation at the regional and global levels. Second, the Transition must pave the ground for providing and garnering the functional capacities, necessary resources, and regional conditions so that Afghanistan's national security forces (ANSF) are enabled to properly ensure and maintain peace, security and stability in the country, and undeniably prevent Afghanistan once again from being occupied by international terrorist networks. Third, the Transition must preserve and underpin the achievements of the last ten years in Afghanistan including democratic values and human freedoms. Fourth, before the Transition process is initiated, the necessary conditions will be put in place for the reconstructing and maintaining of Afghanistan's democracy.

The assessment phase of the Transition process, which looks at the conditions in a province or set of provinces, paves the ground for the Transition to begin and move to the implementation phase; however the implementation of the Transition requires the achievement of certain milestones in the province providing that the Transition occurs in the following areas:

- Security: Having strong and capable Afghan national security forces to safeguard Afghanistan's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity against any kind of internal as well as external threats and to properly ensure and maintain national security, public order and rule of law)

- Governance: Ensuring efficiency and effectiveness within Afghanistan's government through bringing out necessary administrative reforms; meritocracy, fair recruitment and appraisal systems within Afghanistan's civil service and establishment of an effective judicial system in the country.

- Development: Applying an inclusive and nationwide development approach in accordance with the principle of equitable development intended at diminishing inequalities across the country, and at paving the ground for putting to the fore a sense of fairness and inclusion (Kabul Conference, 2010).

The Joint Afghan-NATO Inteqal Board (JANIB) was established to assess and lead the Transition Process. The board's first meeting was held in September 2010, where it fixed a timetable for full Transition. The Afghan Government presented to the Kabul Conference an Afghan-led, inclusive and achievable plan for strengthening development, governance and security, including national priority programs to improve and enhance service delivery. The Afghan government put to the fore a credible and realistic national agenda, supported by national priority programs reform interventions which all aimed at generating tangible outcomes for Afghanistan and its people (NATO, 2011).

The Afghan government and NATO agreed on the Transition process and deadline at the Lisbon NATO Summit, on 20 November 2010. The declared 2014 deadline for terminating the process created a plethora of reactions because Afghan public opinion perceived it as the complete withdrawal of International Security Forces from Afghanistan. On behalf of the NATO members, a list of principles was agreed upon about the role of the ISAF during the Transition Process. Among these were a further strengthening of Afghan National Security capabilities and civilian efforts. Another outstanding result of the Lisbon Summit - nevertheless still just a promise at that time - was that NATO confirmed its long-term commitment in Afghanistan and that it would not abandon Afghanistan, even after 2014. As such, the events after the 1989 Soviet withdrawal would not recur (Lisbon Summit, 2010)

In July, 2011, the implementation of the first phase of the transition of security from International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) to the Afghanistan's national security assistance forces began. A total of five tranches will ultimately bring the entire Afghanistan into the Transition Process. The final tranches are expected to begin around June 2013. The Transition in any specific area is an open-ended one, and theoretically can continue up to the end of 2014 when the political process of the Transition comes to an end, even in those provinces, districts, cities or villages chosen for its earliest phase (Brooke-Holland and Taylor, 2012).

3.3 Transition Mechanisms

Theoretically the whole government is involved in the Transition process; however, a number of structures and intuitions, including the following, have specifically been established by the government on the basis of the necessity to facilitate planning, implementation and monitoring of the Transition process across Afghanistan.

3.3.1 Joint Afghan-NATO Inteqal Board (JANIB)

The central element of the Inteqal process is the Joint Afghan-NATO Inteqal Board (JANIB). The JANIB is chaired by a representative of the Afghan government, co-chaired by the ISAF Commander and NATO Senior Civilian Representative, and comprised of key Afghan and NATO/ISAF stakeholders. The Afghan government and the ISAF decide on which provinces are to be handed over. The Joint Afghan-NATO Inteqal Board (JANIB) is established as the mechanism to assess the readiness of districts and provinces for transition (ICDA, 2012).

3.3.2 Transition Coordination Commission (TCC)

In 2010 President Karzai assigned the Transition Coordination Commission to oversee the government's role in the Transition Process. The TCC conducted assessments across the country and had a key role in working with ISAF, NATO and other key stakeholders to identify the areas deemed ready for the transfer of security responsibilities to the Afghan security forces. The TCC works with Afghan government ministries and directorates on a joint approach to Transition, a collaboration that will continue until the process is complete in late 2014 (IDLG, 2010). As the lead body on the government side of the agreements with the international community, the TCC has an essential role in helping the line ministries and central agencies engage with the process and carry their share of accountability for the successful Transition of responsibilities from the international community to Afghan institutions. In addition, the TCC facilitates communication and planning together with key local, national and international stakeholders.

3.3.3 Transition Non-Security Technical Working Group (NSTWG)

NSTWG has been established within the Ministry of Finance, Office of the Deputy Minister for policy affairs to create coordination among all organizations that are involved in development, governance and rule of law clusters. It also has to identify challenges in the Transition process, propose ways to address them and allow for new suggestions from the members be addressed in the national and provincial plans and programs prior to the Transition implementation phase. Meetings of this group are chaired on a bi-weekly basis by a technical advisor – and include a non-security cluster at the ministry of finance and comprised of key representatives from governance, agriculture and rural development, as well as human resource development clusters and delegates from ISAF and NATO and key embassies when necessary. The output of NSTWG meetings are detailed minutes, which includes inputs from members, identification of challenges to development and governance aspects of the Transition process and steps to be followed up in the next meetings.

3.3.4 Strategic Communication Working Group (SCWG)

SCWG was established within the Government Media and Information Centre (GMIC) to contribute in implementing strategic communication component of the Transition process and make sure that all events and issues regarding the Transition process are properly covered and communicated at the national and sub-national levels. SCWG holds its meetings on a bi-weekly basis, chaired by the director the GMIC and comprised of spokespersons and communications directors from government ministries and directorates, the Transition commission, ISAF, NATO and US embassy. SCWG has been established to improve coordination and cooperation among all key stakeholders on how to convey appropriate messages to the targeted audiences about the Transition Process and gain public contributions regarding this process. It also provides necessary support for all government institutions in developing consistent key messages, identifying target audiences and the means to communicate with them, raising awareness about the Transition, improving communication and media cooperation among different government organizations in the centre and provinces.

3.4 International Aid and the Challenge of Transition

The year 2014 will mark a decisive moment for Afghanistan's future. After a decade of widespread international involvement and hard fighting in Afghanistan, the international presence will be significantly reduced. Although the international community, and in particular the US, has committed not to abandon Afghanistan, as it did in the 1990s, the burden will be on the Afghan government institutions to take the lead for ensuring security and providing for development and governance (Felbab-Brown, 2011). The phased transition towards full responsibility for security, governance and development by the Afghan government institutions and people is currently in progress. However, after almost two years of the Transition process, commenced in 2011 (and officially scheduled to be completed by the end of 2014), there are a number of major challenges that lie ahead for the transition process, and especially for the communication and interaction between the different components of the Transition (Thruelsen, 2011). The important question is whether this process will succeed in meeting its initial goal: a self-sustaining and stable Afghan state. The general perception is that the 'transition strategy' does not currently provide a clear and universally accepted definition, both from the Afghan government and international community perspectives. This, in turn, has created several confusions and questions about the mechanism and approaches within the transition process. In addition, the transition strategy lacks a clear definition of its short and long term objectives (Stapleton, 2012).

Afghanistan will go through enormous security and development changes over the next few years. NATO and the Afghan government at the Kabul and Lisbon Conferences in 2010 agreed that full responsibility for security would be handed over gradually to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) by the end of 2014. Afghanistan now experiences a drawdown of most international military forces over the coming years – and a likely accompanying reduction in civilian aid as the attention of the international community shifts elsewhere and increasing fiscal pressures in many Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries will affect aid flows to Afghanistan (World Bank, 2012).

According to the World Bank's Report, "Afghanistan in Transition: Looking Beyond Transition" (2012), the decline in foreign assistance is envisioned to have prevalent problems for Afghanistan's political and economic environment beyond 2014. Development progress in Afghanistan has been very diverse since the fall of the Taliban in 2001. Some major achievements have been documented, such as fast economic growth (with large fluctuations), relatively low inflation rate (after hyperinflation in the 1990s), acceptable public financial management, and relatively good basic health and education services. Marked improvements in key social indicators, including life expectancy and maternal mortality (definitely from a severely low base), and women's participation in the economy have increased. Yet in other domains, predominantly governance, peace building and institution building, Afghanistan has failures, and many indicators have deteriorated in the recent past (World Bank, 2012).

Unfortunately, Afghanistan remains one of the world's least developed and poorest countries (UNDP, 2010), with a per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of only 499 US dollars in 2010 (UN, 2011). More than a third of Afghanistan's population live below the poverty line and widespread corruption further deepens poverty. More than half of the population are vulnerable, and any negative shock can send them below the poverty line. Importantly, three-quarters of the population are illiterate (UNDP, 2010). The large aid influxes that have benefited Afghanistan have also brought about enormous challenges to the country. Aid has undoubtedly strengthened much of the progress since 2001 – including that in key services, infrastructure, and government administration – but it has also been linked to widespread corruption, unorganized and parallel delivery systems, poor aid effectiveness, and debilitated governance (Felbab-Brown, 2011). Despite all these challenges, the Afghan government has plentiful opportunities and resources to make use of, particularly in the Transition process and use of strategic communications as one of several strategic tools to strengthen Afghanistan's development, governance and peace processes beyond the Transition timeframe.

3.5 Relevance of Strategic Communications in the Transition Process

Development communication in general and strategic communication in particular has increasingly become an important tool of development, highly necessary for developing and transitional countries like Afghanistan. International experience in the area of development shows that people's active involvement is an integral component of sustainable development. It has also been increasingly recognized in Afghanistan that any intervention intended to achieve tangible and long term improvement in the living conditions of people could potentially fail unless the key beneficiaries are actively involved in the process. This is especially true about Afghanistan's Transition process, one that provides the Afghans the opportunity to assume more responsibilities in the areas of security, governance and development, and which is thus an important process for the future of Afghanistan in the long run.

The Transition process, in addition to strengthening security capacities, will also support good governance, peace and reintegration efforts in the country. This apparently requires clearly though out amd systematic and strategic communication activities at the local, national and regional levels, aimed at gaining public support and confidence in the Afghan government and undermining support for the enemies of a strong Afghan state. Unless Afghans are actively involved in all phases of the Transition process, from assessment, design and planning, to actual implementation, the likelihood that the Transition will succeed is slim. Use of a strategic communication approach is therefore at the very heart of this challenge; it is the approach by which Afghan people, during and particularly after the Transition period, become leading actors of their own development. In addition it paves the way for a top-down approach encouraging active participation.

It is likely for a well-designed program with local knowledge, if placed on the right local communication channels to influence the local communities, individual perceptions and the decision making process. In Altai (2010) report, it was observed that when Afghans were provided with multiple sources of information (after years of a media ban) were considerably influenced by media about their opinions, and in some cases made important decisions, such as sending girls to school, allowing women to cast their vote, and attending the vaccination campaigns, were primarily triggered by local communication channels.

Being strategic is about defining goals and identifying the instruments to achieve them (GIZ, 2006); strategic communication in Afghanistan's Transition context is more about applying a comprehensive approach that is based on research and evidence, has a fundamental vision, sets priorities, objectives and directions and lays out the main tactics for achieving these. For the Transition, being strategic requires a profound understanding of the Transition goals and its implications for the future of Afghanistan – not necessarily just one set of actions. Strategic communication in the Transition context is plainly more than information dissemination but active participation of key local, national and international stakeholders and solicitation of their perspectives to make this process successful. It should facilitate a two-way flow of information, and contribute in building consensus and partnership about development, governance and security agendas in Afghanistan beyond 2014. Strategic communications in the Transition process can help with a range of external factors, including material such as visual aids (posters or films), the 'carrier' of messages as well as media such as TV, radios, newspapers, magazines, information and communication technologies (ICTs), mobile theatres, face-to-face communications through cultural and religious leaders, and overall the 'vehicles' that carry the intended messages to the target audiences aiming for change in the society.

To this end, improving the government's capacity to communicate internally with other government and non-government institutions and externally with media, development partners, national and international stakeholders and most importantly Afghan citizens is clearly a crucial component in Afghanistan's development context, and in particular in its Transition mission. The Transition was initially planned as part of a continuous international aid programme to strengthen Afghanistan in the areas of governance, development and security in the long run. However, the general misperception is that it will put an end to international assistance and involvement in Afghanistan. Here, the fundamental role that strategic communication can play in terms of addressing commonly held misunderstandings and gaining a political will to support the transition goals both for on-going Transition efforts to facilitate handover of security, governance and development responsibilities to the Afghan leadership and to support the post-2014 transition in the long run. This role becomes more important in the post-Taliban environment with so many countries involved in providing aid and support for a war-ravaged Afghanistan. Therefore all these

international donors are interested to know if their contributions have improved the lives of Afghans. The international community and donors are interested to hear the voice of both Afghan government officials and the general public – the beneficiaries through various channels of communication including the mass media to make sure their aid is flowing to the right channels and contributing to the country's social and political growth.

To ensure effective communication with local, national and international audiences, the Afghan government needs to build its communication capacity and use strategic communication approaches to increase the free flow of information into and out of the government and increase the quality of its information and messages to all those who need it, including partners who are supporting the development process in Afghanistan. In addition to local and national audiences, this approach should also seek to provide internal media with relevant information that they need. As one consultant who was previously working in Afghanistan said, "The international media is a monster that needs to be fed. If the new government in Afghanistan cannot feed this monster, someone else will." A government cannot give the impression of running a country if it is silent.

Mohammad Sediq Amarkhil, Media Relations and Coordination Manager of GMIC believes that "strategic communications can be applied as a productive mechanism for Afghan government institutions at national and sub-national levels for raising public awareness of the Transition outcomes and goals". He also adds that, in the absence of such a strategic approach, the Afghan government will fail to get its messages across to the intended audiences. Through strategic communications, both the government of Afghanistan and the international community will have the opportunity to engage with local people, build trust and create a good understanding of the Transition and its contribution in furthering development, as well as the peace process through widely publicizing the on-going transition progresses – such as the hand-over of security and governance responsibilities to the Afghan authorities in key provinces and explaining how the Transition will strengthen the overall development process in Afghanistan.

"Strategic communications is an efficient tool to achieve development goals and absence of a proper strategic communication mechanism within the government has remained as a challenge in the development of Afghanistan over the last years". Wais Mohammad of Pajhwok Afghan News (PAN), a leading private news agency in Afghanistan, He also talked about the case of post-Taliban development in Afghanistan, and in particular the Transition process as "unique", due to the involvement of diverse groups of actors (e.g., government, donors and NGOs) with their conflicting interests, thereby suggesting use of an integrated approach for the government's communication activities to ensure consistent messaging and communication activities to promote the achievements of the Transition process and strengthen implementation of governance, development and peace programs at different levels.

The international community has recently seemed to have shifted its efforts towards the Afghan government's strategic communications. This seems to be a reaction to a consciousness that the government institutions need to have strategic communication strategies through which they can carry out communication activities to achieve the intended goals and inform the key audiences of their development policies and programs across the country. A Media Assessment Report conducted by the Altai Consultancy in 2010 reports that embassies of a number of countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Netherlands and Canada, as well as ISAF and NATO, have been recently involved in building the capacity of government communication branches through the Government Media and Information Centre (GMIC) and directly by providing technical and institutional support for the government media and information officers and spokespersons. "Afghanistan's Ministry of Interior (MOI) has been a pioneer organization in drafting an ample strategic communications plan to support communication and information campaigns during the Transition", said Sediq Seddiqi, MOI spokesperson. He also added that "We must collaborate closely with other relevant government entities, international partners and (GMIC) to ensure a consistent communication campaign and messaging on the Transition achievements".

Despite all these efforts, some informants from the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), Ministry of Finance (MOF) and Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) believe that the Transition process, although being relatively effective in the area of security, lacks a clear direction in the areas of governance and development and, furthermore, has underestimated the importance of strategic communications. "Strategic communication, despite being enormously significant throughout the Transition process, is still an area that has not received noticeable attention by both the orchestrators and implementers of the Transition process" Said, Yama Nader, strategic coordination director at IDLG.

3.6 Strategic Communication and its Challenges

There are a large number of operators who have been mandated within and beyond the government of Afghanistan's communication domain to conduct communication and information dissemination activities in support of the Transition; nevertheless, some of them lack a strategic approach to raise public awareness and promote the goals of the Transition. The GMIC was initially established to play a central role in coordinating long-term social communications and outreach plans for national and sub-national levels of government. However, "due to lack of a budget and leadership problems, it is now involved only in limited day-to-day communication activities for the government" Najib Qani from GMIC said. As described in Afghanistan's National Development Strategy the government of Afghanistan should make use of contemporary media and communication support through the GMIC and the ministry of information and culture, the government's spokespersons, as well as traditional forms of communication as noted earlier (see Chapter II) – such as mosques, and provincial Jirgas,[5] to increase awareness and provide people with relevant information.

---

[5] This is a tribal assembly of elders which takes decisions by consensus.

The National Ulema Council is one of the key religious entities, and an important channel of spiritual and societal communication, and is represented on the High Peace Council. In addition, other important operators within the Transition structures include the security and non-security committees and working groups, government spokespersons in the centre and provinces, cultural and religious leaders, development partners, civil society organizations, and the mass media.

In implementing Transition-related communication plans and strategies, all those who are involved in strategic communication efforts are faced with several dilemmas that challenge their function of communication and information dissemination. GMIC is one of those entities faced with a number of challenges. One major problem observed during a personal conversation with GMIC staff memers was lack of an overall strategic communication policy as well as operational plans to guide their information and communication activities. "In the initial phases of the Transition we used to travel to different provinces, make news stories and films and develop appropriate messages regarding the Transition activities. We placed them in the right media channels to reach the public, but later we thought that our messages were redundant and repetitious" said, a traditional communications officer in GMIC. He also said that "if the Transition Technical Commission, the main coordinating body for the Transition process, give us a communication plan, we do not hesitate to implement it". This is one of the examples of several challenges that strategic communication operators within and beyond the government of Afghanistan is faced with in conducting effective strategic communications. The following are some arguments and perspectives with regard to the significance of strategic communications in strengthening in Afghanistan's peace process.

3.7 Strategic Communication and Peace Building

Strategic communication for promoting peace-building work predominantly emanates from communication for development, a mature field of practice that can trace long histories. Throughout history, communication has played an important role in shaping the views of policy initiators and influencing prevalent perspectives regarding conflicts. Starting with the Crimean War (non-verbal communications), through the American Civil War (newspapers), World War II (short documentary films, radio and newspapers) and the conflicts in the Persian Gulf (1991) and more recently the military interventions in Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2002) (global media and 24 hour current affairs news cycle) (Kalathil, Langlois and Kaplan 2008) we can realize how the communication and media sector has played a significant role in shaping the views of popular policy makers and the people on war and the scenarios of the peace process. Strategic communication is regarded to be an integral component of any peace building interventions; since the general population rely on information they receive from communication channels not only for basic knowledge, but also to interpret complex scenarios and shape overall issues (Bloh, 2010). Politicians within the peace-building domain also rely on media and public outreach campaigns to disseminate their own positions and gain feedback. If communication interventions are unprofessional and sensationalistic, they can skew perceptions of the peace process and raise expectations that negotiation is unacceptable, and compromise will bring no result (USIP, 2008).

Even though there is no universally accepted definition, there are various ways to understand the concept of communication for peace-building purposes. Most communication scholars would agree that it involves the use of various communication channels to support any interventions that contributes in resolving violent conflicts and bringing about a viable peaceful environment (SFCG, 2010). A World International Consultancy report on the communication for development concept (2004) articulates that communication for development is a relevant idea within the context of violent conflict, post-conflict and disaster scenarios that strategic communication approach has the potential to be used as a way of communicating for achieving peace and stability and that communication is likely to influence opinion leaders and policy pioneers, due to increased information, more

knowledge, more pressure on politicians who are pressurized by international actors to come up with policies that can resolve conflicts and bring about change (Davies, 2004). In general, the existence of a good flow of information and the availability of communication vehicles are crucial prerequisites for empowering national populations to freely express their opinions about major development issues and to play a role in the process of democratic transition, conflict resolution and, eventually, a peace building process (UNESCO, 1998).

The literature as a whole suggests that a pluralistic, independent and diverse media and communication sector serves as a crucial component of long-term development, governance and peace-building work. Several of these studies articulate that an independent media serves both as a civic sphere and observer over powerful interests, enabling the ordinary citizens particularly in conflict zones to have a voice and contribute in the formation of their government and hold their leaders accountable. Communication and media studies on Afghanistan's context also prescribes use of communication to gain public support and provide people with the information they need to stabilize their fragile society and inspire dialogue between the government and the governed (USIP, 2008).

Eleven years after the overthrow of the Taliban Regime, the Afghan government is still struggling to shift from a theocracy to a new form of social and political governance. A major source of motivation for this transition has been the intervention of the international community, whose primary approach for running the process was military. However, Afghans initially agreed to the use of force to put certain aspects of this transition into practice, the commonly held perception now in the country is that insecurity is as high as it has ever been. Furthermore, Afghans do not have enough faith both in the Afghan government and international community to address their needs (BBC, 2010). In this context, strategic communication plays an important role in terms of helping to gain public support and aid Afghanistan's peaceful transition to a future that is desired by many Afghans. To this end, Afghanistan's High Peace Council as a key body for promoting peace in the country will highly benefit from using strategic communication efforts within the spirit of a vision that helps Afghans gain the information they need to support the peace process.

Conscious of this, the international community and a range of non-governmental organizations have invested plentiful resources in Afghanistan's communication and media sector as a mechanism to contribute to fostering good governance, development, and ensuring security, as well as preventing, resolving or mitigating conflict and supporting the overall peace process in the country. The peace and reintegration program has gained an increasing international interest and support. Part of this support focuses on building communication capacities, promoting public outreach and awareness programs that use various forms of modern mass media, including dramas, radio series and TV productions as well as traditional channels of communication, including mosques, cultural leaders and Jirgas. APRP, as described below, is one the national priority programs aimed at strengthening peace and reintegration efforts and creating an open environment for peace negotiations with anti-government elements.

3.7.1 Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP)

APRP[6] was established on the recommendations proposed by the 1600 delegates who gathered at the Consultative Peace Jirga (CPJ) of June 2010 in Kabul, Afghanistan. The participating delegates in CPJ represented the suffering people of Afghanistan from all walks of life, including from the parliament, provincial councils, religious and cultural scholars, tribal leaders, civil society actors and other social groups, and the CPJ had as its main purpose to seek ways out for the problem of insecurity and for sustainable peace in the country (Afghan Ministry of Finance, 2010). The APRP's role is primarily to strengthen Transition goals aimed at: promoting peace through a political process, encourage regional and international cooperation, bring about political and judicial prospects for peace and reconciliation, and encourage all anti-government armed insurgents to renounce violence and terrorism, join the process of peace and reintegration and become members of the Afghan society for a better and peaceful Afghanistan (UNDP, 2010).

---

[6] The APRP is an Afghan government peace program, intended to provide a way for insurgents to stop fighting and re-join their communities with honour and dignity.

The APRP is also mandated to support the role of victims and civil society communities in promoting fruitful dialogues, building conflict resolution capacity, managing advocacy for human rights, and ensuring an inclusive peace process. The government of Afghanistan is promoting an inclusive approach with three pillars, firstly to underpin security and civilian institutions of governance and development to support the peace and reintegration process; secondly to facilitate the political conditions and support to the Afghan people to bring about a sustainable and just peace; thirdly to enhance and encourage national, regional and international support and consensus to strengthen peace and stability. The APRP is currently led by the High Peace Council (HPC),[7] comprised of state and non-state actors and is implemented by the Joint Secretariat under the direction of the Chief Executive Officer (Afghan Ministry of Finance, 2010).

There are a number of institutions associated with the implementation of the peace and reintegration process in Afghanistan. All associated institutions are overseen by the High Peace Council (HPC) at the highest level. The HPC is a 70-member body appointed by the President of Afghanistan. These 70 members include religious scholars, tribal leaders, community leaders, civil society representatives, former Jihadi commanders, and women activists (Zyck, 2012). HPC has five departments or units, including the following: a Policy Unit, an Administration and Finance Department, a Field Operations Department, a Development Department and a Communications Department. The Communications Department has responsibility for conducting strategic communications through informing the Afghan population of peace efforts and persuading anti-government armed fighters to join the peace process and contribute to the peaceful future of Afghanistan.

---

[7] The HPC is the highest body within the peace and reintegration process, intended to negotiate with the Taliban.

3.7.2 APRP Strategic Communications Approach

Mindful of the significant function of strategic communications, as described earlier in terms of promoting the concept of peace and reintegration in the Afghan context, the Afghan High Peace Council (HPC) has recently developed a Strategic Communications Plan to ensure a well-coordinated and consistent messaging campaign that can strengthen implementation of the Peace and Reintegration Program at national and sub-national levels. According to the HPC's Strategic Communications Plan, the HPC and the joint secretariat for the peace process must build on the achievements of the Chicago, Kabul and Tokyo summits, and use a strategic approach to ensure support and understanding of the peace process by Afghan citizens, the international community and donor countries and communicate peace messages to anti-government elements, thereby demonstrating the Afghan government's commitment to a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan. The HPC is committed to underpin Afghanistan's Transition through using a strategic mechanism to increase understanding of the objectives of the peace process and gain public support and collaborate with key stakeholders to facilitate negotiations with insurgent groups (Afghan National Security Council, 2010).

The High Peace Council, the highest body in Afghanistan's peace process, also encourages all government agencies to increase awareness of the peace process and promote reintegration achievements through modern mass media and traditional forms of communication. "An important message of the HPC to the Afghan population is that the international community will continue to support Afghanistan beyond the Transition timeframe and that the peace process will complement the Transition process by facilitating post-conflict development and governance in the country" Sami Sadat, HPC communication director said. According to him the HPC Communications Department is making several changes to effectively carry out its main functions. "So far, we have launched several information campaigns, developed hundreds of peace messages and produced a number of audio and visual materials and more recently finalized our strategic communications plan and organizational structure". While these are important steps in strengthening the peace process through use of an integrated strategic communications approach, much still remains to be achieved in terms of having a framework for use of communication activities.

Although the importance of both modern mass media and traditional forms of communication, as noted earlier in Chapter I, has been recognized and adequate resources made available to adopt a strategic approach, the government of Afghanistan and in particular the High Council of Peace still lacks a robust and inclusive strategic communications approach to strengthen the peace and reintegration efforts, particularly during the Transition period. HPC is a key institution mandated to strengthen the peace process and reintegration efforts while the commonly held perception is that HPC activities are ineffective. "HPC peace building and reintegration activities have so far been not unleashed to the public and journalists have trouble getting relevant information from a reliable source about the peace efforts", said a public affairs officer from United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

3.8 Strategic Communications and Governance

Use of strategic communications for improving governance should be viewed as part of the broader concept of development communication often referred to as communication for development. Development communication is defined as "a process that facilitates the sharing of knowledge in order to achieve positive change in the field of development" (World Bank, 2006). Communication activities are widely viewed as crucial for connecting governments with societies, enabling broad political systems, giving 'voice' to the poor and side-lined groups, and facilitating citizen participation and social accountability. Communications experts argue that the strategic application of political communications practices can influence the decisions of key stakeholders and support the political motivation needed for reforms to succeed in reality (Mcloughlin and Scott 2010). According to the World Bank (2006), communication strengthens good governance, since the process of providing citizens with relevant information divulges the actions of policy makers, aids evaluation and monitoring and encourages public dialogue. Increased communications makes policies more contestable and motivates citizens to hold the government responsible. Therefore, communication plays several important roles in nurturing good governance. For instance, two-way communications can enable communities to identify and communicate their needs and to monitor government performance. It

can contribute in holding the government accountable through increasing citizens' understanding of their rights and improving their capacity to participate in public debates (Coffey International, 2007).

It is important for governments not only to disseminate information but also to communicate with citizens, address their needs in the policy formulation debates and involve them in the decision-making process as well as maintain transparency and accountability (CommGap, 2009). A very important aspect of governance now is how people, leaders and government institutions communicate to each other to make social and political change possible. Without effective strategic communications mechanisms, it is difficult to envision how states can be accountable to the needs of the citizens. In addition, dominant thinkers are of the opinion that effective strategic communications contributes in building trust between state and society, and is a basis of state legitimacy over the long-term (The Communication Initiative, 2007).

In today's world, communicating with non-state actors and members of the society and feeding them with the information that they need is a key function of the government. Governments of the more developed countries are highly aware of this and often create communication structures and processes to achieve this function of communication. However, in most of the developing countries, such as Afghanistan, governments lack the necessary communication capacity and structures and the function of effective communication is challenged by a number of hurdles, such as a poor culture of disclosure, or a faulty or inefficient legal framework (The Communication Initiative, 2007).

To this end, it can be argued that strategic communication is an important component in the area of governance, as it seeks to promote democracy and good governance, through disseminating knowledge and strengthening state-society relations and among democratic institutions (UNESCO, 2005), particularly in new democracies such as that of Afghanistan. Thus, it is essential that the Afghan government institutions, in particular subnational-governance entities or professional associations in Afghanistan encourage and apply strategic communications to further cognitive interactions, build trust and improve collaboration in the Transition process, which in turn will contribute to good governance. This can be done by building capacities, creating communication structures and processes within the government

communication and public relations domain and improving working relationships with mass media and communication experts. Since Afghanistan's government is going through a Transition from dependency to assuming more responsibilities in the areas of security, development and governance, it is necessary that it creates clear understandings of the Transition prospects and achievements, disseminates knowledge, furthers collaboration and provides a good environment for good governance at the national and sub-national levels. To achieve this, the government of Afghanistan and all other institutions, including that of civil society, need to develop strategic communication plans and build up required capacities in the various communications mechanisms to contribute in implementation of the Transition.

Yama Nader, director of strategic coordination in IDLG said that "We have been seeking to use strategic communication as an effective approach to support sub-national governance, to feed local populations with information they need, involve them in the decision-making debates, and additionally contribute to the success of the Transition" Key informants in the IDLG, MRRD and TCC stressed the importance of strategic communication and explained that the Afghan government institutions, in particular those who are dealing with agriculture and rural development, security and governance clusters, should invest in the human resources and infrastructure needed to consult, inform and persuade citizens to contribute in the transition process and engage in meaningful and informed decision-making debates. According to IDLG's strategic framework, designed specifically to support the Transition process, the it has a vital role to play to promote Afghanistan's sub-national governance efforts through crafting robust internal and external communications strategies to manage citizen's expectations and promote achievements of on-going transition related interventions in the country (IDLG, 2011). The IDLG is a key institution heavily involved in implementing the Transition plans to improve sub-national governance throughout the country. The IDLG's strategic coordination director says that "even though the Transition approach is not very clear about how it should go about governance and development issues in the country, we have deemed it necessary to plan our Transition related actions within our scope of work".

3.8.1 Independent Directorate of Local Governance

The IDLG was established by a Presidential Decree in August 2007 to strengthen and promote Afghanistan's sub-national governance and achieve stability and security through improved governance. It is mandated to consolidate peace and stability, ensure public participation decision making, and foster development and equitable economic growth and additionally bring improvements in service delivery through just, democratic processes and institutions of good governance at the sub-national level, thereby improving the quality of life of Afghan citizens (IDLG website, 2012). The IDLG is the Afghan government's lead institution for policy and planning for strengthening local government and ensuring good governance. It is also responsible for subnational governance entities (Provincial Governor's Offices (PGOs), District Governor's Offices (DGOs), Municipalities and Local Councils) and for ensuring that they are adequately equipped and skilled to represent people and to serve the population. The IDLG is also the lead agency for formulating policies that delegate authority to provincial and district authorities: the "Subnational Governance Policy" is the most important of this type yet developed (IDLG, 2008).

In addition, the IDLG supports other cross-cutting issues such as gender, youth, counter-narcotics and civil society by working with the relevant central government agencies to ensure that the subnational governance entities can address these issues in line with their mandates. There are some programmes, processes and initiatives that occur in the provinces and which the sub-national governance entities play a critical role in leading and delivering, such as 'Transition, Peace & Reintegration' and some inter-governmental initiatives such as the District Delivery Programmes. To contribute in implementation of the Transition process and make sure its activities are strengthening the Transition goals, the IDLG has developed a strategic framework that defines its role in the Transition.

3.8.2 IDLG's Role in the Transition Process

Duffield (2007) argues that "Security without development is questionable, while development without security is impossible". This has specially been proved in the case of Afghanistan where in the past 11 years security has remained unachievable without adequate development and that the work of governance and development, particularly in rural Afghanistan, has been challenged due to security reasons. Security, governance and development are three integral components of the Transition process and are inter-woven in any country and are specially so in the case of Afghanistan. In executing the Transition activities, almost all the government institutions are involved. However, the IDLG is mainly concerned with governance at the subnational level. The three components are often referred to as the integral parts of a single process, but in reality security is foremost in most officials' minds, while the security sector has been planning for the Transition for several months, it is only recently that development and governance aspects have begun to receive keen attention. There is a growing understanding that if governance and development issues are not addressed, the state may not be sufficiently functional when the international forces are withdrawn from Afghanistan (IDLG 2011)

In this respect, the IDLG's Strategic Framework for Transition has been designed to define the context, actors, and associated activities required to promote subnational governance interventions and strengthen the citizen's perception of the legitimacy of the Afghan state during and beyond the Transition process. The whole of government is involved in this Transition, and the IDLG is just one of the government institutions that contribute to implementing the goals towards Transition, primarily within the area of sub-national governance. The IDLG's strategy for Transition is aimed at strengthening the four local government entities (provincial governors offices, district governors offices, municipalities and Local Councils) in preparedness for withdrawal of the foreign forces that will be consistent with the priorities of the Transition phases. The IDLG will ensure that local government entities play their mandated functions during the Transition timeframe, and coordinate with key stakeholders to ensure appropriate delivery of Transition activities for sub-national governance (IDLG, 2011). In carrying out this, "there is a critical need for the IDLG to have a well-crafted and strategic approach to encourage

public engagement, as well as strategically communicate its role, functions and achievements along with coordinating with all the relevant local government entities during and beyond the transition process" said, Said Intizar Khadima director of communications at the IDLG.

3.8.3 IDLG's Strategic Communications

IDLG has an important role to play in the area of promoting long term efficient and viable communication mechanisms between the central government and sub-national entities, as well as line ministries, directorates, donor agencies, civil society organizations and other key national and international stakeholders who are dealing with sub-national governance issues. However, the IDLG clearly lacks a well-defined strategic communications strategy, though a synthesis report on local governance in Afghanistan developed by Saltmarshe and Medhi (2011) argues that the IDLG, since its establishment in 2007, has improved communication between the centre and the provinces that has resulted in expediting the speed of decision making process.

The IDLG's policy framework shows clarity on how it should go about strategic communication activities. For instance, the IDLG Strategic Framework for Transition (2011) stresses the requirement for a robust internal and external communications strategy to manage citizen expectations and communicate the achievements of Transition related activities. In addition, the document on the national priority program for governance, sub-component 6, identifies media and strategic communications as a fundamental need for the IDLG to communicate to its intended audiences about its mission, promote sub-national governance, and coordinate with all the local government entities. It also articulates the need for the IDLG to apply a strategic approach to bring together partnering institutions, government representatives, provincial governors, security and development officials, to raise awareness, identify on-going challenges, and chart a way forward, particularly on issues such as local priorities, improving delivery of services, promoting peace and reintegration and providing guidance on the transition process (Afghan Ministry of Finance, 2010).

In executing effective communications and information dissemination, and establishing necessary mechanisms for powerful messaging and consistent communication campaigns, the strategic communication operators, as noted earlier, including IDLG and HPC, have not achieved much so far. In addition, they do not have communication strategies in place yet, which has limited their possibilities to be as effective as their potential promises. The limited information gained from some strategic communication operators, particularly from the IDLG and HPC in Afghanistan's Transition also displays evidence that their roles are insufficiently well defined and therefore their ability to achieve the Transition objectives may be questionable. This is because they have limited capacities and structures, such that a profound understanding of strategic communication on the basis of dominant theories, disciplines, perspectives and experiences within the Afghan government is clearly lacking. Nevertheless, some of these operators are active in conducting public outreach and awareness campaigns, issuing press releases, holding news conferences, and encouraging media to cover their developments, in particularly in the bigger cities.

CHAPTER IV:

Conclusions and Recommendations

Strategic communications is like planning for an emergency, but an emergency that must not arrive - therefore the Transition must just emerge. Despite extensive debate about the function and importance of strategic communications, communication activities in pursuit of the strategic objectives of Afghanistan's Transition process currently remain too focused merely on information dissemination and messaging on development activities, rather than helping Afghan citizens to understand and trust in the changes that the Transition will offer. This study aimed to raise awareness of the role and potential of strategic communications as a means of strengthening the Transition approach, particularly in the areas of governance and peace-building, and address some of the commonly held misperceptions with regard to the Transition's potentially adverse consequences. The argument developed in this study suggests that strategic communications, particularly in Afghanistan's Transition context, should not be understood to be merely for transmitting information or "reacting and responding", but as an overarching master plan integrating multi-media, multi-outlet, public outreach. Beyond modern communication outlets, these should include traditional communications (such as the village or town *jirga)*, and face-to-face efforts in a well-coordinated and unified campaign intended to achieve the Transition objectives. Predictably, such a campaign exists in a complex and changing atmosphere, and should be capable of reacting positively and authoritatively. Pointing clearly to the need for such an integrated campaign, the dissemination of negative perspectives, such as that suggesting that Afghanistan would collapse after 2004 (ICG, 2012), gave space to insurgents propaganda. Such misinformation has placed Afghans in a state of confusion, misperception and fear.

Therefore, clear communication of national policies and programs about development activities to key audiences through various channels of traditional communications and modern mass media, particularly in times of uncertainty and confusion, is critical to the Afghan government. This will enable key audiences to make informed choices, influence the decision making processes, engage citizens in a constructive dialogue with the government, establish consensus, build capacities and ultimately create a spirit of mutual collaboration. Unless Afghans are actively

involved in all phases of the Transition process, the likelihood that the Transition will succeed is slim. By this view, if strategic communications are used in relation to promoting the Transition achievements and active involvement of the Afghans, it will assist in achieving the desired results. However, for all the ambition of the Afghanistan's Transition, strategic communications remain an essentially reactive and non-established process. As a result, its potential remains underexploited. In addition to the absence of necessary mechanisms and conditions, a possible reason for this, as publicly perceived, could be the Transition approach itself, being unclear, incoherent and perceivably incredible.

In seeking to set the post-Taliban scene, this study shed light on Afghanistan's pre-2001 situation, particularly regarding the media restrictions during the Taliban regime and post-2001 Afghanistan, during which the government abolished all the restrictions and provided the way for the rapid development of the communications and media sector. Despite growth in the development of new forms of media and communications in post-Taliban Afghanistan, the traditional channels of communication are still used, particularly in rural areas of the country. Afghanistan's traditional channels of communication originally came into existence because of constant years of civil war, the destruction of media facilities and high levels of illiteracy. For the majority of the Afghan people, particularly rural residents, the traditional channels of communication include tribal gatherings, mosques, markets, family assemblies and opinion leaders.

This study suggests use of these channels as being critical in promoting Afghanistan's Transition objectives. Traditional communications – including face-to-face efforts – provide opportunities for sharing ideas, identifying problems, and helping to resolve conflicts and address common problems (MacBride & Abel, 1984). Drawing on pertinent literature and personal communications, this study highlights the importance of strategic communications in aiding Afghanistan's Transition, arguing that strategic communications can make a significant contribution in improving delivery of Afghanistan's development policies and programs, particularly in the Transition process. It also argues that lack of strategic communications will significantly limit the impacts of the Transition and keep the audiences in a state of confusion and fear.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, in order to make significant progress on Afghanistan's strategic communication challenges that the government faces, the following recommendations are presented for the key figures within the Afghan government, particularly those who are intimately involved in Afghanistan's Transition process:

- The literature on the subject of development communications shows that communication is a central part of development. In order to increasingly integrate communications in development activities, the government of Afghanistan should take a holistic view by establishing a comprehensively planned framework that can enable strategic communication to help meet Afghanistan's development goals, particularly in the Transition context.

- The government of Afghanistan and its international development partners should recognize that strategic communication is at the heart of the country's development process particularly during the Transition and beyond: its role and functions should be defined in future development analysis and planning, and necessary resources, expertise, structures and processes must be provided to make it happen.

- Both the Afghan government and International community need to gain the support and engagement of Afghans if they are to make the Transition successful. To do this, they need to engage with all citizens and other key stakeholders using multiple media and traditional channels of communication.

- The lack of the embeddedness of strategic communications is a problem. The government institutions, particularly those working to promote the governance and peace process in Afghanistan, need to revise their approaches to incorporate strategic communications in their development policies and plans, but importantly this requires the allocation of adequate resources.

References

Abrams, D. (2007) *Modern World Leaders: Hamid Karzai* United States of America: Chelsea House Publication

Afghan National Security Council (2010) Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP) Kabul: APRP program document

Ahang, M. K. (1970) *Seir-i zurnalism dar Afghanistan [Short history of journalism in Afghanistan* Kabul: Government Press [Dari]

Ahwar, A. J. (2011) *Path Dependency and the International Conferences on Afghanistan: From Bonn 2001 to Bonn 2011* Kabul, Afghanistan: Friedrich Ebert Foundation, OSCE Academy & Barg Publication

Altai (2010) Afghan Media Synthesis Report, Kabul, Afghanistan: available from:http://www.altaiconsulting.com/docs/media/2010/Afghan%20Media%20in%20 2010.pdf [Accessed 20/09/12]

BBC (2012), The media of Afghanistan: The Challenge of Transition, Policy Briefing, BBC Media Action. Available at: http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/ policybriefing/bbc_media_action_afghanistan_is_in_transition.pdf

BBC News Website (2012) *Who are Taliban* News Asia. Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/ news/world-south-asia-11451718 [Accessed on 25/6/12]

BBC Trust (2010) *Afghanistan Media Survey* Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/ assets/files/pdf/review_report _research/ar2007_08/afghanistan_research.pdf. [Accessed on 25/11/11]

Bloh, O. (2010) *Training guide on how to use strategic communication on development: objectives as a tool for peace-building* Strategic Communications for Peace-building, 1st edn

Bonn Conference (2001) *Boon Agreement Document, Officially, Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-Establishment of Permanent Government Institutions* Germany: Bonn

Brooke-Holland, L. & Taylor, C. (2012) *Afghanistan: The Timetable for Security Transition* UK: House of Commons Library

Coffey International Development (2007) *The Role of Communication in Governance: Detailed Analysis* London: Coffey International Development. Available at: http://www.coffey.com.au/Uploads/Documents/Role%20of%20Communication%20in%20Governance_20110502105455.pdf [Accessed on: 11/05/12]

CommGap (2009) *The Contribution of Government Communication Capacity to Achieve Good Governance outcomes: Conference Report* Washington DC: The World Bank

Coombs, W. T. (1998), an Analytic Framework for Crisis Situations: Better Responses From a Better Understanding of the Situation". Journal of Public Relations Research, 10(3): 177- 191.

Davies, J. (2004) *Consultancy Report prepared for SDC by The One World Network.* Available at: http://www.communicationforsocialchange.org/pdf/comm4devconceptpapermdgmeeting nov04.pdf [Accessed on: 11/4/12]

DFID (2006) *Eliminating World Poverty: Making Governance Work for the Poor* London: DFID. Available at: http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm68/6876/6876.pdf

Dos Santos, T. (1970), '*The structure of dependence'*, American Economic Review, Papers & Proceedings, pp. 231-36

Daft, R. L, & Lengel, R. H. (1984). Information richness: A new approach to managerial behaviour and organization design. Research in Organizational Behaviour, 6, 191-233.

Duffield, M. (2007) *Development, Security and Unending War: Governing the World of Peoples* Cambridge: Polity

Felbab-Brown, V. (2011) *Afghanistan Field Trip Report VII: The Overall Transition in Afghanistan* Washington, DC: Brookings Institution. Available at: http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2012/05/11-afghanistan-transition-felbabbrown [Accessed on: 11/2/12]

Fortune, F, & Bloh, O. (2008) *Strategic Communication: The Heart of Post-conflict Processes, Conflict Trends* South Africa: African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes. Available at: http://www.accord.org.za/downloads/ct/ct_2008 _2.pdf?phpMyAdmin=ceeda2 df659e6d3e35a63d 69e93228f1 [Accessed on: 11/04/12]

Fraser, C. & Restrepo-Estrada, S. (1998) *Communicating for Development: Human Change for Survival* London & New York: I. B. Taurus

Fraser, C. & Villet, J. (1994) *Communication: a key to human development* Rome: Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

Freire, P. (1983) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* New York: Seaburg Press

Government of Afghanistan (2008) *Independent Directorate of Local Governance "Five Year Strategic Work Plan* Kabul: IDLG

Government of Afghanistan (2009) *Independent Directorate of Local Governance - Subnational Governance Policy* Kabul: IDLG

Government of Afghanistan (2010) *Afghanistan National Development Strategy* Afghanistan: Kabul

GTZ (2006) *Strategic Communications for Sustainable Development: Environmental Policy and Promotion of Strategies for Sustainable Development* Tulpenfeld

Hairan, A. (2007) Media in Afghanistan Before and After the Taliban *The Ovi Newspaper* Available from: http://www.ovimagazine.com/pdfs/pdf_51.pdf. [Accessed on 29/07/12]

Hakimi, A. (2009) Overview of Media Development in Post-Taliban Afghanistan: communicating with the Persian-speaking World *Centre for Media and Film Studies* Available at: http://www.persianspeakingworld.org/p=296. [Accessed on 09/07/12]

Hanifi, J. (2002) Afghanistan and the Emergence of the Taliban: Reviewed Works *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 56 (2), pp.329-332. Available at: http://zeroanthropology.net /2009/09/02/afghanistan-and-the-emergence-of-the-taliban-reviewed-works [Accessed on: 11/05/12]

Harvey, M. (ed) (2007) Media Matters: Perspectives on Advancing Governance and Development from the Global Forum for Media Development. Available at: http://www.uncdf.org/english/local_development/uploads/thematic/MEDIAMATTE RS_AR.pdf [Accessed on: 11/07/12]

Huesca, R. (2002) Tracing the History of Participatory Communication Approaches to Development: A Critical Appraisal (Chapter 8). In: Servaes, J. (ed.) *Approaches to Development Communication* Paris: UNESCO

Idea (2011) What is Strategic Communication, Fresh Ideas to Advance Scientific and Cultural literacy, Idea Website. Available at: http://www.idea.org/blog/2011/03/16/ what-is-strategic- communications [Accessed on: 11/04/12]

IDLG Strategic Framework (2011) *IDLG's role in Transition* Kabul

Independent Directorate of Local Governance (2011) *Strategic Framework for IDLG's Role in Transition*

ICDT (2012) *Afghanistan After ISAF: Policy Paper* Hungary: Budapest. Available at: http://www.icdt.hu/documents/publications/ Afghanistan-After-ISAF-Policy-Paper.pdf [Accessed on: 11/05/12]

Invernizzi & Romenti (2009) *Strategic Communication and Decision Making Processes: Toward the Communication Oriented Organisation* Bucharest: Paper presented at Euprera Congress: Available at: http://www.academicus.edu.al/nr3/ Academicus-MMXI-3-012-027.pdf [Accessed on: 11/04/12]

Kabul Conference (2010) *Joint Framework for Inteqal: A Process for Strengthening Peace and Stability in Afghanistan and the Region,* Kabul

Kalathil, S., Langlois, J, & Kaplan, A. (2008) Towards a New Model Media and Communication in Post Conflict and Fragile States, World Bank Available at: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTGOVACC/Resources/CommGAPNewModel Web.pdf [Accessed on: 02/05/12]

Kamal, S. (2007) *Grounds for Development: Media Development Practice and Theory in Post-Conflict Afghanistan* London: University of Oxford. Available at: www.journalhosting. org/meccsa-pgn/index.php/netknow/article.[Accessed on 5/07/12]

Katzman K (2012), *Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy*, Congressional Research Service

Kaul, V. (2011) Development Communication in India: Prospects, Issues and Trends *Global Media Journal - Indian Edition.* ISSN 2249-5835, Winter Issue / December 2011 Vol. 2(2). Available at: http://www.caluniv.ac.in/Global%20mdia%20journal /Winter%20Issue%20 December%202011%20Commentaries/C-2%20Kaul.pdf [Accessed on: 11/05/12]

Kumar, R. (2011) Development Communication: A purposive communication with social conscience - An Indian perspective *Global Media Journal - Indian Edition* ISSN 2249-5835 Winter Issue, Vol. 2 (2). Available at: http://www.caluniv.ac.in/ Global%20mdia%20journal/Winter%20Issue%20December%20%202011%20Article s/AR-3%20Kumar.pdf [Accessed on: 10/07/12]

Lisbon Summit Declaration (2010) *Declaration on an Enduring Partnership Agreed by the Afghan Government and NATO* Lisbon, Portugal. Available at: http://www .nato.int/cps/en/ natolive/official_texts_68828.htm?mode=pressrelease [Accessed on: 02/05/12]

MacBride, S., & Abel, E. (1984), Many Voices, One World. Paris: UNESCO.
Malyar, N. (1977). Tarikh-i radiw-i Afghanistan [History of Afghan radio], Kabul: University of
Kabul. [Dari]

Mastoor, M. (2010) US Strategy towards Post-Taliban Afghanistan: Analysing State building Efforts in Afghanistan *Regional Studies* Vol. XXVIII, No.3, pp.31-73. Available at: http:// irsndu.academia.edu/MaryamMastoor/Papers/876182/US_ Strategy_Towards_Post_Taliban_Afghanistan_Analysing_the_State_building_Efforts [Accessed on: 02/04/12]

McCall, E. (2010) *Communication for development: Strengthening the effectiveness of the United Nations* FAO, ILO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and WHO. Available at: http://www.unicef.org/cbsc/files/Inter-agency_C4D_Book_2011.pdf [Accessed on: 02/05/12]

Mcloughlin, C. & Scott, Z. (2010) *Topic Guide on Communications and Governance: Governance and Social Development Resource Centre* Birmingham. Available at: http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/CommGAP1.pdf [Accessed on: 02/05/12]

Mefalopulos, P. (2008) *Development Communication Sourcebook: Broadening the Boundaries of Communications* Washington DC: The World Bank

Melkote, R. S. & Steeves, H. L. (2001) Communication for Development in the Third World: Theory and Practice for Employment. (2nd edn.). New Delhi: Sage Publications

Ministry of Finance (2010) *Afghanistan National Development Strategy, Prioritization and Implementation Plan Governance Cluster* Kabul: Department of Policy

Moemeka, A A. (1989), "Perspectives on development communication," Africa Media Review, Vol. 3 No. 3, pp 1-24, Available at: http://archive.lib.msu.edu/DMC /African%20Journals/pdfs/africa%20media%20review/vol3no3/jamr003003002.pdf (Accessed on 15/06/2012)

Naficy, M. (1993) *Klerus, Basar und die iranische Revolution* [Clergy, bazaar, and the Iranian Revolution] Hamburg: Deutsches Orient-Institute

Narula Uma. (1994), *Development Communication* New Delhi: Haranand Publication, pp.1, 9, 22, 25-29, 70

NATO (2011), Backgrounder: Transition, Public Diplomacy Division (PDD), Press and Media Section, Media Operations Centre (MOC). Available at: http://www.nato. int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2010_10/2010_10_D34F22C9AE854B7FAA0BB409A 21C90D3_101014-transition-backgrounder.pdf (Accessed on 12/06/2012)

Noor ul Haq (2005) *Post-Taliban Reconstruction in Afghanistan* Islamabad, Pakistan: Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI). Available on: www.ipripak.org/factfiles/ff69.pdf [Accessed on: 02/06/12]

Noorzai, R. (2006) *Communication and Development in Afghanistan: A History of Reforms and Resistance* Ohio: Ohio University, The Scripps College of Communication

Norris, P. (2007) The Role of the Free Press in Promoting Democratisation, Good Governance and Human Development. In Harvey, M. (ed) Media Matters: Perspectives on Advancing Governance and Development for the Global Forum for Media Development. Available at: http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org/programs/ ai/rti/articles/undp_rti_2006/annex3_background_paper.pdf [Accessed on: 02/07/12]

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (2011) *Transition to the Afghan Lead: Inteqal - Media Backgrounder*. Available at: http://www.isaf.nato.int/images/media/PDFs /111005intequal.pdf [Accessed on: 12/06/12]

OECD (2002) *Sustainable Development Strategies* (Chapter 7) Paris: Communications

Parker, W. B. (1977) Planning Communication Technologies and Institutions for Development: In: Rahim and Middleton (eds.), *Perspectives in Communication Policy and Planning* Honolulu: East West Communication Institute, East-West Centre, p.56

Prasad, K. (2009), *Communication for Development: Reinventing Theory and Action* Delhi: B. R. Pub. Corp. Available at: http://www.comminit.com/ict-4-development/ node/291566 [Accessed on: 05/07/12]

Quebral, N. C. (1975) *Development Communication: Where Does it Stand Today* Media Asia, Vol. 2(4), p.198

Rashid, A. (2000) *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press

Rawan, S. M. (2002) Modern Mass Media and Traditional Communication in Afghanistan, *Political Communication* Vol.19(2), pp.155-170: Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/ 10584600252907425. [Accessed on 21/07/12]

Roschani-Moghaddam, N. (1985) Kommunikationsplanung und Entwicklungsprozesse: Modell eines Kommunikationsservices als Hilfsfaktor bei der Vollziehung von sozialer Planung in Entwicklungsländern [Communication plans and developmental processes]. Frankfurt: Lang

Rotberg, R. I. & Weiss, T. G. (eds.) (1996) *From Massacres to Genocide: The Media, Public Policy, and Humanitarian Crises* Cambridge, Mass: The World Peace Foundation

Rubin, B. R. (2002) *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in International System* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press

Saltmarshe, D. & Medhi, A. (2011) *Local Governance in Afghanistan: A View from the Ground* Kabul: Synthesis Report, AREU. Available at: http://www.areu.org.af/ Uploads/EditionPdfs/1114E%20Local%20Governance%20in%20Afghanistan%20SP %202011.pdf [Accessed on: 05/05/12]

Saikal, A. (2004), *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival.* London: I.B.Tauris

Servaes, J. (2002) By Way of Introduction. In: Servaes, J. (ed.) *Approaches to Development Communication* Paris: UNESCO. Available at: http://webzone.k3.mah.se /projects/comdev04/ frame/DevComm_Servaes.pdf [Accessed on: 07/06/12]

Servaes, J. & Malikhao, P. (2002) Development Communication Approaches in an International Perspective (Chapter 7). In: Servaes, J. (ed.), *Approaches to Development Communication* Paris: UNESCO

SFCG (2010) Communication for Peacebuilding: Practices, Trends and Challenges, United States Institute of Peace. Available at:http://www.usip.org/files/GrantsFellows /GrantsDownloadsNotApps/CfPeace%20Report_vFINALFORMATTEDPhotosFINA Lv1Rev2June.pdf [Accessed on: 02/07/12]

Snyder, J. & Ballentine, K. (1996) *Nationalism and the marketplace of ideas* International Security

Soulé K (2009), Media in Afghanistan: Post-Conflict Development and Policy Implications. Available at: http://www.sais-jhu.edu/academics/regional-studies/ southasia/pdf/afghanmediasoule.pdf (Accessed on 08/06/2012)

Stapleton, B. J. (2012) *Beating A Treat, Prospects for the Transition Process in Afghanistan* Afghanistan Analyst Network

Steul, W. (1981) *Paschtunwali: Ein Ehrenkodex und seine rechtliche Relevanz* [Pashtunwali: An Honour code and its legal relevance] Wiesbaden: F. Steiner

The Communication Initiative (2007) *Communication and Governance, Ch.3 in World Congress on Communication for Development: Lessons, Challenges and the Way Forward,* The Communication Initiative, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Bank. Available at: ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/ai143e/ai143e00.pdf [Accessed on: 02/06/12]

Thruelsen, P. D. (2011) *The Operational Challenges to the Comprehensive Approach: Ending the International Involvement in Afghanistan* Royal Danish Defence College

UNDP (2010), Annual Report, United Nations Development Program Afghanistan

UN (2011) *Per Capita GDP Afghanistan, National Accounts Estimates of Main Aggregates* United Nations Statistics Division. Available at: http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=SNAAMA&f=grID%3A101%3BcurrID%3AUSD%3BpcFlag%3A1 [Accessed on: 02/07/12]

UNAMA (2012) *Social Media Week: Afghanistan's urban youth embrace social media, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan* UNAMA website: http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=12254&ctl=Details&mid=15756&ItemID=35552&language=en-US. [Accessed on: 20/07/12]

UNDP (2010) *United Nations Development Program Afghanistan Annual Report.* Available at: http://www.undp.org.af/publications/KeyDocuments/2011/june/ UNDP%20Afghanistan%20 Annual%20Report%202010.pdf [Accessed on: 02/06/12]

UNESCO (1998) *Communication for Peacebuilding, Conceptual Framework and Strategy, Place De Fontenoy*. Available at: http://www.unesco.org/cpp/education/ pubs/commcppen.pdf [Accessed on: 02/06/12]

UNESCO (2005) *Media and Good Governance* Paris, Available at:
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/ images/0014/001463/146311e.pdf [Accessed on:
10/06/12]

UNICEF (2005) *Strategic Communication for Behaviour and Social Change in South
Asia* Kathmandu: UNICEF. Available at: http://www.unicef.org/rosa/Strategic
_Communication_for_Behaviour_and_Social_Change.pdf [Accessed on: 09/04/12]

UN Security Council (2011) *The Situation in Afghanistan and its Implication for
International Peace and Security: The General Assembly Report* New York: UN
Security Council

USIP (2008) *Media and Conflict: Afghanistan as a relative success story* United
States of America. Available at: http://www.usip.org/files/resources/sr198.pdf.
[Accessed on 20/07/12]

Wahidi, S. M. (2010) *Aligning Transition Approaches in Afghanistan*: Centre for
Conflict and Peace Studies

Waisbord, S. (2000) *Family tree of theories, models and approaches in development
communication* The Communication Initiative. Available at:
http://www.communicationforsocialchange.org/pdf/familytree.pdf [Accessed on:
20/07/12]

Wiebe, D. (1978) *Stadtstruktur und kulturgeographischer Wandel in Kandahar und
Südafghanistan* [Urban structure and cultural geographical change] Germany:
University of Kiel (unpublished doctoral dissertation)

Wilkins, K. (2008) Development Communication. In Donsbach, W. (ed.) *The
International Encyclopaedia of Communication* Blackwell Publishing, p.8. Available
at: http://webzone.k3.mah.se/projects/comdev/_comdev_PDF_doc/comdev09
_m3_development_communication_K_Wilkins.pdf [Accessed on: 01/05/12]

Women Aid International (2003) *The Emergence of Taliban* London. Available at: http://www.womenaid.org/humanrights/shadows/taliban.htm [Accessed on: 20/07/12]

World Bank (2006) *A Decade of Measuring the Quality of Governance, Governance Matters.* Available at: http://www.impactalliance.org/ev_en.php? ID=41565_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC [Accessed on: 20/05/12]

World Bank (2012) *Afghanistan in Transition: Looking Beyond 2014: Volume 1, Overview* Kabul: World Bank

Xavier Institute (1980) *Development from Below* Ranchi: Xavier Institute for Social Service

Zyck, A. Z. (2012) Peace and Reintegration Program: An Introduction: Part 1 of a 4-part series on Peace and Reintegration in Afghanistan: The Civil-Military Fusion Centre (CFC). Available at: https://www.cimicweb.org/cmo/afg/Documents/ Governance/CFC_Afghanistan_ Reintegration_Overview_April2012.pdf [Accessed on: 20/07/12]