



EVALUATION OF DANIDA SUPPORT TO THE EDUCATION SECTOR IN AFGHANISTAN

EVALUATION

2012.02





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June 2011

Department of Field Support
Cartographic Section

For administrative purposes the government has grouped Afghanistan's 34 provinces into three main zones (from: 2008-09 EMIS School Summary Report). These are shown in the table below:

Northern Mainland Afghanistan	Central Mainland Afghanistan	Southern Mainland Afghanistan
1.1 North Eastern Afghanistan	2.1 Eastern Afghanistan	3.1 South Eastern Afghanistan
1.1.1 Badakhshan	2.1.1 Kunar	3.1.1 Ghazni
1.1.2 Baghlan	2.1.2 Laghman	3.1.2 Khost
1.1.3 Kunduz	2.1.3 Nangarhar	3.1.3 Paktia
1.1.4 Takhar	2.1.4 Nuristan	3.1.4 Paktika
1.2 North Western Afghanistan	2.2 Central Afghanistan	3.2 South Western Afghanistan
1.2.1 Balkh	2.2.1 Kabul	3.2.1 Daykundi
1.2.2 Faryab	2.2.2 Kabul City	3.2.2 Helmand
1.2.3 Jowzjan	2.2.3 Kapisa	3.2.3 Kandahar
1.2.4 Samangan	2.2.4 Logar	3.2.4 Nimruz
1.2.5 Sare Pol	2.2.5 Panjshir	3.2.5 Urozgan
	2.2.6 Parwan	3.2.6 Zabol
	2.2.7 Wardak	
	2.3 Western Afghanistan	
	2.3.1 Badghis	
	2.3.2 Bamyan	
	2.3.3 Farah	
	2.3.4 Ghor	
	2.3.5 Herat	

Evaluation of Danida Support to the Education Sector in Afghanistan

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark



June 2012

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The opinions expressed in this document represent the views of the authors, which are not necessarily shared by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs or other stakeholders.

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- Annex E Education sector aid programmes and projects 1388 (2009)
- Annex F Donor assistance to education over the period covered by the evaluation
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List of abbreviations

<i>ADB</i>	Asian Development Bank
<i>AF</i>	Asia Foundation
<i>ANDS</i>	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
<i>APEP</i>	Afghanistan Primary Education Program (World Bank)
<i>ARTF</i>	Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund
<i>CIDA</i>	Canadian International Development Agency
<i>CNA</i>	ADB's Comprehensive Needs Assessment
<i>DAC</i>	Development Assistance Committee
<i>DACAAR</i>	Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees
<i>DAARTT</i>	Danish Assistance to Afghan Rehabilitation and Technical Training
<i>DED</i>	District Education Department
<i>DfID</i>	Department for International Development (UK Government)
<i>DKK</i>	Danish Kroner
<i>DOF</i>	Department of Finance
<i>DP</i>	Development Partner
<i>ECE</i>	Early Childhood Education
<i>ECG</i>	Education Consultative Group
<i>EFA</i>	Education For All
<i>EIP</i>	Education Interim Plan
<i>EMIS</i>	Education Management Information System
<i>EQUIP</i>	Education Quality Improvement Program (World Bank)
<i>ESPA</i>	(Danish) Education Support Programme to Afghanistan
<i>ESWG</i>	Education Sector Working Group
<i>EQ</i>	Evaluation Question
<i>EQIP</i>	Education Quality Improvement Project
<i>EU</i>	European Union
<i>EVAL</i>	Evaluation Department,
<i>FDG</i>	Focus Discussion Group
<i>FTI</i>	Fast Track Initiative
<i>GDP</i>	Gross Domestic Product
<i>GIZ</i>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
<i>GMU</i>	Grant Management Unit
<i>GPE</i>	Global Partnership for Education
<i>HDI</i>	Human Development Index
<i>HRDB</i>	Human Resource Development Board
<i>IDP</i>	Internally Displaced Person
<i>IIEP</i>	International Institute for Educational Planning
<i>INEE</i>	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
<i>InSeT</i>	Inservice Training
<i>ISD</i>	Infrastructure Development Services Department
<i>ISAF</i>	International Security Assistance Force
<i>JICA</i>	Japan International Cooperation Agency
<i>LEG</i>	Local Education Group
<i>LTTA</i>	Long Term Technical Assistance
<i>MDG</i>	Millennium Development Goals
<i>MDU</i>	Materials Development Unit
<i>MFA</i>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark

<i>MoE</i>	Ministry of Education
<i>MoF</i>	Ministry of Finance
<i>MoHE</i>	Ministry of Higher Education
<i>MT</i>	Master Trainers
<i>NATO</i>	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
<i>NDF</i>	National Development Framework
<i>NESP</i>	National Education Strategic Plan
<i>NGO</i>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<i>OECD</i>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<i>P&G</i>	Pay & Grade
<i>PAR</i>	Public Administration Reform
<i>PED</i>	Provincial Education Directorate
<i>PEPS</i>	Primary Education Programme Support
<i>PIU</i>	Project Implementation Unit
<i>PRA</i>	Participatory Rural Appraisal
<i>PRDC</i>	Provincial Reconstruction Development Committee
<i>PRR</i>	Priority Restructuring & Reform
<i>PRT</i>	Provincial Reconstruction Team
<i>QA</i>	Quality Assurance
<i>QRF</i>	Quick Response Fund
<i>RBM</i>	Results Based Management
<i>RDE</i>	Royal Danish Embassy
<i>REU</i>	Research and Evaluation Unit
<i>RIMU</i>	Reform Implementation Management Unit
<i>ROI</i>	Regions of Origin Initiative
<i>RRA</i>	Rapid Rural Appraisal
<i>SBS</i>	Sector Budget Support
<i>Sida</i>	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
<i>SQ</i>	Sub-evaluation Question
<i>STTA</i>	Short Term Technical Assistance
<i>TA</i>	Technical Assistance/Technical Advisors
<i>TEP</i>	Teacher Education Program
<i>TL</i>	Team Leader
<i>ToR</i>	Terms of Reference
<i>TRC</i>	Teachers' Resource Center
<i>TRT</i>	Teachers' Resource Team
<i>TTC</i>	Teacher Training College
<i>TVET</i>	Technical and Vocational Education
<i>UN</i>	United Nations
<i>UNESCO</i>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<i>UNHCR</i>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<i>UNICEF</i>	United Nations Children's Fund
<i>UPE</i>	Universal Primary Education
<i>USAID</i>	United States Agency for International Development
<i>WFP</i>	World Food Programme
<i>WHO</i>	World Health Organisation
<i>Danida</i>	The Danish aid administration until the 1990s, but now a collective term for the development activities of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs rather than a separate entity.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Exchange Rates (November, 2011)

1 Euro = 7.44 Danish Kroner (DKK)

1 Euro = 1.42 United States Dollars (USD)

1 DKK = 0.19 USD (However, actual exchange rates are used in the report)

Afghan Calendar:

1382 = 2002 - 2003 1386 = 2006 - 2007

1383 = 2003 - 2004 1387 = 2007 - 2008

1384 = 2004 - 2005 1388 = 2008 - 2009

1385 = 2005 - 2006 1389 = 2009 - 2010

Executive Summary

Background to the evaluation

Between 2003 and 2010 Denmark disbursed Danish Kroner (DKK) 431 million for education in Afghanistan mainly through bilateral programmes, including in Helmand, but also through other channels, e.g. the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF)¹.

To learn from the experience the Evaluation Department of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (EVAL) commissioned the current evaluation. The main purposes are to assess Denmark's contribution and to assist the continued improvement of Danish support. The objectives are to assess strategy, implementation and results and to identify conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. The evaluation has used the DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, taking into consideration the context, including the security situation, in which the support is provided.

The evaluation was conducted from mid-2011 to early 2012. It was planned to include four phases: i. Preparation and fact finding; ii. Desk study; iii. Evaluation visit and field studies; and iv. Final data analysis. Arrangements were made for a further document search and a visit to Kabul and Helmand province. Results of the additional work have been incorporated into the evaluation report.

Methodology

Danish support policy, as exemplified in the programme documents, was to work through and strengthen host institutions, using an 'on-budget' modality. This approach relied on regular, documented results to guide joint programme management by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Royal Danish Embassy (RDE). Planning and modifying activity would specify outputs and programme outcomes. Immediate results would feed into next steps in the management process, keeping ownership with the MoE and raising capacity.

The approach taken by this evaluation also relies on documented results. Consistent with the logic of the support programme it draws on Results Based Management (RBM), a strategy focusing on outputs, outcomes and impacts. The evaluation seeks to show the links between what was planned, what was carried out (inputs) and the immediate results (outputs), and the eventual broader outcomes. Where possible it also points to longer-term impact.

Documentation for programme management and evaluation

Essential tools for all programmes were the Annual Work Plans and Budgets, which would guide each cycle. The fragile situation and weak capacity meant management would be a challenge. This was the risk inherent in the support strategy. To mitigate this, flexibility in resource allocation was a central part of the design, therefore, and documented Annual Reviews were to inform the feedback loop (e.g. PEPS 1 Programme

1 Note: References have been kept to a minimum in this Executive Summary. Full details of quoted sources are given in the main text or in footnotes in the report. A list of the main documents consulted is given in Annex C.

Documents, para 6 and para 41). Programme documents detail the roles of the Grants Management Unit (GMU) and the Steering Committee in using annual and quarterly progress reports, monitoring, accounts and audits to monitor progress and make decisions. The logic, as stressed by Programme Documents, was that this would strengthen capacity, not only to manage Danida's programmes, but for the education system in general.

The GMU was also to be a magnet and coordination mechanism for other Development Partner (DP) programmes. The logical assumption was that as efficiency and effectiveness were demonstrated, other donors would provide funding through government systems following Danida. Danish aid was to be a "test case" (term used in the Programme Documents) to encourage harmonisation and alignment. Thus documentation was fundamental to management and aid effectiveness.

Management as central to Danida's modality

The modality also assumed that use of the Afghan public administration (a Ministry of Finance (MoF) account for Danish funds with earmarking of programme components) and MoE service delivery would contribute to national reconstruction. In particular, the modality relies on development of a strong monitoring framework. Popular participation in governance to increase stability in a very fragile situation was also a broad aim. National policies linked to local activity were to build confidence in Government. These included community participation in location of schools, promoting access to education for girls, training for female teachers and students, school management, etc. The Afghan and Danish Governments explicitly linked national policy and local realisations as a means of nation-building.

A fundamental aspect of Danida's support model was the implementation of a two track development approach, i.e. to attend not only to local, emergency intervention, but also to long-term systems and policy development. Sustainability and ownership by the Afghan Government as well as collaboration with other donors would be built on documentation of shared strategy.

In sum, management mechanisms with documented outputs (accounts, reviews, minutes, reports, plans, etc.) were foreseen as the basis of Danish support and continue to be essential for programme management and for broader system development. They permit flexible budget allocation (inputs) in response to need as it becomes clearer, as data and reduced levels of conflict allow this to be specified; they provide a means to manage the funding risk, through transparency and accountability; at the level of outcomes they support confidence-building in government systems among other donors and the Afghan public, and they link immediate, local action to long-term national strategy, and build sustainable capacity in MoE and government departments.

Evaluation approach and constraints

Similarly, the evaluation itself depended heavily on written records. Security and time did not permit direct observation or statistical sampling of programme results. Interviews and visits allowed only an impression of the Afghan education system, although fact-finding and field visits in 2011 and 2012 included a mix of urban and rural areas in different regions with experience of different ethnic groups. During these visits informants at MoE, provincial and district education offices, schools, communities and teacher training colleges (TTCs) were interviewed; girls' schools were visited and issues of marginalisation discussed. Representatives of key NGOs and DPs were met (see Annex B). The interplay between education support and security issues in Helmand and elsewhere was discussed.

During the 2011 field mission schools were sitting national exams, meaning little observation of structured teaching or use of books or materials was possible. Data collection based on the evaluation questions (EQs) and sub-questions (SQs) provided in the Terms of Reference (ToR), were used in the field mission. However, data on many indicators was not available (e.g. net and gross enrolment ratios (NER) and (GER), numbers of qualified teachers by year, etc.). Other constraints matched those for programme management:

- Frequent changes of staff in Government and DPs and weak institutional memory;
- Lack of continuity between international staff, including technical assistance (TA);
- Donor projects (including military) operating in the same technical area;
- Weak individual, institutional and data management and administrative capacity;
- Frequent reorganisation in Afghan government institutions;
- Changing patterns of security and stability throughout the country.

The evaluation, moreover, covered a period of more than 10 years. Technical and management reports covered a lengthy and unstable period. However, a comprehensive database of over 800 documents was assembled and largely formed the basis for the evaluation.

Education in Afghanistan

The cultural context

The Islamic tradition has permeated Afghan society and religious leaders have influenced community life, including educational development. Education indicators have always been low (literacy has never risen above 25%) and the central state's role in provision has been limited. In 1979, when the Soviets invaded, the literacy rate was 18% for males and 5% for females.

This period was followed by two decades of conflict when 80% of school buildings were destroyed and qualified teachers were killed or left the country. After Soviet occupation in 1989 factional fighting between Mujahedeen parties delayed reconstruction. In 1993, NGOs assisted 1,000 of the 2,200 schools. 90,000 Afghan children were supported in refugee camps in Pakistan. Between 1996 and 2001, the Taliban took control and banned female participation in education. Only limited services were provided by MoE, which by 2001 needed to be rebuilt from scratch.

Provision has greatly improved with support from donors including Denmark. According to MoE, more than 7 million children are enrolled, (39% or 2.7 million girls); usable classrooms were increased from fewer than 1,000 in 2002 to over 71,000 in 2010; there is an eight-fold increase in teacher numbers; over 8,500 school Shuras (community education committees) have been established, and there is a Provincial Education Department (PED) in each of the 34 provinces.

Education and society

The socio-economic and political situation varies within the 34 provinces. GDP has grown since 2003/04 at an average of 9.1% p.a., though with high volatility. In 2010/11 international aid was about USD 15.7 billion, or about the same size as nominal GDP. Afghanistan has made notable progress on some Human Development Index (HDI) indicators. In 2011 48% of the population had access to clean water, i.e. double 2007/08 figures; 72,500 women are attending 2,900 literacy centres. Education is a basic right for all children. The country is committed to Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with a revised target date of 2020. However, it remains among the poorest countries in the world (HDI ranking 172 of 187).

Education and conflict

Education is a means of building stability and is free of charge. However, continued violence undermines protection and almost 50% of the population is insecure. This limits service delivery.

According to the Asia Foundation (AF), access to education and widespread illiteracy were the biggest problems for women in 2011, but security, peace and education interact in a complex manner. Stakeholders have a range of interests, capacities and motives. Government legitimacy continues to be challenged and links between Government and people depend on central and local structures. The state is only slowly becoming an important part of people's lives. Danish support to education in Afghanistan recognises that where donor support is outside the Government it undercuts state capacity and may reduce legitimacy. Moreover, in areas where international military and PRTs provide assistance, schools may be more vulnerable to attack precisely because they have been constructed by foreign forces. Some donors have begun to address this through broader approaches, at least within education, and recent reports indicate the Taliban and Government are finding common ground, though progress is vulnerable to frequent setbacks.

Brief overview of Danish supported areas in education

The two tables below provide a summary of Danish support from 2003 to the present, showing the programme components supported with amounts, by period, and the main modalities. It will be noted that the current programme budget represents a substantial increase in funding (2003-10, USD 50.5 million; 2010-13, USD 60 million). The programme components supported in 2003 included Curriculum development, Construction, Teacher training, Textbooks and Management including aid management. Apart from construction, funded separately through the NGO Danish Assistance to Afghan Rehabilitation and Technical Training (DAARTT), and some funding through the ARTF, Danish support used an on-budget modality.

Over the whole period there is a broadening of scope (to include all education grades 1-12) and reduction in earmarking, aligning with Afghan strategic planning for education as set out in the Education Interim Plan (EIP). This reflects Danish development guidelines and strategy. Support for education in Helmand was specifically included from 2008.

Table 1 Programmes and budget allocations

Programme	Agreement date	Years	DKK	USD ²
Primary Education Support Programme (PEPS 1)	4.12 2003	2003-06 (Extended to March 2007)	110.0 million	15.7 million
Extension (including grades 1-12)	17.5 2007	2007-08	72.0 million	12.6 million
Helmand Schools and Dormitories	19.11 2008	2008 onwards	34.2 million	6.0 million
Extension of funding for education	??	2009-10	92.5 million	16.2 million
Total 2003-10			308.7 million	50.5 million
Education Support Programme to Afghanistan (ESPA)	2010	2010-13	340 million	60 million
Total incl. (ESPA)			648.7 million	110.5 million

Source: Programme documentation and meetings during the evaluation mission.

Table 2 Summary of programme components 2003-10³

Component*	Primary Education Support Programme (PEPS) 2003-06	Extension of Danish support to Education in Afghanistan 2007-08	Helmand 2008-??	Extension of funding for education 2009-10
Grade	1 - 6	1 - 12	1 - 12	1 - 12
Curriculum	X			
Construction	X	X	X	X
Teacher training	X			
Text Books	X	X		X
Education administration	X	X		
Helmand			X	X
Multilateral assistance	During the period Danida provided multilateral funding (in 2009 at least through the ARTF) earmarked for teacher salaries ³ Danida also supported UNICEF's "Back-to-School-Campaign" in 2002.			

2 USD 1= DKK 7.00 in 2003 and DKK 5.70 for the remaining years.

3 Letter from WB to RDE, January 2009.

Component*	Primary Education Support Programme (PEPS) 2003-06	Extension of Danish support to Education in Afghanistan 2007-08	Helmand 2008-??	Extension of funding for education 2009-10
Assistance through NGOs	Covered by a separate contract signed between Danida and DACAAR/DAARTT for construction of schools.	Covered by a separate contract signed between Danida and DACAAR/DAARTT for construction of schools		In 2009 DAARTT was contracted for an accelerated education project for Danida funded from the bilateral sector support for education.

*Capacity Development: Staff training, institutional and professional development are explicitly mentioned as priorities or under implementation arrangements (with budget in PEPS) in all components from 2003 onwards (including in current ESPA documents). Capacity development was the principal element in the Education Administration component.

Source: Programme documents.

The activities and objectives of other development partners in Afghanistan

In 1990 NGOs and UN agencies supported 70% of Afghan schools with teacher salaries, training, student supplies, and textbooks. In 2001 the new development agenda attracted international organisations and NGOs and increased the need for coordination.

Principal donors

Details of donor contributions are given in Annex F (can be found on www.evaluation.dk). In addition, a 2009 report listed the principal donors with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as the largest bilateral, contributing USD 97 million directly (almost USD 300 million in total) for education over the decade. The Embassy of Japan and JICA were also major contributors with the multilateral agencies (World Bank (WB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), and United Nations (UN) agencies, including the World Food Programme (WFP)) also providing very substantial sums. Danida, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and German aid, (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)) were the major contributors bilaterally after USAID. Few donors have provided funds through Government via MoF. While others use MoE systems, they contribute little directly to support MoE's control of sector resources. In this sense Danida's approach is unique. USAID and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DfID) also implement education programmes in Helmand through the PRT. WB manages the largest donor programme in the MoE with three components under the ARTF, all on-budget:

- the World Bank's Education Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP) – basic and secondary education
- Technical/Vocational training
- Higher education

The 10 ARTF donors have provided USD 88 million for EQUIP I and II, covering General Education, Teacher Education and Working Conditions, Education Infrastructure

Rehabilitation and Development. PRTs, funded primarily by the Provincial Reconstruction and Development Committee (PRDC) and Quick Response Fund (QRF) under ISAF, also support the sector.

Achievements of Danish support to education in Afghanistan 2003-10

Achievements are summarised for three periods of programme support. It was expected that inputs would take time to show progress and that sustainable results would not be established in one three year programme, but that periods of support would strengthen earlier gains. This has been the case with a remarkable expansion in education provision in Afghanistan over the past decade with an increase of schools under MoE ownership by approximately 10,000 (in 2002, there were 3,400 schools in MoE ownership and in 2010 the MoE reported owning 13,363 schools; including 12,421 general education and 626 islamic education), recruitment and training of 93,000 new teachers, printing of millions of textbooks based on a new curriculum and significantly strengthened management capabilities. Denmark has made a major contribution to this progress.

Overall performance of PEPS 1

Between 2003 and 2006 the Afghan education system expanded substantially. Access improved dramatically through the construction of 1,424 primary schools and classrooms. Quality was addressed through a new curriculum, printing millions of books and by greatly expanding teacher provision. These outcomes relate to Danida's programme outputs: building 21 schools, rehabilitation of the Curriculum Development Centre and contributions to writing the primary curriculum and textbook printing. Danida's management inputs were documented and the whole programme budget was disbursed making use of in-built flexibility. The on-budget modality, management controls and earmarking allowed spending to be monitored with evidence of ownership and responsiveness to need in terms of inputs.

The evidence shows that, through a very unsettled period in the establishment of the Afghan MoE, Denmark contributed significant and much appreciated support. The only other programme to use direct funding, EQUIP, which became effective in July 2004, was in problem project status before June 2006. These are important achievements against considerable obstacles.

However, recognition of great progress in Afghan education and the Danish contribution must be tempered by acknowledgement of differences between planned interventions and the actual experience of support. Budget disbursement and management were not as planned. Management, through the Steering Committee (the GMU did not function), relied heavily on Danida TA. Flexibility was anticipated, but variations from programme plans were marked, and reasons not always documented. Inputs and activities were recorded, but there are limited records of outputs especially in the areas of system and policy development. Spending was very largely on printing books (twice the original allocation and three times that spent on all other components), and yet there was no book distribution system. For this period there are no central records of how many of the books printed with donor support actually reached the schools. Systems for sustainable printing and distribution were only discussed at the end of 2006. Plans for capacity development and coordination of construction were not addressed. Danida's planned contribution to teacher training was reallocated. Immediate needs tended to crowd out systems rather than operating an expected two track approach.

For these reasons overall programme relevance is evaluated as good, though effectiveness and efficiency are moderate. Sustainability took longer to emerge. It is too early to evaluate performance in terms of impact. Limited records of outputs make contribution analysis difficult. That Danida supported improved outcomes in access and quality areas is clear. Its overall contribution, however, was not as anticipated. Individual programme outputs where documented show marked differences from original plans.

Overall performance on extensions 2007-10

During the following period the Afghan education system continued to expand access and to address quality issues. By 2008 there were almost 8,000 more schools and 6 times as many enrolled students compared to 2001. 87 million textbooks were printed in the period and teacher and education administration staff reached almost 170,000 (from 64,000 teachers in 2001). In 2008 also MoE produced the first Education Management Information System (EMIS) report, showing improved capacity for planning and management. The Ministry was gradually able not only to gather and present data at provincial level, but also to begin analysis of quality issues as well as access. Recorded Danish aid outputs for the period include: Completion of 72 classrooms by August 2009 with a further 130 classrooms almost finished by the end of 2010; contribution to textbook printing and some attention to distribution problems.

In general, records for Danish programme outputs are scarce for this period. As shown, Afghan education outcomes improved substantially and Danida clearly contributed. Budget disbursement and achievement of outputs are not reported in any detail. However, as far as can be seen, the funding modality functioned reasonably well in very difficult circumstances in Afghanistan. Aid effectiveness and management improved somewhat also, with ARTF acting as a donor coordination forum. The Education Development Board (EDB) and subsequently the Human Resource Development Board (HRDB) and Working Groups began to meet in late 2008. Danida has been active in the HRDB, and was co-chair from May 2010 to 2011.

However, it is less easy to see where Danish programme inputs occurred until Steering Committee Meetings resumed in late 2009. Improvements in management capacity at the level of policy, strategy and systems are seen from later evidence from school surveys, staff management, etc. Danida contributed to reforms in these areas. Achievements in management and aid management were slower to emerge than expected. Fragmentation of inputs was reportedly still a problem in 2009, and the capacity to formulate common plans and provide objective feedback on performance (outputs) was still weak, meaning intended programme outputs were still highly relevant.

Analysis of Danish contribution to overall system outcomes is harder than for the previous period, therefore. 2008 and 2009 Danida reports draw attention to this problem and issues began to be addressed from late 2009 when Steering Committee meetings resumed, documentation improved and monitoring of TA workplan outputs began.

Education Support Programme to Afghanistan (ESPA) from 2010

From March 2010 Denmark began a three-year programme worth DKK 340 million (approximately USD 60 million) to support Government's Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and what would become the NESP/Education Interim Plan

2011-13. Danish support is provided under the Education Support Programme for Afghanistan (ESPA) April 2011-13. Under the Danish Helmand Plan (2011) 15% of the development support is for Helmand.

ESPA provides direct support to MoE budgets and plans with TA and capacity development. The ESPA Programme Document lists five EIP priority programmes. They include, i. General and Islamic education; ii. Curriculum development and teacher education; iii. TVET; iv. Literacy; v. Education governance and administration. Due to the limited implementation period this evaluation covers only a limited analysis of ESPA focusing on links and follow up from PEPS, etc.

The largest budget item in EIP is Construction, also the most seriously underfunded. However, a recent (Danida-funded) report has improved the basis for MoE policy development in this area, coordination of inputs, setting of targets, standards, etc. EMIS reports the number of classrooms in 2009 was 71,592. The projected need was 127,253, rising to 144,191 in 2011. The relevance of support is still clear.

There is growing confidence in government systems. In addition to improved access (through construction) quality continues to improve through materials provision and teachers. MoE capacity to estimate need with increasing accuracy is a significant achievement and Danida supports this area through TA and funding of training. However, programme documents emphasise continued monitoring of progress in areas of ongoing interest, using MoE systems.

The demand for teachers remains very large (EMIS records a shortfall of 131,929 in 2009) despite progress. The proportion of female teachers has risen, from 28% of the total in 2006 to 52% in 2011. Several training initiatives continue. Danida's interest remains in improved programme coordination, systems for measuring and increasing learning, and improved efficiency.

The Steering Committee is still responsible for management of ESPA using EIP work plans as "*the primary references*" with clear annual targets according to programme documents. The stated intention, following the strategy for earlier interventions, is to report outputs and outcomes not activities. Monitoring is against targets, budget and DPs' contributions. ESPA foresees some training before this can happen, and Danida is currently funding workshops by the International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP).

The GMU, revived from 2008, has functioned as coordinator for the Steering Committee Meetings. It is staffed by national TA. In late 2009 there were 1,157 TA in MoE, mostly Afghan nationals. Danida was funding some 155 of these. "Capacity buying" of such a large TA cohort represents a significant strategic choice and merits shared discussion on management and staged future planning. More specific output targets for capacity development would be welcome.

The GMU's function as coordinator for Danida's programmes and its role in broader aid coordination, the support logic consistently detailed in programme documents, are not demonstrated, and the transaction cost of monthly Steering Committee Meetings is high. There has been progress with donor coordination as indicated by successful submission of a coordinated proposal to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2011, and by MoE's preparation with DPs of a first Joint Sector Review for mid-2012. However, there is some duplication of function between the Department of Finance (DoF), GMU

and the Education Development Board (EDB later the Human Resources Development Board, HRDB). Danida supports both the HRDB and the GMU.

Helmand

NESP/EIP as a national plan directs priority activities, without earmarking by province. ESPA supports national level planning with specific, indicative activities and budget allocations for Helmand (15% of Danish development support for Afghanistan). Since 2008 Afghan priorities for Helmand have focused on access as the number of students in safe areas has increased.

According to MoE's EMIS system there were 89,615 students enrolled in Helmand (17,720 girls, 20%) attending 332 schools in 2010. The school numbers have increased since 2008, when 238 schools were reported with 106,881 students (16% more than current). Fluctuating trends show the difficulty of getting reliable data and the changing security situation. However, there seems to be an encouragingly consistent growth in enrolment of female students.

From 2010, Denmark has support programmes aimed at stabilisation and development. Development activities are related to ESPA, with funding for school and dormitory construction and capacity building initiatives implemented through MoE. Stabilisation activities are funded through the UK and US military budgets and have included community outreach, teacher training, material supply and school construction. Danida, as education lead, has increased alignment and harmonisation of donor programmes over 2011, reflecting the overall support strategy. This is an achievement of Danida support and deserves expansion. More donors and NGOs should join the Provincial Education Sector Working Group, adopt common policies and report progress jointly to PED.

In terms of infrastructure achievements, Denmark has funded construction of nine schools and two dormitories. Progress has been reported since 2010 at Steering Committee Meetings. Ongoing plans include construction of a Mini-TTC and administrative building in Gereshk to increase female teacher recruitment; the extension of a school in Abazaan into a high school to have an impact on girls' enrolment in the area, and the development of a branch of the National Institute for Administration and Management in Lashkar Gah.

Textbooks and materials for over 4,000 students and 100 teachers were distributed to district centres in 2009. In 2010, students and teachers received sets of children's books to broaden reading opportunities in Pashto.

On teacher training, as with all data from the province, the figures are not reliable. However, between 2005 and 2008 numbers increased from 1,437 teachers to 1,629 (20% female). In 2010 there were 200 women enrolled in the Lashkar Gah TTC. Over 2009 and early 2010, in-service training was provided to 200 female literacy teachers and over 400 district based teachers. Teachers in Helmand also make use of the Radio in a Box distance training programme. Upgrading through national exams has enabled Helmand teachers (over 90%) to be included on the new MoE Pay & Grade system leading to higher individual salaries.

A challenge in Helmand as elsewhere is to apply Danida's policy on programme support to develop MoE capacity for more confident and convincing projections, and to use them jointly with partners for reporting, planning and decision-making.

Conclusions

This section summarises the performance of Danida's programmes against the DAC criteria. It constitutes a set of conclusions drawn from the evaluation. The relevant chapter in the main report gives detail on the inputs, components, discussions and outputs for each period of support.

Relevance

Danish support has been in line with Afghan needs. Despite the challenge of on-budget support in the early 2000s the strategic decision to work closely with the new Government has had great value. Denmark is, consequently, seen as a trusted partner. Access has been MoE's greatest priority and Denmark continues to support this through construction. Need for inputs to quality areas has also increased with the huge expansion in enrolments and Danida has provided the bulk of funding for textbook development and printing. Budget flexibility in particular increased ownership and responsiveness to need. Collaboration on management has also been appreciated by MoE and other donors. Danida has contributed to increased MoE capacity to collect and analyse data on national needs and performance, which has justified reduced earmarking in recent programmes. The integrated, two track attention to policy and system development and immediate need was appropriate. Cross-cutting issues were consistent and appropriate policy priorities in Danida support, as were the emphases on harmonisation of donor support.

However, the challenge of establishing systems for on-budget modality, were under-estimated and there was insufficient assessment of the implications of possible failure. In the event early management relied much more than intended on Danish TA. The Steering Committee and GMU were expected to develop policy and capacity without explicit details of how this was to be done. Target outputs and mechanisms for development of MoE management capacity were not detailed and results not documented. Sustainability and efficiency were reduced, therefore. The decision to fund school construction through DAARTT made management by the Steering Committee more difficult. Funding for teacher training was switched to textbook printing in response to need, but fuller documentation of how budget flexibility operated would have allowed valuable lessons to be learned. There are few explanations of what activities or outputs were projected in many of the cross-cutting areas apart from expansion in female enrolment and teacher numbers. The mechanisms for programme harmonisation were also not detailed and the need to capture all annual donor and government contributions (funds and activities) in annual strategic plans, with joint sector progress reporting is only now being addressed in 2012. It would be helpful to see plans of how attention to urgent needs is balanced with long-term strategic capacity building.

Effectiveness

There have been significant improvements in the sector during a highly insecure period and Danida has provided major inputs. Male and female access to education, a constitutional right and a MoE policy priority, has increased as schools were built or restored. Denmark has funded high quality construction with local involvement in site selection and building. Education quality issues have been addressed through curriculum and syllabus development, writing and printing of textbooks and training of teachers. Danida made its largest contribution to textbook and other material printing. Flexible budget allocation largely benefited this component.

MoE capacity to report improvements and to estimate annual demand for teachers, classrooms, etc. with greater accuracy has grown. There is now considerable M&E capacity at

central level related to IIEP support funded through Danida. Full programme ownership by government institutions is established (with caveats regarding TA). Successful introduction of the staff pay and grading (P&G) system indicates growing capacity to monitor and reward performance. Danida funding of the Reform Implementation Management Unit (RIMU) helped develop this system.

Management and aid management have made clearer progress recently and Danida has shown the lead towards better alignment with government priorities. It helped coordinate development of the GPE support proposal. Danida's *"flexible and non-bureaucratic"* approach in dialogue with MoE has allowed rapid response in the uncertainties of Afghanistan. A joint donor/MoE review in June 2012 will move this process forward significantly. Danida's success in applying aid effectiveness principles in difficult circumstances (even in Helmand) merits greater publicity especially in the face of objections that such coordination is premature for Afghanistan. Security constrained programme implementation in its access to provinces, schools and communities even for Afghan staff. Access to Helmand has been severely restricted for civilian advisers. Danida is said by DPs to be doing a *"remarkable job"* there, aligning with local and government priorities and approaches.

Nevertheless, in all component areas there were aspects of planned support that took longer to show progress. Management capacity to control construction, though repeatedly emphasised, was not addressed until recently and there is no evidence of systems or policies for vulnerable groups and minorities. Support for these is mainly handled locally by individual NGOs or donors. Danida's collaboration in teacher development ceased early. Funding was switched and the intended unified policies, programmes and national records are still in development. Donor training remains fragmented and still needs integration into national career pathways (e.g. the P&G structure). MoE records books printed, but there is no system for monitoring distribution to schools.

Contrary to the planned use of Afghan systems, programme management depended largely on TA inputs before 2006, and from mid-2006 to late 2009 largely stopped reporting inputs and results. From limited records, funding was not disbursed as expected and important elements in the planned support were not fully achieved.

Ministry capacity still rests with staff designated as TA and not in systems or in the growing skills of establishment counterparts. TA numbers remain very large and key staff are paid by donors under different systems with unclear links between salary and performance. The risk also is that *"bought capacity"* will not stay in the public service if outside funds are reduced.

Efficiency

The ability to direct funding to areas of need contributed to efficient use of budgets. In earlier periods, built-in flexibility allowed response to emerging need in a very uncertain context and ensured a high burn-rate. Major re-allocations from curriculum development and teacher training to printing went smoothly. Management decision-making by the Steering Committee was efficient, though reliant on outside TA to 2006 and then on hold until late 2009. Funding efficiency through pooled arrangements was developed as planned where Danida took the lead (e.g. in Helmand). Separate funding for infrastructure has a mixed evaluation for efficiency. Speedier construction may have been offset by raised costs, increased duplication and complicated management by MoE.

The security situation affected the efficiency and effectiveness of all activity. Insecurity with poor distribution systems and road conditions limited delivery of textbooks printed

with Danida support. The cost of precautions is high, especially where use of international TA is necessary.

The GMU coordinating mechanism did not operate consistently or efficiently as foreseen in implementation plans for managing aid in general or Danish aid in particular. Currently, it runs in parallel to the HRDB. The continued frequent, dedicated Steering Committee Meetings are still valued by MoE despite the serious transaction cost. Absence of Joint Sector Reviews (with all donors), intended to increase alignment and harmonisation, reduced efficiency. The first Joint Sector Review is now planned for mid-2012.

Measurement of inputs and related outputs was generally not used to measure Danida's programme performance and increase efficiency. The modality made enormous demands on RDE capacity. Effectiveness and efficiency increased where sufficient permanent Danida staff with education sector specific expertise were in place.

Sustainability and impact

In line with its programme strategies, Danish support follows Afghan priorities. Ownership by MoE of Danida supported interventions contributes to sustainable alignment and partnership. In addition, interventions comply with Danish Government policy on "*Whole of Government approaches*". Consequently Government is seen by the Afghan public as the main education provider, the most important public service. Awareness of donor initiatives is encouragingly limited, strengthening sustainable ownership. School Shura also strengthen ownership, planning and liaison with the community, promoting education, reducing suspicion, etc. including in Helmand.

In more stable parts of the country there is evidence of economic progress contributing to stability and long-term development. Perceptions of improved prosperity are growing, though unevenly. There is steady confidence in the Afghan National Army and National Police and growing confidence in print media, provincial and community councils and other forms of local government, indicating sustainable stability and progress. There is a respect for free speech and exchange of opinion (e.g. through the Loya Jirga).

Support to central and provincial planning units is important for targeting and sustainable development of education services as well as measurement of performance. The capacity of the EMIS unit to make projections of education need is developing and Danida has funded training and continues to pay staff supplements. There were questions over the reliability of data on need in 2004 and later, but recent improvements are encouraging. Sustainable capacity at provincial and district levels has yet to be developed. The deployment of Afghan TA or supplemented Afghan staff promotes national ownership and ensures skills are available within MoE. However, buying capacity is vulnerable to adjustments in donor support and of weak sustainability.

As noted, trends in female school attendance, sometimes in discouraging circumstances, are encouraging even in Helmand. Supply of female teachers is also expanding, which encourages sustainable female enrolment. Needs remains double the supply, however. Attendance at literacy classes continues to grow even in Helmand. Positive trends are reversible however, and sustained growth in enrolment trends relies on improved quality and opportunities for graduates to make use of learning when they leave school.

Recommendations and lessons learned

The evaluation presents six recommendations below. Each draws from various conclusions and links to lessons learned. In general, the recommendation is that Danida should continue to support education priorities in Afghanistan in those areas and through the modality that has been used to date. The programme support approach is the more appropriate as capacity in MoE has grown. The EIP provides the necessary basis for joint sector performance monitoring.

1. **Danida's on-budget modality reflected emerging aid effectiveness priorities, was appropriate and should be continued.** At the time of its application it was innovative and applied in a context of high risk (acknowledged in programme documentation). Nevertheless, the benefits outweighed the risk.

However, to reduce this risk, to implement policies underlying Danida's support strategy, to allow all stakeholders to draw more fully on experiences and lessons learned from the modality and programme implementation, the following recommendations should be introduced.

2. **To reduce risk and promote capacity development, it is recommended that documentation be kept more fully and in a form that facilitates use by managers in MoE, Danida and development partners.**

This was not always done and, at times, seriously threatened the value of the assistance. Moreover, at best, documentation referred more to activity and process than output. Management needs to focus more on planning and monitoring of outputs, targeting medium-term outcomes and eventual impact. This needs to be explicit in ToR of TA and managers and monitored as an important aspect of performance.

3. **For the host institution the maintenance of records in a form that focuses on results serves a strong capacity development purpose and should be given greater prominence. Counterpart managers should receive training and support in writing, keeping and using documented results, identification of significant expected outputs and setting realistic targets. MoE, provincial, district and school management still needs help to cost annual interventions and to report on performance and trends. It is recommended that Danida ensure that results-based management skills are included in the training programmes they currently support for MoE and PED staff. In addition, RDE education programme management should be strengthened and increased to ensure the assistance MoE receives is tailored to the monitoring task involved.**
4. **The use of the on-budget modality was intended to promote donor coordination. Plans for a Joint Sector Review are currently being developed, and it is recommended that this is capitalised on for explicit mapping of phased progress towards improved coordination including programme budgeting, capturing all annual donor and government contributions (funds and activities) to annual strategic plans. It is recommended that Danida develop an explicit results chain to show how programme activity will lead to the improved harmonisation and alignment of support. This should be done in collaboration with MoE and other donors, but needs to be both planned and monitored.**

5. Danida's further support to education quality at the level of systems, coordination and policy development is appropriate, consistent with the modality, in line with earlier planning, and plays to Danida's strengths in partnership and dialogue. It should continue to balance attention to urgent needs with support for long-term strategic planning. More explicit **benchmarking is needed to ensure these inputs translate into not just immediate outputs but medium-term outcomes** closer to beneficiaries, i.e. students, parents, etc.⁴ **Danida should support the further development by MoE of systems that record and report quality improvements at school level.**

6. It is recommended that **Danida should support rationalisation of the different TA and supplementation systems, either by provision of specialist advice to MoE, or through advocacy in Ministry/donor forums.** Performance of TA with counterpart development roles should be monitored against ToRs, preferably in collaboration with the HR department. Where funding is provided to government establishment staff, development of a single scheme with government-led reporting criteria should be established. Since it supports both, Danida should advocate a rationalisation of the roles of **the GMU and HRDB.**

4 For example, through support to MoE on follow up of issues raised in the 2006 report on textbooks.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the evaluation

Denmark has provided substantial development assistance to the reconstruction of Afghanistan since 2001, with the main purposes of contributing to national, regional and global security as well as to poverty reduction. It has been active in the education sector since 2003 and between 2003 and 2010 disbursed approximately Danish Kroner (DKK) 431 million (US Dollar (USD) 82 million at 5.24 DKK=1 USD) in support to Afghan education through bilateral programmes, including the efforts in the Helmand province, mainly through the bilateral education sector programmes. A relatively minor portion of funding has been given through other channels, e.g. through the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) and, in the early years, through UN organisations.

Denmark wishes to learn from the experience of development assistance to Afghanistan over the above period, and the Evaluation Department of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (EVAL) has, therefore, commissioned the current evaluation. The main purposes are to assess and document the contribution to results of the Danish support to education in Afghanistan and to contribute to the continued improvement of Danish support. It will also contribute to continued learning in relation to sector support in 'fragile' situations.

The main objectives of the evaluation are to assess the strategy, implementation and results of Danish support and to identify conclusions, lessons learned and forward-looking recommendations for continued support. The evaluation has used the DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability as a basis for assessments, while taking into consideration the context, including the security situation, in which the support is provided. This evaluation is one of two Danida evaluations concerning Danish support to different development cooperation activities in Afghanistan. The other evaluation covers the Region of Origin Initiative.

1.2 Structure of the Report

The report firstly sets out the methodology used for the evaluation including discussion of the underlying logic, and a description of the data collection tools and processes used during the evaluation. This is followed by chapters outlining the background to education in Afghanistan to the present day and an overview of Danish support to Afghan education in the past decade. Both include some analysis of the ongoing conflict situation.

These chapters are followed by an in-depth analysis of the Danida programmes: Primary Education Programme Support (PEPS 1) 2003-06; the extension from 2007 to 2008; the further extension from 2008 to 2010, and the current support through the (Danish) Education Support Programme to Afghanistan (D/ESPA) 2010-13. Each programme component (curriculum, textbooks, training, construction, management) is discussed in terms of the DAC evaluation criteria and the modality selected for delivery of Danish support. There are sections on Technical Assistance (TA) and on support activity in Helmand Province. This is followed by a chapter summarising the conclusions of the evaluation in answer to each of the Evaluation Questions (EQ) and Sub-evaluation Questions (SQ). The report ends with six key recommendations drawn from the analysis.

The report includes annexes and with a summary of the Terms of Reference (ToR), lists of documents consulted and persons interviewed and an organogram of the Ministry of Education (MoE).

1.3 Methodology

The ToR ask for an evaluation with a focus on results taking account of the context of historical isolation, poverty, fragmentation, fragility and insecurity and the causal chain leading to the results.

Danish support policy, as exemplified by the strategies detailed in programme documents, was to work through and strengthen host institutions, using an on-budget modality. Support relied on regular, documented results to guide joint programme management by the MoE and the Royal Danish Embassy (RDE). Planning and modifying activity would specify outputs, and programme outcomes. Immediate results would feed into next steps in the management process, keeping ownership with MoE and raising capacity.

The support strategy also assumed that use of Afghan public administration (a Ministry of Finance (MoF) account for Danish funds with earmarking of programme components) and MoE service delivery would contribute to national reconstruction. Where development partner (DP) support over the last 10 years has been provided off budget it has thereby undercut state capacity and missed the opportunity to strengthen legitimacy. To this extent it has reduced its assistance to the Afghan State. Danida's strategy specifically addressed this through its emphasis on use of government systems.

A further fundamental aspect of Danida's support strategy was the implementation of a two track approach referred to also in programme documents as "*interrelated strategic approaches*" (PEPS 1 p. 4 and Extension Document p. 6). This required attention not only to local, emergency intervention but also to long-term systems and policy development.

As an example of emergency intervention, the Education Materials component was to be given priority in the first year of programme operation (2003-04) and the largest portion of the budget. This was because a major investment was urgently required "*to establish the capacity for production on the scale and quality required for the new curriculum*"⁵. As noted, the need for books, even based on earlier, low estimates of demand, was huge.

A further aspect of Danida's programme strategy was the emphasis on harmonisation and alignment of support. These aspects, as shown in sustainability and ownership by the Afghan Government as well as collaboration with other donors would be built on documentation of shared strategy.

The approach taken by this evaluation also places a strong emphasis on documented results. Consistent with the logic of the support programme it draws on Results Based Management (RBM), a strategy focusing on outputs, outcomes and impacts. The basic technique in RBM is formulation of a results chain, mapping inputs and activities to produce intended results. The key distinction in RBM between inputs/activities and results places emphasis on measurement of the latter, where possible using indicators and targets. Also fundamental is the distinction between short-term **outputs** and longer-term **outcomes** and impact. The evaluation seeks to show the links between what was planned,

5 PEPS 1 Programme Document, 2003-06, p. 5.

what was carried out (inputs) and the immediate results (outputs), and the eventual broader outcomes. Where possible it also points to longer-term impact.

Evaluation approach and constraints

RBM principles are relevant to planning, management and evaluation of aid programmes⁶. Danish support to education in Afghanistan from 2003 was not informed explicitly by RBM, but logic in Danida's PEPS and ESPA depends explicitly on a similar results focus to guide programme management⁷. Planning and modifying activity to produce expected outputs leading to outcomes continue to be essential responsibilities of programme management. Programme management and the methodology used for this evaluation, though distinct, thus share an emphasis on documentation of results. In the former the documentation of results is to guide programme inputs and activity. In the latter, to draw broader conclusions against EQs grouped under the headings: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability and Impact. This chapter of the evaluation underlines the ways in which both management and evaluation rely on and make use of documentary evidence.

Security and time did not permit direct observation or statistical sampling of programme results. Interviews and visits allowed only an impression of the Afghan education system, although fact-finding and field visits in 2011 and 2012 included a mix of urban and rural areas in different regions with experience of different ethnic groups. During these visits informants at MoE, provincial and district education offices, schools, communities and teacher training colleges (TTCs) were interviewed; girls' schools were visited and issues of marginalisation discussed. Representatives of key NGOs and DPs were met (see Annex B). The interplay between education support and security issues in Helmand and elsewhere was discussed. During the 2011 field mission schools were sitting national exams meaning little observation of structured teaching or use of books or materials was possible. Data collection based on the EQs and SQs provided in the ToR, were used in the field mission. However, data on many indicators was not available (e.g. net and gross enrolment ratios (NER) and (GER), numbers of qualified teachers by year, etc.). Other constraints matched those for programme management:

- Frequent changes of staff in Government and DPs and weak institutional memory;
- Lack of continuity between international staff, including technical assistance (TA);
- Donor projects (including military) operating in the same technical area;
- Weak individual, institutional and data management and administrative capacity;
- Frequent reorganisation in Afghan government institutions;
- Changing patterns of security and stability throughout the country.

The evaluation, moreover, covered a period of more than 10 years. Technical and management reports covered a lengthy and unstable period. However, a comprehensive data-

6 See inter alia: Defining the role of evaluation vis-à-vis Performance Measurement in Results Based Management in the Development Cooperation Agencies: A Review of Experience, The Development Assistance Committee, Working Party on Aid Evaluation, 1999.

7 E.g. PEPS 1 Programme Document, 2003-06, paragraph 6 p. 1, paragraphs 41 and 45 p. 8.

base of over 800 documents was assembled and largely formed the basis for the evaluation.

Documentation for programme management and evaluation

Page 1 of the Executive Summary of the first PEPS 2003-06 specifies, *“Annual Work Plans and Budgets will serve as tools for determining and identifying next steps in each component of the programme”*. Given the fragile situation, weak capacity and lack of data records, management was always going to be a challenge. This was the risk inherent in the intervention logic. Flexibility in resource allocation linked to planning was part of the design, therefore, and Annual Reviews were to contribute to the constant feedback loop.

In addition to annual plans, budgets and reviews, the mechanisms consistently identified for management of Danida’s programmes were the Grants Management Unit (GMU) and the Steering Committee. Responsibilities of both are set out in detail in the 2003, 2007 and 2010 programme documents. They include widespread and comprehensive reporting, monitoring and accounting functions, including, in the case of the Steering Committee, approval of plans and budgets (annual and quarterly revisions if needed), annual and quarterly progress reports, ToR for annual audits, etc. The logic explained in the programme documents was that this would strengthen capacity, not only to manage Danida’s programmes, but for the education system in general⁸.

Moreover, through its key management function the GMU was intended to act as both a magnet and a coordination mechanism for other DP programmes. The assumption was that other donors would begin to provide funding through the GMU in the same way as Danida⁹. The modality selected for Danida’s Afghan education programmes, i.e. use of government systems with a degree of earmarking linked to management assistance, is described as on-budget support¹⁰. To increase fiduciary reliability funding was to be channelled to the MoE through a special bank account allowing the Finance Ministry (MoF) to withdraw money for utilisation by MoE, while MoE would report to the Danish Representation in Kabul on the use of funds and activities carried out. Danish aid would be a ‘test case’ to encourage harmonisation and alignment, a *“shift from parallel disbursement of their funds to channelling into the official Afghan system.”*¹¹ Thus documentation was fundamental to management and aid effectiveness.

Management as central to Danida’s modality

Host capacity and a strong monitoring framework are recognised as essential elements in deployment of an on-budget modality¹². And yet weaknesses in Afghan monitoring and management capacity were repeatedly acknowledged in documents throughout the period. For this reason, the development of management capacity in MoE (including planning and performance monitoring) was included as a formal component of the aid programme. To mitigate risk entailed by the on-budget modality, where institutions and

8 PEPS 1 Programme Document, p. 27 paragraph 151.

9 Explicitly stated in PEPS 1 Programme Document, p. 30 paragraph 163.

10 See Danida’s Guidelines for Programme Management, 2011 and earlier versions of documentation on Danish aid modality from 1994 and 2000.

11 PEPS 1 Programme Document 2003-06 p. 5.

12 Danish policy on host management and monitoring capacity has been developed and refined in official documentation at least since the Strategy for Danish Development Policy towards the year 2000, 1994. Documentation includes Guidelines for Programme Management Support, 1998, Partnership 2000, Guidelines for Programme Management, 2003 (1st version), 2006, 2007, 2009 and 2011, and Modalities for the Management of Danish Bilateral Development Cooperation, June 2005.

management were known to be fragile, substantial management capacity development was, and continues to be, essential.

The rationale for use of the on-budget modality included recognition of the importance of strengthening the Afghan state in provision of public services as part of national, economic and social reconstruction. Poverty reduction, social development and equity, including access by girls to education, are Afghan state policy and have also been strongly advocated by Danida from PEPS onward. Popular participation in governance as a means to build stability is a broad aim of Danish support, just as the drafting of coherent Afghan national policies and their presentation through local activities, building confidence in Government are also accepted as critical in this process.

Danida programme documents stress the need for strong links between national policy and local implementation including community participation in dialogue on location of school buildings, access to education for girls, promotion of training for female teachers and students, unified national curricula, systems for school management, etc. The Afghan and Danish Governments explicitly linked national policy and local realisations in a critical nation-building relationship.

And finally, Danida's support was always foreseen as a collaborative effort. Danida would not take sole responsibility for a sub-sectoral component, but would work with the Afghan Government and other donors. The development of a common policy framework was always essential, therefore. Danida's objectives were not simply to train teachers or to print textbooks, but to do these things within a unified national programme. This explains the stress on balance between policy development and urgent, local implementation, *"the inter-related strategic approaches (i) immediate action, and (ii) longer-term development"*.¹³ The availability of shared documentation was fundamental to the approach.

In sum, the management mechanisms identified in the PEPS programme documents together with associated documentation (accounts, reviews reports, plans, etc.) were foreseen as the basis of Danish support and continue to be essential for programme management and for broader system development. They were also essential to the evaluation. The meetings, records, reviews, etc, made possible and demonstrated the flexible budget allocation (inputs) in response to need as it becomes clearer, as data and reduced levels of conflict allow this to be specified; they provide a means to manage the funding risk, through transparency and accountability; at the level of outcomes they support confidence-building in government systems among other donors and the Afghan public, and they link immediate, local action to long-term national strategy for development and reconstruction¹⁴, and build sustainable capacity in MoE and government departments.

Limitations of the evaluation approach

Evaluation of Danida support, thus, depends on documentation (as well as institutional memory, informants' impressions, etc.) in the same way that the above management processes did and do. The conflict situation and weak institutional capacity in Afghanistan placed a serious burden on management of aid programmes. They also made evaluation difficult. But the fragile situation, weak institutional capacity and need for changes of strategy also made the role of management especially important. Constraints common to evaluation, aid and sector management include:

13 PEPS 1, 2003-06 Programme Document p. 4.

14 PEPS Extension 2007-08 Programme Document, para 68.

- Frequent changes of staff at all host government and DP institutions resulting in weak institutional memory;
- Lack of continuity of inputs from key international staff, including Technical Advisors (TA) (short periods in-country followed by leave);
- A tendency for several donor projects (including the aid activities implemented by military or associated mechanisms) to operate in the same technical area increasing the risk of duplication, fragmentation and increasing transaction costs;
- Uneven capacity in institutions and individuals;
- Frequent reorganisation of structures and responsibilities in Afghan government institutions;
- Changing patterns of security and stability throughout the country.

The evaluation itself examined a range of activities over a period stretching back more than 10 years. This extended time frame was a constraint. It was expected that documents and staff able to report on the technical and management processes of the early, unsettled periods would not be easy to find. Records and memories were bound to be uneven and possibly to reflect inputs rather than outputs, as was the case.

The evaluation managed to assemble a very large number of documents from a wide range of primary and secondary sources in Afghanistan and in Denmark. Filing systems had changed as had locations over the 10 year period. At times, documents had not been filed systematically or securely. Nevertheless, using triangulation of information sources and case studies, an overall picture of support to the sector was established as well as a more detailed appreciation of Danish interventions.

A change in the evaluation team between inception and the field work in Phase 3¹⁵ reduced the opportunity to arrange provincial visits, including to Helmand. Strict security requirements mean visits require considerable time to set up. Nevertheless, the evaluation team for the main field visits included members with past experience in country and in-house on Danish development aid. Personal contacts could thus be drawn on for both documentation and administrative support without compromising independence, and this proved of great help given the challenges of staff continuity at RDE.

The 2011 field mission also coincided with a 'Loya Jirga' in Kabul and a serious bomb attack, which increased security concerns and restricted movement. For these reasons, and to address issues of documentation particularly relating to the 2009-10 extension, further periods of field work were carried out in Copenhagen and in Afghanistan in March and April 2012. A visit was made to Helmand to provide additional details about interventions in the province.

Data collection

During the field mission instruments prepared earlier were refined and used to collect data and information. The document base was also greatly expanded as interviews took

15 Phases were: i. Preparation and fact finding; ii. Desk study; iii. Evaluation visit and field studies; iv. Final data analysis.

place and respondents provided records, minutes, reports, etc. A list of the main documents consulted is in Annex C. The full list extends well beyond this.

Standard data collection instruments were important because the team split into two groups to meet a larger number of people and visit a wider range of places. They were refined before and during the field mission in line with feedback. The full set:

1. Interview questions for DP and Embassy informants;
2. A questionnaire for NGOs;
3. Interview questions for MoE staff at central, provincial, district and school levels;
4. Classroom observation checklist with teacher interview questions (e.g. on adequacy of training received).

Selection of provinces for field visits was made with the help of Afghan nationals on the basis of security and feasibility to provide a mix of urban and rural areas in the different regions, north (Balkh Province), east (Laghman and Nangarhar Provinces), west (Herat Province) and central (Parwan Province and Kabul). This allowed some experience of different ethnic groups (Pashtun in Herat, Jalalabad, Kabul; Uzbek in Mazar e Sharif; Nuristani in Nangarhar and Hazara in Parwan) although these divisions are less distinct in practice than in theory. Girls' schools were included, and to some extent issues of marginalisation were explored. The interplay between education support and security issues in Helmand and elsewhere was discussed with informants from the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT), the Ministry, NGOs, Danida and other DPs, and on a four day visit to Lashkar Gar (including to schools). This allowed a balanced assessment of different perspectives. Capacity development during the evaluation was addressed by having a member of the Ministry's Research and Evaluation Unit (REU) join each of the provincial teams and by conducting a workshop for the REU at the end of the mission after the feedback presentation to the Ministry's senior leadership.

National experts provided exceptional support with logistics. The MoE's Planning Department gave invaluable assistance as well as providing documentation and responding to requests for further explanation between the team's visits to Afghanistan.

During the fact-finding and subsequent field visits conducted in mid and late 2011, and again in early 2012, informants at the MoE (17 central departments), provincial and district education offices (eight and four respectively), schools and communities (13), and TTCs (two) were interviewed in depth. Representatives from 27 separate non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and DPs were also interviewed (see Annex B). Discussions were also held with the Provincial Education Directors (PED) from Helmand and Kunduz and at the PRT in Helmand.

Short 'case studies' are included as Appendix H to this report (can be found on www.evaluation.dk). They provide an impression of the more immediate experience of education at local level. The evaluation spoke at length to teachers, principals and administrators on field visits about their experiences over the last decade and before and their hopes for their country and their students. All education staff showed committed pragmatism as well as an awareness of modern professional developments tempered by a realistic assessment of what is possible in Afghanistan.

Visit outlines were shared through Ministry staff with provincial offices so respondents were aware of questions the teams would ask. National experts distributed questions to NGO informants before the field mission. Responses were used to guide further investigation in interviews.

The data collection instruments were developed from indicators related to the 29 EQs and SQs. They ensured that judgements were quantified where possible. For example, the numbers of girls enrolled, female teachers trained, books printed, etc. are reported. However, information on many common indicators was not available or rarely utilised or referred to (e.g. net and gross enrolment ratios (NER) and (GER), numbers of qualified teachers by year, numbers of schools renovated annually, number of joint sector/donor reviews, number and type of project implementation unit (PIU), number of TA in management roles, etc.).

In practice, respondents were well-informed on current programmes and responsibilities, but fewer than expected were able to give details of broader trends, milestones, changes in management or evolution of policy or strategy. Consequently, analytical data had to be assembled from a number of different sources and that relating to the early years, was occasionally contradictory.

In many countries (including some with comparable levels of post-conflict development, ongoing insurgence, social break-down, weakness of management capacity, etc. – e.g. early 1990s Cambodia) basic information on past and present enrolment, repetition, drop out and promotion (by gender) is displayed in school offices. This was not the case in the few schools visited. Even locally, school-age populations were not known. Questions on these matters and on enrolment or completion rates could not be answered. In a few instances (e.g. Roodat District, Nangarhar Province) enrolment numbers were assembled, but analysis or explanation for changes in the rate of expansion had not been undertaken.

It was expected that there would be general, but not specific awareness of Danish support programmes, and this was the case. Few respondents could give details of particular initiatives supported by Danida, and those related to present or recent past programmes (e.g. support for development of the Global Partnership for Education, (GPE) Program Document; construction of schools in Helmand). Since recent Danida support has been for broad programme areas and the amount of earmarking has been greatly reduced there was, as expected, little attribution, and this was regarded as positive by the evaluation.

At the time of the field mission schools were involved in national exams. Little observation of structured teaching was possible, therefore. Systematic investigation of teacher performance was not possible, but from the few classes observed (and from informants), even where textbooks were available, teaching was teacher focused. So questions on the use of books or materials could not be answered, though important information on textbook availability was found. From admittedly limited observation, but also from reports by interviewees, cases of students working independently are rare, (although not impossible to find, e.g. in Bibi Hawa High School, Jalalabad, see case study in Annex H).

2 Education in Afghanistan

2.1 The cultural context

Afghanistan was always a crossroads of civilisations, peoples of different origins and ethnic backgrounds. Islam came to Afghanistan during the seventh century and ever since has provided the spiritual, philosophical and cultural context for the Afghan people. The Islamic tradition permeated every aspect of Afghan society and way of life. Religious leaders have been able to influence the political, social and cultural life of the communities, thus, educational development during much of its history reflected the religious and traditional nature of the society.

In 2011, the Minister of Education wrote: *“Our vision for the Afghan education system is to develop human capital based on Islamic principles and respect for human rights by providing equitable access to quality education for all to enable them to actively participate in sustainable development, economic growth, stability and security of Afghanistan”*¹⁶.

2.2 The development of education

Afghanistan’s education indicators have always been low (literacy rates have never risen above 25% in the past) and the central state’s role in the provision of education has been limited. In the 1930s, the majority of rural communities had no schools and education took place at home and in the mosques. By 1940, with an estimated population of about 10 million people, there were 60,000 pupils in 324 schools with 1,990 teachers throughout Afghanistan.¹⁷ While centralised state support for a broad secular education increased throughout the 20th century, it was concentrated in the cities and major towns. The first formal boys school (Habibia) was established in 1904 in Kabul. It took almost two decades to establish the first formal school (Asmat) for girls in Kabul in 1921.

The constitution of 1964 made basic education compulsory, but the country never succeeded in establishing a strong system. Agencies such as the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) supported planning, the establishment of primary schools, teacher training and adult education. Turkey, France, Egypt, Germany, Japan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics provided assistance in secondary, technical and higher education. However, in 1979, when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, the overall literacy rate was estimated at 18% for males and 5% for females.

The Soviet invasion was followed by more than two decades of conflict. An estimated 80% of school buildings were damaged or destroyed and qualified teachers were killed or left the country. During this period, two education systems operated in Afghanistan: one provided by the Soviets and the other organised by Mujahedeen groups with Western backing.

16 Message from H.E. the Minister at MoE web-site, www.moe.af/en/page/2019 2011.

17 Samady, Saif R. Education and Afghanistan Society in the twentieth century, UNESCO. Paris, 2001 p. 10.

The Soviet effort to provide education was characterised by literacy campaigns in both urban and rural areas. Such programs provided the opportunity to instil pro-Marxist values. However, rural Afghans often resisted attempts to use the education system to enforce social change which contradicted religious and social values and threatened traditional ways of life. Resistance activists regarded schools and teachers as the messengers of an alien ideology¹⁸.

The end of Soviet occupation in 1989 failed to result in tangible improvements. Instead, factional fighting between Mujahedeen parties destroyed the remaining infrastructure and further delayed the reconstruction of the country.

In 1993, prior to the Taliban take over of Afghanistan, approximately 1,000 of the 2,200 schools were supported by international assistance channelled through NGOs. These served about 25% of the estimated one million children enrolled in primary education. In Pakistan, NGOs supported the primary education of 90,000 Afghan children in refugee camps.¹⁹

Between 1996 and 2001, the Taliban assumed control and the formal education system was crippled; their ban on female participation compounded problems by significantly reducing support available from the international donor community.

The Taliban further dismantled the education system by converting the existing formal and non-formal schools across the country into Madrassas under the direction of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Only limited services were provided by MoE.²⁰ By 2001, after 23 years of war, education indicators were some of the worst in the world and the MoE needed to be rebuilt from scratch.²¹

2.3 The administration of education

Provision has greatly improved since 2001. According to education management information system (EMIS) figures for 2010, more than seven million children were enrolled in all schools, around 39% or 2.7 million of them girls; usable classrooms were increased from fewer than 1,000 in 2002 to over 71,000 in 2010²². The number of schools under MoE ownership has increased by approximately 10,000: In 2002, there were 3,400 schools in MoE ownership and for 2010, the MoE Annual Progress Report indicates the MoE owning 13,363 schools (including 12,421 general education and 626 Islamic education). There is an over eight-fold increase in the number of teachers (93,000 new teachers have been recruited and trained). To promote ownership of the education system by communities, 10,876 school Shuras (community education committees) have been established.²³ Millions of textbooks have been printed based on a new curriculum, according to the 2010 MoE Annual Progress Report.

The MoE is responsible for managing and delivering both formal, and non-formal education (the latter covering “*multiple approaches*” to literacy, training, etc. through classes and materials outside the formal state system) through the following programs:

- General and Islamic Education;
- Curriculum Development and Teacher Education;

18 American Institute for Research, Education and the role of NGOs in Emergencies, Afghanistan 1978-2002, USAID 2006 p. 4.

19 Ibid p. 5.

20 Ibid.

21 Website Ministry of Education <http://moe.gov.af>.

22 MoE EMIS figures for 2010 provided November 2011.

23 Afghanistan Ministry of Education assessed November 2011.

- Technical and Vocational Education and Training;
- Literacy;
- Education Governance and Administration.

General and Islamic Education is the single largest programme accounting for between 75% and 80% of the recurrent state budget for education, mainly due to salaries.

Territorially, Afghanistan is divided into 34 provinces, frequently grouped into three zones (Northern, Central and Southern Mainland Afghanistan). The MoE has a PED in each province. Kabul city is also an administrative unit and has the status of a province, thus increasing the number of sub-offices from 34 to 35. As noted in a WB report on administrative structures in 2007²⁴ “the Central Statistics Office considered that there were 364 rural districts and 34 provincial urban centers, some of which are subdivided into *nahia* or urban districts” (p. vi). Local administration is evolving and the number of District Education Departments (DED) is currently almost 400. The latest Ministry organogram²⁵ is shown in Annex D²⁶ on p. 148.

Other ministries apart from MoE are also involved in education. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled is responsible for parts of technical and vocational education (TVET), and the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) is responsible for university programmes. In addition, the Ministries of Defence and Interior Affairs run literacy courses for their officers and soldiers. The role of international donors in the sector is described in the following chapters.

2.4 Education and society

The socio-economic and political situation shows variation within and across the country's 34 provinces and respective districts. The GDP in Afghanistan has grown steadily since 2003/04, and the country has had an average growth of 9.1% over the period since then, though with high levels of volatility. The main drivers have been agricultural production and private consumption. The former is subject to weather fluctuations, global prices, the particularities of the narco-economy, and dependence on external consumption and on- and off-budget donor grants²⁷. In the latter, growth in the security economy and higher non-security spending by donors represent a significant contribution²⁸. In 2010/2011 international aid was about USD 15.7 billion, or about the same size as nominal GDP.

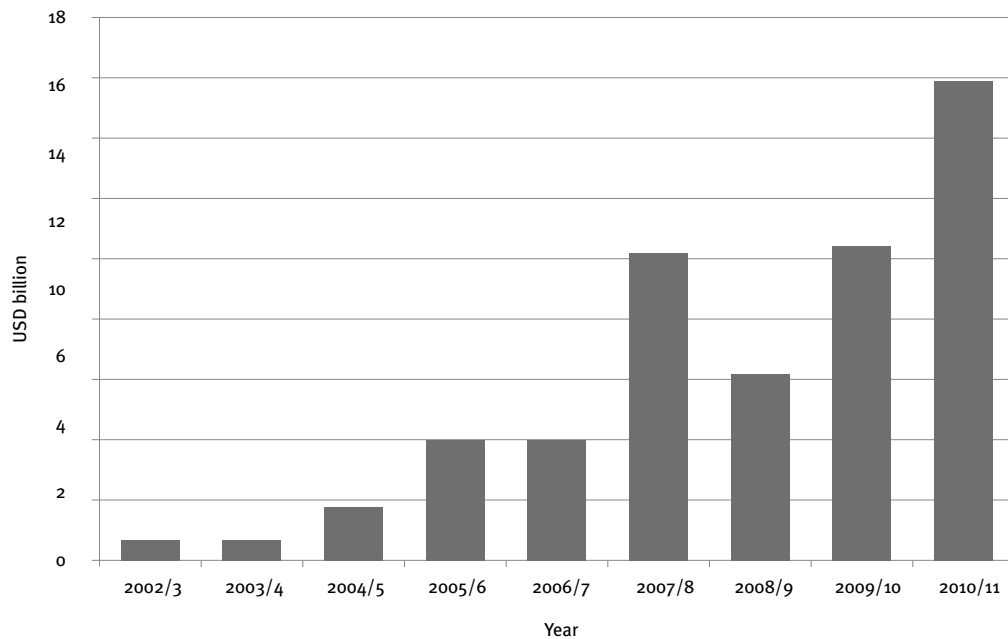
24 Service Delivery and Governance at the Sub-national Level in Afghanistan, World Bank, 2007.

25 Results Monitoring Unit (RMU), MoE, 2011.

26 Not all administrative units are shown in the overall version, e.g. the key Monitoring and Evaluation Unit. Some units within General Departments only appear in a separate organogram for each department, e.g. The General Department of Planning and Evaluation has three sub-departments. 1) EMIS, 2) Strategic Planning and Policy Formulation, and 3) School Establishment and Coordination; etc.

27 “Afghanistan Economic Update”, October 2011 (World Bank), and “Transition in Afghanistan – Looking Beyond 2014”, November 21, 2011. (Ministry of Finance and the World Bank). See also <http://go.worldbank.org/EEXQKXSB00>.

28 In 2010/2011, this largely externally fuelled private consumption contributed some 82% of real growth.

Figure 1 Afghanistan's GDP 2002-11 (in billion USD)

Source: *Transition in Afghanistan – Looking Beyond 2014*, Ministry of Finance and the World Bank (2011).

Ten years after the re-engagement of international cooperation Afghanistan is still one of the poorest countries in the world with an estimated income per capita of USD 900 in 2010 and unemployment of almost 35%²⁹. The country ranks number 172 on the Human Development Index (HDI) out of 187 countries with comparable data³⁰. In 2009, when Afghanistan was registered in the HDI for the first time, the country was ranked number 181 out of 182 countries³¹. According to the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment 2007/08 only 27% of the population had access to clean drinking water, 15% of the population had no access to basic health services, 8 % of the countries children under five were suffering from acute malnutrition, and 54 % of the population were either directly affected by or vulnerable to food insecurity³².

The country still has the highest rate of maternal mortality in the world, the second highest rate of under-five mortality, and continues to have severe problems with malnutrition reflected in the world's highest rate of stunting³³. But, there is also notable progress on some of the indicators. In 2011 48% of the population had access to clean water, i.e. a doubling from 2007/08³⁴. 72,500 women are presently acquiring literacy skills at 2900 literacy centres in 34 provinces³⁵.

29 CIA World Fact Book <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html> (accessed 12.01.12).

30 The HDI provides a measure of three basic dimensions of human development: Health, education, and income. Afghanistan's HDI is 0.398, giving the mentioned ranking. <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/AFG.html>.

31 UNDP: http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_20072008_EN_Indicator_tables.pdf.

32 The National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment 2007/2008 was conducted by the Central Statistics Organisation and the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), with support from the European Union. It is based on statistical data collected from August 2007 through August 2008.

33 UNICEF: "Fast Facts – 2011".

34 UNICEF: "Fast Facts – 2011".

35 Briefing from UNICEF 25.11.11.

Afghanistan is committed to Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to “ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling (Universal Primary Education (UPE))” and to “promote gender equality and eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and to all levels of education no later than 2015”³⁶. However, the decades of conflict have obliged the country to set a revised target date of 2020.³⁷ Afghanistan has also signed and ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, accepting education as a basic right for all children.

2.5 Education and conflict

This section draws on interviews with stakeholders in Afghanistan, discussions at the University of York 2011 with Sultan Barakat (Professor at the University of York, with extensive field experience in Afghanistan), Fransesc Vendrell (Former European Union (EU) and United Nations (UN) Representative to Afghanistan), and Mohammed Haneef Atmaar (former Minister of Education in Afghanistan), as well as on the host of written material outlined in the references of the section.

Education is seen as an important means of building stability, and assistance to the sector draws on the perception that “*an educated population is one of the most powerful foundations for fostering peace and mitigating conflict*”³⁸. Article 43 of the Afghan constitution (adopted in January 2004) states that education is the right of all citizen (both men and women), and up to BA level, it is free of charge.³⁹

The familiar drivers and obstacles to development in Afghanistan have been known for years. Others have developed as a reaction to continued international military engagement. The ongoing conflict emerges from a combination of historical factors and other elements: the country’s geopolitical relevance, natural hazards, a multi ethnic population, and a strongly urban biased distribution of wealth. Weakness of Government, exclusion and political marginalisation of key actors and the presence of international forces ensure a mix that is “*neither a singular conflict nor a phenomenon of anti versus pro-government elements*”⁴⁰.

Violence continues to be a major problem – despite military successes for Government and international troops⁴¹. In 2008 insecurity spread from the border areas with Pakistan and isolated parts of the south. Since then it has become widely acknowledged, that military success alone is no longer possible, and political solutions must be found⁴². The continued violence has undermined efforts to provide protection in affected areas, and almost 50% of the population is currently reported as insecure⁴³. This has direct implications for delivery of social services like education.

36 Afghanistan has committed to fulfil MDGs by 2020.

37 Ministry of Education, Response to EFA global monitoring report – 2011, op. cit. p. 1.

38 Adam Smith: Afghanistan Education Sector Analysis (2010).

39 Abdullah Qazi, Education. Afghanistan online www.afghan-web.com updated August 29 2010.

40 Sultan Barakat et al “A Strategic Conflict Analysis of Afghanistan” (2008) p. I v.

41 Report of the United Nations Secretary-General: The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (March 2011).

42 Minna Jarvenpaa in “Making peace in Afghanistan – the missed political strategy”, February 2011 p. 2.

43 Proposal to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). Ministry of Education (2011).

The evaluation does not attempt to provide a full context and conflict analysis. However, the table below⁴⁴ provides an overview of fault lines, challenges, and key actors. Fault lines are seen as underlying divisions that may remain dormant, but may become the points of fracture along which different groups will align themselves in confrontation. In this sense ‘Challenges’ may be seen as priorities in reducing tendencies to social fragmentation. Components in the pattern of conflict in Afghanistan are not all equally relevant when it comes to the role of education, but are useful references when assessing risk and potential linked to social interventions⁴⁵.

Table 3 Suggested fault lines, challenges, and actors

Fault lines	Challenges	Actors
International factors:	Security:	The National Government
Geopolitical interests – the western-led “war on terror”	Military intervention needs achievable objectives before main ISAF Partners withdraw by 2014	International forces (ISAF)
Regional interests in the country (Pakistan, India and Iran)	Afghan Security Forces (ANP & ANA) must provide a satisfactory level of security to the population	Regional Governments
	Government need to be seen to balance regional interests to build security	International & Regional Corporations,
		International security companies with interest in insecurity
Historical factors:	Government legitimacy:	Anti-Governmental elements (AGE’s), led by or affiliated with Taliban, Pakistan Taliban and al-Qaeda fighting against Afghan Government and international forces
Weak links between Centre and Periphery	Government must generate trust among population	Warlords fighting for control of resources including drugs
Weak capacity and legitimacy of Government (Security Forces as well as Civil Government structures)	Peace process needs to be more inclusive	Local communities and population – not a homogenous group
Urban biased development policies	Implementation of development strategies needs to be seen as successful and equitable	
Corruption	Geographic and ethnic rivalries require constant political attention	
Rivalries between Regions (eg: Ethnicity)	Need to mitigate anti ISAF sentiments fuelling Taliban sympathies	
Control over resources (presently in particular Narcotics)	Need to build government capacity to lead, manage, represent whole population	
	Need to offset youth of leadership	
	Strong conservative elements and sentiments within communities and across the country to be taken account of in all initiatives	
	Lack of results reinforces lack of popular confidence in the “National Project” leading to increased risk of conflict	

44 Compiled from various sources including: Stuart Gordon: *The United Kingdom’s Stabilisation Model and Afghanistan: The Impact on Humanitarian Actors* (ODI 2010), Minna Jarvenpaa: *Making peace in Afghanistan – The Mission Political Strategy* (US Institute of peace 2011), lectures by Fransesc Vendrell, Mohammed Haneef Atmaar and Mike Smith (at University of York 2011).

45 Sultan Barakat et. al. provides a comprehensive analysis of the conflict in Afghanistan in “A Strategic Conflict Analysis of Afghanistan” (November 2008). Other references include Gilles Dorransoro in “Afghanistan at the Breaking Point” (2010), Stuart Gordon: “The United Kingdom’s Stabilisation Model and Afghanistan: The Impact on Humanitarian Actors” (ODI 2010), and Minna Jarvenpaa in “Making Peace in Afghanistan – the missed political strategy” (February 2011).

According to the Asia Foundation (AF), 10% of the Afghan people consider access to education the most important problem at both national and local levels. Access to education and widespread illiteracy are also rated as the biggest problems facing women today⁴⁶.

The issues surrounding security, peace and education interact in a highly complex manner, as do the actors outlined in the table above. Stakeholders – the Afghan Government, international and national security forces, educational institutions, communities, students, and governments of the international donor community – have a range of interests, capacities and motives pertaining to these issues. Some of these are outlined below.

The Afghan state is still very much based on central government structures and local government is still being built up. Government legitimacy continues to be challenged in particular in three areas: i) its ability to provide services, ii) corruption, and iii) its ability to maintain security⁴⁷. The strength of links between Government and the general population depends on these factors and perception of the state as an important part of people's lives is only slowly being established.

In areas where the international military and PRT provide educational assistance, often playing a significant role in rehabilitating critically needed infrastructure which Government has been unable to deliver, schools may be more vulnerable to attack, precisely because they have been constructed by foreign forces⁴⁸.

International donors and aid partners have provided much support to education over the past 10 years. However, where this has been channelled through direct partnerships outside the Afghan Government⁴⁹ it has thereby compromised state capacity and missed the opportunity to increase legitimacy. To this extent it has failed to address the conflict dynamics outlined and reduced its assistance to the Afghan State.⁵⁰

Over the decade Government and donors have begun to address this issue through broader sector approaches – at least within education. One stakeholder summarised this: Until the end of the decade the selection of an organisation's interventions was largely decided at community level. For example, Danish Assistance to Afghan Rehabilitation and Technical Training (DAARTT) would arrive at decisions on school construction through dialogue at community level. In 2009 the approach to construction shifted, and decisions of location were largely driven by MoE – *“a shift from bottom-up, to top-down”*, reflecting the importance of pursuing national strategies and also *“the aspiration of the Government and donors (like Danida) to use school construction, education as a visible sign of state building – the Government's capacity to outreach”*⁵¹.

46 The Asia Foundation: Afghanistan in 2011 – A Survey of the Afghan People. The survey also notes that satisfaction with the availability of most basic facilities and public service has been increasing over time, reaching its highest levels in 2011 for a range of services including the availability of education for children, and the proportion of respondents who identify lack of education as the biggest problem in the country has fallen significantly since 2009 to 10% in 2011.

47 Sultan Barakat et al., “A Strategic Conflict Analysis of Afghanistan” November 2008 p. 28.

48 Adam Smith International: Afghanistan Education Sector Analysis (2010).

49 Denmark being a noteworthy exception to this.

50 See, for example, Sultan Barakat et al., “A Strategic Conflict Analysis of Afghanistan” November 2008 p. 53.

51 Meeting with DAARTT on 27.11.11. DAARTT noted that the strong links to local communities had been developed as part of the direct partnership with DACAAR.

Another challenge for Government is that data suggests poverty is not necessarily linked to areas most in conflict. Relatively large parts of international aid and attention are politically and strategically targeted at conflict areas, e.g. through PRTs. The result is that populations in the more stable and at times poorer areas feel disadvantaged. While it is not clear if this threatens stability in poorer areas, it may affect perceptions of Government ability to deliver services⁵².

Attacks on service providers, e.g. teachers, have been a problem⁵³. The evaluation team was told that these and attacks on schools have declined, but it has been difficult to access data on this. UNICEF is planning further related studies with CARE, which should provide useful information for Government and donors.

Related to this issue, there is a need for greater nuance in analysis of resistance to education, and hence also in the response. The label ‘Taliban’, for example, is used loosely by international media to refer simply to more conservative attitudes⁵⁴. And yet there are many areas unaffected by conflict, where there is significant resistance to education, in particular of girls who have reached puberty. Attitudes also vary between different ethnic groups.

UNICEF also explained that, although the Taliban is a challenge to the introduction of education, there are several instances where local communities in Taliban led areas have actually requested support for education. A recent report from the Afghan Analyst Network also indicates signs the Taliban and Government are increasingly finding common ground on education, which in principle should point towards fewer attacks on schools⁵⁵.

The lesson is clear, that actors interact in dynamic and highly complex manners. Performance monitoring and shared analyses are increasingly important to a balanced approach, supporting education through central initiatives realised by pragmatic complementary local solutions⁵⁶.

2.6 The future

Despite immense progress many challenges lie ahead. The NER is estimated (by the 2007-08 National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment) at only 52%. The high numbers of out-of-school children and youth, gender and rural/urban disparities, low quality of education and administrative limitations are yet to be overcome. Shortages of female teachers inhibit girls’ enrolment and there remains, in many areas though by no means all, a cultural bias against educating women.⁵⁷ An estimated 11 million Afghans are still illiterate⁵⁸.

52 Ministry of Education and UNICEF in the Proposal to Global Partnership for Education (GPE) for a Catalytic Contribution towards Implementation of Afghanistan’s Education Interim Plan, 2011 (p. 18), drawing on data from among others the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) 2007/2008.

53 Care: “Knowledge under Fire” (November 2009).

54 Meeting with UNICEF 25.11.11.

55 Antonio Giustozzi and Claudio Franco: *The Battle for the Schools – the Taleban and State Education* (2011).

56 In the report “Understanding and Addressing Context in Rural Afghanistan” (December 2010) AREU concludes that: “A programming approach that builds on what exists is more likely to achieve sustainable benefits than one that ignores it”.

57 Qazi, *op. cit.*

58 United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) March 1008, cited in Qazi, *op. cit.*

Even success brings challenges. Schools must operate in multiple shifts due to increasing enrolments and limited classroom space. Reopening and rebuilding schools entails staffing and recurrent budget costs. Reopened schools lack proper facilities and qualified teachers. Meeting rising demand and expectations stretches limited resources and requires difficult management decisions on priorities.

3 Danish support to the education sector in Afghanistan 2003-10

3.1 Danish aid to Afghanistan before the 2000s

Earlier Danish assistance to Afghanistan in the 1990s and early 2000s is not part of the present evaluation and is included only for background. Danish assistance following the withdrawal of the Soviet troops in 1989 and during the 1990s was characterised by humanitarian assistance and development cooperation through civil society partners. This was the case for support provided under the traditional humanitarian and NGO budgets as well as under Danida's budgets for bilateral cooperation⁵⁹.

Prior to 9.11.2001 and into the subsequent period with increased political, military, and development engagement in Afghanistan, Danish assistance to the country came largely through NGOs such as Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR)⁶⁰, the Danish Afghanistan Committee⁶¹, Mission East⁶², and other international partners such as UNICEF and UNHCR. During this period, cooperation with the Danish NGOs, built strong competencies in the water, sanitation, health and rural livelihoods sectors.

DACAAR & DAARTT

DACAAR was established in 1984, working with Afghan refugees in refugee camps in Pakistan. The programme gradually developed and its focus became water supply. In 1990 it started a school construction department, to work in communities where it was already engaged in water supply. Geographical focus was for several years in the east of the country. The approach was to construct or refurbish school structures where schooling was already happening, but where the physical frame for education was absent/or worn out. In 2004 the DACAAR School Rehabilitation Unit was separated out and established as a separate NGO, Danish Assistance to Afghan Rehabilitation and Technical Training (DAARTT). From 2003 Afghan NGO legislation changed, and international NGOs were not allowed to construct directly. However, a number, including DAARTT, were given a waiver and the organisation was allowed to continue to construct schools until 2012, when a new waiver will be applied for.

The evaluation team noted that DACAAR's role in water management was regularly mentioned in meetings during the field missions⁶³. The sectoral shift to education and from working through NGOs to collaboration with Government marked a further

59 E.g. Appropriation acts (aktstykker) 115 from 1999 and 021 from 2001: Oversigt over aktstykker fremsendt til Folketingets Finansudvalg, Økonomityrelsen <http://www.oes-cs.dk/aktstykker> and home page of the Danish parliament.

60 <http://www.dacaar.org>.

61 <http://www.afghan.dk>.

62 <http://www.miseast.org>.

63 E.g. Deputy Minister Patman (Ministry of Education) underlined in a meeting on the 20.11.11 the importance and quality of the Danish support through DACAAR in providing access to clean water and functional water management. Minister Patman stressed that *"DACAAR had managed to transfer itself towards a national organisation. It is a model that should be followed by others"*.

change in strategic direction for Danish aid, which had begun in the mid 1990s⁶⁴. Funding through UN and NGO partners with interventions in e.g. health, water management and livelihoods, has continued as part of the support targeting returning refugees, under the Regions of Origin Initiative (ROI)⁶⁵.

3.2 Danish assistance to education from 2001

Danida provided a total of DKK 2.5 billion over the period 2001-10 (USD 460 million) for all sectors. Danish development aid to Afghanistan for the period 2009-12 is approx. DKK 450 million (USD 83 million approx.) p.a. Danida is the 7th largest donor to Afghanistan, the largest being the USA, which spent USD 84 billion over the decade.

The main budget allocations for Afghanistan in the period covered by the evaluation include funding under a number of Appropriation Acts ("Aktstykker")⁶⁶. The following table summarises these, the principal modalities used and their main focus over the period. Supplementary allocations were also made. For example, an addendum to the 2008 Partnership agreement was signed in 2010, expanding the budget by DKK 260 million, making total Danish support DKK 750 million for the period 2008-12⁶⁷.

Table 4 Appropriation Acts (Aktstykker) from 2002 to 2008

No.	Year	Title	Million DKK	Main modality	Focus
123	2002	Humanitær bistand til Afghanistan og afghanske flygtninge i nærområdet (Humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and Afghan refugees in the region of origin) ⁶⁸	785 (250 for humanitarian aid)	NGOs and multilateral partners ⁶⁹	1) Administrative system, 2) Democratic institutions and human rights, 3) Rural areas, agricultural production, access to clean water and sanitation, 4) Social sectors including education, 5) Regional cooperation.
159	2005	Afghanistan – støtte til genopbygnings-bistand m.v. (Afghanistan – support to the reconstruction assistance etc.)	670 (160 for humanitarian aid)	National Priority Programmes, General Budget Support, and Sector Budget Support	1) Democratisation and Human Rights; 2) Public Sector Reform; 3) Education (incl. curriculum development, teacher training, books for primary school, school construction and reform in MoE); 4) Rural development. 5) Civil – Military Cooperation (aid in areas with Danish troops); 6) Integration of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) ⁷⁰ .

64 "A Developing World", Danida, March 1994.

65 This support is subject to a separate evaluation undertaken simultaneously with the present evaluation.

66 In Danish administration an Appropriation Act ("Aktstykke") is the term for a request for funds from a Minister to the Parliament's Finance Committee. An approved request is referred to as an "Akt".

67 Addendum to Partnership Agreement between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Government of Denmark 2008-10. (2010).

68 Danish text translated by the evaluation.

69 Appropriation Act 123 (2002).

70 Appropriation Act 159 (2005).

020	2008	Afghanistan, bistandsindsats i overensstemmelse med regeringens strategi for "Den danske indsats i Afghanistan 2008-12" Afghanistan, development assistance following the Government strategy for "The Danish Assistance in Afghanistan 2008-12"	490 (including aid interventions in Helmand)	"Whole of Government approach", targeted Education Sector Budget Support	Integrated political, military, and civilian effort: State Building, Education, and Improvement of Living Conditions ⁷¹
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Source: Appropriation Acts.

Over the period, therefore, there was an evolution in priorities and modalities towards state building including an increased focus on education. Furthermore, it is noted that increased efforts were made to link Danish civilian assistance in Afghanistan to Denmark's military engagement in the country, e.g. by a complementary effort focusing (up to 15 % of the total Danish assistance) on civilian activities in Helmand after 2008⁷².

The following is an overview of Danish education aid programmes from 2003.

PEPS 1 2003-06

The Draft Identification Report from 2002⁷³ states that support is to address the main priorities of the Afghan Government, in particular along four streams: Teacher Development, Physical Infrastructure, Curriculum Development and Provision of Education Materials. The case is also made for various forms of TA⁷⁴. In the subsequent appraisal report it is recommended, that the four components are supplemented with a fifth: "*Management and HRD*"⁷⁵.

The Identification Report notes that "*The (Education) Policy Document is expected to provide the common framework for action and support for all donor and Government partners' support in educational development in the country (and that the policy principles) are in line with the "World Declaration on Education for All"*"⁷⁶. It was recommended that the bulk of the Danish support for the MoE should be on-budget support through the system of public administration, with a relatively high degree of earmarking. A GMU and a Steering Committee would ensure flexibility in Danish support.

Finally, the first bilateral agreement on education, the Primary Education Programme Support (PEPS) 2003 to 2006⁷⁷, had five components: Curriculum Development, Teacher Development, Provision of Education Materials, Physical Infrastructure and Administrative Reform in the MoE.

71 "Denmark's Engagement in Afghanistan 2008-12" produced jointly by the MFA and the Ministry of Defense.

72 In 2005 the same was the case when Denmark had troops around Faizabad in Badakhshan.

73 It has been difficult to locate material (or any institutional memory) that can outline the basis upon which the decision to pursue a strategy of supporting education was made.

74 Draft Identification Mission Report – Future Danish Support to Education, Afghanistan, October 2002 (pp. 5-13).

75 Rejserapport vedr. Appraisal af uddannelsesstøtte til Afghanistan (26.4 - 7.5.2003).

76 Draft Identification Mission Report – Future Danish Support to Education, Afghanistan, October 2002 (p. 3).

77 The document was signed by the two Governments in 2003.

Extension of the programme 2007-08

The Annual Review of PEPS from 2005 recommended that the programme be extended beyond 31st December 2006, and that the extension should run to the end of 2009. Furthermore the Review recommended reducing the number of components from five to three, providing an argument that *“Curriculum development has been funded by UNICEF and UNESCO – hence reason to reconsider whether Danida should continue, (and that) USAID and JICA are heavily supporting teacher education – hence also a reason to reconsider whether Danida should continue with teacher education”*⁷⁸.

In 2007 the support to education was extended for a shorter period 2007-08 with a budget of DKK 72 million. The extended programme was expanded to cover all grades, i.e. 1 to 12 with additional TA. The focus was on three components: General Education (including i.a. support to the MoE as well as support to the continued construction of schools), Curriculum Development including printing of books and Education Administration Reform.

Support to Helmand from 2008

In line with the Helmand Plan, an important share of approximately 15% of Denmark's development support to Afghanistan was channelled to Helmand Province, where support was focussed on: security, state building, education, living conditions, and cross-cutting issues⁷⁹. Included within this programme was funding for construction of school and other education infrastructure. Support to education in Helmand Province was seen as part of the stabilisation objective, and two education advisors were posted in the province to contribute to the coordination of the overall international effort in the education areas under PEPS and to promote capacity building at the provincial level. The aim has been to complement military efforts in the province.⁸⁰ Over time, Danish support in Helmand has increasingly been integrated into the overall Danish bilateral support programme to education in Afghanistan⁸¹.

Extension of funding for education for the period 2009-10⁸²

As part of the implementation PEPS 1 2007-08, a review was carried out in late 2008. The Review Mission recommended urgent formulation of an intermediate phase of 15 months of the same magnitude as the previous one to be followed by a further, longer phase, covering the next three years⁸³.

Subsequently the Danish Embassy in Kabul submitted a proposal for continued funding of DKK 92.5 million. The relevant documents did not follow Danida procedures or formats. The Technical Department's Desk Appraisal, however, noted the difficult circumstances in Afghanistan, and recommended *“the Proposal be approved with the proviso that the Proposal be further developed with the information and analyses of the following issues by*

78 PEPS Annual Review 2005, p. 19.

79 “Denmark in Helmand 2008”, p. 8.

80 “Denmark in Helmand 2008”.

81 This process will continue under ESPA to 2013 in support to NESP-2/IP with funds managed by the MoE and the PED.

82 Executive Summary – Extension of Danida funding till March 2010 (un-dated – but presumably January 2009).

83 Desk Appraisal of “Request for Extension of Funding by Denmark to the Education Sector in Afghanistan for the period January 2009 - December 2010”, Danida's Technical Services – BFT (2009).

May 1 2009⁸⁴. After extensive enquiry the evaluation finds there is inadequate documentation for this period. Danish support activities continued, however.

ESPA 2010-13

Preparations for the ESPA⁸⁵-programme, which covers the period April 2010 to March 2013, began at the end of 2009. The programme is aligned with Afghan Government strategy, and was linked to the emerging National Education Strategic Plan (NESP)-2, with agreements signed in 2010. Revision of NESP led to development of the Education Interim Plan EIP 2010-13, and a revised version of the ESPA, signed in April 2011. ESPA support is available for all of MoE's five programmatic areas. The three that correspond principally to earlier areas of Danish support are: General Education, Curriculum Development, and Educational Administration Reform. The majority of funding continues to be channelled through the MoF to MoE as on-budget support. The period is outside the principal scope of the evaluation, and is mentioned with some observations and recommendations to complete the picture of Danish support to education in Afghanistan.

The following table summarises Danish funding over the whole period:

Table 5 Programmes and budget allocations

Programme	Agreement date	Years	DKK	USD ⁸⁶
Primary Education Support Programme (PEPS 1)	4.12 2003	2003-06 (Extended to March 2007)	110 million	15.7 million
Extension (including grades 1-12)	17.5 2007	2007-08	72 million	12.6 million
Helmand Schools and Dormitories	19.11 2008	2008 onwards	34.2 million	6 million
Extension of funding for education	??	2009-10	92.5 million	16.2 million
Total 2003-10			308.7 million	50.5 million
Education Support Programme to Afghanistan (ESPA)	2010	2010-13	340 million	60 million
Total incl. (ESPA)			648.7 million	110.5 million

Source: Programme documentation and meetings during the evaluation mission.

3.3 Implementation modalities

Of the DKK 2.5 billion in support to Afghanistan that Danida has provided over the period 2001-10, approximately DKK 431 million, or 17.24%, has been disbursed for edu-

84 Desk Appraisal of "Request for Extension of Funding by Denmark to the Education Sector in Afghanistan for the period January 2009 - December 2010", Danida's Technical Services – BFT (2009).

85 Originally Danish Education Support to Afghanistan (DESPA) until appraisal in April 2010.

86 USD 1= DKK 7.00 in 2003 and DKK 5.70 for the remaining years.

education support; this includes the efforts in Helmand Province⁸⁷. The support to education has included aspects of bilateral, multilateral, and NGO cooperation, and involved political and military engagement through the PRT.

Assistance has largely been provided through bilateral sector support to the MoE closely linked to the Afghanistan National Education Strategic Plan and national education policy objectives. Multilateral support has been limited. In the period 2003-10 Denmark allocated USD 60.9 million through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF)⁸⁸ of which USD 18.2 million was preferenced to poverty eradication and the National Solidarity Programme. Otherwise all ARTF funding has been un-preferenced⁸⁹. Funding through the UN, e.g. UNICEF, for education has also been minimal. According to the Draft Identification Mission Report for the first education programme (2002)⁹⁰, UNICEF received DKK 10 million for its “*Back-to-School-Campaign*” in 2002. Despite plans for additional aid to this programme, UNICEF informs that they did not receive further Danida funding for education during the period, but did receive a contribution to humanitarian assistance of DKK 10 million in 2004⁹¹. As such it appears that Danida’s support for education through multilateral channels has been mainly in the form of policy dialogue, cooperation and simultaneous funding to MoE.

The main NGO channel for education has been DACAAR and DAARTT, with focus on school construction. The appraisal report of the first programme document recommended that: “*The School construction/rehabilitation should start urgently. DACAAR should be funded directly by Denmark for an initial period as an emergency measure. The further development of school construction/rehabilitation is to be worked out later, including the possible involvement of DACAAR*”⁹². This modality, which was introduced in 2003, was continued after DACAAR’s school construction department was shifted to the newly established DAARTT in 2004: From 2005 to 2007 DAARTT was funded directly through Danida’s humanitarian budget-line, and during these years, DAARTT was involved in the construction and refurbishment of 21 schools⁹³ in a number of provinces⁹⁴. Direct funding to the organisation was repeated in the period 2007-09, where funding came directly from Danida’s Regions of Origin budget-line. During this period DAARTT constructed or rehabilitated 72 classrooms.

Through PRTs various minor interventions have been implemented in Badakhshan and in Helmand, e.g. the establishment of a school library in Fayzabad in 2006⁹⁵ and a one-time donation of books in Fayzabad⁹⁶. Since 2008 support to education through the PRT has changed character. Denmark participates in the PRT in Helmand as part of

87 Evaluation ToR see p. 121.

88 A multi-donor trust fund administered by the World Bank (WB).

89 Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, Annual Report, March 21, 2009 to March 20, 2010 (World Bank).

90 Draft Identification Mission Report – Future Danish Support to Education, Afghanistan, October 2002.

91 Telephone interview with UNICEF fundraising department in New York 17.12.11.

92 Danish Support to Primary Education Development. Appraisal Mission 27.4-6.5.03.

93 In this period DAARTT broadened its previous scope from construction activities, to include provision of school furniture

94 Reflecting the linkages with DACAAR and focus on returning refugees from Pakistan, DAARTT would initially focus on the eastern parts of Afghanistan, to where the bulk of the refugees from Pakistan returned. This has since been broadened out.

95 Project document regarding school library in Badakhshan Institute of Technology (2006).

96 Project document regarding Book Donation to Department of Education (DOE), Badakhshan Province (2007).

the civil-military collaboration. The PRT is led by the UK; Denmark has funded two education advisors in the PRT including the head of the Education Dept. The US Military Commander Emergency Response Program has recently joined the PRT education set-up, and all three partners have supported education in the province, primarily in the areas of school construction, refurbishments and supplies.

As detailed in Chapter 1, management inputs to Danida's education programmes from RDE were as essential as technical support to education management in MoE. The modality, size and complexity of programme funding as well as the challenging context facing Danish aid throughout the period placed a special burden on this function. Frequent changes of personnel and consequent lack of institutional memory increased the need to maintain a full documentary record. The findings of the evaluation in Chapter 5 evaluate the success of this operation.

The table below summarises Danida's technical inputs to education over the period.

Table 6 Summary of programme components 2003-10⁹⁷

Component*	Primary Education Support Programme (PEPS) 2003-06	Extension of Danish support to Education in Afghanistan 2007-08	Helmand 2008-??	Extension of funding for education 2009-10
Grade	1 - 6	1 - 12	1 - 12	1 - 12
Curriculum	X			
Construction	X	X	X	X
Teacher training	X			
Text Books	X	X		X
Education administration	X	X		
Helmand			X	X
Multilateral assistance	During the period Danida provided multilateral funding (in 2009 at least through the ARTF) earmarked for teacher salaries ⁹⁷ Danida also supported UNICEF's "Back-to-School-Campaign" in 2002.			
Assistance through NGOs	Covered by a separate contract signed between Danida and DACAAR/DAARTT for construction of schools.	Covered by a separate contract signed between Danida and DACAAR/DAARTT for construction of schools		In 2009 DAARTT was contracted for an accelerated education project for Danida funded from the bilateral sector support for Education.

*Capacity Development: Staff training, institutional and professional development are explicitly mentioned as priorities or under implementation arrangements (with budget in PEPS) in all components from 2003 onwards (including in current ESPA documents). Capacity development was the principal element in the Education Administration component.

Source: Programme documents.

97 Letter from WB to RDE, January 2009.

4 The activities and objectives of other development partners in the education sector in Afghanistan

4.1 Introduction

In the post-Soviet and the Taliban period more than 28 NGOs and three UN Agencies supported education activities inside and outside the country. In 1990 70% of the 2,633 schools inside Afghanistan were supported by NGOs with teacher salaries, training, student supplies, and textbooks⁹⁸. The situation of extreme need and revitalised international interest in education for all, resulted in many donors wishing to channel part of their increased support to education.

However, the fragility of the new administration and the varied agendas linked to donor engagement increased the need for coordination. Over the previous decade it was mainly humanitarian organisations that provided aid to the country.⁹⁹ The new development agenda encouraged hundreds of international organisations and NGOs to begin working in their own target areas with limited contact to Kabul and central line ministries. In addition, apart from the usual differences between funds pledged, committed, and eventually disbursed, the picture has been clouded by a common pattern of short-term postings, frequent staff turnover, lack of detailed documentation and consequent loss of institutional memory. Despite assurance in 2008 that the GMU was carrying out a donor mapping exercise, assembling the details of who is providing what support to which programme remains a challenge, not least for MoE and Government.

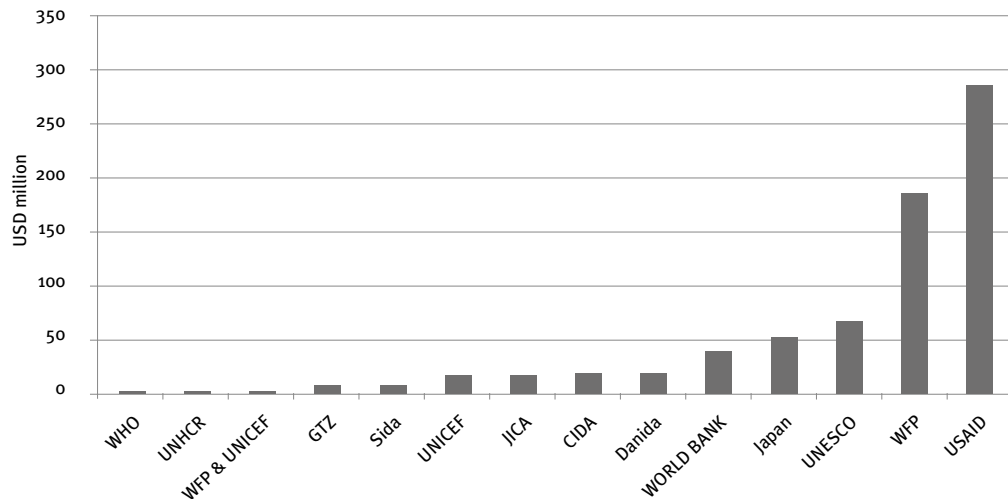
4.2 Principal donors in education

MoE does not yet have reliable data bases on donor support to education. A 2009 report¹⁰⁰ gave an overview of the principal donors at the time. Drawing on data from the official registry of donors managed by the MoE (with UNESCO support), the main contributors to education were:

98 American Institute of Research: 'Education and the role of NGOs in emergencies, 1978-2002', USAID, 2006, p. 3.

99 Prior to the fall of Taliban in 2001, a broad spectrum of internationally sponsored education programmes had provided significant scale and reach for Afghans both in the country and in refugee camps, particularly in Pakistan, including e.g. the USAID-funded University of Nebraska, DACAAR, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, the Norwegian Committee for Afghanistan, Muslim Aid, and the Islamic Relief Agency.

100 Identification Report for Danish support to Education (MoE) Afghanistan for the period 2010-12 (2009).

Figure 2 Main contributors to education – 2009 (in USD)

Source: *Identification Report for Danish Support to Education, 2009, p. 31.*

Also a sector analysis from 2010¹⁰¹ generates a table using a mix of information on aid from the MoE's GMU and from UNICEF, noting that *"these two (set of data) overlap, but do not match"* – a copy of the table is shown in Annex E¹⁰².

The brief presentation of donor support in this chapter is largely drawn from these two reports¹⁰³ and from information and material received during the evaluation mission. As will be seen, there is a range of activities and funds provided to education in Afghanistan. Most stakeholders make reference to NESP 1 and 2. Similarly most activities are said to be implemented in close cooperation with MoE at all levels. However, unlike Denmark, very few donors provide funds through the core modality to Government via MoF, and, from interviews, while some regard Danida's funding as laudable, others regard it as too ambitious, high risk and premature. While these donors refer to and apparently depend on MoE systems, they contribute little directly to ensure that MoE is able to take control of resources provided to the sector.

Several donors channel funds through multilateral organisations including the European Union (EU), World Bank (WB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), UNESCO, UNICEF, the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP), and World Health Organisation (WHO). Bilateral donors include Australian Aid for International Development (AusAID), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), UK's Department for International Development (DfID), Germany's Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Japan's International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), France, India and the Netherlands. The evaluation team consulted many of these organisations during the field visit. Several NGOs funded by these donors were also consulted. A list of informants is included in Annex B.

Among bilateral agencies USAID is by far the largest donor. From 2006 to 2013, it contributed almost USD 96.9 million for education through partnerships with: Creative As-

101 Adam Smith International: Afghanistan Education Sector Analysis (2010).

102 Adam Smith International: Afghanistan Education Sector Analysis (2010) p. 122.

103 Identification Report for Danish Support to Education, (2009) & Adam Smith International: Afghanistan Education Sector Analysis (2010).

sociates, CARE, Danida, and UN-HABITAT¹⁰⁴ and USD 190 million for a number of large projects and programs through various national and international partners. USAID does not channel funds through Government and the line ministries, though it provides some funds to organisations that cooperate with MoE e.g. through an agreement with the RDE for textbook printing and distribution. However, USAID is preparing to switch to on-budget support through the Basic Education, Literacy and Technical-Vocational Education and Training project. It has previously implemented a health programme “Tech Serve” through the MoH, using on-budget modalities.¹⁰⁵ The US also has a large aid component in Helmand implemented through the PRT, including an education component. Since 2007 USAID has gradually shifted towards capacity building, interventions in the insecure areas with a view to strengthening the presence of Government in those areas¹⁰⁶.

The World Bank’s EQUIP programme¹⁰⁷ is the largest programme within the MoE. There are three major education programmes that come under the ARTF, and they are all on-budget:

- EQUIP – basic and secondary education;
- Technical/Vocational training;
- Higher education.

The 10 donors to the ARTF have provided USD 88 million for EQUIP I and II, covering General Education, Teacher Education and Working Conditions, Education Infrastructure Rehabilitation and Development. In principle EQUIP covers all provinces of the country, but currently this is not possible due to insecurity. Since its inception in 2006, the two phases of the EQUIP have supported the construction or rehabilitation of over 1,600 schools. Of these, some 50% have been completed while the rest are under construction. Some 100,000 teachers and over 6,500 principals and headteachers have been trained. Moreover, over 11,000 schools have received grants to purchase school supplies and laboratory equipment, and a similar number of school shuras have been established to manage their schools in line with local priorities¹⁰⁸.

The UK’s DfID provides 50% of the overall UK aid portfolio of GBP 135 million a year through the ARTF and was the largest contributor from 2002/03 to 2009/10. ARTF has three windows: Investment, recurrent costs and incentive programme. DfID’s support is “unpreferenced” (un-earmarked). In practice a relatively large part of the UK funding is going through the budget for recurrent costs (government salaries mainly). DfID notes that teacher salaries constitute 60% of the state’s budget for salaries, but that only 18% is allocated from the state budget to teacher salaries. Thus, DfID *notionally* disbursed £ 108 million to the education sector in Afghanistan from 2002/03 to 2009/10¹⁰⁹. DfID also supports education through the PRT in Helmand. Furthermore DfID provides funding for education through UNICEF as well as for a number of NGO partners.

104 Identification Report for Danish Support to Education, (2009).

105 Meeting with USAID 24.11.11.

106 Meeting with USAID 24.11.11.

107 Education Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP1 Aug 2004-Sept 2008; EQUIP 11 March 2008-Sept 2012).

108 Meeting with World Bank on 7.12.11. See also WB Home Page <http://go.worldbank.org/9YJ94MTRO0>.

109 Meeting with DfID 23.11.11 and DfID: Overview of DfID Afghanistan’s Support to the Education Sector: *DfID Afghanistan Support for Education Sector through the ARTF to 2009/10* (2010).

Canadian CIDA has provided support to education since 2001¹¹⁰. In 2004 CIDA supported four sectors, of which education was one of the highest, with a budget of 100 million Canadian dollars over three years. This level has continued to 2011. CIDA is not providing assistance through the national budget or MoF, but under Canadian strategy in Afghanistan all education programming supports the NESP and involves MoE in coordination, and joint implementation. CIDA provides considerable resources through EQUIP, UNICEF, CBE, Girls Education Project through BRAC, TVET assistance through CARE, teacher training, and school construction. CIDA does not support printing of textbooks or curriculum development. Much support is focused on districts in Kandahar, where 50 schools will be built, expanded or repaired by 2011¹¹¹.

After the fall of Taliban, Norway provided support to MoE through UNICEF, including support for education policy development and community based schools. In 2004 Norway changed support modality and funded through the ARTF, targeting EQUIP, and in 2006 supported development of the new MoE Sector Strategy, through UNESCO. Within TVET Norway, together with USAID has financed a National Institute of Management and Administration¹¹². Norway and Denmark have financed UNESCO IIEP's assistance to the development of NESP 1 and 2.

Norway's support to education in Faryab has been located in, though separate from the PRT. A particular goal is to achieve full school coverage of primary schools in the province. Programs educating illiterate women will also be prioritised. Before 2009 the bulk of Norwegian support was through ARTF/EQUIP and through NGOs. Norway does not have civilian advisors in PRTs, but works through NGOs, and has funded: DACAAR, DAARTT, NRC, NCA on long-term agreements¹¹³.

PRTs funded primarily by the Provincial Reconstruction and Development Committee (PRDC) and Quick Response Fund (QRF) under the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) with some funding from the American Government, are also involved in the education sector.

ISAF is a NATO-led¹¹⁴ security mission established by the United Nations Security Council in 2001. PRTs consist of military officers, diplomats and reconstruction subject experts to empower local governments through strengthening government services, such as education. Denmark (in conjunction with the United Kingdom, United States and Estonia) leads on education in the British-led PRT in Helmand Province.

110 Meeting with CIDA 23.11.11.

111 Identification Report for Danish Support to Education, (2009) and meeting with CIDA 23.11.11.

112 This will include offers of programs on Administration and Management, Accounting, and Information and Communications Technology to prepare graduates for jobs and careers in the public or private sector or for entry into university programs.

113 Meeting with Norad 23.11.11 and Identification Report for Danish Support to Education, (2009). See also Afghanistan, Norwegian Education Team Report, April 2005.

114 NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) is an intergovernmental military alliance.

5 Findings on Danish support to the education sector in Afghanistan 2003-10

This chapter presents the findings of the evaluation as they relate to five specific time periods (1. 2001 to 2003, before Danida's first education programme; 2. 2003 to 2006; 3. 2007 to 2008; 4. 2008 to 2010; 5. 2010 to 2013). The inputs and activities of each programme were not expected to produce outcomes in the short term. These would take more time to become apparent. However, identification of measurable outputs on which to base management decisions was part of the design. The evaluation examines the Danida-supported programme components and addresses the five main EQs (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability and Impact). This gives three dimensions for each part of the evaluation: time period, programme component and EQ. In addition, findings are presented, where possible, in relation to inputs from other DPs and also geographically, with particular reference to Helmand, as required by the ToR. The chapter begins with a description of the situation just before the Danida programmes began, with particular reference to the sub-sectoral areas where Danida was preparing to provide inputs.

5.1 2001-03 The baseline situation

Reliable data on the years before 2003 is not easily accessible at this remove. Not only has a lot of time passed, but pre-2003 there was less incentive or capacity in the MoE for record keeping. The main sources of information are the ADB's Comprehensive Needs Survey, 2002, the Afghan Government's National Development Framework, 2002 and the Policy for the Rehabilitation and Development of Education of the same year. There is some disagreement between these sources on numbers. The Policy for Rehabilitation reports that 70% of education infrastructure had been destroyed. A recent IIEP report¹¹⁵ describes a ministry in disarray in 2002 with no equipment, furniture, stationery, electricity, water, etc. With widespread instability, no education system in existence and very little individual capacity in the Ministry reliable nation-wide data were not available. Local and international NGOs, military and civilian agencies responded to requests or perceived needs in particular areas without reference to national strategic planning. NGOs had increasingly taken on quasi-governmental roles in the provision of education services for Afghans in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In 2002, the Danish representation in Kabul noted, donors had a general understanding of the overall priorities, but that a comprehensive or joint overview of actual or planned donor initiatives did not exist¹¹⁶.

At the same time demand for education was much higher than anticipated at the end of 2001. When the Government launched the 'Back to school' campaign sponsored by UNICEF in 2002, it expected 1.7 million students to enrol in primary school, yet more than 3 million students were enrolled in schools at grades 1 to 12 that year¹¹⁷.

115 On the road to resilience. Capacity development with the MoE, Morten Sigsgaard, UNESCO/IIEP, 2011 p. 60.

116 Konceptpapir for dansk støtte til Afghanistan (2003).

117 Asian Development Bank, 'A new start for Afghanistan's Education Sector', April, 2003, p. 4.

Curriculum development

In 2001 Afghanistan had no unified curriculum, a shortage of teachers and a shortage of textbooks. The Policy for the Rehabilitation and Development of Education, spelled out the broad aims of the curriculum: *“to translate the national vision and goals into curriculum objectives. A curriculum should advocate unity, justice and security and strive against terrorism and all social ills, promote welfare programs and maintain freedom”* (p. 5).

There was, initially, the task of agreeing on what exactly were the national vision and goals, and how to incorporate them into a national curriculum. In 2002, ADB’s Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) pointed out that the curriculum had not been revised for 30 years, and “virtually no modern educational practices have been introduced for decades” (p. 4). There was no central authority meaning no national programme, books or curriculum standards or goals, let alone any common textbooks.

The CNA proposed to print and distribute what books could be made rapidly available with donor funds, while working on a curriculum framework and syllabi. A draft New Curriculum Framework was produced in 2002 and revised in 2003 partly through workshops and consultancies funded and supported by UNESCO and UNICEF. UNICEF also assisted with the syllabi for grades 1 to 6. MoE’s Compilation and Translation Department had responsibility for further development.

In June 2003, Danida funded a consultant from International Book Development Ltd, UK to report on the need for a Materials Development Unit (MDU) in the Ministry. The priority was for materials development initiatives to have a framework in which to produce books and other materials.

Teacher education and development

Before 2001 teacher training activities were of short duration and to a large extent conducted by NGOs. They were locally beneficial but lacked common direction in the types of training offered. In early planning after 2002 many donors, including the World Bank, USAID and Danida, prioritised support for teacher education policies, strategies, curricula and training plans.

The Afghan Government identified the professional development of teachers as a critical part of re-establishing the country’s human capital and economy. In the first place they cited the need for data, *“to establish the number of teachers who are actually engaged in teaching”*. In order for a strategy to be developed it was essential to have an idea of the initial situation, the likely cost and demand. Thereafter the Government should *“provide teacher training, establish a system for evaluating the skills of teachers and their commitments, provide them support to enhance their skills, and ensuring timely payment of their salaries”*¹¹⁸.

The CNA recognised that a huge number of new teachers (4,000 each year) was urgently required to teach the flood of children returning to schools, and that existing training systems were “wholly incapable” of meeting the demand. The MoE’s Policy for the Rehabilitation and Development of Education summarised the problem: For the 3 million students enrolled in schools in 2002, 93,466 teachers were needed. At the time the country had 64,850 teachers. So, 28,610 additional teachers were needed. The major problems were: i. Qualifications and professional skills in teaching; ii. Living conditions; iii. Shortage of teachers as a whole.

118 Afghan National Development Framework, 2002, p. 20.

The Ministries of Education, Higher Education and Labour and Social Affairs with the Ministry of Women's Affairs were jointly responsible for training programmes with an Education Consultative Group (ECG), headed by MoE, responsible for steering the process through policy decisions, budgetary planning, and the identification of implementation needs. Membership of the ECG was drawn from representatives of donors, UN Agencies, INGOs and international organisations.

Educational materials development

In 2001 materials of varying quality and based on differing ideologies were in use in schools in Afghanistan and in refugee camps in Peshawar, Quetta and elsewhere. In 2002 the MoE calculated the books needed as follows: *“For 3 million students, 27 million textbooks are needed. 11.5 million textbooks have been printed and distributed. There is an urgent need for 15.5 million more”*¹¹⁹. These should be based on a unified curriculum. The same needs and solutions applied to all sorts of equipment for schools, desks, chairs and blackboards, laboratory equipment, books for libraries, etc. Moreover, school enrolments were rising rapidly. In 2002, UNICEF distributed approximately 4,500 school kits, 21,000 teacher kits and 1.5 million student packets for primary schools. 100,000 copies of primary and secondary textbooks were provided by USAID (CNA, 2002, p. 9).

Table 7 Estimated textbook requirements

Serial #	Textbooks	Number of Textbooks
1	Needed	27,000,000
2	Available	11,500,000
3	Shortage	15,500,000

Source: Policy for the Rehabilitation and Development of Education, 2002, p. 20.

Physical infrastructure

Access tends to be the first concern of most education rehabilitation programmes, and organising school construction is, therefore, a priority at central and local levels. Despite the lack of reliable figures from the beginning of the century on such things as school-age population and classrooms, the records that exist agree that in 2002 there was a serious shortage both of school buildings, capacity for reconstruction and for management of the process. By 2002 staff numbers in the Building and Construction Department had, according to Giustozzi, *“dropped from 411 to 50”*¹²⁰. The evaluation team was repeatedly told, as a measure of how far things have improved, that in 2001 under the Taliban there were only 3,400 schools in the whole of the country, and fewer than 1 million children in schools, none of whom were girls.

Following the Bonn Agreement of December 2001 and by the time of the Tokyo Donor Conference of January 2002 there was already increasing demand for education. The Draft National Development Framework produced by the Board of the Afghan Assistance Coordination Authority in April 2002, refers to the enormous hope and interest generated by the Back to School campaign and emphasises the importance that *“programs of construction and maintenance of schools are undertaken with community support”* (p. 20).

119 Policy for the Rehabilitation and Development of Education, MoE, 2002, p. 13.

120 Nation-Building is not for All, AAN, Politics of Education, May 2010.

The estimate at that time was also that up to 4.5 million¹²¹ returning refugees and displaced persons would also need to be absorbed by the country and provided with public services including education.

The ADB's CNA, 2002 estimated that there were 3,600 primary schools in the country and that *"in order to achieve an 85% net enrolment ratio in primary education within 10 years, using a very conservative estimate of a constant primary school age population of 4.5 million ... an additional 13,851 schools will need to be constructed"* (p. vii). This meant building 1,385 new schools each year, a "massive undertaking" in the words of the Danida programme document for PEPS 1.

The Policy for the Rehabilitation and Development of Education in Afghanistan (September 2002) refers to the same 4.5 million school-age children, but points out that in 2002 only "3 million children were able to be registered and absorbed in the schools". Moreover, school places of a reasonable standard were only available to 1 million of these 3 million children, *"the other 2 million are attending school with inadequate facilities. The 2 million children lack basic learning materials and necessary supplies"* (p. 7).

The Ministry's estimate was that 5,063 schools existed at the time, though it is not clear on what this estimate is based or whether it includes secondary and other establishments. It was proposed that 2,500 schools should be newly constructed, therefore, bringing the total for the 3 million students to 7,563. Repairs were to be completed in six months, while students made use of *"temporary learning spaces"*. The construction of new school buildings was to be *"completed within 16 months"* (p. 8).

Aid management and planning and management capacity development

The central roles of planning and institutional development were recognised at the start of the decade and discussed in several key reports. The importance for Danida's programmes, and for this evaluation, is explained in the introductory chapter above. The ADB's CNA in 2002 reinforced the essential need for a balance between attending to both immediate and longer-term needs:

"Emergency assistance that delivers services but detracts from long-term development is inefficient, whereas an emphasis on long-term planning that fails to meet immediate critical needs is ultimately ineffective because it undermines the short-term stability needed to achieve long-term goals." (p. 5)

The MoE's Policy for the Rehabilitation and Development of Education in Afghanistan (September, 2002) also stressed the need for a policy and strategic framework within which to address long-term and immediate goals. It warned, *"Lack of coordination between the objectives and the system will lead to failure in achieving educational goals"*¹²².

The National Development Framework, 2002 echoed this concern for coordination among NGOs *"and with the international agencies to avoid duplication, harmful competition, pursuit of conflicting agendas, tensions between Afghan and international NGOs and among the established and new entrants, and geographic concentration of operations"* (p. 17). It argued for the development of policies and systems for financial, personnel and sup-

121 A Joint Evaluation, Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan, 2001-05, MFA, Denmark, Oct. 2005, p. 19.

122 Policy for the Rehabilitation and Development of Education, MoE, 2002, p. 14, The Educational System.

porting operations for national education programmes within which there would be co-ordinated, efficient and transparent use of funds, including the payment of salaries.

5.2 2003-06 Primary Education Programme Support (PEPS)

Danida was one of the first major national agencies to offer support to the huge problems of the education sector outlined above. From 2003 it committed DKK 110 million (approximately USD 15.7 million) plus TA over three years to December 2006 in support of five priority areas. The following sections examine what was attempted in each component area and how well each managed to achieve its objectives. The analysis uses annual plans and budgets as well as reviews, where these are available. It also draws extensively on the Steering Committee Meeting minutes for the period. As a proxy for programme performance, budget disbursement is also examined. The programme is discussed in more detail than subsequent Danida programmes, since more documentation exists for this early phase. In addition, much of what follows PEPS 1 builds on its systems.

Table 8 PEPS 1 2003-06: Budget

Component Text	Budget allocation in USD by Afghan fiscal year				Total Budget in USD	% of budget
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07		
1 Curriculum	300,000	245,000	275,650	267,000	1,087,650	6.9%
2 Teacher Education and Dev.	274,500	844,700	395,200	301,600	1,816,000	11.6%
3 Education Materials	1,298,000	1,730,000	1,625,000	1,600,000	6,253,000	39.8%
4 Physical Infrastructure	700,000	1,200,000	1,275,000	555,000	3,730,000	23.7%
5 Aid Management & HRD	220,000	506,000	436,000	337,000	1,499,000	9.5%
Sub-total	2,792,500	4,525,700	4,006,850	3,060,600	14,385,650	91.5%
Contingency					1,328,600	8.5%
Yearly in %	19.4%	31.7%	28.0%	21.4%	15,714,250	100%

Source: *Danida Programme Document, PEPS 1 2003-06 (Dec. 2003, p. 7).*

Curriculum development

The objective of the curriculum component of the PEPS 1 programme was to support the continued implementation of the New Curriculum Framework, developed in 2001 and still undergoing review in 2003, and also syllabus development. Four outputs were identified:

- Subject syllabi for grade 1-6
- Textbook content and pedagogical methods
- Teachers' support packs
- Guidelines and materials for student assessment and exams

TA would be provided and there would be a budget for design, printing and distribution of the supplementary materials. There was some anticipated overlap between curriculum development and the activity and funding provided under the education materials component of the programme. The main distinction was that the curriculum component would develop the frameworks and write the materials (including the textbooks) and the

materials component would be responsible for printing (and presumably distributing) the books and guides. Coordination with UNICEF, UNESCO other donors and NGOs active in curriculum development, syllabus and educational materials was also an acknowledged priority.

From Steering Committee Meeting minutes and expenditure reports the programme seems to have been a little slow starting. There is no evidence of urgent needs being rapidly addressed. If this was a consequence of the modality, using undeveloped MoE systems, it would have been helpful to document in reports at the time since this concerned a fundamental intervention principle. However, in 2004, the new curriculum textbooks in math, science and social studies in Dari and Pashto for grades 1 and 4 were field-tested, comments were made by teachers and students from all over Afghanistan. Changes were incorporated in the final versions by the end of the year. TA were provided for curriculum development and the Curriculum Development and Compilation of Text Book facility was renovated with programme funds. Danida funded TA worked in the building to raise the capacity of curriculum staff and were much appreciated. Support from several donors for further development of the curriculum framework was begun in 2004 and harmonisation was not reported as a problem, though the Programme's 2005 Annual Report suggested problems with coordination and information sharing between MoE departments.

In addition, substantial expenditure on textbook printing took place. For example, in September 2006 the Mid Year Report stated that the majority of textbooks (3.6 million reported printed by June 2005) were now in schools (p. 11). This was a major achievement, although it is not clear exactly how this was established since the 2005 Annual Report reported that no mechanism or budget for actual distribution of the printed books had been established. This critical issue is discussed further under the Education Materials component below¹²³.

Nevertheless, the Afghanistan Norwegian Education Team Report of April 2005 confirmed that USAID, Danida, UNICEF and TTC of University of Columbia/USA¹²⁴, were involved in *“curriculum development and printing of textbooks, together with their counterpart in the Ministry of Education. 48 million books have so far been printed, and the needs are still great”* (p. 30). 400 professionals apparently worked on the curriculum, 200 of them overseas Afghans. 40 staff were sent to Jordan for training. The new curriculum books for grades 1 to 4 were finalised by 2005. Work on the next phase with grades 2 and 5 had started at the time the Norwegian team reported, but then was stalled for lack of financing.

The anticipated documentation and reporting difficulties did make it hard for the Ministry to monitor progress. In 2006 the 8th Steering Committee Meeting called for *“the requested and long overdue report to the Minister and to the Danish Embassy”*. In July the Embassy received a Textbook Distribution Mechanism from MoE¹²⁵ with details

123 From more recent reports and observation, delivery of books to schools after printing continues to be problematic. On school visits the evaluation was, in fact, able to discover examples of distribution systems, textbook ordering forms, etc. developed by Danida. However, they suggest book ordering is not yet well established or functioning smoothly in 2012 and that demand continues seriously to exceed delivery.

124 This University has been involved in Afghan education since the 50s. An interview with Renee Cherow about curriculum development is available on the university's web-page: <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/news/article.htm?id=4823&tid=85>.

125 Textbook Distribution Mechanism, MoE, July 2006.

of how need was to be assessed and delivery checked. Late that year (2006) Danida TA provided MoE with an excellent, succinct outline of policy and strategic choices regarding printing, unit costs, layout considerations, etc. and also such considerations as raised expectations created by initial high quality donor-funded inputs to textbook development and distribution¹²⁶. These were sent together with proposals for a pilot study in one province. They demonstrate clearly the linking of immediate response to urgent need and long-term financial requirements. For example, limited textbook life (estimated in the Programme Document, p. 21 at around three to four years, but in 2006 by Danida TA at only two years for some grades) means books need frequent replacement. Attractive books, with colour illustrations are more effective in educational terms, but also constitute a higher recurrent cost to Government. These issues of sustainability, efficiency and cost effectiveness were clearly part of the decision-making process within the Steering Committee in 2006, but apart from a much later record of expenditure on provincial warehouses¹²⁷ there is no evidence of agreement on how to ensure that books printed reached children, were economically produced and could be reprinted sustainably.

Budget disbursement for the component was dependent on the functioning of the GMU discussed below, and this was problematic. The Audited Financial Statement of March 2005 indicated expenditure of just 6.9% of the original allocation for the first two years of operation. In fact, over the three years only USD 46,382 (4.3%) of the original over USD 1 million allocation was spent on the curriculum programme. In October 2006 Danida's Review of Support to Primary Education recorded the reallocation of programme funds *"to books because other donors were funding some areas"* (p. 22). No further expenditure was recorded for Curriculum over the whole programme period to mid-2007.

In October 2006 the Review of Support to Primary Education suggested, *"the distinction between curriculum development and textbook provision...should no longer be made"* (p. 25). The Ministry's Five Year Strategy presented in 2007 also combined curriculum and textbook activities. However, the issues of printing and delivery, while connected, are distinct from those of curriculum and pedagogy¹²⁸.

In all, the record for this component shows Ministry achievement of expected outputs in terms of the printing of books based on a unified curriculum and subject syllabi. However, neither from budget expenditure nor from other records is it easy to determine Danida's precise involvement. Documentation of policy on pedagogical method, decision-making on textbook specification and guidelines relating to student assessment were also hard to find. This points to the continued weakness in policy including of systems for responding to need through delivery and reporting on arrival of the printed books in schools.

Teacher education and development

There were five sub-components of the Teacher Education element of PEPS 1, with corresponding outputs:

1. A teacher education policy. TA support would help develop this.

126 Major Textbook Issues in Afghanistan, Gibbings, MoE/Danida, October 2006.

127 Warehouses Construction Report, Danida or MoE, 2010.

128 The Departments of Publication and Communication and of Curriculum Development and Compilation of Text Book continue to operate with separate responsibilities in 2012, which suggesting a separation of support was and remains valid.

2. A unified teacher education curriculum. Again TA would assist with this, and with the training of educators and printing of the curriculum and materials
3. A national institutional framework for pre- and in-service education and training. TA would provide capacity development.
4. Expansion of the part-time diploma programme and rehabilitation of two training colleges. Up to 1,000 teachers would be trained. TA would assess and help improve the part-time programme, and DAARTT would be responsible for the construction work.
5. Headteacher training. TA would assist with course development and training for 600 headteachers.

All activities were to be undertaken in collaboration with other donors and with the MoE's Teacher Training Institute and Planning Department. As indicated for the period before 2003, a number of independent training activities had taken place. A MoE initiative in 2004, supported by WB, UNICEF, USAID, JICA and Afghanistan Primary Education Program (APEP), was to establish a Teacher Education Programme (TEP) to deal with the need for coordination, to raise the quality of teaching and learning, and to increase the number of qualified teachers, particularly females.

According to the November 2005 PEPS Progress Report, Danish and WB funding for TEP was delayed for almost two years due to accounting problems and the lack of a cash flow mechanism from central to the provincial offices of MoF¹²⁹, while direct support from USAID and UNICEF allowed activities to proceed as planned. These activities included production of a Teacher's Resource-book and Trainer's Manual, and the selection of 140 Master Trainers (MTs), 34 finance and 34 logistic officers from all PEDs. This set of activities formed the first Inservice Training programme (InSeT 1). Unfortunately, in this case the choice of modality seriously limited Danida's ability to contribute to the programme component.

A group of TEP Core Trainers was formed, including employees of MoE, staff hired from outside MoE and educators from NGOs. This group developed a set of eight teaching standards describing the social, pedagogic and moral qualities of ideal primary level teachers, and, based on these a curriculum framework for a two-year training program was drafted in early 2005.

Training of teacher educators and teachers proceeded, as did coordination meetings attended by representatives from over 30 of the NGOs conducting training (including Save the Children, World Vision, BRAC, CARE, etc.), MoE and MoHE. These were followed by further TEP packages and development of an evaluation plan in late 2005.

The following table shows progress with training by late 2005. Danida involvement in these activities was limited due to the funding difficulties.

129 PEPS Progress Report, November 2005, p. 8.

Table 9 InSeT 1 teacher training 2005

Province	Total teachers	Trained 1 st round (female)	Teacher educators	Master trainers
Kapisa	2,584	448 (97)	30	3
Logar	2,299	381 (109)	42	3
Paktia	1,766	556 (32)	48	4
Parwan	4,861	1,188 (?)	69	5
Ghor	2,793	516 (13)	66	4
Badghis	1,549	319 (70)	24	3

Source: Danida PEPS Progress Report, Nov. 2005 p. 10.

Over the first two years of PEPS, therefore, there was teacher training activity, but with limited inputs from Danida. TEP activity was discussed in Danida/MoE Steering Committee meetings, but only in terms of funding for workshops. The balance between longer-term planning and budget disbursement to address urgent needs was not evident. For example, in September 2004, the programme Steering Committee Meeting considered a request that funding for PEPS policy development activity be reallocated to a trainer training programme proposed for the following month within the TEP framework. And the Danida Review a year later in August 2005 still noted the need for *“development of a national policy and strategic framework for further and more systematic development of teacher education”*¹³⁰. This was almost two years into the PEPS programme and teacher education policy, a unified teacher education curriculum and a national institutional framework were the main component outputs identified by Danida in the PEPS 1 Programme Document (p. 18). While progress was, no doubt, constrained by MoE capacity and organisation, it would have been helpful, as noted above, to have reference to activities and interim outputs with implementation of the two track approach in reports.

There was no rapid initial expenditure and the TA to advise on long-term strategy were not in post a year after the programme had started. No disbursements at all for the component were made before Financial Year 2005-06 and the Steering Committee Minutes for September 2004 indicate that TA had not yet arrived. In fact, the 2004 Review recommended, *“the request for Danish technical assistance, ... be put on hold until more clarity as to which donor agency (or agencies) will be providing the necessary technical assistance”*¹³¹. Coordination between donors was clearly an issue. The Review felt that because other donors (WB, USAID) had also targeted teacher training *“a decision be taken as to which agency (or agencies) would be in the best position to provide the necessary technical assistance, and that this be discussed within the framework of the TEP”*¹³².

The evaluation team was assured there has been much progress in the area of teacher development. In 2001 there were just four Teacher Training Centres. By 2005 there were 14 and by 2011 there were 42 Teacher Training Institutes covering all provinces. The number of female teachers is also expanding (e.g. 41,300 in 2007, 44,231 in 2008¹³³). However, need was estimated at 94,551 for 2009, so demand continues seriously to outstrip supply.

130 Review of Danish Support to Education, August 2005, p. 5.

131 Review of PEPS 1, 2004, p. 7.

132 Ibid.

133 EMIS Surveys, 2008, 2009.

In terms of Danida's inputs to this process, a joint evaluation in 2005 praised Denmark and UNICEF for investments in coordination and capacity building within MoE to enhance its ability to direct and develop the education sector. It remarked, "*The Danish model stands out here for its emphasis on establishing benchmarks for Government achievement, thereby facilitating an ongoing debate on further improvements*"¹³⁴. MoE senior staff spoke warmly to the evaluation of inputs by TA when they did arrive in post.¹³⁵

In the event Danida contributed some USD 800,000 to a trainer-training programme, which took place in FY 2005-06. Thereafter expenditure on the component was minimal and the October 2006 Review records the "*reallocation to books, because other donors are funding some areas*" (p. 22). Total expenditure by mid-2007 was some 46% of the original USD 1.8 million.

To summarise, therefore, the planned programme component seems to have been a clear response to need, and highly **relevant**. The slow deployment of TA and emphasis on using government channels delayed Danida's inputs to the component. The latter is not necessarily a failing if it could be shown that it drew attention to central budgeting and management and that these were subsequently strengthened as a result. However, there is little evidence to connect later improvements with these challenges. Overall funding was much less than anticipated.

Education materials development

The Education Materials component was to be given priority in the first year of programme operation (2003-04) and the largest portion of the budget. This was because a major investment was urgently required "*to establish the capacity for production on the scale and quality required for the new curriculum*"¹³⁶. As noted, the need for books, even based on earlier, low estimates of demand, was huge so some urgency was anticipated. However, by September 2004 there was still a lack of clarity on procurement procedures for equipment for the proposed MDU discussed over a year before. This unit and the printed books were the two outputs for this component. The Danida Management Adviser was in place but MoE "*institutional and management challenges*" affecting the MDU had not been sorted out¹³⁷ and, as has been noted above, TA were still not fielded by late 2004.

3.6 million copies of the books for grade 1, 22 titles in two languages (Pashto and Dari), were indeed printed with Danida funding, though not until 2005. A contract for distribution by a private transport company was signed that year and co-financing was agreed between Danida and USAID for the printing and distribution of 17.4 million more textbooks. Danida and USAID funding for this purpose was estimated at USD 6.3 million and USD 6 million respectively. As indicated earlier, UNICEF and also JICA had committed funds and TA to this activity and Norway also contributed to the funding of textbook printing.

134 MFA, A joint evaluation. Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan, 2001-05. From Denmark, Ireland, The Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom, Main report, Copenhagen 2005, p. 108.

135 Nevertheless, much of the original agenda remains outstanding. Policy development, unified training curricula, institutional frameworks, management and administration training reportedly still require support in 2011. MoE staff continue to be concerned about lack of alignment between donor programmes and the government objectives and goals. EMIS have only recently managed to specify figures on targets and projected demand.

136 PEPS 1 Programme Documents, 2003-06, p. 5.

137 PEPS 1, 2nd Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, September 2004, (p. 10).

Technical inspections were being carried out on paper and cover quality and strength of binding, but baseline data on student numbers for 2006, a prerequisite for preparation of cost-estimates for printing and distribution, were still being developed. At this time the task of distribution over a period of 18 months to two years was shared with a number of international NGOs who arranged to buy books from central or provincial Ministry of-fices and to undertake delivery themselves to schools they supported. These independent arrangements continued into 2009 as shown by the comment in the Education Development Board minutes¹³⁸ that “NGOs would like to obtain textbooks from Ministry of Education rather than printing their own copies”.

The figures in the table below demonstrate the increasingly large number of books printed by PEPS and other central programmes between 2005 and 2007 (though well short of estimated demand).

Table 10 Textbooks printed during PEPS 1

No.	Year	Number of Textbooks printed	Grade/ Level	Number of Titles	Funded By	Total Printed	Total Cost in USD	Total Demand of MoE
1	2005	3.6 million textbooks	Grades 1 to 6		Danida	3.6 million textbooks		5.5 million textbooks
2	2006	15.4 million textbooks	Grades 1 to 6		Danida	15.4 million textbooks		around 19 million textbooks
3	2007	23.5 million textbooks	Grades 1 to 6	48	Danida/ USAID	36.5 million textbooks	5.78 million	42 million textbooks
		13 million textbooks	Grades 1 to 12	99	US Forces			

Source: Publication Department, MoE, 2011.

Originally 40% of funding for PEPS 1 was for education materials, USD 6.2 million (DKK 32.6 million) out of a total USD 14.38 million. This was to be spent on production costs for textbooks, teachers’ guides and for the establishment of the MDU discussed above. The MDU was to be provided with furniture, equipment, computers and software for textbook publishing, as well as technical assistance. Nevertheless, as with other programme components, it took time to establish procurement procedures. No expenditure was recorded before FY 2004-05.

Eventually, programme budget flexibility allowed the under-spend in other components to be absorbed by the printing of books. By mid 2007 the total spent on book printing was USD 12.5 million (DKK 65.8 million), twice what had been originally planned and three times the size of all other programme components combined. This appears to be an appropriate, flexible use of funds, though very different from the original intention. Moreover, the output, in terms of books in children’s hands, is unknown.

Physical infrastructure

USD 3.7 million (23.7% of the programme allocation) was provided in the first Danida programme for school construction. Given the huge demand, this would normally have been a top priority in most intervention programmes. All areas of the country needed

138 Minutes of Education Development Board Meeting, 16.2.2009, MoE, Item 6.3.

new or refurbished classrooms and access, the provision of shelter, generally comes before consideration of quality in hierarchies of need and educational development planning. Nevertheless, infrastructure had the second largest allocation in the programme.

School construction is also a highly visible indicator of a Government's ability to provide public services. It thus contributes strongly to its legitimation, still a critical factor in Afghanistan today. The recent and highly rated Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Program Document summarises:

“Supporting communities to rebuild and/or reopen their schools is a powerful expression of the intent to revitalise the education system and put the entire nation on a path towards peace.” (GPE Program Document, 2011, p. 33)

PEPS 1 did not set a target number of schools for construction or rehabilitation. Construction of a *“limited number”* was proposed through DACAAR/DAARTT, with a proportion of funds channelled through MoF to allow MoE to acquire skills in supervision. Thus, consistent with the overall approach to PEPS, support for construction also included provision for management capacity development in the Ministry's Construction Department.

There are many aspects to construction management, both technical and strategic. The evaluation's limited comments on technical matters are included in sections below relating to later programme inputs. Strategic management includes issues of site selection, supervision of standard construction procedures and processes, as well as choice and procurement of materials and the projection of long-term maintenance requirements. All of these may be subject to pressures of patronage or short-term, local interests. Local community demand and involvement is cited in much documentation¹³⁹ as essential for site selection and school construction. As with all PEPS components, the plan was to balance local initiatives by developing capacity for long-term planning at national level. TA contracted by ADB was to assist with skills development in the Construction Department, with funds for training provided by PEPS. DAARTT would implement construction while MoE would be responsible for monitoring of activities¹⁴⁰.

The dangers of duplication and fragmentation made coordination a priority in this component as in others. A recent comparative review (funded by Danida)¹⁴¹ included at least 20 organisations many of which had been active in Afghanistan since 2003 either directly or through sub-contracting to smaller companies. As a consequence the MoE has inherited a huge range of styles and quality standards for which it now has long-term maintenance responsibility.

Nevertheless, the result of the combined construction effort was a substantial and rapid expansion of school building stock. The first EMIS School Survey in 2007 records 5,024 primary schools (up from 3,600 in 2002), and a total of 9,476 schools (MoE had estimated 5,063 in 2002). DAARTT were responsible for the Danish contribution to this effort. They had selected the two provinces of Samangan and Badakhshan for its initial construction of eight schools in 2004-05, a decision based partly on security and access and partly on the need to support the eastern provinces as the destination of the majority of refugees from Pakistan. The PEPS 1 Annual Report (March 2006-07) states *“comple-*

139 E.g. Comparative Review of School Construction and Education Infrastructure, Article 25, June, 2011.

140 PEPS 1 Programme Document, p. 26.

141 See the Comparative Review of School Construction and Education Infrastructure cited above.

tion of 13 schools is just around the corner” (p. 10). With the initial eight schools this gives an output total of 21 schools between 2004 and 2007¹⁴². Two Teacher Training Centres were also refurbished or rebuilt in the period.

The component was less successful in building capacity in the Construction Department. The October 2004 Review praised the development by DAARTT of “*an effective and systematically sequenced approach to construction of schools in rural settings with the direct involvement of local communities in both decision-making and provision of labour*” (p. 9). However, it also commented, “the possibility that DAARTT could collaborate with the Construction Department was discussed” (p. 10). Since DAARTT was required to report on progress quarterly to the Steering Committee this should already have been part of the programme.

Communication was problematic and in 2005 the Deputy Minister “*requested that for the future the Danish Government should inform MoE and the Department of Construction of their construction plans.*”¹⁴³ He was “*surprised to learn*” about the schools and “*reminded Danida that whatever Danida is doing must be registered with MoE to ensure proper explanation to the Government*”.

The Review of Danish Support to Primary Education in Afghanistan (August 2005) also stressed the importance of coordination and “*building capacities in the MoE Construction Department*”. Further references through 2006 suggest seriously delayed progress¹⁴⁴. Problems with budget and with MoE re-organisation were given as reasons.

PEPS 1 originally planned to spend approximately USD 1 million of the allocated USD 3.7 million in the first two years (2003 & 2004) on construction by DAACAR/DAARTT. It intended, thereafter, to channel funds through MoF for contracts managed by MoE once the latter had acquired supervision skills, a process supported by the ADB and for which Danish support had also allocated a budget of USD 75,000.

According to budget records expenditure was initially slower and overall lower than expected. Each year spending was expected to pick up, although this was not realised in actual performance. The Audited Financial Statement of March 2005 reports disbursement of a reasonable 74% of the original budget projected for the first 15 months (after an initial reported 0% expenditure to September 2004). A draft Work Plan in February 2004 had projected expenditure to March 2005 of almost USD 5.4 million. The budget for 2004-05 shown in the 2005 Audited Statement cut this to only USD 2.3 million, but even so only 60% of this was actually spent. The following year a budget of nearly USD 4 million was planned but only just over USD 1 million was spent¹⁴⁵. In total, between January 2004 and March 2007, the project component spent USD 2,488,577, approximately 67% of the original USD 3,730,000 allocation¹⁴⁶ (an under-spend of USD 1.3 million). Given the lack of capacity and the instability in the country this is perhaps not an unreasonable performance, though less than expected and considerably less than anticipated each year.

142 The figure was confirmed by the Head of DAARTT’s International Department.

143 Minutes of 3rd project Steering Committee Meeting, 6.2.2005.

144 PEPS Annual Report for the period March 2005-March 2006. April 2006 and also PEPS Review of Support, October 2006.

145 Work Plan for 2005-06 and Annual Report, April 2006.

146 This figure was given by the Head of DAARTT’s International Department on 27.11.11. The PEPS 1 Annual Report (March 2006-07) states “completion of 13 schools is just around the corner” (p. 10). With the initial eight schools this gives a total of 21.

In general therefore, the conclusion on the performance of the component during this first phase is that it was again highly relevant in terms of both its construction and capacity development objectives. It was also effective in building and refurbishing schools. The availability of classrooms has directly benefitted thousands of Afghan children who would otherwise have had no experience or a poorer experience of schooling. However, there is no evidence at this stage that problems of minorities, e.g. Kuchi peoples and disabled students were being systematically addressed or that demand from returning refugees was quantified in any way.

The programme was less successful in its ability to predict spending. Given the difficult context, this is understandable. However, coordination and reporting to management on progress were also not as strong as expected, which reduced performance of the component in terms of efficiency. Separate funding for school construction seems to have made the component harder to manage in terms of the programme's objectives, and reduced MoE's ownership of programme activity, hence making the component less efficient. Coordination and reporting also relate to capacity development and ensuring sustainability, which, reportedly, remained weak at the end of the programme.

It is hard to measure the wider impact of this component at this point. In 2011, a national survey¹⁴⁷ indicated that education is regarded as very important and that the Government's delivery of education is welcomed and expected to improve. Public awareness of development initiatives separately operated by donors is encouragingly limited. Government is seen as the main provider and education is regarded as the most important public service. As indicated, school construction is a visible sign of government effectiveness. The above survey suggests perceptions of overall government performance are good and expectations are that it will improve (73% regard education availability as either Quite Good or Very Good, 84% expect availability to be either much better or somewhat better in a year's time).

Aid management and planning and management capacity development

In 2002-03, the education sector in Afghanistan was largely coordinated through the Education Programme Secretariat. This body reported directly to the Minister of Education and included a small team of international and national senior education professionals who organised regular coordination meetings around specific topics. They were also responsible for the coordination of development funds as part of the National Development Budget. The secretariat functioned until 2004 when a Grants Management Unit (GMU) was established inside the MoE, which aimed to assist in the coordination of development funds to the Ministry. The PEPS 1 component on management anticipated the establishment of this Unit, saying, "*The main output of this component will be the establishment of the GMU*" (p. 26). Indeed, the GMU was critical to the operation of the other PEPS components since it was to manage funds, and coordinate the planning and performance monitoring functions.

147 Afghanistan Survey Book, Asia Foundation, 2011.

Grant Management Unit

According to the GMU's Terms of Reference, annexed to the PEPS 1 Programme Document (Annex 2), the GMU was established under the Office of the Minister, and headed by a director reporting directly to the Minister of Education. At the time it was expected that an increasing number of externally funded projects within education required a strong unit for the coordination and management of such assistance. The GMU was to be responsible for the management of education grants, development of management capacity, the preparation of the Ministry's Development Budget and coordination of all donor assistance to the Ministry.

Unit procedures and practices as well as staff capacity were to be supported, financially and with technical advice by counterpart international TA and a Management Adviser. The responsibilities of the GMU with regard to PEPS 1 included:

- Establishment and maintaining of procedural and reporting requirements relating to collaboration and communication between MoE, MoF and the Office of the Representative of Denmark to Afghanistan,
- Establishment and operation of accountancy functions for, and monitoring of, utilisation of Danish funding,
- Participation in planning and preparations for the Joint Annual Reviews,
- Acting as secretariat of the Steering Committee.

As outlined, MoE would apply for use of programme funds through the GMU and Steering Committee. In 2003, the development budget held only donor contributions, those from Danida and the World Bank managed ARTF¹⁴⁸.

Quarterly Steering Committee meetings were to be used, eventually, to monitor programme support from other DPs too as these began providing funding through the GMU. This would reduce transaction costs in terms of staff time, administration and promote financial efficiency as well as reducing the risk of duplication.

Given the capacity of MoE in 2003, assigning these critical responsibilities to an untried Unit entailed major risks, though, to some extent these were anticipated in Programme Documents. MoE would need to make staff available and good relations would have to be established with the MoE's Finance Unit. MoE would also need to prevent donors setting up separate PIUs.

Programme documentation includes Annual and Progress Reports, Reviews and minutes of fairly regular Steering Committee Meetings. Annual plans and budgets with expected outputs are less complete and reports refer to progress with inputs (activity and budget disbursement) more often than achievement of targets. In particular, records show problems establishing, staffing and clarifying procedures for the GMU. These difficul-

148 PEPS and ARTF regulations differed and GMU procedures were not established. PEPS disbursement procedures were set out in a separate protocol and Project Management Manual developed in 2004. ARTF multilateral funds, (USD 8,510 million between 2004 and 2006), came through the Department of Finance (DoF) and covered recurrent government costs including salaries as well as priority investments.

ties played a role in delaying implementation of all components, and to the extent the component output was not achieved, the management and aid management capacities in MoE, the expected outcomes for Component 5, also remained elusive¹⁴⁹.

Throughout the period of Danish support, the GMU slips in and out of focus, and this was true between 2003 and 2006. The Steering Committee noted the “*setting up of the GMU office*”¹⁵⁰ in mid 2004 with the support of the newly arrived Management Advisor. However, records also contradict this, saying the GMU had not been established by the end of 2004. There was also a need for better “*documentation on forward planning and benchmarks for the monitoring of progress*”¹⁵¹ and a lack of activity on Component 5¹⁵².

The GMU Director had been replaced by the time of the third and fourth Steering Committee Meetings in March 2005, and the Annual Report concludes: “GMU has not been capable to deal with fund management in a proper and accountable manner”¹⁵³. It suggests the Unit was abandoned in 2005, calling it “*a vision without MoE support, without general donor support and out-dated and non-adherent ToR*”¹⁵⁴.

By 2005 MoE was “*in the process of bringing change to the GMU*”¹⁵⁵. It was, apparently, decided to pass responsibility for both Danida and ARTF funds to the Finance Department¹⁵⁶. However, the move was not completed by the end of 2005, though no GMU staff apparently attended Steering Committee Meetings after June 2005.

Crucially, and until her departure in April 2006, PEPS 1 programme management, including financial management, was handled by the Danida Management Advisor, in what seems to have been a partly integrated Project Implementation Unit (PIU). For much of the period the TA was not training a counterpart, and the GMU’s establishment status was uncertain. The capacity development role of the implementation logic, therefore, was secondary to that of programme management.

Management of Danida and other donor funds was transferred to DoF from mid 2006. MoE recruited Danida-funded financial and management TA to assist and the Steering Committee retained oversight. However, in March 2007, it was once more reported that “*the GMU has been established*”¹⁵⁷.

The role of the GMU was central to the management of all PEPS components, to the aid effectiveness agenda and, in some ways, to the whole on-budget modality. However, it is clear that this element of the component, and thus of the programme, did not function as expected. Programme management was not coordinated by the GMU, but by the Danida Advisor and by the Steering Committee. While the Advisor was in post, the Committee functioned effectively. Records suggest, however, that after her departure, Committee Meetings ceased and annual planning, reporting and reviews for PEPS were discontinued.

149 The Unit currently exists and staff were interviewed. Further discussion is included in outlines of later Danish support.

150 2nd Meeting Minutes, September 2004.

151 Review of Danish Support, October 2004, p. 2.

152 2004-05 Annual Report, May 2005, p. 6.

153 Ibid.

154 Ibid, p. 19.

155 4th Steering Committee Minutes, March 2005.

156 2004-05 Annual Report, May 2005, p. 21.

157 2006-07 Annual Report, March 2007, p. 12.

It is true that some capacity to deploy management mechanisms covering the whole sector has developed in Afghanistan and that MoE is able to draw on this through very substantial TA involvement as discussed below. The drafting of subsequent national education strategies and plans (e.g. the EIP) as well as the recent proposal to the GPE demonstrate this, and it is reasonable to conclude that continued engagement by Danida has played a role not only in the drafting and donor coordination, but in capacity development. However, the logic of the results chain, and the GMU was clearly one of the planned links in this, suggests the GMU component did not fulfil its role.

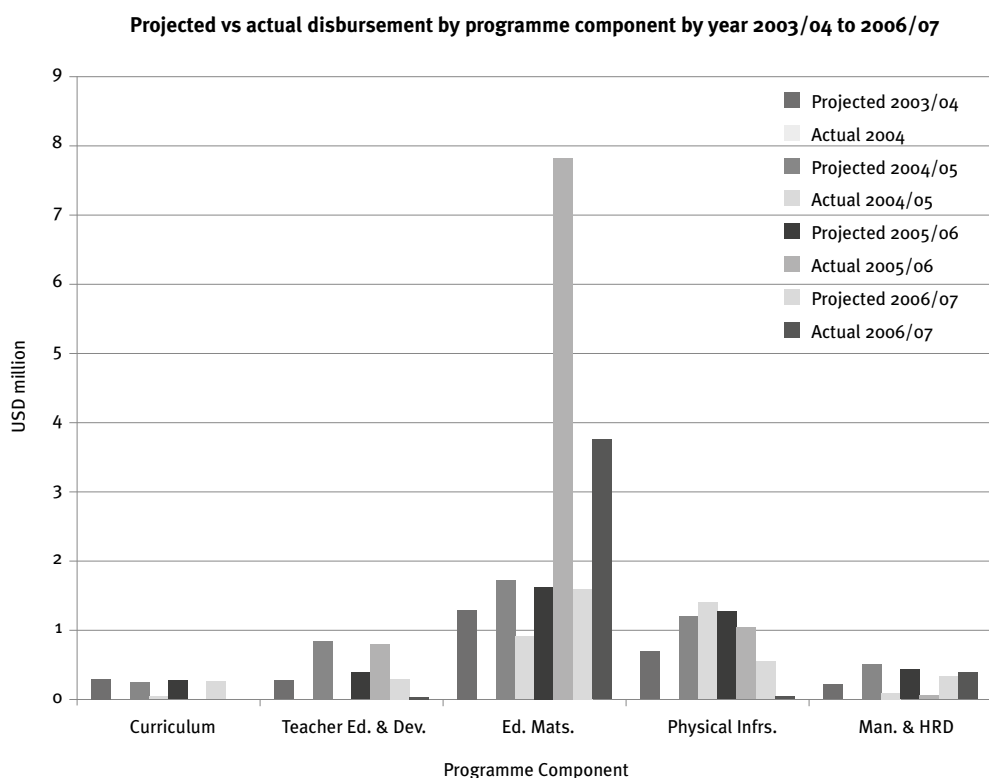
The component was also unsuccessful in its donor coordination function. Appearances of other DPs at Steering Committee meetings were rare, and a 2005 report commented, *“...it is therefore completely blurred which donors support which activities in the core and external budgets.... currently attempts from Danida to involve the WB funded EQUIP programme in capacity development at the MoE (...) have proven futile”*¹⁵⁸. A year later neither the Steering Committee nor the GMU were able to show evidence of harmonisation, though, *“coordination...takes place through informal contacts”*¹⁵⁹. For MoE, however, *“access to different funds for different purposes from different donors is a jungle”* (Ibid).

In terms of budget disbursement, the planned, flexible redistribution among components, following Steering Committee resolutions, responded reasonably effectively to the initial slow spend. This seems to have worked well, with TA support. However, expected performance as reflected in budget plans did not improve each year. The chart below presents the year-by-year projected and actual disbursement on each component. It shows not only the flexibility, and the final concentration on textbooks, but also the rather over-optimistic annual estimation of expenditure in many components such as planned spending on teacher education, construction and management.

To summarise, the programme component on Management used the Steering Committee, with TA support, to move programme funds in response to need, to over-supply and occasional shortfall in funding from other donors. This functioned to MoE's and Danida's satisfaction, and in this respect fulfilled the programme intention.

158 PEPS Annual Report, May 2005, p. 6.

159 PEPS Annual Report, April 2006, p. 17.

Figure 3 Year by year budget performance during PEPS 1

Source: Compiled by the evaluation from figures in various published sources.

In general, performance results for the management component are mixed. The GMU was not established at the start of PEPS and when it did exist, it consistently suffered from a lack of clear mandate. The slow start to the other components must be linked to the lack of clarity over management. The Steering Committee operated efficiently while the Danida management TA was in country, and plans, reviews, reports and minutes record activity, and some outputs. However, it is not clear that management skills were identified and passed on (e.g. planning linked to budget, followed by monitoring and reporting on outputs), or that there were counterparts to whom transfer could take place. For these reasons the component can only be considered moderately relevant, effective and efficient. Some capacity has been established within MoE, but the question of where this is located (in establishment staff or TA) is discussed below.

Overall performance of PEPS 1

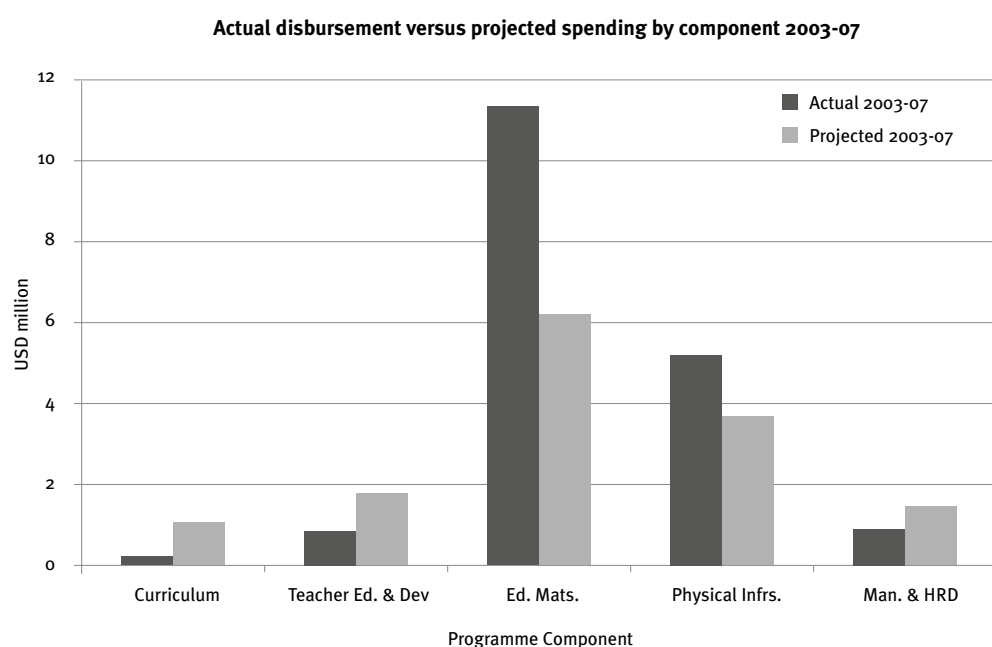
Between 2003 and 2006 substantial outputs were achieved in the programme's component areas. The primary curriculum was written, large numbers of teachers were trained, millions of books were printed, schools and classrooms were built, the management process was documented and the whole budget was disbursed making use of in-built flexibility. The on-budget modality with management controls and earmarking allowed performance against most of the expected outputs to be monitored. The evidence shows that, through a very unsettled period in the establishment of the MoE, Danish aid provided very substantial and much appreciated support. The only other programme to use direct funding, the World Bank's Education Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP), which became effective in July 2004, was in problem project status before June 2006¹⁶⁰. These are important achievements against considerable obstacles.

160 EQUIP Mid-Term Review Mission, Aide Memoire, May 2007.

However, recognition of great progress in Afghan education must be tempered by acknowledgement of unexpected difficulties experienced by Danish support. Neither budget disbursement nor management were as planned. Flexibility was anticipated, but variations from programme plans were marked, and reasons not always documented. Inputs and activities were mostly recorded, but not results. Management, through the Steering Committee not the GMU, relied heavily on Danida TA. Few reports refer to system and policy development. Spending was very largely on textbooks and not on other components, and yet there was no book distribution system. For this period there are no central records of how many of the books printed with donor support actually reached the schools. (This remains a serious omission in 2012). Systems for sustainable printing and distribution were only discussed at the end of the period. Plans for capacity development and coordination relating to construction were not addressed. Danida's planned contribution to teacher training was almost wholly reallocated. Immediate needs crowded out attention to systems with little evidence of the two track approach.

For these reasons overall programme relevance is evaluated as good, though effectiveness and efficiency are moderate. Sustainability was under-addressed or un-reported. It is too early to evaluate performance in terms of impact. The World Bank's conclusion seems appropriate. Early progress had allowed Afghanistan to anticipate, *"a more rapid transition from its emergency post-conflict status to a more 'normalised' situation. Time has demonstrated however that despite the progress made, many elements of that post-conflict situation remain – capacity is uneven and weak overall, systems and procedures are rudimentary, though improving"*¹⁶¹. The chart below shows the differences between PEPS budget intentions and disbursement results:

Figure 4 PEPS 1 Budget Disbursement Performance



Source: Compiled by the evaluation from figures in various published sources¹⁶².

161 Interim Strategy Note, WB 2006, p. 8.

162 Sources include: Programme Documents, Steering Committee Minutes, Work and Budget Plans, Audited Statements and Annual reports.

5.3 2007-08 extension of PEPS

Programme documents specify the continuation of Danish support to the education sector in Afghanistan during the period March 2007-December 2008¹⁶³. PEPS 1 had already been extended from December 2006 (the original end date) to March 2007 to coincide with the end of the Afghan FY.

The new two-year programme was to “*build upon the experience and results of the first programme period of support*” (p. 3). Funding for the additional 21 months was set at approximately USD 12.7 million with additions for TA to support the Education Administration Reform and, presumably, the school construction programme. This represents a substantial increase in funding p.a. over the first grant and reflects criteria of need and thus relevance. Many outputs set for PEPS 1 had still to be fully realised.

There were no Steering Committee Meetings or Work Plans, Annual Reviews or Report documents for this period, and this presents a gap in active management as well as the record. A Review was carried out in late 2008 for which a helpful Aide Memoire exists¹⁶⁴. A formal audit was carried out in 2010 for the period 2008 and 2009. There were a number of disagreements with the findings of this audit, however, mainly relating to documentation, HR recruitment procedures and stipend records. The audit was not signed off on until early 2011.

A few additional reports of activity on individual programme components have been seen. As explained in the introduction to the evaluation, documentation of process and results relates to effectiveness and also to both efficiency and sustainability. In order for lessons to be learned and management capacity to be developed, partner organisations and host departments need to be able to refer to common records. From personal communication it is confirmed that meetings did take place during a period of considerable flux and confusion in MoE and RDE. However, no records were kept. At one point¹⁶⁵ it was asserted that Annual Reports were written by the RDE and not shared with MoE. There were no Annual Reports after March 2007, and the assertion differs clearly from the policy of “*higher level alignment with Afghan systems*” re-iterated in the 2008 Review Aide Memoire: “*systematic joint planning between the MoE and the Danish Embassy as opposed to more ad hoc like agreements and action*” (p. 1).

The focus of PEPS 1 had been the five programme components related to the primary education sub-sector. This was widened during the extension to include secondary education grade 7 to 12. Support was no longer confined to specific Danida programmes, but to the whole Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS), which, with the Afghanistan Compact, resulting from the London Conference on Afghanistan in early 2006, formed the framework for a new Education Programme: Five Year Strategy 1385-89 (2006-10). The Strategy identified eight programmes, of which Danida would support three:

1. General Education
2. Curriculum Development
3. Education Administration Reform

163 Programme Document on Extension of Danish support to Education in Afghanistan 2007-08, 21 March, 2007.

164 Review Aide-Memoire Danish Support to the Education Sector in Afghanistan 2007-08 (2008).

165 Danida Preparatory Material Review 2008, Preliminary Response to Mission preparation notes, Danida, 2008 p. 1.

Limitation to these three programmes would ensure issues of access, quality and capacity development remained priorities, while avoiding stretching programme capacity too thinly. The need for continued attention to “a two-track development approach” was recognised, i.e. the most pressing demands would be addressed while the programme would help MoE to “*continue planning for systematic development in the longer perspective as specified in the Education Strategy*”¹⁶⁶.

The lack of documentation for this period limits the ability to evaluate performance of contributions to particular education programmes in Afghanistan. The support continued to be highly relevant and the modality is to some extent justified by aid effectiveness criteria. However, while the flexibility and size of the budget was appreciated by MoE, there is little evidence of effective or efficient use of funds, and shared data was intended in the implementation logic’s emphasis on use of shared results for management. From experience on the field mission, clearly considerable capacity in the Ministry (particularly in relation to planning and monitoring) has been established. This is positive. However, as much of this is bought in through national TA, who remain outside the establishment and whose presence is dependent on donor funds, the arrangement cannot be said to be sustainable.

General education

The decision to broaden the focus in the extended programme extended the flexibility built into the first three years. It continued the modality used for PEPS 1 with “*clear and measurable performance and output indicators*”¹⁶⁷. The decision was made, however, to abandon earmarking of programme funds, and the prescribed outputs were those described in the Education Strategy as explained below.

Management mechanisms for the extension were to be the same as those that had operated over the past three years: Steering Committee meetings with the GMU “*or such other similar authority as may be mutually decided*”, Annual Plans, Audits, Reviews and Reports. However, monitoring and reporting would be part of a full set of indicators developed by MoE for the overall Strategy. The first EMIS school survey dates from 2007¹⁶⁸ and provides some of the evidence on progress not shown by programme mechanisms. Records of MoE reporting (e.g. through EMIS) on progress in programme areas of interest to Danida would have been perfectly acceptable. In the event, Danish contributions to Ministry achievement in the period were difficult to quantify, though, as with the earlier period, schools were built, teachers trained and books printed. Known inputs on Curriculum, Management and Infrastructure are detailed below.

Curriculum development

The Ministry’s presentation on the Five Year Strategy 2007¹⁶⁹ sets out the targets for curriculum and textbook activity to 2010 (“Major targets 1385-89”):

- Develop new curriculum for secondary school;
- Field test, print and distribution of 78 million textbooks in official languages;
- Establishment of resource and reference materials for libraries in 80% of schools;

166 PEPS Extension Programme Document 2007-08, p. 6.

167 Programme Document on Extension of Danish Support to Education in Afghanistan 2007-08, March 2007, p. 8.

168 Less comprehensive surveys had taken place in 2004 and 2005 with UNICEF support.

169 Education Programme: Five Year Strategy 1385-89 (2006-10), Slide 8.

- Establishment of science labs in 2,400 secondary schools and provision of science kits to 10,000 schools;
- Strengthening and expanding the National Curriculum Development Centre;
- Establishment of a National Standards Board for teaching and learning achievements.

As explained above, in 2006 the distinction between curriculum and textbook development had become less clear-cut. The Five Year Strategy incorporates textbook provision within the programme on curriculum development. Yet book and material development and production (printing and distribution) activities continued to be managed by separate departments. According to data provided to the evaluation by the MoE Production Department, Danida funded the printing of 7.1 million textbooks in 2008 for grades 3 to 6, and 15.3 million for grades 1 to 6 in 2009. The latter cost USD 7.76 million. Danida TA had begun supporting the Curriculum Department's MDU in September 2006 and a progress report on the production and distribution of books from April 2007 briefly outlines activity.¹⁷⁰ There was a six-member Textbook Team in place assisting not only with the production of 27.7 million books (in collaboration with UNICEF, USAID and the Norwegian Government), but also with capacity building in a single province (Parwan) on computerised record keeping and receipt/dispatch of books. There was also a pilot activity to "*assess and upgrade existing textbook storage facilities in the larger Provinces*" (p. 1). The report found that in 2007 books were arriving in Provinces and Districts with no storage facilities of any kind. A subsequent, 2008, meeting between Danida and MoE staff indicated some problems with payments to a local printing company and with quality control, counting of books, reporting on distribution and coordination with the US Army¹⁷¹.

In January 2008, the EMIS department in MoE produced the first full report on its School Survey, which had taken place the previous year, between May and August 2007. This indicated substantial progress in systems management capacity in MoE. However, it did not cover data on books in schools. A record¹⁷² of books printed and distributed in the period with Danish funding suggests:

- 44.5 million textbooks printed between 2003-08 (co-financed by USAID)
- 49 million books distributed in first half of 2009.

Education Administration Reform

At the time of the preparation of this phase of Danish support, the Afghan Government's Priority Restructuring and Reform (PRR) planning process was in its final stages of completion. PRR was an organisational structure related to the Public Administration Reform (PAR) for the function of the entire civil service system. Changes to MoE structure were planned at central, provincial and district levels, specifying staff requirements, functions and responsibilities within a new Pay and Grading (P&G) human resource management system. A Reform Implementation Management Unit (RIMU) had been set up to implement the PRR in the education sector. Danish funding was provided in support of the work of this Unit between early 2006 and 2008.

170 Gibbings, Danida Textbook Production and Distribution Progress Report, April 2007.

171 Minutes of Meeting, June, 2008, p. 1.

172 Major achievements for Donor Profile – Danish contributions Achievement under the Education Pillar, RDE, 2010.

It was hoped that part of the PAR would include arrangements for multi-donor co-financing. The Danida Programme Document refers to introduction of programme budgeting, which would allow planning of annual activity related to Education Strategy goals and linked to annual budgets. These would capture all government and donor funding supporting MoE programmes irrespective of modality. Given that continuation of Danish support was designed “to advance further the achievement of the targets of the Paris Declaration and the Afghanistan Compact on donor harmonisation and effectiveness”¹⁷³ this would indeed have been an advance.

Three documents relate to Danida support to RIMU: a MoE proposal to establish RIMU with Danish support from 2006¹⁷⁴, a Final Report on Implementation of RIMU was produced in May 2007¹⁷⁵, and a 2009 Report on work undertaken by the Unit¹⁷⁶. The initial proposal was for a modest budget input (USD 250,000) over three years to provide five national specialists. The tasks included the drafting of job classifications for P&G and the development of capacity in the HR department to manage human resources in MoE.

The Final Report refers to training and recruitment of provincial staff and to capacity development activities in relation to human resource management. It records several recruitment successes, but that staff (in the event three long-term and five short-term foreign staff) became overstretched and involved in day-to-day crisis management. The eventual budget exceeded USD 1.1 million and although the P&G system appears currently to be quite widely established¹⁷⁷ the 2009 Report states that implementation of P&G was too difficult for the HR department. They would not be “in a position to handle this without a targeted capacity building intervention”. From the repeated and undefined references to “capacity development” at several points in the programme there is the impression of this term being invoked to cover the immediacy of “guidance on a daily basis” and a much broader time horizon without specified limits. References to measurable targets are very hard to discover.

The Financial and Management TA referred to above in discussion of GMU functioning apparently continued at post during this period with responsibility for:

- Advising on all aspects of capacity development related to the implementation of the PRR process;
- Supporting the PRR task force to oversee the implementation of the PRR process;
- Assisting through the Deputy Minister in planning and evaluation of capacity development programmes for professional staff;
- Assisting MoE on all aspects of management issues related to donor-funded support implemented by the Ministry, especially regarding harmonisation and promotion of Coherence.

Progress on donor coordination took place through a meeting of the Education Development Board in December 2008 and attended by MoE and donor representatives (CIDA,

173 Programme Document on Extension of Danish Support to Education in Afghanistan 2007-08, March 2007, p. 7.

174 Establishment of a Reform Implementation Management Unit (RIMU) MoE, March 2006.

175 Implementation of RIMU/PAR at the Ministry of Education, The Services Group, May 2007.

176 Danida, RIMU, Report on the work undertaken, RDE August 2009.

177 Some 80% of staff currently recorded on the system according to MoE, 2011.

UNICEF, USAID, JICA, WB and Sida). Danida did not participate. They did attend a further meeting in February 2009 at which the use of TA, textbook distribution, the use of ARTF for teachers' salaries and the Fast Track Initiative were discussed.

The extension was to make use of considerable TA inputs. However, use of TA seems increasingly to have been a concern to donors and to MoE. From interviews and from the lack of documentation the evaluation concludes this was also true for Danida. Accountability for expected outputs as well as coordination of effort were not well managed. In 2006, the World Bank had been critical of the way donor provided TA had been utilised, and these comments can also be applied to Danida TA¹⁷⁸: *“Coupled with the problems of public administration reform are the difficulties encountered with technical assistance. Experiences learned from the past four years indicate that TA has generally been provided through an ad hoc, project-based and donor supply-driven approach resulting in a fragmented, uncoordinated and expensive provision of assistance with the absence of regular monitoring and reporting mechanisms. Salary top-ups and hiring government staff to work on donor programs have further undermined Public Administration Reform”*¹⁷⁹. The 2008 Review Aide-Memoire also emphasises the dangers of perpetuating a *“2nd class public service”* by ignoring the *“uneasy working relations between lowly paid civil servants and highly paid TAs”* (p. 8).

Infrastructure development

The Programme Document for the extension identifies new expenditure on infrastructure development with a contract for construction of 14 schools by DAARTT. In addition, it was suggested, *“support could be provided for capacity development in MoE’s Department of Construction to enable the staff to manage tender, bidding, contracting and overseeing processes, and to coordinate construction activities”* (p. 7). The Programme Document does not refer to funding arrangements for construction and it is assumed the previous separate financing channel for DAARTT continued under the new programme¹⁸⁰. According to the DAARTT representative, between 2007 and 2009 they were contracted to construct or rehabilitate 72 classes, develop coordination and information sharing (but not capacity development) with what had by this time become the Infrastructure Development Services Department (ISD) and other stakeholders. They were also to develop the DAARTT Staff Competence Development programme and share this with ISD.

The National Education Strategy confirmed the priority still given to infrastructure development in 2007, and the huge need that remained (73,000 classrooms in 9,200 schools compared with the 13,851 estimated need five years earlier). However, in addition to access, management capacity for policy development and monitoring were the first items listed when the Strategy was presented to MoE and donors¹⁸¹. This suggests a better strategic balance between long-term and immediate needs and is consistent with Danida’s support policies.

178 Danida’s 2009 Identification Report refers to supply-driven decisions (p. 50). The 2008 Review Aide Memoire (p. 8) is critical of earlier TA use. The 2011 IIEP document, On the road to resilience (p. 105) cautions on widespread use of TA. Danida Programme TA Performance review procedures beginning late 2009 concluded many TA had no workplans against which to rate performance.

179 Interim Strategy Note, WB, 2006, p. 21.

180 In 2007 Danida’s funding of DAARTT moved from the NGO budget-line for to the Regions of Origin budget-line, planned to run until 2009.

181 National Education Strategy Presentation, 2007 (Slide 13.)

Table 11 Summary of schools and students by gender and type of education 1386 (2007)

	No. of Schools	% of Schools to Total Schools	Male Students	Female Students	Gender Ratio	% of Male Students	% of Female Students	Total Students	% Students to Total Students
General education	9,062	95.63%	3,677,862	2,008,089	0.55	64.62%	35.38%	5,675,951	98.00%
Islamic education	336	3.55%	84,446	6,916	0.08	92.43%	7.57%	91,362	1.58%
Teacher training	34	0.36%	9,156	5,138	0.56	64.05%	35.95%	14,294	0.25%
Technical and vocational	44	0.46%	9,321	1,045	0.11	89.92%	10.08%	10,366	0.18%
Total	9,476	100.00%	3,770,785	2,021,188	0.54	65.10%	34.90%	5,791,973	100.00%

Source: 1386 (2007) Schools Survey Summary Report, MoE, 2008.

The table taken from the EMIS database report (drawing on a sample of 1,386 schools) was able to give more accurate figures for existing school infrastructure from 2008 (drawing on the 2007 survey) and thus more reliable estimates of need. For the first time figures are given also for each province.

The table below, from the same report, provides an estimate of the “Number of schools without building” (more than 50%).

Table 12 General education building type and classrooms

Total Students	No. of Classes (Norm)	No. of Schools with Building	No. of Schools without Building	No. of Schools Building Status Unknown	Current No. of Students Per Classroom	No. of Classrooms Available	No. of Classrooms Needed	Expected No. of Students Per Classroom
5,675,951	157,537	3,704	4,956	402	135	42,003	73,208	78

Source: 1386 (2007) Schools Survey Summary Report, MoE, 2008.

Figures were disaggregated by level, gender, type (Islamic or General), area-type (urban or rural) and by school year type also (warm areas or cold areas). There are no references to disabled pupil provision, education of Kuchi families, ethnicity or provision for religious minorities, but the report gives an impressive view of the progress the MoE had made in providing management information relating to need.

Table 13 Summary of general education schools by type and gender (1386)

	Male	Female	Mix	Total By Level	% Total by Level Schools to Total Schools
Primary	1817	728	2479	5,024	55.44%
% of Primary Schools to Total Primary Schools	36.17%	14.49%	49.34%		
Lower Secondary	830	374	1302	2,506	27.65%
% of Lower Secondary Schools to Total Lower Secondary Schools	33.12%	14.92%	51.96%		
Higher Secondary	753	235	544	1,532	16.91%
% of Higher Secondary Schools to Total Higher Secondary Schools	49.15%	15.34%	35.51%		
Total by Gender	3400	1377	4325	9,062	
% of Total Schools by Gender to Total Schools	37.52%	14.75%	47.73%		

Source: IBID, p. 13.

A report¹⁸² on Danish support for construction from March 2007 to mid-2009 gives the selection criteria for DAARTT's construction of 72 primary classrooms in Kabul, Nangarhar, Baglan, Samangan and Balkh at a cost of USD 15 million. These included the high numbers of school age children, lack of infrastructure and DAARTT's extensive experience in the areas. It also examines the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of outputs and reports the construction output as achieved, largely following MoE standard designs. However, the output relating to staff competence development was not achieved and DAARTT's contribution to capacity development is described as "*ad-hoc*" and hard to identify¹⁸³. The evaluation suggests the objective was undefined, though it also comments that no staff competence plan was developed. Construction costs were not found to be excessive, but overhead costs could in future be reduced. Sustainability (in this case the ability of the Ministry to fund ongoing maintenance) is regarded as "*a work in progress*" for DAARTT.

As with the earlier phase of support, classrooms were constructed, but outputs relating to coordination and to capacity development were not achieved; following the above evaluation cost-effectiveness is considered only moderate. Sustainability, in terms of strengthening host institution ownership and capacity, was not addressed systematically. It was too early to assess impact.

An overall assessment of Danida's support during the period 2007-08, therefore, suggests that management capacity was gradually developing within MoE. Danida-supported outputs in terms of physical infrastructure and books were documented. However, limited records do not reveal where the expected systematic support to management during this phase occurred.

182 Carsten Bronded, Evaluation of Danish Assistance to Afghan Rehabilitation and Technical Training Phase III 2007-09, Training & Development Partners Aps., August 2009.

183 Ibid. (p. 6).

5.4 2008-10 Further extension of PEPS

As noted, the 2003-06 programme was extended to March 2007. This was then again extended to December 2008 as described in the previous section. On 18.11.2008 MoE and RDE signed an MoU recording a USD 6 million grant for the construction of schools in Helmand. From the end of 2008 to mid 2010 when the current Education Support Programme to Afghanistan (ESPA) 2010-13 began, Denmark provided substantial funds to the ARTF for teacher salaries¹⁸⁴. It is understood that Danish support to other programme components continued during this period making use of carried over funds. However, as indicated, until the resumption of Steering Committee Meetings and Minutes at the end of 2009 there are few records of programme activity or outputs.

The intention to continue Danish support for the reconstruction of Afghanistan to the end of 2009 had been foreseen in the 2005 education review. Education was included in this intended support. *“As the current phase ends in December 2006 the support to education will be extended by three years to include the period January 2007-December 2009. The exact amount of Danish funding for this extension still needs to be calculated. But it is expected to continue at the current level”*¹⁸⁵.

In June 2009, an Identification Mission visited Kabul to plan the next phase of Danish support to education¹⁸⁶. This mission reported in August 2009 and gives an indication of the substantial funding at that time available for part of the 2008-10 period.

Table 14 Proposed further funding for Danish Support to Education (USD)

Program Funding Stream	Carry Over from 2008	2009	Total
Danish/Ministry of Education	7,590,000	3,100,000	10,690,000
Stabilisation Funding	300,000	441,300	741,300
Total	7,890,000	3,541,300	11,431,300

Source: *Identification Report for Danish Support to Education, 2009, p. 84.*

In September 2009, the series of Steering Committee Meetings resumed and continued with regularity and remarkable frequency to late 2011. The 23 meetings (roughly one per month) provide a useful general record of activities and how Danish funding was being spent. The supported programmes are in the areas of textbook production, construction (especially in Helmand) and Technical assistance. Details of expenditure and activity in these areas, apart from construction, are uneven. Discussion of support during this period is grouped under headings relating to Management and Infrastructure, therefore.

Aid management and planning and management capacity development

When the Steering Committee Meetings restarted, senior MoE staff attended regularly and there were often more than 15 members, observers or invited participants. This reflected the quality of discussion, size of funding provided and the flexibility of allocation, frequently explained as the most appreciated characteristics of Danish support.

184 Letter from WB to RDE, January 2009.

185 Review of Danish Support to Education, August 2005, p. 3.

186 Identification Report for Danish Support to Education, 2009, p. 84.

More recently, however, Directors have sent TA to represent them at these meetings. No other DPs are shown as attending. However, both donors and ministry interviewees reported high regard for Danida's support modality linked to management arrangements. From reports, few donors are currently in a position to support the Ministry in the same way, and some envied the professional satisfaction derived from close involvement in the details of MoE programmes.

Steering Committee Meeting minutes provide an overview of discussion on some of these technical details referring, for example, to the quality control of textbooks, and procurement and contracting procedures. Steps for dealing with detailed textbook printing problems, the purchase and transportation of shipping containers for storage of books in provinces, and the arrangements for awareness-raising campaigns to encourage girls to attend school. The monthly meetings allow a fair idea of the time required to resolve issues.

A 2010 textbook inspection report also refers to this period¹⁸⁷. Lack of printing capacity in-country led to contracting of companies as far away as Indonesia¹⁸⁸. Given Afghanistan's land-locked situation, the size and bulk of the end product and quality of roads this seems a remarkable decision. The report illustrates the challenges of exercising quality control over millions of copies of books, the difficulties of distribution and the huge demand still being experienced. These remained significant. However, it is noted that systems to address them were still being developed at this time, six years after the start of major donor support. Other reports suggest large differences between books needed and arrivals in 2008.¹⁸⁹ Provincial visits during the evaluation confirm this as an ongoing issue. EMIS and centralised units are still not able to calculate annual demand and monitor delivery. The only references to systematic procedures and forms for monitoring textbook supply were seen in documentation from Helmand and from Balkh (see Case Study in Annex H). It must be acknowledged, however, that even in 2011 roads are in poor condition and it is reported that in some areas, to be found by insurgents transporting government material means immediate execution. This is not a simple problem, therefore. But it must be stressed that the printing of books by MoE and donors is only one step in the lengthy process of getting books into students' hands.

Budget break downs for Danida support are referred to in Steering Committee minutes, but are not attached to documentation. Annual Plans were not prepared in relation to Danida funding, though they may have been developed by departments. Records of specific inputs or outputs were described by the 2009 Identification Mission Report as important for monitoring by both Danida and MoE, and the 2008 Review Aide-Memoire makes the point: *“Without programme budgets based on reliable activity-level data and the possibility to monitor programme results regularly and reliably, there is little chance that the donors will be able to switch from strictly earmarked funding towards more flexible programme funding”* (p. 4).

Technical assistance

The GMU seems to have been revived from 2008 and functioned as coordinator for the meetings when they resumed. The same staff have continued in place from 2009 to the present, which provides a welcome degree of continuity. Many participants shown in the

187 “40.6 million Textbooks to the MoE”, Institute for Education, Business and Culture, iEBC Ltd., Sept. 2010.

188 PEPS 1 Programme Document 2003-06, p. 21.

189 Heidi Vogt, School textbooks bogged down in Afghanistan, Associated Press 23 April 2009. Several of the persons interviewed for this article were also interviewed by the evaluation.

minutes as ministry staff, were in fact TA, including the GMU members. Coordinated funding of TA was one of the issues discussed by the Steering Committee at the end of 2009. Danida was at this time funding some 155 TA in the Departments of Finance, Procurement, Planning and Construction among others, many of them Afghan nationals.

Funding of TA, or supplementing MoE staff through donor funds is a significant strategic choice, and further documentation would be welcome on the reasons for implementation of such an extensive strategy, whether its implications had been fully considered and how long it was expected to be used¹⁹⁰. From recent communication with RDE and MoE it is understood that a detailed analysis is currently being carried out by the HR Department¹⁹¹. However, the GMU is also said to have been working on a form of TA policy in 2008¹⁹². This has not been seen by the evaluation. The 2011 IIEP paper discusses TA deployment and points to serious concerns with “capacity buying”¹⁹³. The strategy merits serious, shared discussion and staged future planning. Recruitment of Afghans with the required qualifications has not been possible on government salaries and DPs have agreed to support salary payments. However, this masks the long-term implications for civil service capacity. The table below lists the TA being supported by DPs in late 2009.

Table 15 TA in MoE supported by different donors, 2009

Donor	Section	Number
World Bank		475
Danida		155
CNTF		50
CDP		178
USAID	CDP	192
USAID	Program Coordination	83
UNESCO	CCP	14
UNESCO		3
WFP		3
UNICEF		4
Total Number of TA		1,157

Source: Identification Report for Danish Support to Education, 2009.

The evaluation was unable to examine the different systems through which staff are recruited and employed in any detail, though these were briefly discussed with MoE. Some provide “superscale” salaries for senior staff, other DPs pay department directors who receive no government salary. There are also national TA schemes and a Civilian Technical

190 The situation is far from unique to Afghanistan.

191 Personal communication with RDE and with Planning Department, February 2012.

192 Review Aide-Memoire Danish Support to the Education Sector in Afghanistan 2007-08 (2008) p. 9.

193 On the road to resilience – Capacity development with the Ministry of Education in Afghanistan, Morten Sigsgaard (Ed.) (2011) p. 107.

Assistance Programme funded by different donors. All schemes are said to involve processing and merit-based selection by MoE and approval by MoF, and this provides some welcome coordination. Nevertheless, the size of the TA cohort and its deployment in key positions remains striking.

In October 2009, Danida was funding 70% of TA in the DoF, while the other 30% were supported by the WB. There was a suggestion that Danida should assume funding for all TA since this would allow for a unified scale¹⁹⁴. The decision of the Meeting is not recorded, but recent discussion on the evaluation mission suggests the different systems and scales for TA employment continue to be a challenge.

In addition, the roles, functions and exit strategies related to TA deployment in capacity development positions have in the past frequently been unclear. Although some TA referred to benchmarks for capacity development in their ToR, others admitted they had none. From mid-2009, an MFA format for recording Performance Dialogue regarding Technical Assistance was made use of by RDE. One statement reports on whether “*A clear and agreed work plan outlining the advisers’ tasks exists*”. In several cases, the TA were carrying out extensive and important tasks (with high levels of commitment and flexibility) without a work plan.

As noted already, it is generally harder to identify objectives and outputs for capacity development roles and, in this respect, TA responsibilities and expected outputs have often been unspecified. More detailed planning would be needed to establish exit strategies and counterpart development in case donor funding becomes unavailable and the TA leave. As indicated, it is understood that MoE and donors are working on this issue, but it would need to be much more accessible to scrutiny. Tasks require much more specific output targets.

In the case of the GMU, it is clear that its function as management coordinator for the Danida programmes has not been a success. Its function as broader aid coordinator is not demonstrated, and the transaction cost of holding large Steering Committee Meetings every month for a single donor does not seem to have been questioned. Duplication of function between the DoF, GMU and the Education Development Board (EDB later the Human Resources Development Board, HRDB) suggests less than optimal efficiency. It is noted that Danida supports both the HRDB and the GMU.

Physical infrastructure

MoE, through its Helmand Provincial Education Department (PED), had responsibility for implementation of the construction of nine schools (including boundary walls, latrines, furniture, facilities and wells) and two dormitories in Helmand province. Monitoring was to be carried out by Danida via the PRT¹⁹⁵.

The need for construction in all areas has remained significant throughout the programme period. Growing stability by 2009 meant that demand for schooling and school populations increased (e.g. through returned refugees). Expectations grew too, and grew harder to satisfy. The situation remained critical not only in terms of access, but in relation to education quality, as suggested by the comment on shifts in the second EMIS Report: “*The current infrastructure situation has affected all faced of education. There are schools with no buildings and schools with buildings. In schools with buildings the schooling hours are*

194 Danida/MoE Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, 29.12.2009.

195 MoU between RDE and MoE, 18.11.2008.

*lesser and schools and classrooms are serving students in shifts, which in return have adversely affected the quality of education. Lack of supporting facilities, i.e. libraries, laboratories and activity centers is also an issue partly involving infrastructure.”*¹⁹⁶

From Steering Committee records, in 2009-10 DAARTT were also constructing 130 classrooms in three other provinces, Kapisa, Baghlan, Parwan and in Kabul. Construction appears on every Steering Committee agenda and DAARTT were called to report on progress with these classrooms, and eventually on those in Helmand, on several occasions, providing updates to MoE and RDE. The minutes recorded the need for accelerated construction of the 130 classrooms. Use of UNICEF’s model for contracts and payments was proposed. There was discussion of the appointment of “*construction TA*” to assist with all contracts in ISD and in one discussion the Ministry commented that costs for 215 new classrooms were “*very expensive*”.¹⁹⁷

From discussion, in 2009 Danida had again raised the importance of DAARTT engaging in capacity building and technical cooperation with the MoE as part of implementation of its contract. No documents describe the specific capacity building activities and outputs expected for this sub-component or the results, although there is a request for a construction “*tracking worksheet*” in the Steering Committee minutes for April 2010. The Danish Support Identification Mission in August 2009 had suggested that construction proposals referred insufficiently to NESP objectives and were “*more supply driven – by the NGO itself – than those required by the situation in Afghanistan*” (p. 50).

5.5 Overall performance on extensions 2007-10

The fact that records are scarce for this period does not indicate a lack of progress in Afghan education development, nor that Danida was not involved. Some significant outputs for the period were indeed reported. 72 classrooms were completed by August 2009 and a further 130 classrooms almost completed by the end of 2010. Steering Committee Meeting minutes from 2009 suggest progress was made with textbook printing and some attention was paid to distribution problems. MoE records show Danida contributed with others to the printing of 30.8 million textbooks in 2008, 15.3 million in 2009 and 40.6 million in 2010.

However, as pointed out earlier, between 2007 and 2009 it is not only hard to piece together where programme inputs occurred and outputs were achieved, the evidence for capacity improvement at the level of policy, strategy and systems is simply not visible. And lack of visibility suggests weak focus on management and aid management.

The 2009 Identification Report summarises the Ministry’s capacity for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) at the time, “*it can be characterised as weak and fragmented, with disparate systems, all working without a common plan, and with little success in providing MoE with an objective feedback on its overall performance*”¹⁹⁸. A Danida Assessment makes similar comments, with some criticism of MoE stakeholders for their lack of attention to reporting on results: “On the whole little attention has been paid in the ministry to its M&E function. This is despite the fact that MoE is implementing programme budgeting for the third year in a row. This has not led to promotion of any ‘result’ orientation in the

196 MoE, EMIS Summary Report for 2007/8, July 2008, p. 34.

197 Steering Committee Minutes, 14.4.2010.

198 Danida Identification Report, July 2009, p. 27.

ministry. There are various issues here: poor capacity of staff, poor systems and processes, and poor demand from MoE's stakeholders themselves – MoF, MoE, even donors – for providing objective evaluation reports and score cards.”¹⁹⁹ Perhaps as a consequence, in early 2010 the EMIS team reported to the Steering Committee the initiation of a pilot project to build M&E capacity in Helmand Province with Danida support.

Details of budget disbursement and achievement of outputs are not known. The 2009 Identification Report table shows a carry-over of nearly USD 8 million from 2008 to 2009, so delays in spending apparently remained. The Assessment quoted above comments positively on MoE staff commitment and on the functioning of the funding modality in very difficult circumstances in Afghanistan. It recommends continued use of the on-budget mechanism. However, quoting an IMF/IDA Note it states, “*Capacity development is an urgent priority, requiring a range of actions, including PAR, pay and grading reform, and better management and coordination of TA*”²⁰⁰. Further effort from donors on aid effectiveness and on management from MoE are also needed the note says.

From discussions with several donor representatives the evaluation concludes that sector coordination, while still weak, improved somewhat during the period. The ARTF/EQUIP acted with some success as a donor coordination forum. There was praise also for the EDB and subsequently the HRDB and Working Groups.²⁰¹ EDB meetings began in late 2008 and HRDB took over in April 2010. Danida has continued since then to be active in the HRDB, and was co-chair from May 2010 to 2011²⁰².

Despite the continuing need for greater monitoring capacity in MoE, the EMIS Summary Report for 2008 demonstrates some improvement in planning, management and reporting. Danida is understood to have supported these functions through TA. The Ministry was increasingly able not only to gather and present increasing amounts of data at provincial level, but also to perform some analysis related to quality issues as well as access. For example, in the following illustrations MoE presents data not only on teacher numbers, but also on their qualifications by education grade attained. This is an important step in the process of raising standards in the teaching profession. Presentation of data on school shifting also demonstrates a growing awareness that simply increasing access, by conducting classes in shifts, has implications for the length of school day and, thus, the quality of education provided. Greater attention to these issues of quality, as well as quantity, has repeatedly been called for in programme documentation.²⁰³

199 Afghanistan Assessment of the Education Sector based on the 10 Budget Support Principles, 2009? p. 10. NB. The evaluation has not seen evidence of this “programme budgeting”.

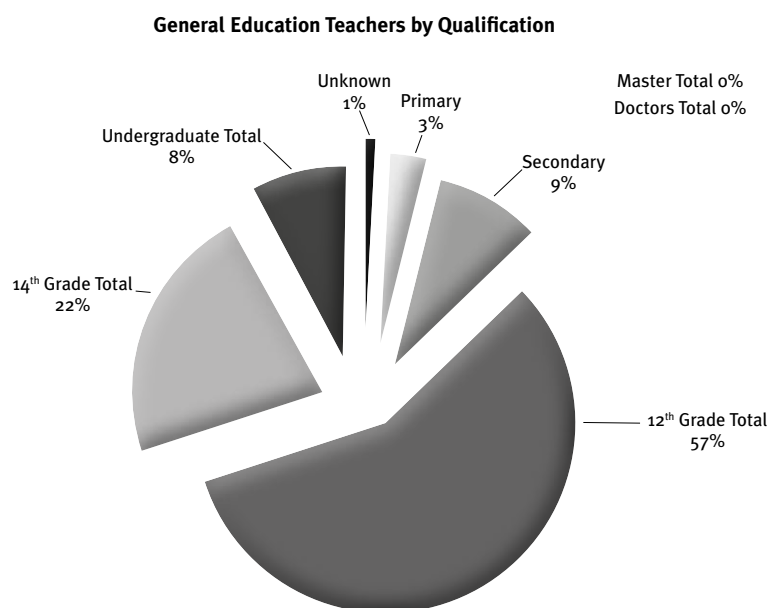
200 Approved by Juan Carlos Di Tata and Matthew Fisher (IMF) and Praful Patel (IDA), May 15, 2008. Available at: [http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRS1/Resources/Afghanistan_JSAN-PRSP_\(May15-2008\).pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRS1/Resources/Afghanistan_JSAN-PRSP_(May15-2008).pdf).

201 Meeting with Norad on 23.11.11.

202 The evaluation team noted some donors, e.g. USA, believe in the need to re-create an Education Development Board (EDB) in addition to the HRDB, to ensure sufficient focus on primary education. RDE reports that ToR for the Education Coordination Committee were adopted in January 2012.

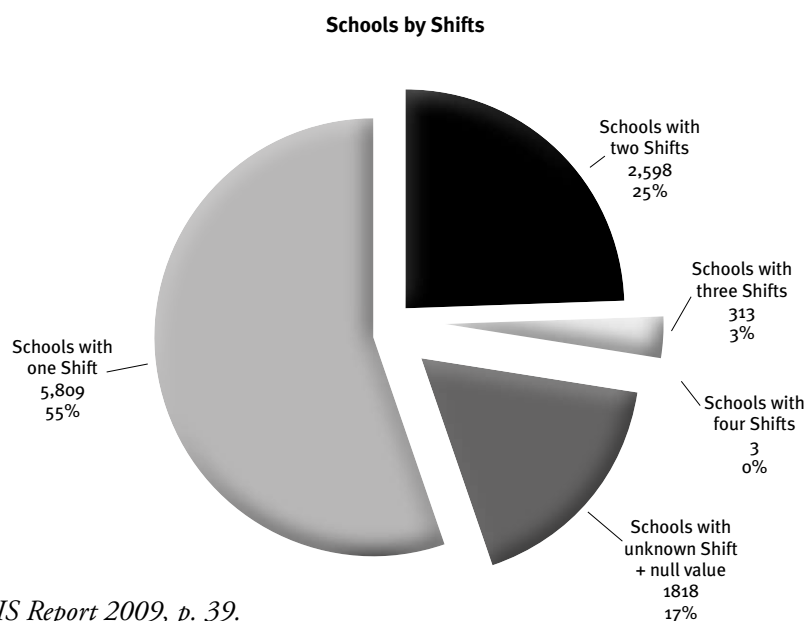
203 For example, Review Aide-Memoire Danish Support to the Education Sector in Afghanistan 2007-08 (2008) p. 5.

Figure 5 Illustrations of growing capacity to analyse quality issues 1



Source: EMIS Report 2009, p. 39.

Figure 6 Illustration of of growing capacity to analyse quality issues 2



Source: EMIS Report 2009, p. 39.

5.6 2010-13 Education Support Programme to Afghanistan

In 2009 the Identification Mission referred to above planned the next phase of Danish support to education. The Mission reported in August 2009 and proposed a three-year programme from March 2010, with a budget of USD 60.7 million to support Government's ANDS and what would become the NESP/Education Interim Plan 2011-13²⁰⁴. The funding represents a substantial further increase p.a. over previous years. Danish

204 NESP 1 was approved in 2006, NESP 2 in 2010 and the 5th version of the EIP in 2011.

support is provided under the Education Support Programme for Afghanistan (ESPA) April 2011-13. The first version of the programme agreement was signed in June 2010 and a revised version in January 2011. In addition to the national focus and support for MoE, Danish attention in the current programme is explicitly on support for Helmand province. Under the Danish Helmand Plan (2011) an allocation of 15% of Denmark's development support to Afghanistan is for Helmand.

ESPA aims to achieve its objectives through direct support to MoE budgets and plans and through provision of TA and capacity development. The ESPA Programme Document lists the five EIP priority programmes selected from the NESP. They include, i. General and Islamic education; ii. Curriculum development and teacher education; iii. TVET; iv. Literacy; v. Education governance and administration.

The ToR for this evaluation suggest only a limited analysis of the current programme due to the limited implementation period. For this reason the comments in this section are relatively brief. They include discussion of issues in EIP programmes i., ii., and iv. where there is some continuity from earlier Danida inputs and references to documentation on education programmes in Helmand, which provide helpful insights into the current situation in the province, and also has wider relevance.

General and Islamic education

The main item (and by far the largest budget item) under these two headings in EIP is Construction of school facilities. Required budgets in the Interim Plan quoted in the GPE Program Document confirm the priority status of investment in school construction. Construction is also the most seriously underfunded item, showing the largest gap between Plan and Estimated Commitment from DPs.

Table 16 Projected construction costs

Education Interim Plan	2011	2012	2013	Total
Planned construction of school facilities (USD million)	152.42	170.55	188.80	511.77
Total EIP (USD million)	403.67	478.93	539.81	1,422.41
Construction as % of Total	37.75	35.61	34.98	35.98

Source: Extracted from GPE Annex 8.5 Table 10.3.4 Donor Resources Mapping, 2011 (p. 5).

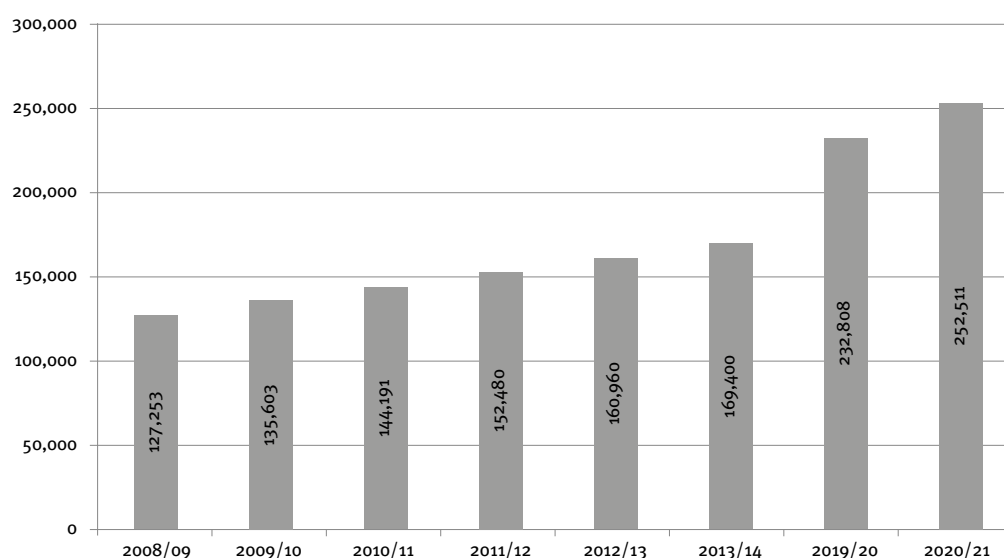
MoE documentation for construction targets (classrooms) improved and a major assessment of construction practice (conducted by Article 25, funded by Danida) has recently reported with recommendations on standards, coordination, etc. for the future. In addition, meetings with key stakeholders (including DAARTT, WB, UNICEF and MoE's Infrastructure Services Department, ISD) confirmed that greater coordination and development of management capacity are now receiving the attention they deserve. The ISD now has 181 staff. Its director and engineers attend monthly Steering Committee Meetings and, from discussion, regard these as valuable for sharing advice on construction matters. In terms of national systems, all new schools in Afghanistan now *"have to pass the ISD"*.

In terms of relevance, EMIS reports the number of classrooms in the country in 2009 was 71,592, including MoE owned and also rented premises. The official 2009 projec-

tion suggested the target figure for that year was 127,253, rising to 144,191 for 2011. The shortfall and hence the need and relevance of support are still substantial, therefore.

Construction continues to function as an indication of progress in nation building. Public attitude surveys report not only a high level of satisfaction with the provision of education services by the Government (73%), but also that more than half the respondent sample (57%) were aware of education-related projects such as reconstruction or the opening of schools and training of teachers²⁰⁵. Construction continues to satisfy indicators relating to public demand.

Figure 7 Classrooms needed



Source: *Afghanistan Analysis and Projection Model, EMIS, MoE, 2009.*

The ESPA Programme Document (Annex D) identifies some Activities for “*indicative funds distribution*” through the Core budget, including support for Helmand PED and EMIS, textbook printing and “*Construction Activities*”. There is also an allocation for construction of textbook storage and warehousing facilities in the Provinces and Districts. Support for construction engineering teams in school design and for provincial monitoring and maintenance teams is also planned (Annex A “Key Activities”).

205 A Survey of the Afghan People. The Asia Foundation, 2011.

Table 17 ESPA Programme Support Document, 2010-13, Annex D, Sub-program Education Management

Priority Program	Components	Activities	Funding Commitments USD Million							
			Core Development Budget			External Budget				
			1389	1390	1391	1389	1390	1391		
5.1	Identification of Rehabilitation and Construction Needs									
	Construction and Equipping of General Schools	2.1. Construction Activities (DAARTT&ISD)		4.32			1.30			
	Construction and Equipping of Islamic Schools and Dar-ul-Ulums									
	Construction and Equipping of Technical and Vocational Schools	4.1. National Institute of Management and Administration in Balkh Province + Greshk MS	2.00	0.50						
	Construction and Equipping of TTCs, Science Centers and Labs									
	Construction and Equipping of Educational Offices in Provinces and Districts	6.1. Textbooks Warehouse + HRD Building	2.00	0.80	0.70					
	Monitoring and Quality Control									
	Maintenance of Buildings									
	Management and Coordination									

Source ESPA Programme Support Document, 2010-13, Annex D.

Although Danida funding is no longer earmarked, reflecting the general growing confidence in government systems reported in the Assessment of the Education Sector quoted above, it remains a priority for Danida (as pointed out in programme documents) to monitor progress on these items, through MoE systems. In particular, performance on the issues commented on by the Minister, H. E. Farooq Wardak at the presentation of

the Danida-funded school construction report in mid 2011²⁰⁶ might be monitored:

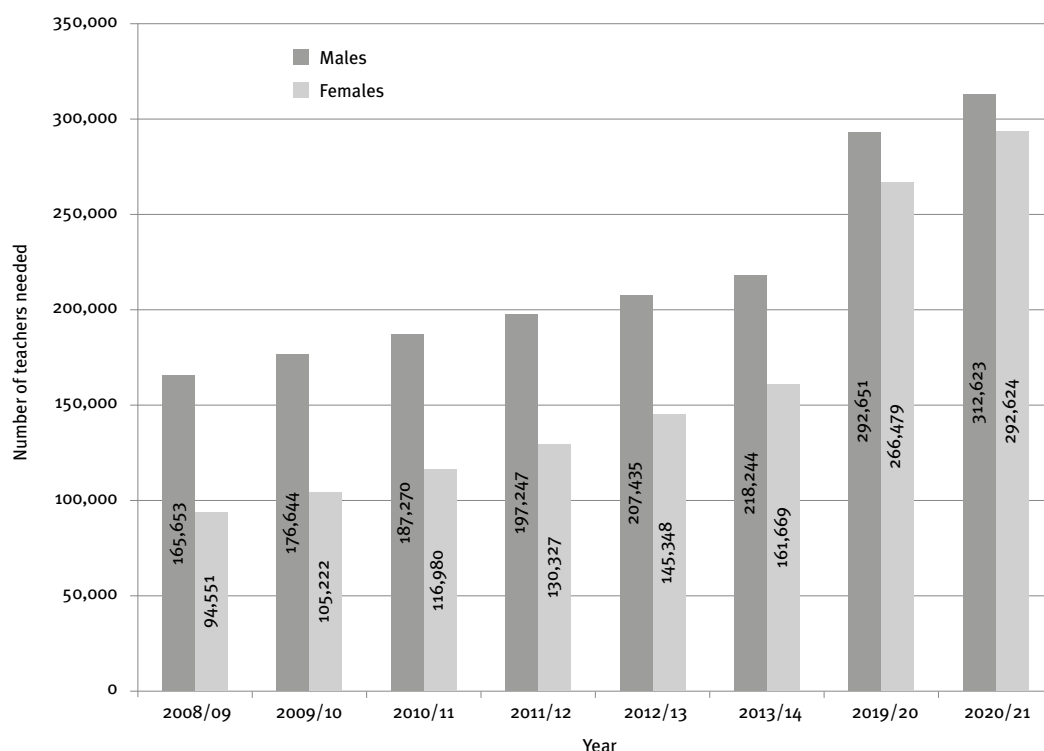
- *“Quality Control – we must work together to find a solution to this problem. Currently the low skills in Quality Control mean we do not get the best deal from the contractors we appoint. We must address this assertively.”*
- *“MoE Capacity – We know the Ministry has to build its capacity to deliver. This is not an instant process, but takes time and can only happen through the collaboration with all the Implementation Partners and donors in this room. This Review helps show us where we need to focus our collaboration for improvement.”*

Curriculum development and teacher education

The focus on access and the need to do more to improve quality also was commented on by informants and in documents throughout the period under evaluation.

Teacher provision has reportedly doubled from 64,850 in 2002. Figures for existing General Education teacher numbers (128,275 in 2008) and expected demand (260,204 in 2009) need to be treated with caution. Assessments of data reliability by donors²⁰⁷ emphasise the need for cross-validation and more careful examination of methods of calculating numbers. But the EMIS system’s ability to estimate need with increasing accuracy represents a significant achievement. Danida continues to support this capacity development through TA and by funding a three-year programme with the IIEP to develop capacity within MoE in planning and monitoring²⁰⁸.

Figure 8 Teacher projections



Source: EMIS, Planning Department, MoE, 2010.

206 Comparative Review of School Construction and Education Infrastructure, Article 25, June, 2011.

207 Data Quality Assessment, DfID, 2010.

208 See Afghanistan Sustainable Capacity Development in Education Sector Planning, Progress report No. 1, UNESCO IIEP, October 2011.

The outstanding demand for teachers remains very large, however, (a shortfall of 131,929 in 2009) despite the undoubted progress in education and the provision of teachers. From discussion at TTCs, there also seems to be no shortage of trainees. The proportion of female teachers has also risen enormously; from 28% of the total in 2006 to 52% in 2011 according to the TTD.

As indicated, there have been several different training initiatives over the last 10 years conducted by NGOs as well as MoE. Throughout 2009 and 2010 a national radio teacher training program was broadcast through the so-called Radio in a Box network aimed at teachers in remote and insecure areas. Teachers have also been encouraged to upgrade their qualifications by sitting the National Teacher Competency Exam. The WB supported EQUIP and ARTF programmes have been mentioned. The series of in-service training programmes has continued from InSeT 1 (2003-06), which trained 75,000 teachers, to InSeT 2 (2009-10), which trained 100,000. Currently InSeT 3 aims to produce 90,000 by 2013 and InSeT 4 is projected to train 70,000 more by the same target date²⁰⁹.

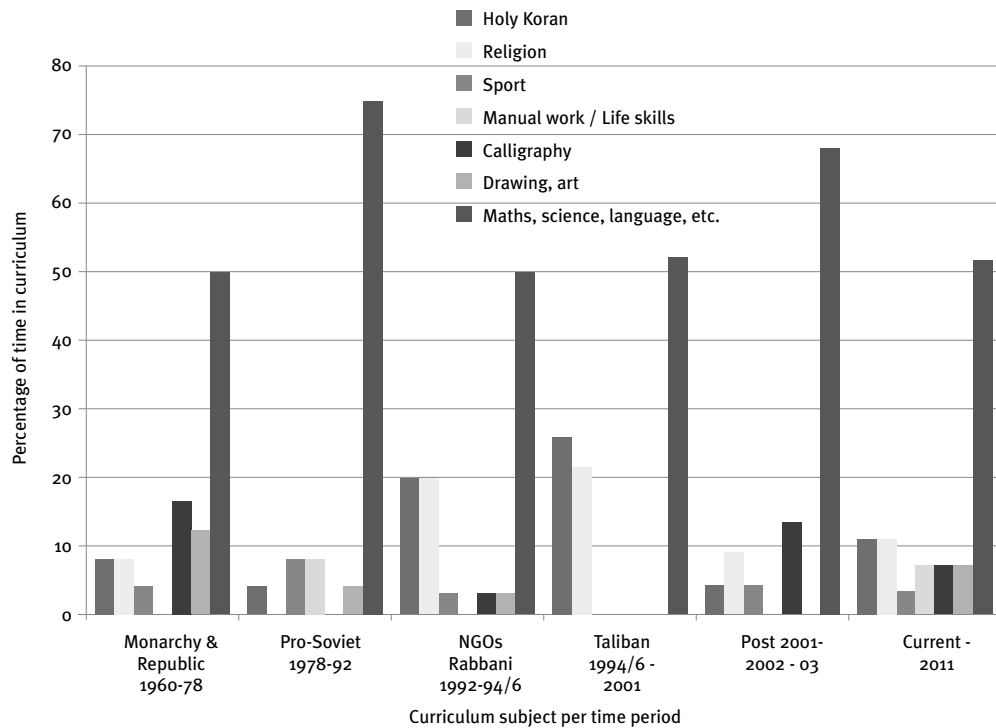
Trainees follow a new pre-service curriculum and quality of teachers is reported to be rising. However, the need to coordinate these programmes remains and some donors have stressed the need for further staff training after graduation pointing to a continued use of rote learning and teacher lecturing. Student-centred, active-learning was observed on the evaluation (see the Case Study in Annex H), but this is reportedly rare. Others questioned the efficiency of the training system. MoE suggests some 50% of trained teachers do not eventually work in schools (let alone government schools) partly because of the size of the recurrent budget. Teachers already represent the largest section of the civil service. Questions of teacher productivity (and student learning quality) will grow in importance during the ESPA period, especially for those schools which operate more than one shift a day (up to 45%), thus shortening teaching and learning hours.

In terms of the school curriculum, and the intention that students will use more modern learning materials, the summary below shows a greater overall balance in the most recent curriculum with more attention to practical subjects²¹⁰.

209 EIP Operational Plan 2011-13: MoE 2011, Budgets and Priorities, p.117.

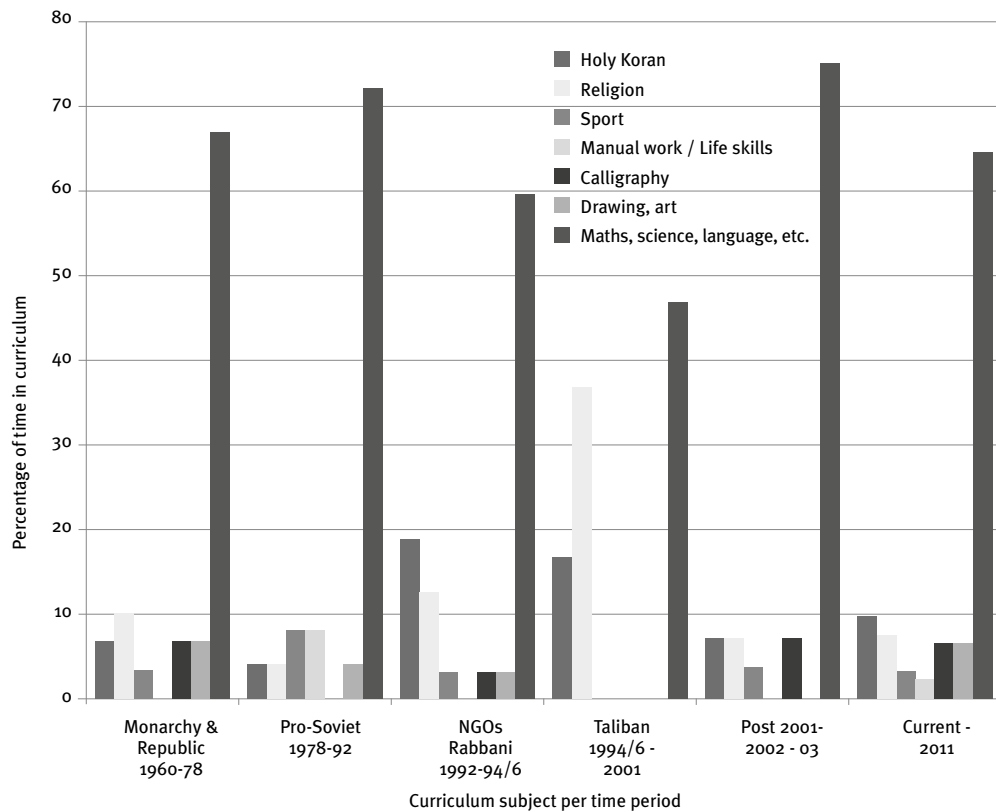
210 Educational Curriculum Frame Work, General Directorate of Curriculum Development and Compilation of Textbooks, MoE, 2011.

Figure 9 Comparison of curriculum elements from 1960 to 2011 (Primary Phase 1 – Grades 1-3)



Source: Compiled by the evaluation from figures in various MoE published sources.

Figure 10 Comparison of curriculum elements from 1960 to Present (Primary Phase 2 – Grades 4-6)



Source: Compiled by the evaluation from figures in various MoE published sources.

Education governance and administration

MoE performance on issues of governance and improving administrative capacity were commented on positively in the 2009 Danida Assessment. For ESPA, Monitoring, Reporting, Reviews and Evaluation continue to be the responsibilities of the Steering Committee. EIP work plans are “*the primary references*” and the Plan “*will be translated into annual national and provincial operational work plans with clear annual targets*”²¹¹. Reporting is to focus on outputs and outcomes not activities. Monitoring will be against targets, against budget and of DPs’ contributions. ESPA foresees some training before this can happen, and workshops are currently being provided within the IIEP managed programme, Afghanistan Sustainable Capacity Development in Education Sector Planning. These inputs to management capacity development can help to provide the focus on results missing from earlier programme monitoring and reporting. However, in the light of earlier comments on capacity development, constant and explicit attention to outputs (expected and achieved) is strongly advised.

The previous series of Steering Committee Meetings has continued regularly into the current support programme with records of items discussed being added to as new points were raised or developments noted. The start of the ESPA programme in the third quarter of 2010 is only indicated in a change in title of the meetings. The minutes of the meetings provide a useful record of discussions on ongoing activities. ESPA monitoring is expected to make use of EIP reports, but also reviews and periodic financial reports. The minutes record some delays in signing the agreement on training in planning and reporting, however, from IIEP reports workshops began towards the end of 2011 for up to 400 MoE staff.

Further progress with coordination is indicated by news that MoE with DPs is preparing a first Joint Sector Review to take place between April and July 2012.

Helmand

NESP/EIP as a national plan directs priority activities by programme, without earmarking by province. ESPA supports national level planning, though there are specific, indicative activities and budget allocations for Helmand. Danish support to the Helmand Plan represents 15% of Danish development support for Afghanistan. Since 2008, development of education in Helmand has reflected Afghan priorities – in the sector as well as in the province: “*The need for construction of schools in safe areas in Helmand Province has increased significantly due to the fact that students from areas considered insecure are now living in, and attending, schools in safe areas*”²¹². Denmark funded construction of nine schools including boundary walls, latrines, furniture, facilities and wells, and construction of two dormitories in Helmand Province and progress was occasionally reported through 2010 at Steering Committee Meetings.

In mid-2010, Danish support for education in Helmand consisted of programmes aimed at stabilisation and development. Development activities are related to the larger Danish support program, ESPA, with funding for school and dormitory construction and capacity building initiatives being submitted directly through the MoE for implementation. The 2011 proposed Annual Plan (submitted to the Steering Committee in December 2010) included funding for a Social Mobilisation Unit, a Girls’ Education Unit, a Construction Programme, and Technical Support²¹³. Stabilisation activities are funded

211 ESPA Programme Support Document, 2010-13, 2011, p. 32.

212 MoU between RDE and MoE, Annex C, Project Document – Construction of Schools and Dormitories in Helmand Province, (2008), p. 1.

213 MoE & Denmark Steering Committee Danish Support Program for Education in Afghanistan (DSPEA): Request for Helmand Activity Funding Support, 2011.

through the UK and US military budgets and have included community outreach, teacher training, material supply, school construction and refurbishment. The two sets of activities have been increasingly coordinated in Helmand over 2011, as they need to be, since both include, for example, school construction.

Initially, coordination of internationally financed programmes, civilian, military, donor and MoE-led, had been a challenge in some areas. However, this is an area where Danida has shown positive leadership and achieved considerable progress. A 2011 WB report comments on harmonisation and alignment of provincial activity, *“Coordination between military supported programs and the PED seemed less effective. For example, the PED noted that schools built by marines were not coordinated by the PED, nor was the PED responsible for ensuring quality/technical standards. Costs of the schools were also much higher than Government built schools. Not only do such interventions cause confusion and parallel systems, but it also undermines opportunities for capacity building of local governments”*. In Helmand, however, the situation is more satisfactory, *“...coordination between provincial level government and donors seemed to be stronger than in other provinces. For example, interventions supported by Danida had resulted in adding much value to the quality of infrastructure as well as teacher training. Helmand provides a useful example of what can be achieved in other provinces in terms of coordination and support of PRTs to local government programs”*²¹⁴. The recent Final Report of the Education Advisor²¹⁵ details earlier lack of coordination in Helmand:

- Schools were refurbished in areas with no teachers or safe access for PED Staff to monitor;
- Expectations were built up among communities in areas where the PED was not able to deliver on-going service;
- Teacher salaries were being paid externally with the PED unable to continue paying the external rates once the schools and teachers were ‘handed’ over;
- Schools have been constructed without consideration of PED’s capacity to provide ongoing maintenance;
- Quality issues on the level of education provided in schools established with little PED oversight.

Such failings are currently much reduced. The report still stresses the need to encourage more donors and NGOs to join the Provincial Education Sector Working Group (ESWG), and to adopt common policies and report progress jointly to PED, but a solid foundation has been built in one of the most demanding provinces.

In terms of infrastructure achievements, the 2011 Annual Plan for Helmand identifies the construction of a Mini-TTC and administrative building in Gereshk to increase female teacher recruitment; the extension of a school in Abazaan into a high school to have an impact on girls enrolment in the area, and the development of a branch of the National Institute for Administration and Management in Lashkar Gah. The establishment of this Institute was seen as a priority in providing vocational opportunities for women in Helmand and was supported by NGOs and local business. It is not yet known if these output targets have been achieved.

214 Helmand Field Mission Report, July 2011, World Bank.

215 Danida, Final Report Education Advisor, Helmand, March 2012.

Danida's lead education TA in Helmand reported an increase in the number of schools open since Danida started work in Helmand in 2007 from 47 to 145 in 2011. Local cooperation was widely reported as a key factor in re-opening schools. By late 2011, all districts had schools except two. US marines have cleared one of these, which will allow construction to start. All construction projects in the province are tendered through the ISD.

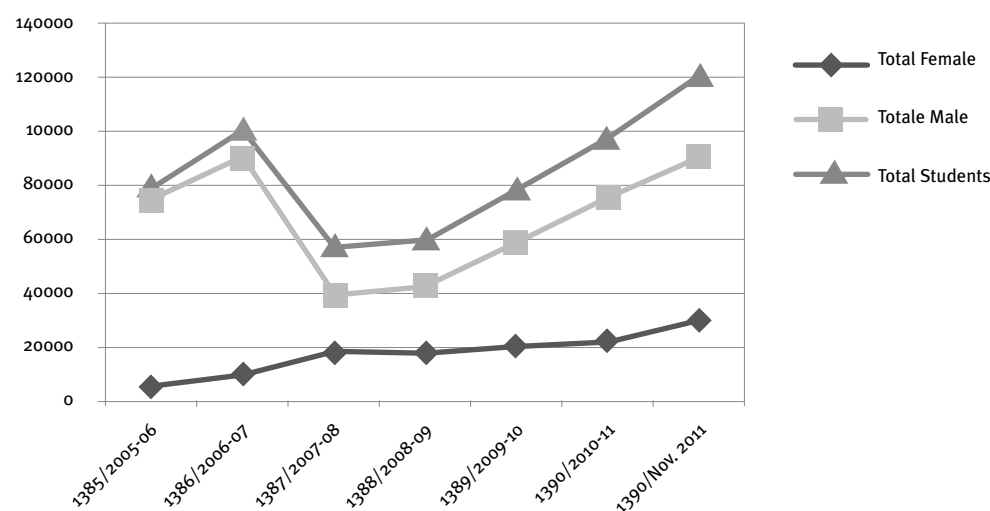
According to the central Ministry's EMIS system there were 89,615 students enrolled in Helmand (17,720 girls, 20%) attending 332 schools in 2010. These school numbers suggest an improving trend since 2008, when 238 schools were reported for the province²¹⁶. However, at that time 106,881 students were listed, 16% more. These consisted of 79,488 boys and 15,418 girls (14.4%) "Present in the class". In 2008 therefore, almost 12,000 students were either "Absent from the class" or "Permanently absent" when the survey was conducted, pointing to the difficulties of establishing reliable data and consistent trends. The outgoing education Advisor's report (2012) includes the following tables showing trends for student numbers over the last six years:

Table 18 Student numbers, Helmand (2005-11)

Year	Total Female	Total Male	Total Students
1385/2005-06	5,279	73,340	78,619
1386/2006-07	10,292	89,650	99942
1387/2007-08	14,264	37,220	51,484
1388/2008-09	14,358	40,279	54,637
1389/2009-10	19,512	58,513	78,025
1390/2010-11	21,431	71,714	93,173
1390/Nov 2011	29,842	89,261	119,103

Source: Final Report, Danida Education Advisor, 2012.

Figure 11 Trends in student enrolments, Helmand



Source: Final Report, Danida Education Advisor, 2012.

Moreover, the substantial differences in the numbers of schools recorded by EMIS in 2008 and 2010 and those reported open to the evaluation in 2011 give a strong indication of both the fluctuating security situation and the difficulty of establishing reliable data. For example, the Provincial Education Director cited 131 active schools in 2010²¹⁷. The Danish Helmand Plan 2011-12, has 115. According to the Director this had increased to 156 in 2011 (91 built and 28 still under construction) with assistance from Danida. Danida's education TA gave the figure for open schools as 145 in 2011, fewer than half the number reported by EMIS the year before.

On textbooks and materials, Helmand PRT has produced a checklist²¹⁸ for local officials and project staff for following up on delivery of requested books. This has sections on transportation, storage and distribution and contains suggestions for assisting, without taking over from local authorities. It is not known if this initiative is coordinated with national distribution mechanisms. School supplies for over 4,000 students and 100 teachers were distributed to district centres in 2009. In 2010, students and teachers received sets of children's books to broaden reading opportunities in Pashto.

Table 19 Checklist for textbooks and school supplies, Helmand

11	Transportation of textbooks and supplies is the responsibility of Government, specifically the MoE has a budget for this and is supposed to work through PED and DED.
12	Let DED and School Officials take responsibility for the transportation and storage of supplies. Play an advocacy and facilitate role that focuses on troubleshooting and building local capacity as much as possible this will lead to a sustainable solution.
13	Do not have the CF Military transport the supplies to the schools because it may undermine Government and put the school, students and teachers at risk.
14	If necessary, ask the Afghan National Army (ANA) or the Afghan National Police (ANP) to transport the supplies to school, which also reinforces their productive role in the community and a functional Government.
15	If necessary, as last resort, facilitate air transport to remote districts. On arrival to the district let DED and School Officials take responsibility for the transportation and storage of supplies.

Source: PRT Helmand, 2011.

On teacher training, as with all data from the province, the Danida TA cautions that figures are not always reliable. In 2009 a baseline analysis was proposed to assemble safer data and under ESPA support for M&E development is being provided²¹⁹. The table below, from that proposal, estimates increases in teacher numbers between 2005 and 2008.

217 Interview November 2011.

218 Checklist for Helmand PRT and District Teams, Education Textbooks and School Supplies, January, 2011.

219 Technical Memo, Baseline School Survey for Lashkargah, Helmand Province, 2009.

Table 20 Helmand teacher registered numbers by year

Year	Male Teachers	Female Teachers	% Male Teachers	% Female Teachers	Total Teachers
1384/2005 (1)					1437
1385/2006 (2)					1456
1386/2007 (3)	1299	259	83.38	16.62	1558
1386/2007 (4)	1302	288	81.38	18.62	1600
1387/2008 (5)	1356	346	79.67	20.33	1702
1388/2008 (6)	1293	336	79.37	20.63	1629

Source: Helmand Data Analysis and Baseline Proposal, Technical Memo.

There are several ongoing training initiatives in the province. According to a 2010 Situation Analysis, there were 200 women enrolled in the Lashkar Gah TTC.²²⁰ Over 2009 and early 2010, in-service training was provided to 200 female literacy teachers and over 400 district based teachers. For many teachers it was the first and only training opportunities any of them had received. Attendance on this course was reported as “*excellent with some teachers travelling through dangerous Taliban held ground to receive the training*”²²¹. From 2010, the three-year MoE approved InSeT programme has been run, and teachers in Helmand also make use of the Radio in a Box, distance training programme. District trainers are also able to assist teachers through face-to-face training. Upgrading through the national training exams has enabled successful Helmand teachers (over 90%) to be included on the new MoE Pay & Grade system leading to higher individual salaries.

In terms of management and monitoring, to some extent Helmand’s special focus makes it easier to track development activity even where these initiatives are not discussed and reported at Steering Committee Meetings. The different level of expatriate staff resource provision, with reporting to Danida contributes. Due to the security situation, the presence of, the PRT and the interest from several donors, support for Helmand retains some of the characteristics of a project, although as pointed out, there is clear movement in the direction of a more coordinated programme based on MoE policies and local PED-led strategy, with a sensible emphasis on capacity development.

A challenge in Helmand, as elsewhere, is to develop the capacity to make more confident and convincing projections, and to make use of them jointly with partners for reporting, planning and decision-making. This needs to be done at provincial level as well as through HRDB forums (possibly at Danida Steering Committee Meetings) and capacity needs to be embedded in “*Tashkil*”²²² staff in MoE. To achieve this, institutional mechanisms need to be extended systematically to provincial and district offices and then to schools also. The IIEP workshop programme is an important contributor to this set of tasks and is an important area of Danida support, though specific outputs and schedules would be welcome.

220 Helmand Education Situational Analysis, June 2010.

221 Ibid.

222 Tashkil in Pashto translates as Establishment in English.

6 Overall assessment and conclusions

This chapter presents an overall assessment of the performance of Danida's programmes against the EQs and SQs proposed in the ToR. It is followed by a set of conclusions drawn from this assessment.

6.1 Evaluation Criterion 1: Relevance

Relevance: Consistence with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs and priorities and partners' and donors' policies.

1. *To what extent have the objectives and modalities of Danish support to education in the evaluation period been in line with the evolving Afghan needs, priorities and policies, including local needs and priorities, e.g. in the Helmand Province?*

Matters of relevance are mainly considered in terms of planning and intentions and not implementation. However, as the whole period of Danish support involved repeated phases of planning and implementation, the extent to which plans reflected evolving needs is important. It should be expected that new plans would have reflected experience on earlier phases, data provided by reports and reviews, MoE surveys, etc., and that assessments of need would have contained references to inputs, expected outputs and targets.

In the early part of the period it was hard to obtain reliable data. Nevertheless, the consensus was that needs were enormous. Following the fall of Taliban, the education sector was paralysed and the bulk of its physical structures were destroyed. There was a major need in 2001 for massive investment to construct and refurbish buildings as well as to establish institutions and capacities, and it was given a very high priority in the new Government's agenda. As such the relevance of support to the education sector is very clear.

At the same time, precise estimates of need were accepted as unreliable. There was a general acceptance throughout the period that the number of books, teachers, classrooms, etc. required was still far from being met. But confidence in detailed targets (e.g. the estimated school-age population in particular provinces, numbers of copies of a particular textbook needed by a district in a particular year, etc.) was only gradually being established in 2011.

From published documents and interviews with both MoE and DP representatives, the overall feedback has been that the Danish support to education has been very much in line with the priorities and modalities of the Afghan authorities. This has included aligning with policy priorities as well as channelling funding through the Government. Given the embryonic nature of the administrative set up in the MoE as well as its strategies, it was challenging in the extreme to attempt a coordinated effort in the early 2000s.

The importance of the Danish decision to work closely with the new Government, and to exercise risk willingness in terms of giving responsibility to the Afghan national partners is, therefore, hard to overestimate. The on-budget support was a significant strategic choice in 2003 when the system was in the process of being established, and the modality allowed support to be complementary to government plans and budgets.

Results are reflected in requests and emerging priorities as expressed at Steering Committee Meetings and in reports and strategic plans. The modality is appreciated in all parts of MoE: *“The funds are in our own coffers, and we can spend them according to our priorities”*²²³, and by donors: *“at the same time it is clear that the MoE is in charge, and it can be argued that Danida’s support to MoE is among the most value added in Afghanistan”*²²⁴.

The extension of Danish support to education in Afghanistan during 2007-08 and subsequently until 2010 built upon PEPS 1 in that, for example, it included an expansion to all levels of education covering grades 1-12 in response to increased pressure for access to secondary education. This agreement supported strategic priorities for the education sector detailed in Government’s new Education Programme: Five Year Strategy 1385-89 (2006-10). Danida’s approach of close alignment with national priorities and implementation modalities in the education sector has continued through the ESPA signed in April 2011 for a three-year period.

The shift from the Grant Management Unit towards more integrated modalities within the MOE in the 2007-08 programme documents, while not explained by Danida or in materials, seems a good indication of attempts to increase national ownership and alignment. The re-emergence of the GMU from 2008 and the continuing lack of clarity over its role, staffing and performance is a concern, however.

The decision to structure complementary support for school construction through DAARTT seems to indicate a different approach to alignment and made management by the Steering Committee more difficult. The evaluation agrees that there was a need to work on two tracks (i.e. both emergency interventions and strategic planning), while national capacities were built up. However, DAARTT paid less attention to capacity development in MoE than required. The quality of the DAARTT schools is good – but they are costly, raising questions of whether they are replicable.

2. *To what extent is the Danish support to education relevant for and coherent with the overall strategy and objectives for Danish support to Afghanistan, including stabilization and peace-building objectives at the local level (the Helmand Province and elsewhere)?*

Danish aid to Afghanistan had not focused on education as a strategic priority before 2003. So the emphasis since that time represents a major change. Support had also been provided through NGOs and at local levels before the start of PEPS 1. Involvement in national programmes, evolution from humanitarian to development aid with associated support for institution-building at central government level, etc. represent changes in approach and strategic objectives.

The emphasis on the two track approach not only meant broadening the geographical and temporal focus, but supporting more complex issues such as policy formulation, institution and capacity-building, and, to some extent, nation-building. Engagement with ISAF and integration of military and civilian efforts in some parts of the country (e.g. Helmand) was a further reflection of this new approach.

The change is fully reflected in programme documents and in statements emphasising host government ownership, alignment with government policy and harmonisation with

223 Meeting with Deputy Minister Patman 20.11.11.

224 Meeting with the World Bank 7.12.11.

other DPs. In 2003, these principles pre-dated the Paris Declarations and other statements on Aid Effectiveness.

Danida's broad approach to Afghan education support reflected these policies from the start of the decade and has been successfully carried through to engagement in Helmand where, it has been argued, such an approach is less appropriate. The link between education and Denmark's overall policy objectives in the country (increased stability, national and social reconstruction), is clearly relevant²²⁵.

The more detailed planning and internal management capacity needed for engagement in the new approach has been less evident. The challenges inherent in establishing monitoring, analysis, reporting and use of expected outputs, including documentation of performance, elaboration of management mechanisms for planning, decision-making, etc. on which the successful use of the modality relies, were under-estimated. Support at a strategic level requires a different, greater and arguably more politically experienced expertise than was provided. The 2008 Aide-Memoire comments usefully on the implications of weak beneficiary capacity for the donor, the huge burden of work and the need to factor difficulties into planned management (p. 10).

It was recognised that national policies and capacities did not exist in 2003. It is not clear that Danish education aid through an on-budget modality, while aiming laudably to address Afghan strategic sectoral policies, recognised the level of expertise required to help make this work. The fact that expertise was, in the event, provided through TA and programme support in RDE at certain periods, was fortunate if not fortuitous. Far too much responsibility was placed on the Steering Committee and GMU to develop policy and raise capacity without explicit details of what they were to do and how support was to be provided.

3. *What is the relevance of the Danish support to the education sector when seen as part of the overall donor assistance provided to the education sector in Afghanistan (division of labour, complementarity of objectives/approaches, gaps, overlaps etc.)?*

The commitment to harmonisation with other donors has been stated consistently in programme documents and was recognised by all respondents met by the evaluation team during the field mission. However, the mechanisms for implementing programmes as part of overall donor assistance have been less successfully detailed in planning documentation. It was recognised that fragmentation of assistance was widespread in 2003. This was noted repeatedly throughout the programme period and it was recognised that this posed a threat to successful implementation of Danida's strategic approach.

The components of the first phase of Danish support were areas where it was recognised other partners were active (training, curriculum, textbooks, construction). From respondents the team received assurance that assistance in curriculum development and textbook printing was successfully harmonised and contributed to assistance provided by other donors working on these initiatives. The situation in the components on teacher training and construction was different. The former became untenable and support, except in terms of advice, was effectively reallocated.

While it is an achievement that the design of Danish assistance allowed this switch to take place, a fuller documentation of the decision process would have allowed valuable

225 Afghanistan-Denmark-Partnership 2005-09, Denmark in Helmand 2008, and Denmark's Engagement in Afghanistan 2008-12.

lessons to be learned. It appears that the identification of these areas for support was of questionable relevance. There were a large number of active partners committed to working on training and construction and using a very different modality to Danida. A more detailed assessment of how Danish aid should be focused given this situation might have avoided subsequent difficulties (switching funds from training, the critical, but unaddressed, need for coordination of construction inputs).

In the area of construction, evidence of planned division of labour, complementarity of objectives, etc. has not been seen. Much planning related to location, design, cost and maintenance was based, it seems, on informal understanding. It has been addressed in part in more recent reports, though the mechanisms for assisting MoE to assume management control of these issues are only now receiving more systematic attention. Repeated and explicit statements of the need to address management capacity may now start to produce results. The urgent provision of buildings crowded out long-term perspectives. In the absence of detailed national strategy this is unsurprising. It was probably unrealistic to expect experts in construction to operate as management trainers for MoE counterparts.

More recent design of broad support to national programmes (i.e. EIP) seem to permit greater complementarity in that host institutions are more in control of planning and implementation. However, the mechanisms for realising these sectoral approaches (annual costed and programme based plans, performance reports, joint sector reviews, etc.) are only now emerging in 2012. Again the assumption is either that MoE will evolve these or that partner organisations (e.g. IIEP) will assist in development. It would be reassuring to see evidence that detailed, results-based plans are addressing these needs. It is critical that programme strategy makes explicit (and measurable) the means by which Danida's very relevant and appropriate support strategy in relation to aid effectiveness is implemented.

4. *Has risk analysis and risk/conflict sensitivity analysis been performed (by Denmark or other actors)? How and to what degree has it shaped the support? Have activities been selected and implemented with due consideration of risks related to the dynamic and varied context in Afghanistan?*

Through flexibility and collaboration, especially in the most difficult areas of the country, Danida has done much to address the risks inherent in the current and ongoing security situation. Selection of provinces for construction reflected security and population movement issues. It is reported that the curriculum development component of early programmes also addressed social breakdown issues, though to what extent cannot be judged with confidence.

Denmark's overall engagement in Afghanistan draws on a number of analyses; these include security and risk analysis undertaken by e.g. the Danish military in connection with deployment²²⁶. However, it is noted that the references to risks and conflict in education programme documents, are limited and very generic²²⁷. The first programme document from 2003, included minor comments, and in the subsequent extensions, references are standard formulations.

The decision to support Afghan government priorities and policy development – despite the relatively weak foundation – carried a relatively high degree of risk-willingness.

226 The evaluation team has not had access to such documents.

227 These comments do not reflect the content in the ESPA/DESPA Documents from 2010, which does follow Danida's AMG and includes an appropriate analysis.

However, there are few assessments of the implications of possible failure. The PEPS 1 Programme Document assumes, for example, that the MoE would take the lead on developing policies, but also that there is a risk this would not work, leading to inconsistency and uncoordinated donor support. This appears to be substantially what happened, yet there are no suggestions, for example, of what might be done if the Ministry did not develop the necessary policies. More explicit references to policy and system priorities and support mechanisms with reports on progress at joint reviews (e.g. assistance with drafts on training, teacher demand, textbook distribution, construction, etc.) would have contributed to efficiency and sustainable capacity. In terms of Danish management support particularly in 2008, the Review Aide Memoire makes the point: “*the principle of improvisation appears to have been somewhat dominant*” (p. 14).

5. *How and to what extent are cross cutting issues like gender, human rights and good governance considered in the education programme support?*

Gender, ethnic diversity, disability and broader considerations have been consistent policy priorities in Danida support. It has been easier to provide details of how to approach some of these areas than others. In terms of planning as well as implementation (see below), this is something of a concern. Gender has had a more consistent priority through local and national advocacy and demand for education. Danida’s programme documents refer to specific measures to address cross-cutting issues such as HIV/AIDS, Environment, Violence and Conflict, for example, more marginalised groups (such as nomads and the disabled) have received less support and attention in programme and in national planning and local provision.

However, detailed planning and reporting provide few explanations of what activities or outputs were projected in any of these areas. Incentive programmes for female students in Helmand, for example, were referred to by respondents. These are being reduced as funding is withdrawn, but studies of effectiveness would assist broader policy development.

Numbers of female teachers and enrolments by girls are common indicators of progress (though percentages of total female population served are not provided until more recently). There are no references to cross-cutting issues being addressed in construction, for example through access ramps for disabled students, schools for settled nomads, or to cater for seasonal use, separate toilets for girls, etc.²²⁸ The few references to curriculum development plans do not refer to the inclusion of human rights issues, support for HIV/AIDS patients, the environment, etc.

From September 2011 “*Cross-cutting issues*” are to be mainstreamed into programming. According to MoE, these include human rights, gender, protection of the environment, counter-narcotics, civics, peace-building and health education. Support for inclusion of these topics within the curriculum and textbooks has been received from different government agencies and ministries (e.g. Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Women’s Affairs, etc.). The evaluation did not see explicit reference to these topics in earlier editions of the curriculum and textbooks (e.g. in 2003/04). There is a need to identify and monitor progress on core subjects, topics and skills to avoid crowding out through gradual accretion.

228 MoE assures (2012) that school designs were reviewed and revised from 2008 and now include access ramps for disabled children, specific designs for latrines for girls, etc.

6. *In a forward looking perspective: what issues and priorities should be considered, in light of the results obtained, the development of the education sector and emerging issues?*

The evolution of Danish support to Afghanistan's education development has reached a point where, in the current programme, even less earmarking is applied than in earlier phases. This is justified by the greater capacity within ministry departments to collect and analyse data on national needs and MoE performance in meeting them. Earlier programmes anticipated detailed budgeting for components would be worked out for inclusion in Annual Work Plans and budgets. Evidence for this happening in practice is weak. Arguably it is now less important since Danish support is across broader programme areas and these are identified in national strategies.

However, with national sectoral plans it should be more important, and in some respects easier, to cost expected interventions over the coming 12 months. At the end of this period it should be a priority, for the purposes of national and international accountability, to report on performance. The fact that this must increasingly involve provincial, district and school management means capacity development initiatives at these levels are required. School mapping, district planning and provincial inspection of performance against national priorities should gradually be developed. Programme budgeting is said to have been in use for some time. The evaluation did not see evidence of this and it remains a priority to capture all donor and government contributions (funds and activities) to Governments strategic plans on an annual basis, and to report progress jointly. It is hoped significant progress can be made in follow up upon the joint evaluation in June 2012. These are all areas where Danida's support to planning (through IIEP) can be expected to play an important role.

That the above priorities were implied, but not explicit, in earlier programmes of Danish aid may have delayed development, but does not lessen the need at this stage. Implementation of Danida's support strategy in relation to aid effectiveness suggests assistance to MoE in coordinating aid through programme budgeting remains a priority. In fact, as has been pointed out, unsatisfied demand and lack of perceived government response puts at risk the investment made to date. Empowerment of local levels within a national framework is even more urgent now, and there are signs that this is being addressed (training programmes for PED and DED staff, etc. within the WB programme depend on Danida contributions. IIEP-led workshops are being conducted).

A flexible approach in identifying priorities has been stated consistently in all programme documentation. This was entirely appropriate particularly in the early days of support and remains so. The limitations of and requirements in terms of support for this approach have been spelled out less explicitly than necessary in the past. This remains the case. Despite the implementation logic of the programme documents the evaluation saw little elaboration of how the balance between responding to urgent needs and the importance of addressing long-term strategic capacity was being struck or how these would be differentially supported and managed in future plans.

6.2 Evaluation Criterion 2: Effectiveness

Effectiveness: The extent to which the interventions' intended outputs and outcomes have been achieved

7. *What is the overall status on results of support to the education sector in the evaluation period, and what is the Danish contribution (including overall assessment of results/achievement of objectives of the multilateral education supported by Denmark)?*

As indicated in the previous chapter, in all areas according to available data there have been major improvements in the sector over the period under evaluation. Enrolments of girls and boys have increased enormously; a modern curriculum and syllabi have been developed and very large numbers of textbooks written and printed; teachers have been trained; thousands of schools, classrooms and other infrastructure have been built or restored, and management capacity has been improved. The capacity to report improvements has developed and been used, more recently, to estimate year by year demand for teachers, classrooms, etc. with greater accuracy.

The Danish contribution, in the early period, can be identified reasonably well, and, from reports, Denmark is a respected and valued partner among other donors and in the Ministry. These are all important achievements in an extremely difficult environment at a very difficult time. However, Danida funding was not disbursed as expected and there are important elements in the planned support (development of capacity to manage infrastructure, to distribute books, to coordinate aid and to focus planning on results and targets) that were not achieved.

Danida's modality emphasised strengthening of planning and reporting mechanisms to mitigate risk and to develop MoE capacity. Steering Committee oversight and more independent reviewing were indeed more consistent in the early periods than later. Planning, budget auditing and accounting were not frequent, but provision of management support was evident even where policy development and the use of detailed outputs to build planning capacity based on results received less attention than deserved. Much of the management activity seems to have depended on TA inputs in this period. In the period 2006/07 to 2009/10, there is less evidence of Danida's reporting of both inputs and results. More recently, the Steering Committee meetings have provided a good record of discussion if not of output. MoE capacity to monitor and report on data, itself and essential "results" which was to have been a focus for Danida, has strengthened. However it is harder than expected to track Danish contributions.

All DPs have suffered from a lack of data and coordinating policies, but while acknowledging the difficulties, these should have been a particular priority for Danida. Reports might have indicated achievement of outputs improving performance in this area. As reported in the section above on Helmand, even in the most difficult circumstances, initiatives to improve monitoring and coordinated planning can be launched and can succeed.

Since 2005, MoE capacity has grown and in some areas supported by multilateral programmes where Danish support has been provided (e.g. ARTF and in Helmand) achievement of and reporting on objectives is more satisfactory. The overall conclusion is that the results of support have generally been highly positive. However, even when not looking for direct attribution, the Danish contribution is obscured by lack of documentation of outputs. Partly this is because, at a time of severe instability, the management mechanisms took longer to develop, but also because records stopped. Funding was moved away from the components and elements planned for support and directed substantially at the more short-term outputs (printing books and building classrooms) and not the longer-term policies and strategic capacity.

8. *To what extent have the planned objectives of the Danish bilateral education support been met? What specific results have been achieved on curriculum development, teacher education, educational material development, physical infrastructure and capacity development? What are the implications for access to and quality of education?*

As detailed in the above chapter, there has been considerable success in several of the areas of Danish support. A modern, balanced curriculum for grade 1 to 12 has been produced after appropriate piloting and consultation. Full ownership of government institutions is established (albeit with caveats regarding TA). Danida's contribution to this work especially after 2006 is less completely documented than expected. Budget disbursement records before this time show expenditure was different from that intended. However, the fact that the curriculum is in place and is made use of for textbook and materials development is a significant achievement to which Danida has contributed laudably.

Danida's programmes also contributed in terms of collaboration in the area of teacher development, funding a trainer training course during PEPS 1, for example. Again, specific outputs from Danida's contribution in terms of unified policies and programmes, courses run or trainees produced are harder to trace. Pre-service training and in-service upgrading of teachers remains a priority, and the sub-component areas identified by Danida in programme documents remain important. The fragmentation of in-service programmes provided by different DPs continues to present MoE with problems of coordination. Support is still needed to increase integration into national career pathways and the Pay & Grade structure, which represents a major achievement for MoE.

Danida has made its largest contribution in the area of textbook and other material printing. As indicated above, the flexibility in moving original allocations has largely benefited this programme component. Moreover, MoE has produced records of books printed with Danida funds. Delivery to schools and institutionalisation of distribution and monitoring systems has been less successful.

Construction of classrooms and other facilities has been of high quality. Local involvement in selection of sites and actual construction has been engaged successfully. Capacity in terms of central department management has been repeatedly emphasised as an important objective. However, beyond broad assertions there is little detailed evidence that such capacity has been built, either in terms of systems or individual skills within MoE departments.

The complex but important areas of management and aid management have shown clearer progress in the later stages of the programmes. Earlier implementation of programme management depended to a considerable extent on Danish and international TA and less on the expected management structures in MoE. Experience in this area was mixed. Progress, therefore, has been slower than hoped for in 2003. Moreover, it is a concern that Ministry capacity resides substantially in staff designated as TA and less in systems or in the growing skills of counterparts.

9. *What results have been achieved in supporting MOE in establishing effective aid management and coordination in the different phases of the Danish education support? How is the coordination between Government and donors, and including Denmark?*

Donors comment on Danida's position as a lead donor in showing the way towards better alignment with the government priorities, and upholding the Kabul process goals. A

“good and engaged partner”, Danida has played a lead role in the HRDB, *“breaking new ground”* in implementing on-budget support since the beginning of Danish support to education²²⁹. Danida was instrumental in the development of the proposal for support submitted to the GPE, playing a lead role in coordinating stakeholders, especially the donor community²³⁰.

Donors, for example the World Bank, echo the Government’s appreciation of Danida as *“flexible and non-bureaucratic”*. The Bank notes that Danida’s flexibility and proximity to and dialogue with the MoE can address problems that arise suddenly. For instance Danida was able to provide additional support to construction projects that have already been funded, but then have had problems in terms of quality. This was the case with some of the Bank’s construction projects. This is crucial in a situation as uncertain as Afghanistan, and for the Bank, which was unable to employ the same degree of flexibility²³¹.

As noted above, access to detailed information remains an aid management challenge in Afghanistan. This might be expected in the early days of an intervention in 2003, and in such a complex situation as Afghanistan. However, it should have gradually become less of an issue. Yet, lack of data collection and shared data is an ongoing planning problem for the Ministry and other donors including Danida.

For effective aid management, particularly when employing an on-budget modality, it is hard to underestimate the importance of documentation and institutional memory. These are essential to the particular donor (in this case Danida), but also to generate commitment to more coordinated approaches. A joint donor/MoE review planned for 2012²³² will, it is expected, move this process forward significantly.

Access to documentation is important for evaluation purposes also, but more critically for management quality control. When working in fluid, conflict, or fragile contexts, there is a need for shorter feedback loops and continuous integration of lessons learned, ensuring that programmes are adjusted accordingly throughout the period from initial design to completion or transition to another level and type of assistance. Building on such discussion can feed into Danida’s ongoing effort to revise organisational and administrative frameworks of engagement in conflict and complex scenarios.

In sum, there is a degree of cooperation, but greater coordination among the present group of donors develops when addressing specific issues, such as the GPE submission. There are other mechanisms of pooled funding, ARTF, EQUIP, Helmand education support, but most tend to be local (in the case of Helmand), short-term (in the case of GPE) or reported as being problematic (in terms of inputs to EQUIP, and ARTF). In short, informal cooperation is good, but an institutionalised common approach has taken time to emerge. No agreed joint costed annual sector plans (MoE and DPs) have been achieved to date

10. & 11. *To what extent has Danish education support achieved (or contributed to achieving) the objectives concerning education for girls and marginalised ethnic groups? What are the special challenges concerning inclusive education in Afghanistan and how have*

229 Various meetings with donors.

230 Meeting with UNICEF 25.11.11.

231 Meeting with World Bank 7.12.11.

232 Details of Project Management Services recruitment for a Joint Review planned for April or May 2012 were released on 25.1.12.

these challenges been addressed in the different phases of the Danish bilateral and multi-lateral education support on gender and gender equality in the education sector (e.g. increase in number of female teachers, female head teachers, etc.)?

Good results are reported for the enrolment of girls in school and teachers in training and employed as teachers. Reports of literacy programmes for women being enthusiastically attended have also been reported. The evaluation visited a number of girls' schools and was able to report on great demand for education from those already with some access. The need for improved facilities and greater quality was also raised in these schools.

Estimating populations of girls and women who are not able or willing to access education is complex. Communities in very rural areas have informal information on school age populations, and are able to estimate demand. But in more urban provincial and district locations the links between the school or education office and the community are, from verbal reports, much more tenuous. As with much else facing education providers in Afghanistan, the size of the challenge is hard to gauge, especially at the national level.

Although inclusiveness is a constitutional and MoE policy priority the evaluation identified little evidence of the problems of vulnerable groups and minorities, e.g. Kuchi peoples, disabled students or returned refugees being quantified or recorded. Hence the implementation of a road-map for supporting these groups is mainly handled by individual NGOs or donors. MoE reports the development of textbooks in eight local languages and also boarding schools for Kuchi children and for children with disabilities. Danida's expected role in addressing the needs of these groups was to assist with the development of central and local planning and reporting processes, estimating needs and advising on flexible methods of meeting them. The evaluation saw no evidence that this had been attempted.

The following table draws brief conclusions on cross-cutting issues as they relate to the Danish support to Education in Afghanistan over the period 2003-10.

Table 21 Summary of cross-cutting issues relating to Danida programmes

Issue	Conclusions
Gender	<p>While the general situation for women in Afghanistan is reported to have improved in certain areas, sectors and in particular, in towns of Afghanistan since 2002, the situation for girls and women needs further explicit attention, policy development and systematic planning.</p> <p>Particular support to improve girls' and women's access to education, as well as promoting prospects for women to become teachers, administrators at schools, or in the central administration is explicitly considered in PEPS 1 and in the Interim Education Plan.</p>
Children and youth	<p>The focus of the programme is to support children and youth in their access to education.</p>

6 OVERALL ASSESSMENT AND CONCLUSIONS

Issue	Conclusions
Environment	The relationship between support to education and environment points at two aspects: a) The details and implications of school construction, and b) the improved knowledge of environmental issues that can be developed in the classroom. Re: a) no information has been found suggesting problems with construction methods. Re b) MoE reports that the new curriculum/ textbooks include information on environmental issues and environment protection (developed with support from the Afghanistan Environmental Protection Authority).
Democratisation, human rights and good governance, HIV/AIDS	Supporting access to education is part of developing the political system in Afghanistan, as well as being part of upholding people's right to education, and their capacity to fend for their own rights.
Support for disadvantaged groups, nomads, the disabled, etc.	Inclusive education is a priority in programme documentation and is a constitutional right in Afghanistan. MoE informs that various measures have been taken including improvement of access and the construction of boarding schools for children of nomad families under the EIP. However, the evaluation did not see evidence on the ground or data on these achievements.

Source: Compiled by the evaluation.

Inclusive education, either mainstreamed through the General Education Department, or addressed at local levels through community based schools supported by UNICEF and NGOs, is not yet systematically addressed. No records of discussion or specific planning measures were identified in Danida programme reports.

12. *What results, experience and lessons learned can be identified from the use of TA in the MOE? In the Helmand and other provinces?*

The deployment of TA remains a problematic issue. In one sense, since currently deployed TA seem to be largely Afghani, and recruited through government institutions there is considerable improvement since the early years of support where reports were of individual, ad hoc arrangements. Scarce supply in a growing market meant that earlier Danida programmes found it hard to recruit local, Dari or Pashto speakers for their programmes. Even in the same department several donors were providing TA on different contracts with different benefits. This situation was unsustainable, inefficient and often ineffective. It was often unclear who staff were reporting to or what their official work plans required them to do.

Now few staff from overseas, who do not speak local languages, are employed. MoE and MoF coordinate recruitment and a more transparent and common hiring process is used.

However, numbers remain alarmingly large and key positions are held by TA or by staff whose salaries are paid by donors under a number of different systems. These systems have reportedly comparable, but different benefits (see previous chapter). It is moreover, far from clear what will happen if outside funds are reduced, how salary relates to performance, if the incumbents are expected to build a counterpart capacity, etc. The risk is that Afghan experts, the "bought capacity", will not look to build careers within the public service. It is understood that MoE's Human Resources Department is examining these

complex issues. More open and joint discussion is urgently needed and a staged strategy for moving to a sustainable civil service.

In Helmand, an arguably different situation exists. The skills needed for coordination of different DPs, both civilian and military, with PED staff are specialised and not widely available. The constraints on use of international TA (very high levels of security provision, frequent staff turnover and short inputs) may be unavoidable in the short term. Even here, however, the familiar balance needs to be struck between short-term needs and longer-term systems. Danida's success in applying aid effectiveness principles in such difficult circumstances merits greater publicity especially in the face of objections that such coordination is premature for Afghanistan.

13. *How and to what extent have the interventions and results of the education programme support, including in the Helmand Province, been affected by (or affected) contextual factors, including security and stabilization factors?*

From reports, programme implementation was constrained in its access to provinces, schools and communities. This varied over the period of support and for different provinces. For much of the 10 year period access to Helmand was severely restricted to civilian advisers. Danida TA were only able to discuss local situations with PED staff on visits to the central ministry.

Access to MoE and donor offices in the capital was also problematic and time-consuming involving negotiation of considerable security procedures. Monitoring of programme performance in provinces has required frequent security briefings and coordination with military advisers on the rapidly changing situation. For programme TA the availability of local counterparts was essential. Without these staff translation and thus communication would have been impossible. Availability of female counterparts and colleagues in MoE was critical to discuss progress with female teachers, students and community members.

In Helmand there are still areas in the north that cannot be accessed, which constitutes a troubled context for education²³³. But in the growing areas where it has been possible to operate, the feedback is that a focus on provision of education is in line with local priorities. Recent public opinion surveys suggest *“Improving availability of education services was also the single issue mentioned most often in Group 1 when asked which three areas they would like to see the Government focusing on over the next six months, and ranked in second place in Group 2 districts”*²³⁴. The interventions in Helmand are part of a broader engagement with other aid partners, but Danida's decision to participate in education efforts in the province seems relevant, effective and is clearly in line with the Afghan policy of engaging in the non-secure provinces.

On the other hand, throughout Afghanistan, there are examples where military assistance programs have constructed schools without any community participation, just as there are examples of using teachers as informants. It appears that the UK/DK/US PRT in Helmand, and the engagement in education in the province, where Danida plays a lead role in the sector, has adopted a very different approach as outlined in the previous

233 Ref. e.g. Care: Knowledge under Fire (2009).

234 Helmand Monitoring and Evaluation Programme 2011 Annual Review – Education. The report categorises districts in Helmand province into four groups: 1) Lashkar Gah, Nahri Sarraj, Nad Ali, Nawa-i-Barak Zayi, Garmser and Marjeh, 2) Musa Qala, Naw Zad, Khanishin, and Sangin, 3) Kajaki, 4) Washer, Dishu, and Baghram.

chapter, and is doing a “remarkable job in education”, managing to align with local and government priorities and approaches²³⁵.

14. *To what extent do existing M&E systems function as a reliable monitoring and planning instrument for the education sector (in particular national systems including EMIS)?*

The consensus is that there is now considerable M&E capacity being developed at central level. This is to an extent related to IIEP support funded through Danida. The IIEP Capacity Development project is implementing workshops to train staff in the use of statistical measurement and programme planning. In terms of capacity assessment²³⁶, it would additionally be helpful to refer to skills audits or inventories of expected outputs. The evaluation had its closest engagement with staff from the Planning Department in which the Results Evaluation and EMIS units are located. However, capacity development is only now being extended to the provinces and districts. EMIS system capacity itself is developing, though it has taken too long to become a focus of support. Capacity support for results is frequently dependent on donor funding. For this reason the opportunity exists, through mutual interest among donors, to make this a shared and coordinated priority area. It is encouraging, though overdue, that a Joint Review is now planned for June 2012.

As stated above, skills and responsibilities still need clearer definition, currently making it hard to identify outputs or targets. The ambitious and reasonably successful introduction of the staff P&G system, deserves recognition and is an indicator of growing capacity to monitor and reward performance. MoE TA with Danida funding (e.g. under the RIMU project) were involved in implementation of this system.

At provincial and district levels the task of monitoring performance of service delivery seems largely untouched and limits the central Ministry’s ability to operate systematically and effectively in response to demand and need. School supervision was observed on the evaluation, though this still requires very considerable development. Targets of all kinds are only now becoming agreed and useful for planning.

6.3 Evaluation Criterion 3: Efficiency

Efficiency: The relationship between outputs and inputs. To ensure that financial and human resources are put to good use, so that results are achieved in a cost-effective manner.

15. *To what extent has the education sector programme management, procedures, and organisational set-up contributed to the efficiency of programme implementation? Have interventions supported by Denmark been implemented in line with plans and budgets? Why/why not?*

The Steering Committee in the MoE, which was established to ensure a continued dialogue between MoE and RDE on programme implementation, has been appreciated by the MoE, for the access to flexible use of funds, the partnership and the access to advice this has provided. The ability to direct funding to areas of need has contributed significantly to efficient use of budgets.

235 Helmand Field Mission Report, July 2011, World Bank, and meeting with World Bank 7.12.11.

236 See, for example, Danida’s 2009 Technical Note on Programme Support Preparation (p. 39).

In the earlier periods of Danish support MoE engagement was good and reasonably well documented, largely due to the unplanned management role of Danida TA. Steering Committee Meetings were devoted to rather ad hoc deployment of the budget. The position of the GMU, which was to have been central to the management process, has never been satisfactorily resolved. Transfer of responsibility for GMU functions to DoF seems to have been an effective and efficient development. From late 2009, engagement and records of discussion improved after a period of weak documentation. The frequent Steering Committee Meetings between September 2009 and mid-2011, while popular with MoE and providing a useful record, represent a serious transaction cost and possibly parallel to HRDB meetings which involve other donors. It is unlikely that this is an efficient management mechanism. Joint planning or review of outputs with other donors and the Ministry is only now being implemented (2012).

Despite the general admiration, the close partnership with the MoE, particularly the on-budget modality has been challenged by a few DPs, arguing that Danida has been perhaps too eager in channelling support through the Ministry and underestimated the lack of capacity. Such resistance to following the on-budget example might have been reduced by providing more specific inputs and monitoring of outputs in the area of aid management.

It is possible that the recent shift from bottom-up to top-down planning of school construction, reflecting government intention to use the spread of education as a visible sign of state building, may be at the cost of community participation. There may be consequences for local engagement, commitment, ownership and sustainability. Achieving a balanced approach remains a goal worth supporting for effective, efficient and sustainable provision²³⁷.

16. & 19. *To what extent has the programme been able to adapt/respond to changing contexts/conflict situations, needs and priorities of Government/MOE and local authorities? How has uncertainty and need for flexibility been handled in planning and implementation? How much does the security situation influence the costs, and to what extent are possible additional "security costs" reasonable in comparison with the results achieved, when looking across regions with different situations (including Helmand)?*

Built-in flexibility has allowed the programmes to respond to local emerging need, making use of the Steering Committee (although with a gap between 2006 and 2009 when the Committee did not meet) as a management forum. One view of the mechanism is that it efficiently directed funding where needed and ensured the burn-rate remained high. Major redeployment of allocations from curriculum development and teacher training, over-supported between 2003 and 2006, to textbook printing, was the most significant use of this flexibility.

Use of the Steering Committee could be viewed more positively if it was creating or establishing host government procedures, thus contributing to capacity development. In addition, if it drew other donor funding and planning along the same lines there would

237 MoE informs the evaluation (April 2012) that the construction plans for 2011 and 2012 were prepared using such a mixed approach. MoE Planning Department has developed a formula for allocation of numbers of schools to be constructed in each province per year. The provincial education directorates consult with local authorities and communities and provide lists of priority schools for construction. This is used for on and off-budget construction of schools although some partners' off-budget programmes do not adhere to this plan.

be a clearer gain in efficiency. Without greater evidence of wider strategic value it is only possible to point to the reasonable efficiency of the mechanism for management of Danida programmes.

The security situation undoubtedly impacts all MoE activity. For example, slow delivery of the millions of textbooks printed with Danida support has been caused by insecurity as well as by lack of warehousing and poor road conditions. Transport by road is highly dangerous in some provinces and at certain times. This also restricts the monitoring that is possible at all levels of the ministry system. An early concept-paper noted the, “*security situation in the country is somehow stable in the majority of the country, but that the Transitional Government still has limited influence in a number of the provinces, (and) that there is a major focus from the administration and the donors on supporting the peace process with visible development and progress.*”²³⁸.

It is hard to quantify the cost of security precautions. Use of international TA may bring the benefits of more highly developed managerial, planning and coordinating skills, where there are explicit and effective programmes to build capacity and implement systems. However, lack of local language skills and higher security needs add a substantial cost, though it is not possible to quantify the benefits and disadvantages. However, several donor informants mentioned difficulties in recruiting programme managers (national or international) with appropriate experience.

17. *To what extent, and why, has the use of different modalities (including partner structures, on-budget support etc.) been appropriate and efficient? What trade-offs have been encountered when deciding on modalities of support and ways of working, and what are the implications for efficiency (when considering both short-term results and longer term results and sustainability)?*

The bulk of funding has been through the MoF on-budget modality. This has worked reasonably well. Remarkably, there have been almost no concerns expressed by auditors²³⁹, flexibility in a very uncertain context has been possible, budgets have been disbursed hand ownership has been established by the host government. The modality has been instrumental in creating a strong partnership and shared management responsibility between Danida and MoE. There were risks involved in this approach including loss of direct control, some weakness in accounting for funds, etc. At one point the textbook component was affected by poor quality control and accountability partly attributable to lack of close management as outlined above. On the whole, however, the mechanism was strongly justified and worked satisfactorily. Budgets were disbursed and outputs are evident (curriculum, books, teachers, classrooms, surveys and plans). Records (mainly Steering Committee Meeting minutes) report activity. Other documentation is increasingly uneven after 2006.

Separate funding for school construction seems to have made the component rather harder to manage, and reduced ownership by MoE of this programme's activity. Given the large number of contributors to the component, and the admitted previous lack of ISD capacity, this has reduced efficiencies (and sustainability), though it is possible that construction quality has benefitted. Funding through pooled arrangements has been satisfactory where Danida has taken the lead (e.g. in Helmand), though inputs to ARTF have been less easy to relate to outputs. To some extent this is inevitable, though Danida

238 Danida's "Konceptpapir for dansk støtte til uddannelsessektoren i Afghanistan", 2003.

239 However, the 2008 and 2009 Audit, signed off in 2011 indicates some issues of disagreement.

might advocate and model a more specific link to expected MoE strategic results according to several DP informants.

18. *Have possibilities for coordination, synergy and division of labour between efforts (also in relation to efforts supported or implemented by other actors) been sufficiently pursued by the Danish support? How have constraining factors been addressed?*

It is not clear that promotion of coordination with other donor programmes has been addressed systematically. Some coordination has certainly occurred. It is reported, for example, that inputs by Danida to curriculum development and to textbook printing were harmonised with other donor support, but it is not documented in what way this worked or what the outputs were.

PEPS 1's withdrawal from teacher training may reflect a successful recognition of other donor strengths in the component, but it appears to have been at best a "tactical" reallocation of funds. And, furthermore, the decision process is undocumented.

To institute a more deliberate and conscious approach to coordination would require appropriate staffing resources and more explicit planning. It is not clear that Danida had the resources at its disposal in the early years, and a staged approach to fostering coordination remains to be designed.

Management mechanisms from the first programmes were intended to include Annual Plans, Joint Reviews, Steering Committee meetings, etc. A Joint Sector Review with all donors is now planned for mid-2012, though documentation of expected outputs and processes is still under development. Harmonisation is not fostered by separate Danida meetings though ownership and alignment arguably are. The HRDB Steering Committee Meetings could provide a vehicle for greater harmonisation if they absorbed Danida's coordinating role among MoE departments.

In programme documentation, the body targeted to manage, coordinate and receive support from Danida was the GMU. At various points in the programmes the GMU has not operated, been abandoned and then revived. Currently, it operates in parallel to the HRDB and may duplicate its functions. It has not proved an efficient mechanism for managing aid in general or Danish aid in particular.

20. *Have lessons and earlier experiences from support to the education sector been considered in later support to sector in order to improve results and efficiency?*

Earlier inputs into Afghanistan do not seem to have been used as an active source of "lessons learned". The statement in 2005 that support would continue after 2006 was not related to success at that point. The 2008 Review and the 2009 Identification Mission admitted to a lack of results on which to base a positive assessment, though recognising the ongoing need. In fact, commitment to continued and expanded funding, and use of broader programme approaches seems generally to have been made on the basis of positive working relations and broad progress within the Afghan education system. Documentation of extended support between 2008 and 2010 is incomplete. According to Danida's current Aid Management Guidelines²⁴⁰ this should have included:

240 Guidelines for Programme Management, MFA, Danida, 2011, p. 25. Similar requirements are included in the 2007 and 2009 Guidelines.

- Description of objectives, intervention logic, strategies, expected outcomes and outputs, including the resulting capacity in the sector to manage and deliver expected results.
- Indicators with baseline figures and targets established (disaggregated by sex if the database enables this) on several levels (i.e. objectives, outcomes, service delivery or regulatory outputs, capacity).
- Clear indication of inputs and resources, including a budget related to planned outputs, and the funding distributed by source.

The documentation²⁴¹ on the extension is limited and inconclusive and does not resolve some serious issues identified by the 2008 Review. Neither the 2009 Identification Report nor the related appraisal includes references to assessments of Danida's own capacities within education in Afghanistan at that time, or recommendations as to how in detail Danida would demonstrate skills as a comprehensive and professional aid partner within education in Afghanistan. At the same time the Identification Report stipulates that "*Ongoing monitoring of programme development would be the responsibility of the Office of the Representative of Denmark to Afghanistan (..and..) the Departments for Asia and the Technical Advisory Services in the MFA*"²⁴².

The evaluation is not required to include a capacity assessment of the RDE, but it is noted, that the modality made enormous demands on RDE capacity and that there was no permanently posted Danida staff with education sector specific expertise until the beginning of 2009²⁴³. In January 2009, an education specialist from Danida's Technical Advisory Services²⁴⁴ was posted at the RDE. Previously technical support had been provided through annual or bi-annual missions – as well as through various forms of written and verbal communication.

In the 2007-08 Programme Extension Document it is noted that the main risks are whether the institutional framework and systems within the MoE and the Afghan Government continue to be able to deliver, and whether donor interest will prevail. The only reference to risk conflict assessment states: "*Continued reconstruction and social development in Afghanistan requires stability and an improving economic situation*"²⁴⁵.

The evident need and local demand for education has been huge and, though still not satisfied, the gradual progress (books printed, schools built, a curriculum developed, teachers trained) has been sufficient to ensure continued donor support, and along the same lines as previous programmes. The political and security situation has also contributed to the ongoing commitment. However, quantifiable results would arguably have strengthened the case for further support and pointed to the need to identify explicit

241 Background Paper on details of Request for Extension of Funding by RDE for the period January 2009 to March 2010, in the MoE, and Executive Summary, Extension of Danida funding till March 2010 (both un-dated – but presumably January 2009).

242 Draft Identification Mission Report – Future Danish Support to Education, Afghanistan, October 2002 (pp. 14).

243 Drawing on feedback from interviews with embassy staff and persons with previous Danida-Afghanistan experience,

244 The Technical Department has had different names over the period covered by the evaluation.

245 Programme Document on Extension of Danish Support to Education in Afghanistan 2007-08. (p. 12).

outputs against which to measure Danida's programme performance as well as that of the Afghan education system.

6.4 Evaluation Criteria 4/5: Sustainability and Impact

Sustainability & Impact: Whether the benefits of development interventions are likely to continue after external support has been completed. The positive or negative, expected or unforeseen effect on beneficiaries and other affected parties.

21. & 26. *When looking at the different results achieved from the support to the education sector, what are the prospects of sustainability? What major threats to sustainability can be identified (including, but not limited to security issues)? How has issues of risk mitigation and exit strategy considerations been addressed? When looking at results achieved, what are the prospects that they can translate into longer-term impacts? Are there any signs of unintended impacts, be they positive or negative?*

The 2002 Identification Report, subsequent appraisal, and the 2003 Programme Document stated, "*Sustainability issues would be addressed in the context of technical, institutional and financial sustainability. Clearly, none of these would be achievable within the planned period of four years of Danish support. The aim would therefore be to assist in the development of essential processes, which can be continued and consolidated after Danish support has been phased out*"²⁴⁶.

Ownership by MoE staff of Danida supported interventions, where these can be specifically identified (contributions to curriculum development, school infrastructure, books, etc.), contributes to sustainability and indicates a degree of programme success.

On the other hand, in terms of management mechanisms (planning, results analysis, etc.) the Steering Committee and GMU have contributed less than expected to long-term skills development. Danida's more recent funding of IIEP involvement may be more successful, though this would benefit from more specific skills audits or documentation of outputs.

The deployment of national TA or supplemented staff throughout the Ministry is, in one sense, highly satisfactory. It promotes national ownership and development of capacity and ensures skills are available within MoE. It fosters sustainability in that Afghan nationals are likely to remain in country. However, this strategy of buying capacity requires transparent coordination and is vulnerable to adjustments in donor support. The issue is under review by the HR Department and needs to be a focus for coordinated discussion resulting in phased strategic planning at the upcoming Joint Review. Capacity at decentralised levels, while less dependent on outsiders, is also far less developed and remains weak, apparently more reliant on energetic individuals rather than systems. In this sense sustainable capacity, at least in those provinces and districts visited, has yet to be developed.

22. & 24. *To what degree have the selected aid modalities supported ownership and longer-term sustainability? What trade-offs have been encountered, and what have the implications been? What measures have been put in place to enhance national ownership of*

246 Draft Identification Mission Report – Future Danish Support to Education, Afghanistan, October 2002 (pp. 10).

the education programme, both at the Government and the local level, and what are the implications for sustainability? Relevant links to broader public financial management should be considered.

The majority of Danish support to education follows Afghan priorities, and as such supports sustainable alignment and partnership.²⁴⁷ Danida has channelled funds through on-budget support, collaborative efforts with other donors in Helmand, through the ARTF and through NGOs (e.g. DAARTT) and through UN organisations (e.g. IIEP). The separate funding of DAARTT has, perhaps, been the weakest of the modalities in terms of sustainability. Danish aid as a means of supporting host institutions was not best implemented by a decision specifically to separate this component from the direct investment through Afghan government channels²⁴⁸.

In addition to the links with national priorities, the Danish intervention in Afghanistan is also fully in line with the Danish government policy towards “*Whole of Government approaches*”, promoting cross-fertilisation of (Danish) government policies, in this case foreign, development and defence. Over the period, increased efforts were made to link Danish civilian assistance in Afghanistan to Denmark’s military engagement in the country, e.g. by focusing particularly on civilian activities and civilian leadership in the Helmand Province after 2008. This approach appears most successful when initiatives are carefully integrated and where MoE representatives are helped to assume the lead management role, as is currently the case in Helmand.

23. *How does attention to and results achieved for institutional capacity building at the different levels of the education sector bode for sustainability?*

From analysis of recent projections of demand, it is clear the capacity of the EMIS unit is developing. Extensive discussion with the Planning Department also suggests greater analytical capacity at central level than was seen during the early period under evaluation. Danida has funded key staff in these areas on overseas training and continues to pay salaries or supplements. It has been argued throughout this report that greater attention to data and planning are essential for management of an effective education system. Support to these units is important for targeting and sustainable development of education services as well as measurement of performance.

Capacities for data management through provincial and district EMIS systems, however, appear rudimentary. In some provinces and districts visited by the evaluation management data on service provision was not available, and it is doubted if the ability to base planning decisions on real data exists even where these data are available. This need is currently being addressed, although, since it was recognised as a priority in 2003, implementation should have taken place earlier.

In terms of specific programmes, such as textbook provision, inspection, in-service teacher development, which have been supported by Danida over the past decade, systems are only now being put in place. The evaluation took note of a new supervision system being established with central oversight and local staff able to visit schools and provide support as well as monitoring compliance with systems. Warehousing for textbooks received from the

247 Denmark’s national Development Strategy “Frihed fra fattigdom – Frihed til forandring” (2010). A new strategy is expected sometime before summer 2012.

248 Article 25, Comparative Review of School Construction and Education Infrastructure, Kabul/London 2011, p. 36.

central Publications Department is being provided with direct or indirect Danida support (either through construction or advice and coordination of other donor's development programmes, e.g. in Helmand). This, and the associated monitoring, reporting and follow up capacities are essential but should have been supported much earlier in the decade.

25. *How has the level of donor confidence in national systems and procedures evolved since 2001, and what are the implications for sustainability?*

There is some formal evidence that confidence in systems is mixed. The DfID assessment of government data quality from 2010 points to lack of reliability for past figures on which estimates of need were based for forward planning in 2004 (e.g. 'guesstimates' of school-age population numbers) and later. However, this assessment also pointed to encouraging improvements.

Other respondents spoke with less confidence of current system reliability. Danida's reliance on MoE management was regarded as risky, though laudable. Informants pointed to theoretical capacity, but said that practical decisions tend to be ad hoc and not system-based. This was said to be a reflection of over-rigid, formal education at all school and higher education levels. The evaluation found this to be the case at provincial and district levels, though there was also recent evidence of more creative strategic planning from some provinces.

Despite the lack of confidence in some quarters and the assertion that anything resembling a SWAp would currently be inappropriate, this evaluation concludes that Danida's support has been sufficiently successful that, with greater attention to expected outputs and performance measurement, for which capacity may soon be in place in MoE, measured progress towards greater sector coordination will be possible and certainly desirable.

As discussed elsewhere, the deployment of TA throughout the Ministry may mask true capacity. This is a key concern in terms of sustainability. If systems can only be sustained with the support of staff who may be temporary, sustainability is at risk.

27. *To what extent has the increasing number of female teachers and girls in schools had an impact on the situation and status of women in Afghanistan? What are the prospects for sustainability and longer term impacts in light of security issues?*

Broadly, from observations, reports from informants and in documents seen by the evaluation, the numbers of girls who continue to attend schools, sometimes in the most discouraging circumstances, is growing. The schools and individual informants consulted by the evaluation may be unrepresentative as the evaluation could only consider a small sample. However, reports from DPs and NGOs are very encouraging. In 2008, when enrolments of boys in Helmand dropped, female enrolments held up remarkably.

The number of female teachers is also expanding (e.g. 41,300 in 2007, 44,231 in 2008²⁴⁹). However, need was estimated at 94,551 for 2009, i.e. double the supply, so demand continues to outstrip the number of teachers recruited by Government. It has been pointed out in the previous chapter that more trainees graduate than can currently be employed within national budget ceilings.

Moreover, the positive trend is reversible and continued progress is dependent on continued improvement in provision of basic facilities and resources for females, which, from

249 EMIS Surveys, 2008, 2009.

observation are sometimes seriously lacking. The extremely difficult physical circumstances observed by the evaluation in some provinces will eventually deter even the most enthusiastic student. Sustainable growth in enrolment trends must depend on improved education quality and also on opportunities for graduates to make use of learning when they leave school and look for work.

It is hard to say what impact this trend is having on perceptions held by women out-of-education. The recent AF survey of attitudes suggests education continues to be very highly prized. Attendance at literacy classes continues to grow also, showing that even after formal school age women are seeking access to basic education. From reports and discussions this is even the case in Helmand.

By its nature, the momentum generated by women seeking education often as the first females in their families to do so, is likely to grow slowly at first. It will be sustainable once it is reasonably well established. This cannot yet be the case and progress remains vulnerable to an extremely unstable situation.

In relation to the interplay between the education sector support and the Afghan state-building process, how are changes perceived amongst the population?

From the above AF survey it can also be seen that public awareness of initiatives as implemented by donors is encouragingly limited. Government is seen as the main provider and education, as pointed out, is regarded as the most important public service. Overall government performance is perceived as good and expectations are that it will improve (73% regard education availability as either 'quite good' or 'very good', 84% expect availability to be either 'much better' or 'somewhat better' in a year's time²⁵⁰). The survey reports 57% of the public are aware of development projects in the education sector. Only 20% of survey respondents, however, reported they were aware of foreign sponsorship whereas 64% knew of Afghan Government led projects in education. This perception of ownership is encouraging, especially when coupled with the reported perception (21%) that insurgents were fighting against the presence of foreign troops/ international community.

As expected, and intended, there was little awareness of specific Danida programmes outside those central ministry departments directly involved in Steering Committee Meetings. Even in those programme areas where Danish funding has contributed to the major improvements (classroom construction, book production, teacher training), Danida is not directly associated with either specific achievements or shortcomings.

Public awareness campaigns promoting the importance of education have been directed at stimulating demand. The evaluation also saw reports of planned campaigns in Helmand and elsewhere suggesting Government is addressing this issue as part of the state-building process. The role of the school Shura in management, planning and liaison with the community, promoting education, reducing suspicion, etc. was discussed with representatives in Helmand and in Mazar. All schools have at least one such committee. From reports the Shura plays an important role in linking the state education system to local interests in the community.

Discussions by the evaluation in schools suggest a risk that rising expectations regarding increased access and quality that are not met will undermine past investment by Govern-

250 Afghanistan Survey Book, Asia Foundation, 2011.

ment and DPs, including Danida. Increased enrolment that forces schools to operate multiple, shorter shifts, for example compromises education quality.

28. *To what degree can early signs of the impact of changes in the education area be identified on governance, possibilities for social and economic development, and broad based participation in the country?*

It was not possible to make any systematic evaluation of this area. In some more stable parts of the country there is a sense of economic progress and commitment to the future (evident in private construction and consumer activity, as well as participation in school Shura activity). However, large parts of the capital remain blighted by justifiable security concerns limiting social and economic development.

Public newspapers, at least those reporting in English, give prominence to human rights and governance issues. They are also encouragingly open in criticism of public policy and figures. There is a respect for free speech and exchange of opinion (e.g. through the Loya Jirga).

The AF survey asked respondents about perceptions of prosperity compared with the time under the Taliban. 44% regard themselves as more prosperous and 34% as less prosperous. The percentage has fluctuated each year since 2006 when it was at a high of 54% falling to 39% in 2008. However, the most recent response from ethnic Pashtuns was less encouraging. More responded negatively to this question than positively (39% against 33%).

In terms of governance, there is steady confidence in the Afghan National Army and the National Police (93% and 83% responding they have a 'great deal' or 'fair amount' of confidence). More than 60% also steadily report confidence in print media, provincial and community councils and other forms of local government.

It is not possible to associate these public perceptions with changes in education provision, except to say that education is regarded as very important and that the Government's delivery of education is welcomed and expected to improve.

7 Recommendations and lessons learned

The evaluation presents six recommendations below. Each draws from various conclusions and links to lessons learned. In general the recommendation is that Danida should continue to support education priorities in Afghanistan in those areas and through the modality that has been used to date. The programme support approach is the more appropriate as capacity in MoE has grown. The EIP provides the necessary basis for joint sector performance monitoring.

1. The first recommendation is that **Danida's on-budget modality reflected emerging aid effectiveness priorities, was appropriate and should be continued.** At the time of its application it was innovative and applied in a context of high risk (acknowledged in programme documentation). Nevertheless, the benefits outweighed the risk.

However, to reduce this risk, to improve management, to allow the Ministry, Danida and other DPs to draw more fully on experiences and lessons learned from the modality, a number of modifications should be introduced. These effectively implement the requirements set out in Danida's own Guidelines for Programme Management and are discussed under the other recommendations below.

Despite reservations expressed by some DPs, the modality was welcome to the host Ministry and encouraged collaboration, openness and partnership. It also proved sufficiently robust that, according to audits and other reports, it encountered few problems in terms of misappropriation. This can be attributed at least in part to the close relationship between Danida TA and MoE colleagues during the early phase, and to the application of procedures set out in the budget management manuals provided. Similar experiences currently from Helmand should continue to be documented and shared as a demonstration of coordination feasibility and advantages.

In addition, the modality allowed funds to be deployed with great flexibility to meet needs as they arose and with adequate management control. In itself this contributed to Government confidence in Danida as a partner and trusted advisor. The possibility of flexible deployment of funds created the opportunity for management discussion with ministry officials, itself promoting capacity development. It also allowed Danida to collaborate with other donors in response to emerging funding situations.

2. Secondly, in order for all stakeholders to benefit more fully from the application of the modality in all aspects indicated above, to reduce risk and to promote capacity development, it is recommended that Ministry, RDE and Danida agree a transparent recording system and keep **documentation more fully and in a form that facilitates use by all managers and development partners.**

This was not always done and, at times, seriously threatened the value of the assistance. Moreover, the documentation even at its fullest referred more to activity and process than output. Management needs to focus more on planning and monitoring of outputs targeting medium-term outcomes and eventual impact. The policies

and strategies required to produce expected outputs and outcomes need to be made explicit and their results monitored. This is recommended in Danida's own guidelines and was insufficiently adhered to during the period under evaluation. Insecure and fragile contexts can encourage a more ad hoc approach to assistance, indeed with greater flexibility. However, such a response, while understandable and even appropriate makes the need for shared documentation and focus on outputs even more necessary.

Since this is an essential requirement it needs to be explicit in ToR of TA and managers. In itself it should be monitored as an important aspect of performance.

3. For the host institution the maintenance of records in a form that focuses on results serves a strong capacity development purpose and should be given greater prominence. Counterpart managers should receive training and support in writing, keeping and using documented results. And managers should be assisted with identification of significant expected outputs and setting realistic targets. This requires discussion, which, with the eventual strategic decisions, needs to be recorded and followed up on. It was the case during the period under evaluation that programme inputs received more attention than appropriate. Where basic outputs were reported, there was insufficient reference to key discussion and strategic decisions that would allow improved management in the future. For example, the printing of books was recorded, but not their delivery to students, the operation of phased systems for ordering materials, reporting on need and arrival. These systems were developed or piloted, but not fully documented, adopted and institutionalised. **It is recommended that Danida ensure that results-based management skills are included in the training programmes they currently support for MoE and PED staff.** In addition, it is suggested that the support for training in these skills be prioritised and monitored by RDE programme management. Over the decade programme implementation using the on-budget modality was most effective when specialist education management was provided by RDE. It is, therefore, recommended that **RDE education programme management is strengthened and increased to ensure the assistance MoE receives is tailored to the monitoring task**, if necessary through the provision of dedicated staff, in particular senior education specialists.
4. The use of the on-budget modality and host institutions was intended to promote greater donor coordination. There is some evidence of occasional progress, particularly when Danida funds have been re-deployed and where discussion on issues of pooled or multilateral funding has taken place (e.g. the submission to GPE). However, as explained, this is not yet institutionalised.

Plans for a Joint Review are currently being developed, and it is recommended that this is capitalised on to strengthen explicit mapping of phased progress towards improved coordination. This may be the responsibility of TA recruited to plan the Review, and if so, should be included in the ToR.

It should also be part of Danida's own programme reporting. While it was the stated intention for Danida's support to act as a "case study" to attract other donors to make use of similar modalities, and donors are in some cases committed to channelling an increasing portion of aid through budget support, the GMU mechanism for promoting this has not been effective. In fact there remains a lack of clarity over the role of the GMU and the HRDB. It is, therefore, **recommended that Danida develop an**

explicit results chain to show how programme activity will lead to the improved harmonisation and alignment of support. This should be done in collaboration with MoE and other donors, but needs to be both planned and monitored.

5. Danida's further support to education quality at the level of systems, coordination and policy development is appropriate, consistent with the modality, in line with earlier planning, and plays to Danida's strengths in partnership and dialogue. It was always Danida's intention to balance attention to urgent immediate Afghan needs with support for MoE's long-term strategic planning. As indicated for the other recommendations, more explicit benchmarking is needed to ensure these inputs translate into not just immediate outputs (teachers trained, books, printed, schools built, etc.), but medium-term outputs or outcomes closer to beneficiaries, i.e. teachers, students, parents, etc. Improved access is a major achievement, but carries with it the rising expectation that education quality will also improve, i.e. that books will be available, teachers better qualified, etc. **Danida should support the further development by MoE of systems that record and report improvements at school level** (e.g. % of children with complete sets of books, schools with complete complement of qualified teachers, etc.)

Management planning and performance monitoring needs to focus to a much greater degree on these benchmarks. There is no doubt that much has been achieved in the past decade in Afghanistan. However, it is easy for those providing the inputs to develop a sense that the task is satisfactorily completed before the beneficiaries in schools and villages are aware of any results.

6. It is understood that the MoE is looking at ways to increase coordination and longer-term systems for employing TA or government staff on salary supplementation schemes. The responsible department has implemented the P&G system and clearly any new, government-led system needs to be related to this. **It is recommended that MoE's rationalisation of the different TA and supplementation systems be supported by Danida, either through provision of specialist advice, or through advocacy in Ministry/donor forums.**

Where Danida is supporting staff providing limited-term assistance to ministry counterparts these should have clear reference to capacity development responsibilities. To establish capacity needs, skills and institutional audits should be carried out in order for long-term requirements to be addressed with phased inclusion in Annual Plans and coordinated funding from other donors where necessary. Performance of TA with counterpart development roles should be monitored against ToR, preferably in collaboration with the HR Department.

Where funding is being provided to staff who are effectively on the government establishment, support for development of a single scheme with clear, unified and government-led reporting criteria should be established. Since it supports both, Danida should advocate a rationalisation of the roles of the GMU and HRDB. Extension and combination of existing schemes, managed by Government (e.g. preferenced support for teachers's salaries under ARTF) should be promoted with benchmarking and monitoring of progress, even where no immediate exit strategy can be planned.

Provision of short-term technical inputs where no counterparting is expected, should be very limited.

Annex A Terms of Reference

Evaluation of Danida support to the education sector in Afghanistan 2003-10

1. Background

Since 2001, Denmark has provided substantial development assistance to the reconstruction of Afghanistan with the main purposes of contributing to national, regional and global security as well as to poverty reduction. Today, Denmark is one of Afghanistan's largest bilateral contributors measured per capita. The Danish development assistance to Afghanistan has mainly been concentrated within four thematic areas: (1) State-building, (2) Livelihoods, (3) Education, and (4) Neighbourhood efforts. Other appropriations include NGO funding, humanitarian efforts and funding from the Local Grant Authority. The total disbursements of Danish development assistance to Afghanistan over the period 2001-10 amount to approximately DKK 2.5 billion.

Denmark participates in efforts to strengthen donor coordination and promote the efficiency of donor assistance to Afghanistan, i.e. through Nordic cooperation, the EU and the UN. Consultations between the Afghan Government, the UN and the international community led to adoption of the "Afghanistan Compact" in 2006, which provides the basis for partnership between the international community and the Afghan Government. The Afghanistan Compact is implemented through the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), which covers the period 2008-13.

In June 2008, the Danish Government announced a new strategy for Danish efforts in Afghanistan, which outlines the integrated political, military and developmental effort in the period 2008-12, and replaces the Strategy for Development Cooperation between Denmark and Afghanistan, 2005-09. In the new strategy Denmark continues to focus the assistance within the four main areas mentioned above. The Danish Government moreover prepares annual plans for the Danish engagement in Helmand, where the Danish military presence is concentrated and where part of the development effort is undertaken.

In Denmark, as well as in the donor community in general, there is a wish to learn from the experiences with development assistance to Afghanistan through the last decade, and the Evaluation Department of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (EVAL) has decided to commission an evaluation of the Danish support to the education sector in Afghanistan 2003-10. This is one of expectedly five evaluative processes being carried out in 2011; the others being an evaluation of the Regions of Origin initiative and three evaluation studies.

1.1 Support to the education sector

Danish support

Denmark has been actively engaged in the education sector since 2003 and was until April 2011 lead donor and co-chair of the Human Resource Development Board (HRDB; similar to education round table). Between 2003 and 2010 Denmark disbursed

approximately DKK 431 million in support to the education sector through bilateral programmes, including the efforts in the Helmand Province, mainly through the bilateral education sector programmes. A relatively minor part of the funds have been given through other channels, e.g. through the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) and, especially in the early years, UN organisations.

Danish bilateral support

The bilateral support has been provided as sector support to the MoE and has been closely linked to the national development strategy and the education policy objectives. The first bilateral agreement was the “Primary Education Programme Support (PEPS) Afghanistan 2003-06” signed in 2003. The programme aimed to support the Afghan Government in its provision of primary education. The PEPS objectives were based on the National Development Framework (NDF) and the Ministry of Education (MoE) sector policy of 2002, “the Policy for the Rehabilitation and Development of Education in Afghanistan”. This policy document emphasised physical infrastructure, but also the need for quality improvements through the provision of more education material, teacher education and upgrading of qualifications. The overall budget for the PEPS was DKK 110 million. The PEPS 2003-06 had five main components:

1. Curriculum development
2. Teacher education and development
3. Educational materials development
4. Physical infrastructure
5. Aid management and planning and management capacity development

The MoE was the main implementer of the programme and was supported by a Grant Management Unit established in the MoE. A Steering Committee was further established to oversee the Danish support and approve plan and budgets as well as reports.

The PEPS was extended with the agreement “Programme Document on Extension of Danish Support to Education Sector in Afghanistan 2007-08”. The budget for the extension was DKK 72 million as well as additional technical assistance. While the first period from 2003 to 2006 was concerned with support to the primary education sector, the second phase from 2007 to 2008 included support to levels 1-12 of the school education. Major reform and development processes were initiated in Afghanistan between 2003 and 2006. Of particular importance to the education sector were The (Interim) Afghanistan National Development Strategy and The Afghanistan Compact.

The strategic framework for the sector, the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) for 2006-10, can be seen as an important milestone in establishing a national framework for education in Afghanistan and has helped to structure and focus the discussion, both within MoE and among its partner agencies, on key priorities of the sector. A continuation of NESP exists for the years 2010-15. The plan was prepared with the participation of a broad spectrum of partners and Afghan stakeholders. NESP was further operationalised in an Interim Plan 2010-13, where the Ministry of Education has indicated the most important priorities for the three years period.

The Danish support was based on the Afghan education policy as expressed in the overall national policy framework “Education Programme: Five Year Strategy 1385-89 (2006-10)”. The Afghan Government had identified eight programmatic areas, referred to as programmes, for inclusion in the Education Strategy. The Danish support prioritised three of these programmes, namely; General Education, Curriculum Development, and

Education Administration Reform. The overall objective of the Danish support for the extension phase was to ensure increased access to continuously improved quality education. Relevant performance and output indicators were to be formulated and agreed for monitoring purposes and alignment to national monitoring and reporting requirements sought. In continuation of Danish support to the education sector, preparations for the new Danish Education Support Programme to Afghanistan (ESPA) were initiated at the end of 2009, with the programme document for support 2010-13 presented and signed in mid 2010. A revised and further aligned version of the programme document was signed in April 2011, with a budget of DKK 340 million for the three-year period. The programme aims at establishing a programmatic framework which is also adequate to other donors, while being aligned with NESP/IP and will support the same priorities, with the aim of creating a basis for further alignment and harmonisation.

Education support in the Helmand province

According to the strategy paper “Denmark in Helmand 2008” the overall objective of the Danish efforts in Helmand is to contribute to a stable and sustainable development by means of inter-connected and integrated civilian and military effort. Prior to 2008, the Danish support to Helmand had, in addition to the security efforts in relation to insurgents, primarily consisted of smaller projects implemented in cooperation with the Provincial Government. The plan for Helmand in 2008 had a budget of DKK 40 million and envisaged three main interventions: 1) Stabilisation efforts (15 million); 2) counter-narcotics (10 million) and education (15 million).

The overall objectives of the education support were twofold:

- To increase the number of pupils at public schools and to strengthen the capacity of provincial authorities
- Reduced radicalisation in Helmand with respect to the education sector.

The support to education included the following elements:

- School facilities and equipment
- Teacher training
- School textbooks
- Capacity building

An educational advisor was posted in Helmand from 2008 to contribute to the coordination of the overall international efforts in the education area and promote capacity building at a provincial level. Furthermore, funds from national programmes would also be available for the development of the education sector in Helmand if the provincial authorities in Helmand were in a position to receive and implement these programmes. This included the construction of schools. The school textbooks printed with support from Denmark under the PEPS were also to be distributed in Helmand. The support to education in the Helmand province now forms a part of the bilateral education programme and is fully integrated in the support to the NESP/IP with the funds being managed by the MoE and the Provincial Education Directorate – PED.

Multilateral support

Multilateral support from Denmark to the education sector in Afghanistan has been provided through the ARTF (managed by the World Bank), UNICEF (especially prior to 2003) and UNESCO (see further below). It should be noted, that the Danish multilateral support has been targeted as well as limited in amount, when compared to the bilateral

support. Thus, the information below is especially relevant as a brief overview of some important aspects of multilateral support to the sector, rather than as a specific indication of areas of Danish support.

ARTF

The Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) is a multi-donor trust fund administered by the World Bank. Since mid-2002 it has funded the recurrent budget, but also been used as a mechanism to fund priority investments in Government's National Priority Programs (NPPs) based on the National Development Framework (NDF). ARTF has been investing in Afghanistan's education system through the Education Quality Improvement Programme (EQUIP I) which was signed in 2004 between the Government of Afghanistan and the World Bank.²⁵¹ The budget was USD 24 million for a four-year period and the programme consisted of the following components:

- School grants for quality enhancement and infrastructure development
- Support to schools through institutional and human resource development
- Policy development and monitoring and evaluation.

The objective was to ensure national access to quality school infrastructure and an improved standard of teaching. ARTF funding enabled the scaling up of the Government's national basic education programme, EQUIP I.

EQUIP I was succeeded by EQUIP II in 2008. EQUIP II was meant to widen and expand the scope of the IDA interventions of the past to be a multi donor supported project that was fully aligned with the vision and goals set out in the NESP in partnership with major donors and NGOs in the sector.²⁵² EQUIP II was to be more comprehensive in terms of coverage, fully aligned with the government strategy in education and provide the vehicle through which other donor funding could be channelled. The programme had three components, focusing on support for school grants; teacher and principal training and education and project management, monitoring and evaluation. It should be noted that Denmark has not provided financial support specifically for EQUIP.

The MoE was designated as responsible for the overall execution of the project, through its central, provincial and district departments. Furthermore, the plan was to increase the use of NGOs for specific components and independent organisations to support project implementation, build capacity within the government bodies and provide independent monitoring and evaluation of specific components.²⁵³

UN

UNICEF was instrumental in the first round of education provision after 2001 and the "Back to School Programme" provided school starter kits and text books for a large amount of pupils after the Taliban regime was ousted. UNICEF has continued its cooperation with the MoE throughout the decade, providing teaching material and building community schools. The programme has been supported by other cooperating partners. Support to education has also been given through UNESCO.

251 *Development Grant Agreement, EQUIP, between Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and IDA*, Grant number H119AF, August 4, 2004.

252 http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSPContentServer/WDSP/IB/2007/11/19/000076092_20071119165054/Original/Appraisal0Stage0PID0Nov01902007.doc.

253 *Ibid.*

Other bilateral support

It should be noted that there are several other actors giving bilateral support to the sector, where e.g. Japan/JICA provides infrastructure support. Significant funding is also received through especially the US Armed forces (CERP-funds).

Important challenges for education sector support in the context of Afghanistan

The context in Afghanistan clearly entails a range of challenges that also are of importance to the planning, implementation and results of support to the education sector. These include the fact that Afghanistan is a fragile state, where capacity building, also in relation to the education sector remains important and where the situation with regards to stability and security continues to be challenging, changing and diverse across the country. Thus, the interplay between education sector support on one hand and issues of security, political processes and state and capacity building on the other can be seen as both important and complex. The security situation can further be seen to entail a high turn-over of staff in international organisations/donor agencies, with implications for i.e. continuity and institutional memory. The diverse set of development actors involved and the range of modalities in play can further add to the complexity.

2. Evaluation purposes and objectives

The main purposes of the evaluation are to assess and document the contribution to results of the Danish support to the education sector in Afghanistan and to contribute to the continued improvement of Danish support to the education sector in Afghanistan. To a more limited degree, the evaluation is expected to contribute to the continued learning in relation to sector support in “fragile” situations.

The main objectives of the evaluation are to assess the strategy, implementation and results of the Danish support to the education sector during the period 2003-10, and, based on the overall approach and the specific experiences of activities funded, to identify conclusions, lessons learned and forward-looking recommendations for the continued support to and development of the education sector in Afghanistan. In line with scope of support given, the main emphasis is expected to be on the bilateral support.

The evaluation will use the DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability as a basis for assessments, while taking into consideration the context, including the security situation, in which the support is provided. Given the timeframe needed for wider effects from support to the education sector to materialise, the criterion of impact is expected to be addressed only to a limited degree, mainly in relation to early signs of impact.

3. Scope of work

3.1 Evaluation period

The evaluation must cover support to the education sector from 2003 and onwards. However, to understand the context and support background, the earlier support to Afghanistan from 2001-02 should be included as part of the context analysis. The evaluation should ensure that periods of particular importance to decisions on the support to the education sector is explored in sufficient depth. In terms of “time sampling” it is therefore suggested that the evaluation focus on important moments and periods e.g. the

very first years (2001-02) before the sector programme was signed, then the period leading up to the signing of the first agreement of PEPS (2003), the time of the extension of the PEPS and the signing of the Afghan Compact (2006) and then the time of the latest phase of the sector education support as well as the ANS (2008). While it is considered too early to include the support in terms of ESPA (2010-13) in the assessment of results etc., it should be considered as an important part of the frame within which to utilise lessons learned and follow up on recommendations

3.2 Coverage in relation to education sector support

The different element of the Danish education support must be included in the evaluation, albeit not necessarily in the same way or at the same level of detail. Danish support to education in Afghanistan given bilaterally through PEPS (now ESPA), including the support to the Helmand province, is expected to form the core of the evaluation (in line with its large share of the budget for the Danish support), and all the components hereof must be considered. Again, it should be noted that the educational support to the Helmand province is now integrated in the PEPS/ESPA. However, the specific context and challenges of the interventions in this region should be considered and may require the evaluation to address this aspect of the support as a distinct, but interlinked intervention area. Other types of support, such as the support given through multilateral organisations and funds (mainly through the UN system and the ARTF) should also be included. However, due to the limited amount, this is expected to be at the more overall level of achieving a background for assessing of the contribution of the Danish support to the education sector, and to assess the division of labour, strengths and weaknesses and value added of the different modalities. At the overall level, the evaluation is expected to employ a sector perspective in order to be able to assess the relevance, contribution of results etc. of the Danish support in relation to the sector context. This also means that the main areas of support to education, also outside the area of Danish support, should be included in establishing the overall picture of support to the sector.

3.3 Geographical coverage

The evaluation must ensure a sector-wide coverage, which by implication entails country-level coverage. Within this, the evaluation must be able to address the regional differences in context and results (with the support to the Helmand Province as one important example). However, given security issues and logistical challenges, this coverage may have to be obtained by combining different types of data sources, with different levels of coverage and detail. The evaluation is expected to carry out field visits to enhance both geographical and thematic coverage. The case studies should take into account the significant regional disparities between the different parts of the country, and consider other issues related to geography (HDI differences, ethnicity etc). An important part of the analytical work will be to assess the coverage obtained and ensure that the conclusions consider the strengths and limitations of the information collected with regards to coverage and depth (see further below).

3.4 Context and conflict analysis

The evaluation must include thorough context and conflict analysis, due to the environment of volatility and fragility in which the supported is implemented and because of the possibility of a complex, mutually influencing interplay between the context and support activities. This will include mapping out the existing conflict and context assessments, as relevant at different points in time (in line with proposed time sampling), as well as investigating if and why issues that later proved to be important were underexplored. If new context and conflict analysis are carried out as part of the evaluation, their relevance

in light of changes in information, processes etc should be considered to ensure appropriate analytical use.

3.5 Evaluation criteria and questions

As mentioned, the evaluation will assess the quality of the Danish support by using the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The additional (humanitarian) evaluation criteria of coherence, complementarity, coverage and coordination are relevant in relation to different aspects of the education support (e.g. coordination between the wide range of actors; complementarity between the different types of the support, whether sufficient coverage of target groups is achieved; the positive or negative interplay between education sector interventions and interventions aimed at stabilisation or peace building etc.). These criteria should be considered in relation to the characteristics of education sector support and are therefore seen as dimensions of the overall OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, in line with the evaluation questions below.

The criteria should be used to assess the different types/areas and objectives of support. Based on this, the criteria should also be used to give a more overall assessment of the support at the portfolio level to the degree possible. It should be noted that the different criteria can to some extent be seen as interlinked, as when the issue of sustainability has implications for the prospects of achieving longer-term impacts, or when assessment of efficiency may consider issues of short-term and long term objectives and results (as related to effectiveness and sustainability). The evaluation is expected to consider such important interlinkages where relevant. An outline of evaluation questions for the different criteria is indicated below. It should be stressed that this should be revisited, prioritised and/or supplemented and refined, as part of the proposal and the inception phase.

4. Approach and methodology

Since a range of different actors are involved in supporting the education sector, and many factors influence the overall development, the evaluation is expected to establish an overview of the education sector and key areas of support, and use this as part of the foundation for assessing the contribution of the Danish support, and whether it has functioned as envisaged. Thus, contribution analysis may be relevant, since attribution is not – or only to a very limited degree – expected to be possible. In order to do this the evaluation is expected to establish an overall picture of the support to and interventions within the sector as well as a more detailed overview of the Danish support, so as to be able to assess the contribution of the Danish support, its characteristics etc. Further, it is expected that both overall changes and developments in the sector, as well as investigation of the interplay with contextual factors will need to be addressed by the evaluation in order to assess the contribution to results and effects of the Danish support.

The evaluation is expected to apply a theory based approach where the causal chain in the programmes between inputs, outputs and outcomes are critically examined. This entails establishing the intervention logic/theory of change of the support by mapping out and investigating the channels through which the inputs provided by the interventions are expected to affect the intended intervention outcomes. This approach is expected to generate learning of relevance to future support by on one hand keeping a focus on results, while on the other exploring the interplay between support interventions and the context, the causal chain leading to the results etc.

The evaluation is expected to be based on mixed methods approach, where questions are explored using quantitative or qualitative data and analysis as well as a combination hereof, depending on data availability and the issues at hand. Careful validation and triangulation of findings is to be ensured throughout.

The possibilities of enhancing the data coverage and depth concerning the whole portfolio through the application of alternative methods (use of social media, telephone interviews or similar; stakeholder seminars etc.) should be explored. Moreover, the evaluation team will have to devote time to additional compilation of background information (relevant international, regional and national research and documentation from other donors, including existing evaluations) to ensure that the context and conflict analysis is sufficiently well founded.

Quantitative data and analysis

It is recommended that quantitative data be obtained from secondary sources such as programme monitoring data, national and regional survey etc. Some data on education indicators such as net and gross enrolment rate (e.g. boys/girls/disadvantaged groups/province), completion and retention rates (by boys/girls/disadvantaged groups/province), drop-out and repetition rates (boys/girls; disadvantaged groups, province), pupil/teacher ratios, textbooks per pupil and subject, classrooms, graduation and progression rates can to some extent be obtained from MoE. Coverage, reliability and validity of such data should however be critically assessed, and should be supplemented by data from other sources. Where possible and relevant, systematic quantitative assessment of results should be undertaken, but mixed methods approaches are also expected to be relevant. The intended use of quantitative methods, including an assessment of quantitative data sources and the intended interplay with qualitative information, should be thoroughly explained in the inception report.

Qualitative data and analysis

Qualitative data collection and analysis should be undertaken in order to validate and substantiate quantitative findings, and to assess effects as well as the issues related to the relevance, efficiency, sustainability and impacts that may best be assessed using qualitative tools. The qualitative analysis must be systematic and judicious, and intended methods should be described thoroughly in the inception report. Primary data sources include reports (policies, strategies and programme documents), internal documents and interviews and focus group meetings with stakeholders. Further, reviews and evaluations of issues related to social sector development, gender, governance, and institutional development in Afghanistan must be considered. Stakeholder groups include i.a. former and present embassy staff, education advisors in Danida, other past and present donors in Afghanistan, the UN system, local and central government officials and religious leaders.

Field work

The evaluation team is expected to carry out field visits to gain in-depth information on the Danish support to the education sector. The key aims are to supplement the secondary data sources with more nuanced and detailed information, as well as to gather information from relevant third parties that can contribute to validation and triangulation in the analysis. The field visits are expected to include interviews and group discussions with key stakeholders and informants, central and local governments, implementing actors and other relevant organisations in the field as well as direct beneficiaries. This includes gaining more direct insight into what goes on in the schools, school administration, teacher training facilities etc., and interact with stakeholders and end users. As part of the field work it is expected that three to five case studies/case study areas are selected for in depth study. The selection

must take into account the significant regional disparities between different parts of the country and should ensure as representative coverage as possible. Since it is not expected to be feasible to ensure full representativity of cases etc. investigated through the field visit, the sampling criteria indicated below (and others, as proves relevant) should be considered to ensure an appropriate coverage, as well as to address the issue of the external validity of the findings from the field visit, to strengthen and clarify the foundation for the analysis and conclusions. More specifically, the following selection criteria should be considered when deciding the specific scope and focus of the field visit and case studies:

- Programme coverage: The field study should be planned to maximise the expected benefits of information on the five components of the PEPS, and to the degree relevant, other aspects of the Danish support.
- Geography: A mix of urban and rural areas, remote and non-remote, and if possible including Helmand, should be visited. Differences in human development index (HDI) should be considered.
- Ethnicity and language: Schools in various ethnic regions should be represented.
- Gender: girls' schools should be included, and the field visit should allow for the exploration of issues of marginalisation.
- Security situation: The field study should be planned so as to gain insight into the interplay between the education support and the (different) security contexts.

The specific sampling strategy is to be established by the evaluation team during the inception phase based on the initial study of background documents for the portfolio of activities (to be done by the evaluation team).

The fieldwork planning will be influenced by the security situation in Afghanistan (which may vary over the time of implementation of the assignment). These factors, together with the requirement for coverage will require a careful planning, both in terms of design and analytical strategy and when considering the logistics of the field visits. The consultants are responsible for planning, logistics etc. in relation to the field visits. Limited assistance (upon request through EVAL) might be obtained from e.g. the Danish Embassy in Kabul. The embassy may help identify areas relevant for visit, and may facilitate the contact with schools and stakeholders, e.g. through MoE.

It will be an important part of the evaluation to explicitly consider the limitations with regards to coverage of conclusions and recommendations, including those that are made on the basis of the field visit and case studies selected, and to ensure a rewarding analytical interplay between field visit/cases and the analysis of the portfolio of activities as a whole. The methodology should be further refined during the tender process and during the inception phase of the evaluation by the selected evaluation team. Further, it should be noted that the evaluation must be conducted in a conflict sensitive manner.

Evaluation process

It is expected that the evaluation comprises of four phases as follows:

1. Preparation and fact finding, including an introductory visit to EVAL; MFA Copenhagen and an initial fact finding trip to Afghanistan which will be used to further qualify the scope of the evaluation, to get an overview of the possibilities

for data collection based on field studies, access to other types of data, hold initial meetings with stakeholders etc. It should be noted that this should be carried out very early in the process (immediately after initiation of work if possible; e.g. June/July), to ensure the needed foundation for the inception report, and to benefit from the information and institutional memory of the present staff at the Embassy in Kabul, prior to expected change of staff (rotation) in August/September 2012.

2. Extensive and comprehensive desk study to ensure a detailed overview of the support, preliminary context and sector analysis, outline of intervention logic/theory of change and fine-tuning of the evaluation matrix and detailed planning the further data collection activities, based on available material and fact finding trip. These two phases are to be reflected in the inception report.
3. Evaluation visit and field studies in Afghanistan enabling the evaluation team collect information through interviews, focus group discussions and workshops with all relevant stakeholders to cross-examine, supplement and further qualify observations, findings and recommendations emerging from the desk study. It is important that there are opportunities where children and women are interviewed. The local team members will prepare/start up the evaluation exercise at provincial, community and school level prior to the international evaluation team's arrival, as relevant depending on the planned field studies. The possibility for consultations with MOE staff, donor representatives and the donors' technical advisers as well as other relevant stakeholders engaged in the earlier phases of the education sector support programme not currently in Afghanistan should be explored and integrated in the process as far as possible.
4. Final data analysis, including consolidation of findings and reporting.

The evaluation should follow Danida's Evaluation Guidelines (2006) and the DAC Evaluation Quality Standards (2010).

5. Outputs

The outputs of the assignment shall be:

1. At the end of Phase 2 an Inception Report, not exceeding 30 pages excluding annexes, is produced. The report should include the overview of the support and a detailed evaluation matrix based on the evaluation questions, indicating and explaining any proposed revisions, based on the data collected and the initial overview. Further, the report must include a detailed proposal for methodology and approach, expected sources of information and the work plan for Phase 3 and 4. An important part is expected to be explanation of sampling strategy, data coverage, interplay of different data sources etc., and the analytical implications hereof. Additionally, the intervention logic should be presented in the inception report, and the analytical implications explained. An outline of the expected structure of the evaluation report must be included as well. The draft report is submitted to EVAL for approval.
2. After the termination of the fieldwork and at the end of the evaluation visit, a Debriefing Note, containing preliminary findings and considerations shall be presented to the relevant stakeholders at the Danish Embassy, and to the EVAL in Copenhagen.

2. An evaluation report (not exceeding 50 pages, excluding annexes, to be delivered in word and pdf-files, with cover photo proposals), in draft(s) and final version(s). The draft Evaluation Report should be presented at a workshop for stakeholders in Kabul, an estimated two weeks after the circulation of the report. The final version should include a CD-ROM with all major evaluation documents, including relevant reports and documentation from the field work.
3. The timing and contents of the evaluation outputs will be further specified in the Inception Report and Work Plan, taking into consideration the overall work plan indicated below. Responsibility for the content and presentation of the findings and recommendations of the evaluation rests with the team leader of the evaluation team. The evaluation report will be made public once finalized.

6. Work plan

Key expected milestones:

- March-June 2011: Prequalification and tender process. Introductory visit to MFA, Copenhagen.
- June-July 2011: Initiation of work; mobilization, fact finding/inception visit. De-briefing presentation after the fact finding/inception visit is expected.
- August 2011: Draft Inception report. Visit to MFA, Copenhagen to discuss Inception report.
- August/September 2011: Final Inception report.
- September/October 2011: Evaluation mission (not expected to be feasible until late September due to change in staff at the Embassy in Kabul. The specific timing to be coordinated with EVAL and the Embassy).
- October 2011: Draft Evaluation Report (zero draft). Meeting with reference group in Copenhagen to present draft report.
- November 2011: Final report. Expected presentation to stakeholders (seminar, workshop or similar through visit to MFA, Copenhagen for videoconference; specific timing to be coordinated with EVAL and the Embassy).

The full text of the ToR can be found on www.evaluation.dk.

Annex B List of informants

Name, first name	Organisation / institution	Function
Ahmed, Shahabuddin	BRAC	Programme Manager Education
Alfred, Colin	Save the Children	Education Advisor
Amiri, Samir Ahmad	MoE	Advisor to the Minister for Grants Management
Andersen, Jesper	MFA, Denmark	Senior Advisor
Arian, Abdul Wassay	MoE	General Director Planning
Atayee, Jalaludin	MoE	Manager, Research & Evaluation Unit
Athar, Mohammad Hadi	Save the Children, Mazar e Sharif, Balkh	
Azizi, Mohammad Sarwar	MoE	Chief of Staff
Aziz-ul-Rahman	MoE	Herat City Education General Manager
Bahbodzada, Susanne	MoE	Internal Audit Manager
Baheen, Mohammad Naeem	MoE	General Director for General Education Hafeezullah Samo, Capacity Development Advisor for Basic Education
Baizayee, Ahmad Najeeb	MoE	General Director Human Resources
Balkhi, Maulana Jalaludin	MoE	High School, Mazar i Sharif, Balkh
Basiratkhwa, Basira	MoE	Principal, Herat Experimental Girls High School
Behzad, Kamaluddib	MoE	Principal, Art School, Herat
Blumoer, Ruediger	GIZ Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit	
Christie, Karen	Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)	First Secretary (Development), Canadian Embassy
Cross, Robin	Article 25	Director of Projects
Crowley, Peter	UNICEF	Deputy Representative
Dinesen, René	RDE	Ambassador
Does van der, Martine	Netherlands Embassy	
Ekaju, John	UNICEF	
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Garvey, Gerry	DACAAR	Director
Gay, Dorian	UNESCO, IIEP	Advisor to MoE, Afghanistan
Ghaznawi, Daoud	Save the Children	Education Projects Senior Manager
Ghotai	MoE	Principal, Bibi Zainab High School (Girls), Kod-e-barq, Dehdadi, Balkh
Gulistani, Abdul Zahir	MoE	General Director of Curriculum Development
Haas, Olve	UNESCO	Chief of Education Sector
Habibi, Nasser Ahmad	MoE	District Education Director, Ingel District, Herat.
Haidari	MoE	Director, Academic Supervision
Hamidullah, Sayed	MoE	Deputy Minister of Administration/Finance
Hanifi, Abdul Wakil	MoE	Director, Procurement Dept.
Hansen, Stig Marker	DAI	Chief of Party, Afghanistan Stabilization Initiative – East, Kabul, Afghanistan
Hayran, Mohamed Salim	MoE	Director, Information Communication Technology, Afghanistan One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) Project Manager
Headmaster, teachers and pupils	Shahid A Mateen Boys School	Headmaster, teachers and pupils
Headmistress, Deputy, teachers and pupils	“Lycee Nawan”	Headmistress, teachers and pupils
Hoilund-Carlsen, Marie-Louise	Danida	Education Advisor
Homayoon, Rahmani	MoE	EQIP Officer, Balkh
Hove, Niels D.	Danida	Education Advisor, Helmand PRT, Lashkar Gah, Helmand
Ibrahami, Muslim Khan	MoE (Provincial Education Directorate - PED)	EQIP Officer, Nangarhar (WB)
Izzard, Peter	Ausaid	First Secretary Development

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Khail, Abdul Moneer Mirza	MoE	Director, Parwan Teacher Training College, Charicar
Khail, Walajan Hussain	MoE (DED)	Education Manager, Roodat District, Nangarhar
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Khattab, M. Ismail	MoE	Director, EMIS
Kissell, Jean	WARDAN	Program Director
Lun, Mary Thida	UK/DfID	Deputy PRT DfID representative
Masood, Mirwais	MoE	Secretariat Director, Human Resources Development Board
Mirzad, Farid	MoE	Development Budget Manager
Mohab, Ghulam Qader	MoE	Acting Director Teacher Training centre Herat
Moss, John	Helmand PRT	Senior Manager of the PRT Security and Justice Team
Mtalo, Calister	UNICEF	
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Nasib, Mohammad	WARDAN	Managing Director
Nazm, Mohamad Zahir	MoE	Provincial Education Director, Kunduz
Niazi, Inayatullah	WARDAN	Program Manager
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Olsen, Charlotte	MoR (formerly RDE)	Technical Advisor
Oruzgani, Mehdi	Helmand	PRT Education Advisory Team
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Raad, Momen	MoE	Director Infrastructure Services Department
Radyar, Mohammed Zia	DACAAR	
Rapley, Brett	Danida	Education Advisor Helmand PRT Lashkar Gah, Helmand
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Rostayee, Ghulam Rasol	MoE	District Education Director, Dehdadi District, Balkh
Roya, Asadullah	MoE	Provincial Education Director, PED, Laghman
Sabur, Abdu	Afghan Development Association	Director ADA Parwan
Safdari, Murad Mirza	RDE	Finance Officer
Safi, Mohamad Nasim	MoE	Provincial Education Director, Lashkar Gah, Helmand
Safi, Ziaulhaq	MoE	Director General Finance & Accounting
Santos, Ronald	Helmand Monitoring and Evaluation Programme	Deputy PRT Team Leader
Shah, Nazar Ahmad	RDE	Senior Programme Officer/State Building
Shaheed, Zalmai	MoE	Provincial Education Director, Parwan
Sherec, Abdul Khadir	MoE	Principal Sarvistan Girls High School, Herat
Gaurav Shresth	Embassy of India, Kabul	Head of Development Cooperation
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Tanai, Farid	RDE	Previous Senior Programme Officer

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Vokstrup, Alan M.	DAART	Head of International Department
Volkersen, Lene	Danida	Previous Senior Programme Officer, RDE, Kabul
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Wafiullah, Shahid Mohamed	MoE (Roodat District, Nangarhar Province)	Middle School, Hishar Shahi Village
Wahidyar, Attaullah	MoE	Director Publication and Communication
Waisuddin	MoE	Naswan-e-Jabulseraj High School, Parwan
Wakil, Addul	Helmand	PRT Education Advisory Team
Wali, Shah	DACAAR	
Walther, Pernille Ørum	RDE	Senior Programme Officer
Wandel, Marie-Louise	UNICEF	Senior Adviser, Policy and External Relations (via phone)
Wardak, Susan	MoE	Senior Policy Advisor & General Director of Teacher Education
Wiles, Royce	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU)	Coordinator information Resources
Wirak, Anders	Norwegian Embassy	Counsellor Development Affairs
Zalmain, Mohammed	MoE	Principal, Emam Azam No.2 School, Parwan
Zarina	MoE	Deputy Principal, Balkh

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