



European Asylum Support Office
Bureau Européen d'Appui pour l'Asile

EASO

Country of Origin Information report

Afghanistan

Taliban Strategies – Recruitment

July 2012

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Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2012

ISBN 978-92-9507906-9
doi:10.2847/13321

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Printed in Luxembourg

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Disclaimer

This report was written according to the Common EU Guidelines for Processing Factual COI (2008) and the EASO COI Report Methodology (2012). It was composed on the basis of carefully selected, public sources of information. All sources used are referenced. All information presented, except for undisputed/obvious facts, has been cross-checked, unless stated otherwise.

The information provided has been researched, evaluated and analysed with utmost care. However, this document does not pretend to be exhaustive. If a certain event, person or organisation is not mentioned in this report, this does not mean that the event has not taken place or that the person or organisation does not exist.

This document is not conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.

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'Refugee', 'Refugee camp' and similar terminology are used as a generic terminology and not as legally defined in the Geneva Convention.

The target audience are caseworkers, COI researchers, policymakers, and decision-making authorities.

This report was finalised in Malta in June 2012. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this report.

Terms of reference

1. Historical introduction to the recent conflicts in Afghanistan
(indication of processes and developments relevant for the current situation).
2. Organisation of the Taliban and other insurgent groups:
 - (a) structural organisation;
 - (b) operational organisation;
 - (c) different groups.
3. Recruitment:
 - (a) general principles;
 - (b) importance of Pakistan;
 - (c) regional description of recruitment in Afghanistan.

This report gives a brief overview of the historical developments leading to the current situation in Afghanistan: it describes the organisation of the Taliban and discusses insurgent group recruitment in detail and, where possible, with a regional approach.

Rather than producing a separate chapter describing the regional situations in Afghanistan, regional illustrations have been implemented throughout the chapters.

Executive summary

In the recent conflicts in Afghanistan, some important developments determined the scene for the actors in the current Insurgency. The communist government (1978–92) evoked a reaction never seen before in the country. The largest refugee community ever was created by the events in the 1970s and 1980s in Afghanistan. This was the base for the large Afghan diaspora in the world. The large Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan originated in this period. They became an important recruitment hub for the armed opposition groups: the mujahideen. The operational methods of these groups are still applied by the Taliban nowadays. Moreover, they were supported and funded by international actors, just like the armed opposition groups active in the Insurgency from 2002 to date. Before 1992, traditional balances shifted and two new classes gained a lot of influence: the military commander and the mullah. The complete destruction of the infrastructure, central authorities and peoples' faith resulted in a fragmentation of society during the Civil War (1992–96). The general desire for peace, justice and stability helped a movement to rise: the Taliban (1996–2001). Through the decades international interference fuelled and funded the conflicts.

A strongly religious organisation under the leadership of Mullah Mohammad Omar resurged after its defeat by a coalition of American high-tech war tools, American military advice and a number of Afghan armed groups on the battlefield (2001–02). The leaders of the old Taliban regime took charge again, but they found few available, or willing, former Taliban ranks. They had to rely on new and younger recruits — again — initially found in the Pakistani refugee camps and madrassas. The Taliban became the leading faction in the Insurgency (2002 to date) against the government of president Hamid Karzai, supported by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), an international military coalition composed of troops of different nationalities. The Taliban leadership resides in Pakistan and they are known as the Quetta Shura, led by Mullah Mohammad Omar. Other insurgent groups are active as well on Afghan territory and many of them have Pakistan as an important logistical and political base.

The Taliban operates in a layered, hierarchical structure. The lower tiers, although largely autonomous, answer to a top level that ensures cohesiveness and large operational capacities. They succeeded in reactivating old networks of allies and infiltrating and persuading communities in order to extend their influence. Preaching, propaganda, intimidation, targeting and the use of violence are the tools applied by the insurgent groups in order to gain influence and control over growing areas of Afghan soil.

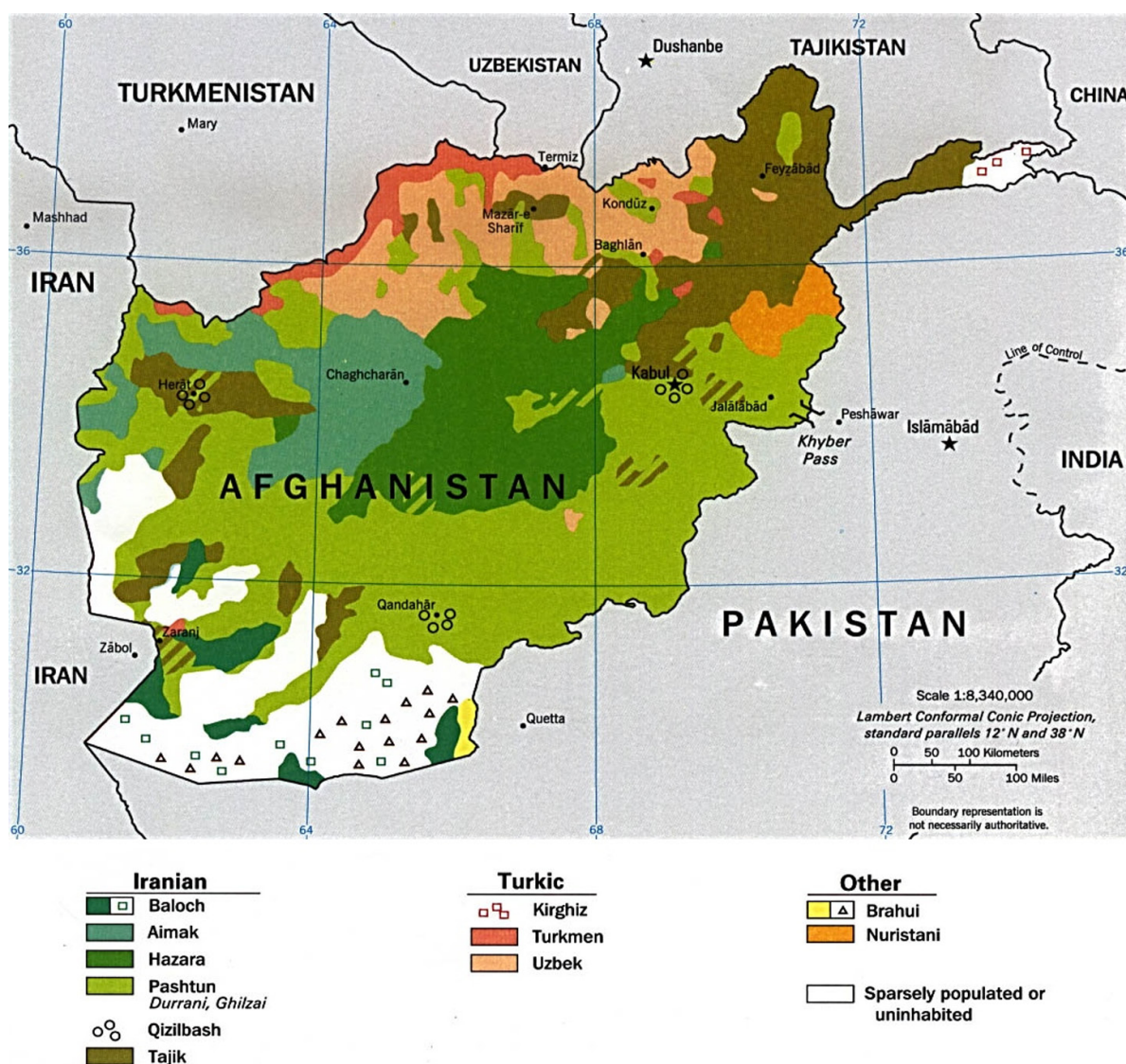


Figure 1: Ethnic groups in Afghanistan

Source: http://www.neweurasia.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/afghanistan_ethnolinguistic_groups_1997.jpg

The heartland of the current insurgency is the so-called Pashtun belt in south and east Afghanistan, extending to smaller areas in the west, centre and north and in the north-west of Pakistan. Some thought has been given as to whether the Taliban is a purely Pashtun movement. However, there is evidence that they did not exclusively recruit Pashtuns. Since 2006, they have recruited some significant numbers of Tajik, Uzbek, Turkmen, Pashai, Nuristani and Kuchi fighters. Some Hazara communities or commanders liaised with the Taliban, but no evidence has been found of individual Hazaras directly approached by the Taliban for recruitment.

In their efforts to recruit fighters, the Taliban initially had to rely on their base in Pakistan, the Afghan refugee communities and the madrassas. They cooperated with Pakistani militant groups and with some Pakistani authorities. From 2006 onwards, there was a sharp rise in the level of insurgency and the Taliban were able to recruit most of their new ranks within Afghanistan. To gain support and recruit fighters, they relied on economic needs, fear and coercion, pride and honour, tribe and tradition, religious persuasion, etc. Clerics played an indispensable role in the recruitment processes. These processes differ but also have similarities in the different regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Local and autonomous commanders, tribal structures and religious clerics are the main channels through which recruitment is facilitated within Afghanistan. As a general principle, it could be stated that the local cell — commander, tribe, family or madrasa — is the basic recruitment hub. In general, the direct use of coercion or retaliation for refusing enlistment by the Taliban is not typical for the current Afghan Insurgency. There are cases of forced recruitment, but these are considered as exceptional.

Introduction

This report was authored by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), according to its mandate. This report aims to provide information to support Country of Origin Information (COI) researchers, decision and policymakers active in the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) procedures. In the European Union, there are people in various capacities — experienced or inexperienced, specialised on Afghanistan or not — active in the national procedures for the assessment of asylum applications from Afghan nationals.

Refugee, refugee camp and similar terminology are used as a generic terminology and not as legally defined in the Geneva Convention.

With a view to the target audience, it was considered useful to provide a brief historical overview of recent conflicts in Afghanistan, to provide an understanding of the political and sociocultural evolutions that determine the current events, as the understanding of the cultural background is a precondition for an objective assessment of the situation of an asylum seeker. In addition, this report intends to give an overview of relevant elements of the Taliban's strategies for the recruitment of armed fighters. It is indispensable to look closer at the general organisation and structure of the Taliban before stepping into the recruitment processes as such. Specific terminology used, is explained in the glossary.

The European caseload of Afghan asylum applications shows that fear of recruitment by the Taliban or other insurgent groups remains an important motive for Afghans seeking asylum in the EU. In discussions with caseworkers in Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary and the Netherlands, different aspects of recruitment have been mentioned as core elements of asylum claims. Among the concerns mentioned were the madrassas, night letters, suicide bombers, minors, kidnappings, training camps, handicapped persons, family members, insurgent groups, Pakistan, returnees, mullahs, mosques, ethnicity, locations and coercion. Questions raised include: How does recruitment happen? Is it plausible that an individual claims to be approached by recruiters, but has no information about the latter? Is it plausible that someone has no idea of who is trying to recruit him? Other questions concern ethnicity: Are Hazaras recruited by Pashtun Taliban? Another aspect is the use of coercion in recruitment or retaliation against persons refusing to enlist as fighters. This phenomenon is often referred to as 'forced recruitment'. Sources, however, mostly do not define this phenomenon or they do not specify what is exactly meant by it. Within the scope of this report, forced recruitment is understood as being the forced recruitment by Taliban military commanders, leaders or fighters (i.e. situations where individuals or their families are directly approached and forced to join up under threat of retaliation or violence if they refuse).

Whereas information provided by sources does not always fulfil the information needs in the refugee status determination process, an analysis of the information will try to partially fill this gap. The assessment of the fear or risk in an individual asylum case is, however, not a matter for the COI and the individual merits of an asylum application should always be decisive for the assessment. The information or analysis provided by this report, in accordance with the EASO COI Report Methodology, could be supportive for this. The best method for an optimal understanding of the Taliban's strategies is extensive reading on the subject — and not only in this report, but especially in different specialised sources: this report contains an extensive References section.

This report presents information found during two periods of research on the subject. It is based on a preliminary research at the beginning of 2011 and on research conducted from 1 March until mid-May 2012. A limited number of specialised paper-based and electronic sources were consulted. Some confidential sources that have come into the public domain have been consulted due to the importance and relevance of its content. Furthermore, a number of contact persons were interviewed by telephone or e-mail. One person contributed in a meeting. All of the contacts reside, at least partially, in Afghanistan and many of them have a profound knowledge of the subject. For security reasons, most of the contacts cannot be named. In the context of an armed conflict, the subject of recruitment strategies is sensitive and dangerous. Almost every contact explicitly wanted to remain anonymous. The choice had to be made between not interviewing them and referring to them as anonymous sources. Considering the value of the information provided, the latter approach was chosen.

National COI experts from Austria, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom were involved in the final stage of drafting of this report and were invited to comment. The draft report was then sent to a reference group of experts from Member States, not or not yet associated countries, the European Commission and the UNHCR. All Members were invited to comment. All comments were considered and many of them were implemented.

Synthesis of information

1. Brief history of the recent conflict in Afghanistan

It is possible to distinguish four specific periods in the recent political history of Afghanistan, characterised by armed conflicts. In the time frame (1978-2012) discussed, these conflicts probably caused the death of more than two million Afghans. Many more disappeared, were wounded or disabled. Millions fled the country or were internally displaced ⁽¹⁾.

1.1 Communism v Islamism (1978–92)

The year 1978 was a turning point in Afghan history. The reign of the last leader of the Musahiban Dynasty (1929–78), Mohammad Daoud Khan, was overthrown by a communist party. This event is known as the Saur Revolution executed by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) ⁽²⁾. Two factions divided the PDPA. The most radical communist faction, Khalq, was led by Nur Mohammad Taraki and Hafizullah Amin and had a largely Pashtun base. The other faction, Parcham, was led by Babrak Karmal and had a largely Persian-speaking base. The Khalqis gained the upper hand and delivered the first communist president, Taraki ⁽³⁾.

The Khalqi government's non-Islamist ideology and its use of violence against opponents and some ethnic minorities caused armed resistance in the countryside. Arrests, torture and executions caused many Afghans to flee the country. These events led to the creation of the Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan. The armed uprising was uncoordinated, but widespread. In October 1979, Taraki was overthrown by his deputy Amin and murdered ⁽⁴⁾.

The uprising turned into a national one when the Russians invaded Afghanistan (December 1979) and installed Babrak Karmal as president. The resistance became a jihad against infidel invaders and the puppet government, uniting different armed factions, called the mujahideen. This was the first real national insurgency involving all regions and all ethnic groups in the country. The mujahideen were not a coherent national movement, but fragmented along ethnic, tribal or religious affiliations. The Afghan government and Russian troops were in control of the cities while the rural and mountainous areas were inflamed by the insurgency. Foreign countries were providing the mujahideen factions with resources. The USA became involved because of its Cold War agenda. Saudi Arabia practiced an international religious policy. Pakistan had a regional agenda. It supplied humanitarian aid and weapons via its main intelligence service, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), to the Afghan Islamist parties based in Pakistan. These parties became able to build powerful patronage networks with a broad base in Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan and with links to the armed groups operating in Afghanistan. Pakistan became an important logistical base for the mujahideen. Supply and retreat routes across the border made it possible to conduct a real guerilla war. The fighting units have often been called 'fronts'. The combatants rotated. The fighters from Pakistan were supported by local mujahideen acting as guides in the Afghan field. This gave the insurgents the advantage of terrain knowledge. The different fronts could merge into large fighting units for an attack and split up again to retreat quickly when the pressure got too intense. They took shelter in villages and launched attacks from populated areas, causing counterattacks that killed many civilians. These strategies are very comparable to those the Taliban employs nowadays and they still use the same smuggling and retreating routes ⁽⁵⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Oxfam International (<http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/cost-war-afghanistan-experiences>) (accessed 8 March 2012); for further reading on the history of Afghanistan, see: Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010; Tanner, S., *Afghanistan — A Military History from Alexander the Great to the War Against the Taliban*, 2009.

⁽²⁾ Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, pp. 195–225; Oxfam International (<http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/cost-war-afghanistan-experiences>) (accessed 8 March 2012).

⁽³⁾ Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, p. 213 and p. 28; Oxfam International (<http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/cost-war-afghanistan-experiences>) (accessed 8 March 2012).

⁽⁴⁾ Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, pp. 227–233; Oxfam International (<http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/cost-war-afghanistan-experiences>) (accessed 8 March 2012); Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽⁵⁾ Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, pp. 238–239 and p. 321; Oxfam International (<http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/cost-war-afghanistan-experiences>) (accessed 8 March 2012); Zaeef, A. S., *My life with the Taliban*, 2010, p. 19, footnotes 10 and 11, p. 20 and pp. 24–27.

In 1989, the Soviet Union withdrew its troops from Afghanistan. Dr Najibullah, who had ruled Afghanistan since 1986, managed to stay in control, largely depending on these local commanders and their militias. The pressure from the burning insurgency caused the collapse of Najibullah's government in April 1992⁽⁶⁾.

The politics, tribal alliances, power structures and social organisation changed in this era in a way that would prove decisive for present-day Afghanistan⁽⁷⁾. In this military culture and through a process of fragmentation, a new social class gained influence: military commanders. A second social class that gained authority was the religious clerics⁽⁸⁾.

1.2 The Civil War (1992–96)

Around 1992, the armed mujahideen factions formed new coalitions, largely based on region and ethnicity. Tajiks and Uzbeks in the north, Hazaras in the centre and Pashtuns in the east and south formed competing factions in the 1992–96 Civil War. They faced a new challenge: a drop of foreign funding. The dissolution of the Soviet Union put an end to Cold War interests in Afghanistan. Since the conflict lost its jihad-dimension, Saudi Arabia lost interest in funding the Islamic mujahideen. The main external funders that remained active were the UN in the humanitarian field and Pakistan⁽⁹⁾.

Some Uzbek and Tajik commanders joined the mujahideen commander Ahmad Shah Massoud who was the military commander of Jamiaat-e Islami, headed by Burnahuddin Rabbani. Massoud entered Kabul in 1992. A government was formed and after the brief presidency of Mojadeddi, Rabbani became president. An opposition leader, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar was one of the main competitors for the government. He had no real power base in the Afghan communities, but had a lot of resources provided by his international connections. Regional strongmen had a power base in the local communities: Haji Qadir controlled the eastern Pashtuns with as regional capital Jalalabad. Jalaludin Haqqani controlled the south-east with at his core base, the Pashtun Zadran tribe. Mullah Naqibullah Akhund



Figure 2: Provinces in Afghanistan

Source UN: <http://www.un.org/depts/Cartographic/map/profile/afghanis.pdf>

⁽⁶⁾ Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, pp. 240–245 and p. 282.

⁽⁷⁾ Van Linschoten, A. S., Kuehn, F., 'Kandahar: Portrait of a City', Zaef, A. S., *My life with the Taliban*, 2010

⁽⁸⁾ Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, pp. 240–245 and p. 282; Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012); Giustozzi, A., *Empires of Mud*, 2009.

⁽⁹⁾ Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, pp. 248–251; Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

(Mullah Naqib) was the most prominent Pashtun leader in the south around Kandahar. Mazari controlled the central part of Afghanistan, called Hazarajat. The rest of the country was under the control of two warlords: Dostum and his Uzbeks were the most powerful group in the north-west around Mazar-e Sharif and Ismail Khan ruled the west from Herat. Hekmatyar was able to gain the support of Dostum and Mazari. Mullah Naqib was loyal to Rabbani and Haji Qadir declared his neutrality⁽¹⁰⁾.

The government in Kabul had no control over the country, no national army and powerless institutions. Much of Afghanistan's infrastructure was destroyed. The competing factions engaged in bloody street battles in Kabul and rockets stroke in the quarters of the city. Armed militias controlled the fragmented parts of the country and turned to locally available sources of income: for example, in Kandahar, many roadblocks were installed to tax the international trade. The militias abused local population by way of rape and pillage⁽¹¹⁾. Due to this prolonged fragmentation and a lack of security, communities became self-dependent for protection. This further consolidated the power of local military commanders⁽¹²⁾.

In the shade of this destructive civil war, a movement was raised around Kandahar and in the Deobandi madrassas located in Pakistan, called the Taliban. In the 1980s, religious clerics fought in the different mujahideen factions. They were educated in madrassas. In 1994, these clerics came together and agreed on taking action, because there was a lot of discontent about the Rabbani government, the roadblocks, insecurity and abuses caused by the militias and commanders. The clerics formed the Taliban movement under the leadership of Mullah Mohammad Omar⁽¹³⁾. The madrassas attracted a lot of young Afghan refugees because they provided free education, housing and food. These young Afghans lived in the harsh conditions of refugee camps. The Taliban easily recruited among them, presenting to them the ideal of recovering their homeland and creating a pure Islamic state along Salafist lines. Their interpretation of Islam was partially based on Pashtun tribal principles (Pashtunwali)⁽¹⁴⁾. They established order by punishing criminals and chasing commanders away from their checkpoints⁽¹⁵⁾. After taking control of Kandahar in 1994, the Taliban surfed the waves of their initial success to Kabul. They succeeded in conquering the capital in 1996 after taking Jalalabad and Herat⁽¹⁶⁾.

1.3 Taliban (1996–2001)

The Taliban attacked northern Afghanistan from their bases close to Herat in 1997. They used a strategy of co-opting militias, which were enemies before the Taliban conquered the region, in order to be able to preserve their own military forces for battle in areas where resistance was met⁽¹⁷⁾. By September 2001, the Taliban controlled 80–90 % of the Afghan territory, but was unable to take the resistance pockets in the north: Badakhshan, parts of Baghlan and Takhar, and a few smaller pockets in remote areas. Rabbani, Massoud, Dostum, Sayyaf and Ismail Khan found each other here in what was called the United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan, also known as the Northern Alliance⁽¹⁸⁾.

The Taliban governed Afghanistan with a religious ideology based on Salafism and Pashtunwali. Their acts were often only disguised as being religious and based merely on local habits and on radicalism. They banned all forms

⁽¹⁰⁾ Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, pp. 251–254, Oxfam International (<http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/cost-war-afghanistan-experiences>) (accessed 8 March 2012).

⁽¹¹⁾ Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, p. 253.

⁽¹²⁾ Oxfam International (<http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/cost-war-afghanistan-experiences>) (accessed 8 March 2012).

⁽¹³⁾ Zaeef, A. S., *My life with the Taliban*, 2010, p. 10; Ruttig, T. (<http://aanafghanistan.com/uploads/20100624TR-HowTribalAretheTaleban-FINAL.pdf>) (accessed 5 January 2011); Stenersen, A., (http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/FFI_TheTalibanInsurgencyInAfghanistan_OrganizationLeadershipWorldview.pdf) (accessed 24 May 2012); International Crisis Group (ICG) ([http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf)) (accessed 9 May 2012).

⁽¹⁴⁾ Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, pp. 255–257; Oxfam International (<http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/cost-war-afghanistan-experiences>) (accessed 8 March 2012); Van Linschoten, A. S., Kuehn, F., 'Kandahar: Portrait of a City', Zaeef, A. S., *My life with the Taliban*, 2010; Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areas.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽¹⁵⁾ Zaeef, A. S., *My life with the Taliban*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2010, p. 10.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, pp. 258–260.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽¹⁸⁾ Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, pp. 258–260; Oxfam International (<http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/cost-war-afghanistan-experiences>) (accessed 8 March 2012); Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areas.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

of entertainment, such as music, kite-flying, television, etc. They eliminated all images of living beings and banned women's education. The habit of forcing women to veil and live in seclusion was imposed by the Taliban on a large scale. Harsh punishments were introduced, such as chopping off hands and public executions⁽¹⁹⁾.

1.4 The Karzai government, international forces and Insurgency (2001–12)

Another key date in the history of Afghanistan was 11 September 2001. The events on this date caused the USA to intervene in the country. The CIA supplied the armed groups of the Northern Alliance. US Special Operations Forces supported these groups and called in precision airstrikes. These airstrikes combined with Afghan ground forces succeeded in defeating the Taliban forces. In December 2001, the UN organised a conference on Afghanistan in Bonn inviting different Afghan factions — not the defeated Taliban — and this resulted in the formation of an interim government led by the Pashtun Hamid Karzai⁽²⁰⁾.

The Taliban reorganised and started an Insurgency against the government. Roadside bombings, attacks and targeted killings destabilised parts of the country. The Karzai government co-opted former warlords and commanders. The Bonn Agreement did not include provisions on disarming combatants. The problematic situation, caused by fragmentation of power, commanders, warlords and strongmen, that troubled Afghanistan for more than two decades continued to exist. A Loya Jirga was organised and this council adopted an Afghan constitution in January 2004, but state building efforts were at low pace and the government's influence remained limited to not much more than the capital, where the only international forces were stationed. The International Security Assistance Force

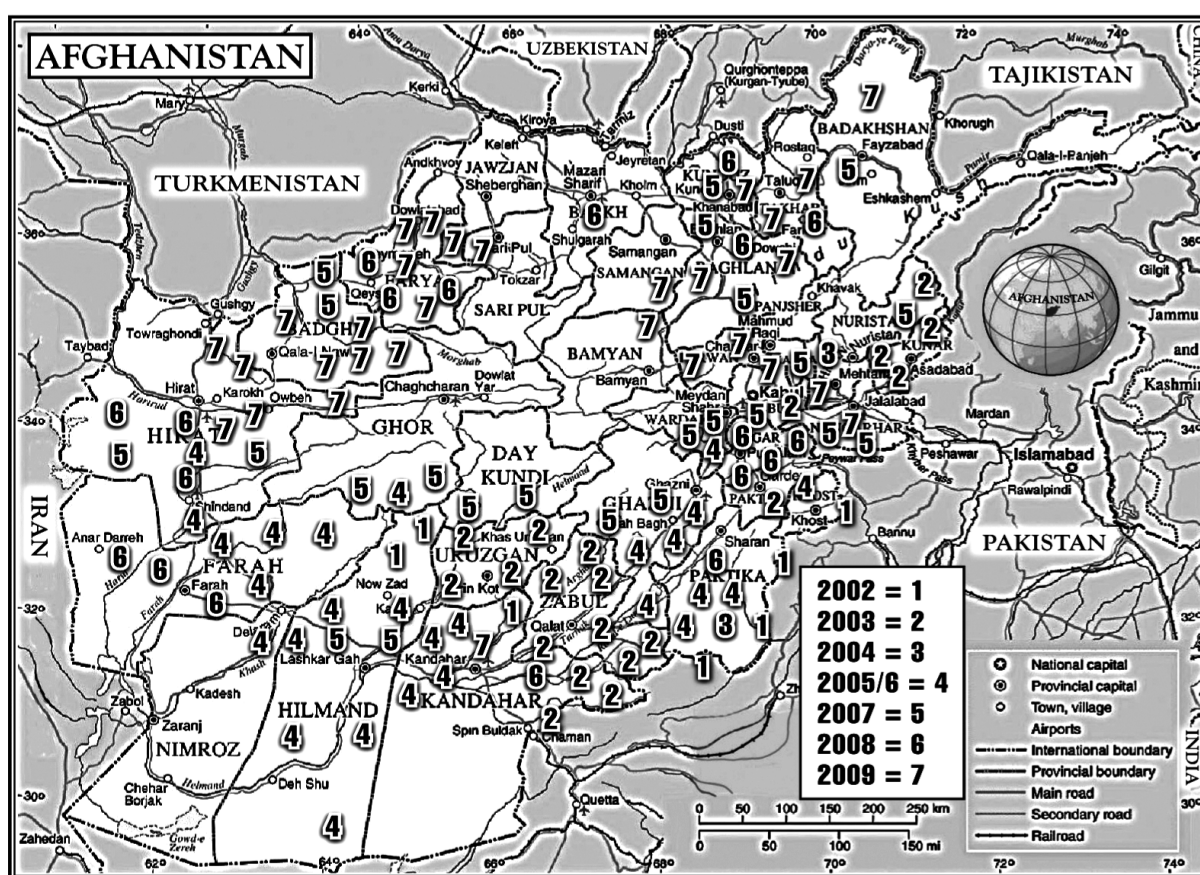


Figure 3: The expansion of the insurgency

Reproduced, by permission, from Antonio Giustozzi, *Negotiating with the Taliban: Issues and Prospects* (New York: Then Century Foundation, 2010).

⁽¹⁹⁾ Barfield (2010), *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, pp. 261–262; Oxfam International (<http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/cost-war-afghanistan-experiences>) (accessed 8 March 2012); Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.arei.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽²⁰⁾ Barfield (2010), *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, pp. 275–276 and p. 322; Oxfam International (<http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/cost-war-afghanistan-experiences>) (accessed 8 March 2012).

(ISAF) gradually expanded to other parts of the country but by 2006, the security situation rapidly deteriorated. The insurgency destabilised the south and east and gradually spread to areas in the centre, west and north ⁽²¹⁾. Giustozzi presents the expansion of the Insurgency in a thematic map (Figure 3) ⁽²²⁾.

Summary — A Brief history

The era of the communist regime (1978–92) was characterised by resistance and insurgency. Different armed groups, referred to as mujahideen, fought against the government. This caused a large refugee and IDP (internally displaced person) flow. In Pakistan, large refugee camps were set up and the Afghan diaspora there became a logistic base for the mujahideen groups. When the Soviet Union interfered, the insurgency turned into a nationwide jihad. The mujahideen developed guerrilla tactics that are still applied by the Taliban in the 2002–12 Insurgency. In this period, two social classes gained significant influence: military commanders and religious clerics.

During the Civil War (1992–96) alliances of armed groups were formed along ethnic and regional boundaries. Much of Afghanistan's infrastructure was destroyed and state authority completely broke down. In the chaos of this period, the Taliban rose as a movement.

The Taliban took control of a large part of Afghanistan. Resistance pockets were located in the north of the country. The Taliban regime (1996–2001) was based on Deobandi and Salafi Islamism and the Pashtun tribal traditions. It was characterised by radicalism.

The attacks on the USA on 11 September 2001 inflicted an assault on Afghanistan coordinated and planned by the US government. The Taliban was defeated but reorganised from 2002 onwards. They organised an Insurgency against the government of Hamid Karzai. In 2006, this Insurgency intensified.

⁽²¹⁾ Oxfam International (<http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/cost-war-afghanistan-experiences>) (accessed 8 March 2012); Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.oxfam.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽²²⁾ Giustozzi, A., (<http://tcf.org/publications/2010/6/pb716>) (accessed 14 March 2012).

2. The Taliban organisation after 2001

2.1 Definition of Taliban

Giustozzi and Ibrahimy provide a definition of ‘Taliban’ ⁽²³⁾.

Throughout, the Taliban are defined as all those who acknowledge the leadership of Mullah Omar and of the Leadership Shura and who in turn are acknowledged by the leadership as members of the movement. This means that the Haqqani network [...], despite having an unusual degree of financial autonomy, is definitely part of the Taliban and that Hekmatyar’s Hizb-i-Islami is definitely not. Hekmatyar at times has maintained relations with the Taliban and his men have cooperated on the battlefield, but they have remained a separate organisation. [...]

2.2 General structure

The Taliban are not a united movement. Different groups with varying operational autonomy, resort under a hierarchical structure ⁽²⁴⁾. The leadership, referred to as Rabari (leadership), Markazi Shura (Central Council) or Quetta Shura, is located in Quetta and chaired by Mullah Mohammad Omar ⁽²⁵⁾.

In 2006, the Taliban published a code of conduct for their fighters, the Lahya (updated in 2009 and 2010) ⁽²⁶⁾. It contains articles on the structure, hierarchical organisation and responsibilities within the Taliban. In the articles of the Lahya, the next institutions and levels of authority can be found (Table 1) ⁽²⁷⁾.

Table 1: Institutions and levels of authority in the Lahya

| Leader/position | Council/commission/unit |
|---|---|
| Amir Ul Momineen <i>Mullah Mohammad Omar</i> | The Leadership |
| Organising Director responsible for coordination, organisation and administration in a province | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Military Commission, responsible for a province or several provinces • Education Commission • Commission for Control and Regulation of Organisations and Companies • Health Commission |
| Provincial Chief leader or governor | Provincial Commission including at least five members |
| District Chief leader or governor | District Commission |
| District Deputy for public/civilian affairs | |
| Military Squad Leader | Military Squad |
| Mujahid | |

The existence of these different institutions has been confirmed by other sources as well ⁽²⁸⁾.

⁽²³⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahimy, N. (<http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽²⁴⁾ Waldman, M. (<http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Guardian/documents/2010/06/13/SISFINAL.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012); The Long War Journal (http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2010/02/the_talibans_top_lea.php) (accessed 9 March 2012).

⁽²⁵⁾ Waldman, M. (<http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Guardian/documents/2010/06/13/SISFINAL.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012); Giustozzi, A. (<http://tcf.org/publications/2010/6/pb716>) (accessed 14 March 2012).

⁽²⁶⁾ Munir, M. (<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?page=country&docid=4e6dc8912&skip=0&coi=AFG&querysi=re-cruit&searchin=fulltext&display=50&sort=date>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽²⁷⁾ Munir, M. (Annex) (<http://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/review/2011/irrc-881-munir-annex.pdf>) (accessed 5 June 2012).

⁽²⁸⁾ The American Foreign Policy Council (<http://almanac.afpc.org/taliban>) (accessed 9 March 2012); Nathan, J. ‘Reading the Taliban’, Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 23–42; The Long War Journal (http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2010/02/the_talibans_top_lea.php) (accessed 9 March 2012); International Crisis Group (ICG) ([http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf)) (accessed 9 May 2012).

2.3 Operational methods and structures

2.3.1 Infiltrating a territory and connecting to the population

Usually, the Taliban seek the approval of the elders before entering a territory of a community and use kinship ties and hospitality values for the initial infiltration. They move in small propaganda teams (4–5), often staying only for one or two nights in a village. They preach in mosques and spread pamphlets⁽²⁹⁾. These activities are followed by a campaign of intimidation and violence, intended to scare the population to be able to offer them relief. Government employees and people cooperating with foreign troops or organisations are threatened and targeted. Attacks and ambushes are conducted against police, army and international troops⁽³⁰⁾.

In order to gain further influence, the Taliban co-opt community leaders, strongmen, criminal elements, mullahs and even former enemies. The war economy makes some players support the war as such for their own profit: mercenaries, profiteers, criminal and drug networks, contractors, smugglers and so on. The Taliban exploit local rivalries and community feuds to gain influence in a region⁽³¹⁾.

2.3.2 Bad governance v shadow governance

The lack of government or bad government including corruption, neglect and discrimination, caused significant discontent among the Afghan population, which the Taliban used to gain influence by providing justice and order. They established a shadow government in the regions under their control⁽³²⁾.

This shadow government exists in layers, with the institutions described in Section 2.2. The higher layers often reside in Pakistan. They might move back and forth to their area in Afghanistan and also communicate with the lower layers via telephone. They send messengers to their fronts. Finances for operations are going down in the structure from Pakistan to the groups. Other finances such as the collection of taxes are supposed to go all the way up to the top leadership⁽³³⁾.

The Taliban initiate the governance of an area by way of providing justice and collecting taxes. They travel to villages to have a meeting with village elders and the parties in a dispute. This is the set-up of mobile Taliban courts. Sometimes, there is even a Taliban Attorney present. At high level, they have one judicial commission in which ulema and mullahs are functioning as a kind of supreme court. People spontaneously go to Taliban judges to settle their disputes, for example water rights according to traditional rules, land disputes and crimes such as physical aggression or murder. The Taliban thus provide quick and non-partisan justice, based on Sharia and Pashtunwali, which is more accessible than the government courts. In the province of Ghazni, for example, no single case was brought to government judiciary in 2008. By imposing taxes, the Taliban show their control of an area. In August 2009, Taliban commanders had been issuing travel permits in Helmand that could be used to cross Taliban checkpoints. Sometimes, the Taliban gets involved in healthcare and education as well⁽³⁴⁾.

⁽²⁹⁾ Giustozzi, A. (<http://tcf.org/publications/2010/6/pb716>) (accessed 14 March 2012); Nathan, J. 'Reading the Taliban', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 23–42; Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽³⁰⁾ Giustozzi, A., *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop — The Neo-Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan*, 2007; Watson, P. (<http://articles.latimes.com/2006/jun/24/world/fg-helmand24>) (accessed 6 January 2011); Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012); Giustozzi, A. (<http://tcf.org/publications/2010/6/pb716>) (accessed 14 March 2012).

⁽³¹⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012); Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012); Gopal, A., DuPee, M. (<http://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/tensions-rise-between-hizb-i-islami-and-the-taliban-in-afghanistan>) (accessed 18 April 2012); Matthew DuPee currently serves as a research associate with the Program for Culture and Conflict Studies, located at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA. Mr DuPee has studied Afghanistan since 1999 and continues to focus his research on Afghanistan's insurgency, illicit networks, narcotics, and human terrain issues. Anand Gopal is a journalist and researcher based in Afghanistan.

⁽³²⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽³³⁾ Waldman, M. (<http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Guardian/documents/2010/06/13/SISFINAL.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012); Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012); International Crisis Group (ICG) (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf>) (accessed 9 May 2012).

⁽³⁴⁾ Starkey, J. (<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/world/asia/afghanistan/article1843811.ece>) (accessed 6 January 2011); Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012); Giustozzi, A. (<http://tcf.org/publications/2010/6/pb716>) (accessed 14 March 2012).

2.3.3 Military structure

Four military commissions are each responsible for a zone in Afghanistan. The Quetta Military Shura (not to be confused with the Leadership Council) is responsible for the provinces of Kandahar, Uruzgan, Farah, Zabul, Nimroz and parts of Helmand. The Peshawar Military Shura is responsible for Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar, Nuristan, Logar, Kabul, Wardak and possibly areas in the north-east. The Miramshah Military Shura, is in charge of Paktia, Paktika, Khost, parts of Nangarhar, Logar, Wardak, Ghazni and Kabul. The Girdi Jangle Military Shura, named after the large refugee camp in Pakistan, is responsible for activities in Helmand ⁽³⁵⁾.

At the lowest layers of military structure, front commanders are surrounded by their fighters. These fronts are united under a district level commander and he is part of a province level network. At the highest level, the mentioned military commissions and the top leadership give orders to the lower levels. The lower level commanders might also be linked directly to the top leaders ⁽³⁶⁾.

David Kilcullen provides a clear illustration of a Taliban operating system in his analysis on the Insurgency in Kunar. He distinguishes between different tiers of Taliban ⁽³⁷⁾:

Tier 1 Taliban: These are units of full-time fighters recruited in Pakistan or Afghanistan and often trained in camps in Pakistan. Foreign fighters (Uzbeks, Arabs, Chechen, Pakistani, etc.) are part of these units. They are very mobile and operate on average four to six months in an Afghan region that usually is not their region of origin or birth. They might be active for a couple of days in a valley or village and stay with the local population. The units can be smaller than a dozen fighters, but they can merge into larger groups of several hundred fighters. If military pressure from international and Afghan forces rises, they have the ability to split into the small units again and take refuge in the mountains. There, they can reorganise and restart their larger-scale activities. These activities range from propaganda campaigns to intimidation and execution of perceived enemies, mobile jurisdiction and dispute settlement, tax collection, and attacks on police and military targets.

Tier 2 Taliban: The insufficient knowledge of the terrain and the need for local information networks constitute severe weaknesses for the Tier 1 Taliban. Local fighters who operate in their own valley or within a day's march of it are called Tier 2 Taliban and provide this kind of support. They mostly gather when a Tier 1 unit arrives in the region and operate together with this unit, rarely independently. After an operation, they simply return home. They act as the Taliban's guides, informants, local guards and fighters.

David Kilcullen calls the third layer in the ranks of the Taliban 'The village underground'. This is a local movement of village people supporting the other layers. They collect information and report on enemy troop movements. They intimidate and target neighbours cooperating with the government by way of night letters, visits and killings. They keep and guard materials such as explosives. Sometimes — depending on the stage of development — they form a real shadow government in the region. Occasionally, this movement is led by the former Taliban mayor of the village.

2.3.4 Funding

The Taliban are believed to have received important funds from jihadist networks in the Arab Gulf. Fundraisers are active in mosques and private locations in Islamic countries. Some propaganda tools are used for this purpose, for example the Arab-language Taliban magazine *Al Somood* and the Taliban website. Illicit companies also fund the Taliban ⁽³⁸⁾. The Pakistani ISI was very likely to be the main funder of the Taliban in 2010. According to sources within the Taliban, consulted by Waldman for a Crisis States Discussion Paper, the ISI was even present at meetings of the Quetta Shura ⁽³⁹⁾.

A Haqqani commander explained that he was supplied every month with ammunition in Pakistan. If he needed more ammunition, or anything else, a letter of credit was given by the Haqqani leadership. With this letter, he could go to arms dealers in the province of Khost or in North Waziristan. He also received a monthly cheque of PKR 0.5–1 million (USD 6 000–12 000) for his operations. This commander presumed that the money originated from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries and from the ISI. He stated that the Haqqani network has a representative in the

⁽³⁵⁾ The American Foreign Policy Council (<http://almanac.afpc.org/taliban>) (accessed 9 March 2012); The Long War Journal (http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2010/02/the_talibans_top_lea.php) (accessed 9 March 2012).

⁽³⁶⁾ Giustozzi, A. (<http://tcf.org/publications/2010/6/pb716>) (accessed 14 March 2012).

⁽³⁷⁾ Kilcullen, D. 'Taliban and Counter-Insurgency in Kunar', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 231–246.

⁽³⁸⁾ Ruttig, T. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=114>) (accessed 12 March 2012).

⁽³⁹⁾ Waldman, M. (<http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Guardian/documents/2010/06/13/SISFINAL.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

Saudi Bank and in the Islamic Bank of Pakistan for the respective collection of the funds. A local Haqqani district commander explained that he received weapons from Pakistan. Salaries for his fighters were provided through an informal money transfer system called hawala⁽⁴⁰⁾.

The Taliban are connected to the opium economy. The Taliban tax agricultural products (ushr) in areas under their influence, and in the south, opium is more important than other crops for these taxes⁽⁴¹⁾. Aid projects are also subject to tax collection by the Taliban. In this way humanitarian, development and other aid may fund the Taliban indirectly. The Taliban impose an Islamic tax (zakat) as well⁽⁴²⁾. The taxes are not popular but, given the corruption by the governmental institutions, they are accepted by most of the population⁽⁴³⁾. Ransom demanded in abduction cases is also a source of revenue⁽⁴⁴⁾.

2.3.5 Propaganda

The Taliban are actively trying to make population, tribes or groups switch sides by way of spreading propaganda. In the early years of the Insurgency, their only media spokesperson was Abdul Latif Hakimi, who was arrested by Pakistan in 2005. He was replaced by three spokesmen. The main role of these spokesmen was publicising Taliban operations or attacks against the foreign troops. Secondly, they were responsible for disseminating statements of the Taliban leadership regarding their rejections of peace talks, deny the link with Pakistan and claim not to cause civilian casualties⁽⁴⁵⁾.

Modern communication tools have been used by the Taliban. DVD and MP3 proved useful to reach illiterate young Afghans. The content was often footage of attacks or executions of spies. Propaganda was also spread through the ether. It was reported from 2005 onwards that the Taliban used mobile radio stations⁽⁴⁶⁾. The Taliban used cell phones with cameras to film their confrontations with foreign troops and spread these among the population. They also sent SMS messages to youngsters to persuade them to join their ranks⁽⁴⁷⁾. According to the governor of Laghman, seven foreign fighters entered the province and carried satellite phones and a laptop on which they showed a movie of Americans destroying property and killing Afghan civilians⁽⁴⁸⁾. Occasionally, some leaders gave interviews on television, for example Mullah Dadullah. The Taliban used to have a website (<http://www.alemarah.com>) which contained links to other Jihadi sites and magazines and videos were uploaded. The website was shut down, but appeared again (<http://www.alemara1.com>) or in English (<http://http://shahamat-english.com/>)⁽⁴⁹⁾.

The Taliban issued the above mentioned magazine Al Somood, in which official statements were published. It was available in Arabic and used for propaganda purposes in other Islamic countries. The former Taliban Minister of Information, Amir Khan Muttaqi, headed a cultural commission that had the following duties: establishment of relations with the media, issue of Jihadi magazines and newspapers, oversee the Taliban website, publish Jihadi books and make films⁽⁵⁰⁾.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Waldman, M. (<http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Guardian/documents/2010/06/13/SISFINAL.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽⁴¹⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahimi, N. (<http://www.aren.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012); Ruttig, T. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=114>) (accessed 12 March 2012); Rohani, A. S. (<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2005/10/30/helmand-farmers-limbo-over-poppo-cultivation>) (accessed 1 March 2012); Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽⁴²⁾ MacKenzie, J. (<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/taliban/funding-the-taliban?page=0,1>) (accessed 1 March 2012); Ruttig, T. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=114>) (accessed 12 March 2012).

⁽⁴³⁾ Giustozzi, A. (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012).

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Ruttig, T. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=114>) (accessed 12 March 2012).

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Foxley, T. (<http://www.sipri.org/research/conflict/publications/foxley>) (accessed 13 March 2012).

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Frontline World (http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/pakistan802/video/video_index.html) (accessed 14 March 2012); Nathan, J. 'Reading the Taliban', Giustozzi, A., Decoding the New Taliban, 2009, pp. 23–42; Foxley, T. (<http://www.sipri.org/research/conflict/publications/foxley>) (accessed 13 March 2012); Wikileaks, (<https://wikileaks.dk/wp/files/wikileaks/afg-war-diary/afg/event/2007/10/AFG20071010n1063.html>) (accessed 17 May 2012). The Afghan War Diary was published by the whistleblower site Wikileaks and contains brief reports from the US military. Though it is difficult to assess the source, the authenticity of the reports was never denied by the US authorities. On the contrary, they commented on this leak of information with discontent and referred to the danger for the troops and individuals caused by the leak. The content of the reports should be approached with caution. It will be used in this report only as an illustration of events that fit in the information provided by other sources.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Stanikzai, Z. (<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2010/09/12/helmand-locals-want-ban-camera-cell-phones>) (accessed 5 January 2011).

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Wikileaks (<https://wikileaks.dk/wp/files/wikileaks/afg-war-diary/afg/event/2007/09/AFG20070916n967.html>) (accessed 17 May 2012).

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Gwakh, A. B. (http://www.rferl.org/content/the_talibans_Internet_strategy/24323901.html) (accessed 5 March 2012); Foxley, T. (<http://www.sipri.org/research/conflict/publications/foxley>) (accessed 13 March 2012); Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (http://shahamat-english.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=15606:promotion-of-education-inside-the-country-is-one-of-the-main-objectives-of-the-islamic-emirate&catid=2:comments&Itemid=3) (accessed 18 April 2012); Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (http://shahamat-english.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=14936:protecting-the-life-wealth-and-honor-of-people-is-from-amongst-the-lofty-goals-of-jihad&catid=2:comments&Itemid=3) (accessed 18 April 2012).

⁽⁵⁰⁾ The American Foreign Policy Council (<http://almanac.afpc.org/taliban>) (accessed 9 March 2012); Nathan, J. 'Reading the Taliban', Giustozzi, A., Decoding the New Taliban, 2009, pp. 23–42; The Long War Journal (http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2010/02/the_talibans_top_lea.php) (accessed 9 March 2012).

A less advanced communication tool used by the Taliban is night letters. These are leaflets posted to doors or walls to inform the population or threaten individuals. At least until 2007, they concerned mostly warnings to refrain from engagement with foreigners or from sending children to school. Examples of these night letters are published on the website of Human Rights Watch ⁽⁵¹⁾. Also to be mentioned is of course the preaching of mullahs in mosques and teaching in madrassas. In general, the Taliban is more in direct touch with the local rural population than the government: this often gives them an operational advantage ⁽⁵²⁾.

2.3.6 Pakistan

It is impossible to build a comprehensive picture of Afghanistan's Insurgency without taking a look at the situation in Pakistan. This country is the logistical base for the insurgent groups active in Afghanistan. The border area in Pakistan has been a base for organisation, leadership, training, supply, rest and recruitment. Supply and infiltration routes from Pakistan feed the active combat units in Afghanistan with the necessary means and people. They serve as evacuation routes for the wounded, and as retreat routes as well. Medical support is organised in Pakistan as well. Afghan refugee communities, Pakistani militant groups, some Pakistani authorities and religious networks are supportive elements for the Afghan insurgent groups. Furthermore, the political and religious leaders of the insurgent groups reside in Pakistan. The Taliban leadership resides in Quetta, the leadership of the Haqqani network in Waziristan. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's whereabouts are not known, but it is known that he has a strong support base in Pakistan ⁽⁵³⁾.

Summary — Structure and modus operandi of the Taliban

The Taliban organisation consists of a network of different groups resorting under the leadership of Amir Ul Momineen Mullah Mohammed Omar and his Quetta Shura. The groups have various degrees of autonomy in a layered structure. Hierarchical organisation ensures the coherence of the network. Under the top leadership, regional, provincial and district institutions are installed.

The groups operate following a general pattern of establishing influence and control in a territory. They first infiltrate a region and engage the population by way of persuading and preaching. Next, they conduct a campaign of intimidation and violence in order to eliminate opposition against them. Finally, they install a shadow government, providing justice and collecting taxes.

The Taliban fund their operations with resources received from international sponsors, such as organisations in Arab Gulf countries or the Pakistani intelligence services. Taxing local population and organisations active in regions under their control is another source of income. Propaganda efforts support all of their activities.

2.4 A religious organisation

The Taliban were originally religious students in Deobandi and Wahabi madrassas in Pakistan ⁽⁵⁴⁾. In 1994, the founding commanders of the Taliban movement were primarily Mullahs leading groups of religious students ⁽⁵⁵⁾. During the Taliban regime, the most important official functions at all levels were given to mullahs, from ministers to teachers. From 2002 onwards, almost all of the commanders and leaders had a background of religious education ⁽⁵⁶⁾. Clerical or religious networks played an important role in the revival of the Taliban after 2001 ⁽⁵⁷⁾.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Wikileaks (<http://wikileaks.org/afg/event/2004/07/AFG20040715n39.html>) (accessed 17 May 2012); Foxley, T. (<http://www.sipri.org/research/conflict/publications/foxley>) (accessed 13 March 2012); Human Rights Watch (<http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/afghanistan/2006/education/index.htm>) (accessed 12 March 2012).

⁽⁵²⁾ Nathan, J. 'Reading the Taliban', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 23–42; Major Afsar, S., Major Samples, C., Major Thomas, W. (http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/MILREVIEW_Taliban_Organizational_Analysis.pdf) (accessed 5 January 2011); Ruttig, T. (<http://aanafghanistan.com/uploads/20100624TR-HowTribalAretheTaleban-FINAL.pdf>) (accessed 5 January 2011); Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areas.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽⁵³⁾ Ruttig, T. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=114>) (accessed 12 March 2012); Hussain, Z., Page, J. (<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/pakistan-provinces-hotbeds-of-talibanrecruitment/>) (accessed 7 January 2011).

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Zaef, A. S., *My life with the Taliban*, 2010, p. 10.55

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Borchgrevink, K. (http://www.prio.no/sptrans/234636690/PRIO%20Paper_%20Borchgrevink_%20Beyond%20Borders%20Diversity%20and%20Transnational%20Links%20in%20Afghan%20Religious%20Education_September%202010.pdf) (accessed 5 June 2012).

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areas.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-U>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Ruttig, T. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=865>) (accessed 12 March 2012); Zabolwal, A., 'Taliban in Zabol: A Witness' Account', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 179–190.

Students from the Pakistani madrassas returned to Afghanistan to preach and to found their own madrassas. The number of mosques and madrassas within Afghanistan has been steadily rising after 2011. Many of them became important support bases for the Taliban ⁽⁵⁸⁾.

2.5 The Taliban: A Pashtun movement?

2.5.1 The 1990s

The Taliban originated in Pashtun areas and the overwhelming part of their ranks was Pashtun. In the 1990s, they recruited fighters from all Afghan regions and cooperated with commanders from all over the country, including Hazaras, Uzbeks and Tajiks. Examples of this were seen in Faryab, areas of Hazarajat, Parwan, Baghlan and Badakhshan. The Taliban leadership allowed different ethnicities to take high functions, including the function of minister ⁽⁵⁹⁾.

The former Taliban official Abdul Salam Zaeef stated that the movement started in Pashtun areas and that most of the Taliban were Pashtuns, but that the idea of tribal heritage being important to the Taliban is a misconception. According to Zaeef, tribal heritage was purely incidental and did not play a role later when the Taliban expanded further. Zaeef pleads for brotherhood among Muslims without any restriction ⁽⁶⁰⁾.

However, the Taliban ideology and governance was partially based on principles of the Pashtun tribal code (Pashtunwali) ⁽⁶¹⁾. They also committed some severe massacres against the Hazara ethnic group in Afghanistan between 1996 and 2001 ⁽⁶²⁾.

2.5.2 Post 2001

Sippi Azarbaijani-Moghaddam pleads against the stereotype of the Taliban as a Pashtun movement. He argues that the Pakistani madrassas have large amounts of Uzbek and Tajik students from Badakhshan ⁽⁶³⁾. Antonio Giustozzi indicates that the movement is largely Pashtun. In 2010, up to 95 % of the Taliban ranks were still Pashtun. He recognises, however, that the Taliban did not identify itself as a Pashtun movement ⁽⁶⁴⁾.

Thomas Ruttig acknowledges that the Taliban still are a predominantly Pashtun movement, but politically, they do not have Pashtun nationalist ideology. Their religious ideology transcends the ethnical boundaries ⁽⁶⁵⁾.

Furthermore, in the ongoing insurgency, there is little or no evidence of Taliban attacks directed against or targeting certain ethnic groups, though this existed in the past ⁽⁶⁶⁾. On the website of the Taliban, some evidence can be found that they do not formally claim to be a Pashtun movement, but are comprised of several ethnicities ⁽⁶⁷⁾. Mullah Omar stated in 2008: “Our religion enjoins on us to avoid from indulging in any kind of activity involving prejudices based on ethnicity. The only bond, which binds us, is the bond of Islam” ⁽⁶⁸⁾.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ International Crisis Group (ICG) ([http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf)) (accessed 9 May 2012).

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Azarbaijani-Moghaddam, S., ‘Northern exposure for the Taliban’, Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 247–268; Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=24>) (accessed 7 January 2011); Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012); Giustozzi, A. (<http://www.cigionline.org/publications/2010/7/taliban-beyondpashtuns>) (accessed 11 January 2011).

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Zaeef, A. S., *My life with the Taliban*, 2010, p. 116.

⁽⁶¹⁾ International Crisis Group (ICG) (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf>) (accessed 9 May 2012).

⁽⁶²⁾ Human Rights Watch (<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6a87c4.html>) (accessed 7 June 2012).

⁽⁶³⁾ Azarbaijani-Moghaddam, S., ‘Northern exposure for the Taliban’, Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 247–268.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Giustozzi, A. (<http://www.cigionline.org/publications/2010/7/taliban-beyondpashtuns>) (accessed 11 January 2011).

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Ruttig, T. (<http://aanafghanistan.com/uploads/20100624TR-HowTribalAretheTaleban-FINAL.pdf>) (accessed 5 January 2011); Ruttig, T. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=114>) (accessed 12 March 2012).

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areas.org/af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (http://shahamat-english.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=13966:the-importance-of-the-islamic-emirate-at-world-level&catid=2:comments&Itemid=3) (accessed 18 April 2012).

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Ruttig, T. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=114>) (accessed 12 March 2012).

Summary — A Pashtun movement?

The available information presents evidence of the Pashtun origin and a large Pashtun human resource base in the history of the Taliban. However, throughout the years, the Taliban have had different ethnicities within their ranks or cooperated with non-Pashtun people. The leadership does not present the organisation as a Pashtun movement, but Pashtun traditions are part of their ideology. In the past, the Taliban directed acts of violence towards another ethnicity. There is no evidence of this after 2001.

2.6 Different insurgent groups

Many different insurgent groups are active in Afghanistan — some examples follow.

One of the strongest groups is the Haqqani network, led by Jalaluddin Haqqani and his son Sirajuddin, who pledged bayat (allegiance) to Mullah Mohammad Omar. The network has strong links to the Pakistani ISI and Arab Jihadi networks. The base of the network is North Waziristan in Pakistan (headquarters in the village of Dand-e Darpa) and the south-east of Afghanistan (main operational hub in Zambar village in the district of Sabari in Khost). The original cadres are from the Zadran arc in provinces of Paktia, Paktika and Khost. Some major attacks in Kabul city are believed to be executed by the Haqqani network, including some suicide and multiple attacks⁽⁶⁹⁾. The structure of the Haqqani Network shows similarities with the Quetta Shura Taliban structure. J. Dressler makes the distinction between Tier 1 commanders, located in North Waziristan and Tier 2 commanders, residing in their home region where they operate. These local commanders rely on their family or tribal connections. Tier 3 team leaders are locals that are responsible for the recruitment. Tier 4 fighters are full-time fighters under the command of the Tier 2 and 3 commanders. There are also Tier 5 fighters: these are locals that are paid for actions or attacks. Throughout these tiers, there are a lot of foreign fighters (Pakistani, Arabs, Chechens, Turkish, etc.), but they are mostly active in the fields of financing and training⁽⁷⁰⁾.

Another main insurgent group in Afghanistan is Hezb-e Islami, led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. The withdrawal of foreign troops is a goal for Hezb-e Islami, but they are more open to negotiation and contact with the Karzai government. The Taliban criticise Hekmatyar for this. The group cooperated with the Taliban, but also engaged in serious fighting against them. Hezb-e Islami has strongholds in the east and south-east of Afghanistan, but also, for example, in the provinces of Kunduz, Baghlan and the region around Kabul⁽⁷¹⁾.

The son of the legendary mujahideen commander Younus Khalis formed the Tora Bora Military Front in 2007. It conducted attacks against Afghan and foreign forces in Nangarhar. Their stronghold is the district of Khogyani and the areas of Pachir Agam and Shinwar. The group publishes a magazine, Tora Bora⁽⁷²⁾. Furthermore, in the south-east of Afghanistan, the Mansur clan is active and in the east smaller Salafi groups and some Pakistani based militant groups⁽⁷³⁾.

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) is a network with many fighters who fled government repression in Uzbekistan. It is active in areas of Kunduz, Takhar, Balkh and Faryab. The network has links with the Taliban and with militant elements in Pakistan⁽⁷⁴⁾.

Ahmad Quraishi, Director of the Afghan Journalists Center and a correspondent at the Pajhwok Afghan News, explained that, according to the estimates of the governor of Herat, Dawoud Shah Saba, up to 55 groups — including 1 000–1 200 insurgents — were present in the province of Herat. Local officials claim that most of these groups are not genuine Taliban but pretend to be. Mr Quraishi talked with elders in the districts who informed him that most of the groups were involved in illegal activities such as abduction, robbery and collecting ushr to pay their fighters⁽⁷⁵⁾. The Al Qaeda network of foreign Jihadists supported the Taliban by way of training, financing and management⁽⁷⁶⁾.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Waldman, M. (<http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Guardian/documents/2010/06/13/SISFINAL.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012); The American Foreign Policy Council (<http://almanac.afpc.org/taliban>) (accessed 9 March 2012); International Crisis Group (ICG) (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf>) (accessed 9 May 2012).

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Dressler, J. A. (http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/Haqqani_Network_0.pdf) (accessed 5 January 2011).

⁽⁷¹⁾ Gopal, A., Dupee, M. (<http://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/tensions-rise-between-hizb-i-islami-and-the-taliban-in-afghanistan>) (accessed 18 April 2012); The American Foreign Policy Council (<http://almanac.afpc.org/taliban>) (accessed 9 March 2012); Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012); The American Foreign Policy Council (<http://almanac.afpc.org/taliban>) (accessed 9 March 2012).

⁽⁷²⁾ The American Foreign Policy Council (<http://almanac.afpc.org/taliban>) (accessed 9 March 2012); Nathan, J. 'Reading the Taliban', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 23–42.

⁽⁷³⁾ Ruttig, T. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=114>) (accessed 12 March 2012).

⁽⁷⁴⁾ Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽⁷⁵⁾ Quraishi, Ahmad, Director of the Afghan Journalists Center and a correspondent at the Pajhwok Afghan News, e-mail correspondence, 5 April 2012.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

3. The recruitment of fighters

3.1 General

Briefly after the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001, the Taliban started reorganising and recruiting new ranks. In 2002, they were able to recruit a lot of volunteers in Afghan refugee camps, mosques and Deobandi madrassas in the Pakistani province of Baluchistan, around the city of Quetta. From then onwards, they recruited through various mechanisms: recruitment of madrasa students in Pakistan and Afghanistan; local recruitment by mullahs or religious networks; recruitment by religious political parties or groups; recruitment via kin or community and via schools or universities⁽⁷⁷⁾. From 2006 onwards, the Taliban recruited more locals in Afghanistan than before. NATO estimated the number of fighters recruited in Pakistan to be 40 % of the Taliban's ranks in 2006⁽⁷⁸⁾.

In general, the local operational cell is the base of recruitment. The Taliban rely on family and clan loyalty, tribal ties, personal friendships, social and religious networks, madrassas and communal interests. Though exceptions exist, Taliban commanders normally recruit fighters within their own tribe. The tribal organisation, although weakened through the years of conflict, remains deeply rooted in the Pashtun communities that still provide by far the most Taliban ranks⁽⁷⁹⁾.

Young fighters were hired by the Taliban to execute an attack or an ambush. They were mostly deployed outside their home area. In this way, they couldn't be recognised by locals and they did not have to attack friends or family. They returned home after an operation. Taliban were keen to use these fighters, because they could then save their experienced fighters from the risks involved in the attacks⁽⁸⁰⁾. A local source in Afghanistan stated in April 2012 that this strategy is changing. The Taliban are localising most of their commanders and fighters, because this ensures a greater 'buy-in' from the communities. This gives them the advantage of being better protected and supported since they operate within their own tribe or village. According to the same source, foreign fighters, such as Pakistani, Arabs, Chechen or Uzbeks are normally attached to local commanders as advisers or — when operating in larger numbers — are usually only active in the Pakistani border areas so that they can retreat quickly to safe areas in Pakistan⁽⁸¹⁾.

Some sources, such as Rashid and Giustozzi, differentiate between Taliban fighters based on their motivation and education. Largely, two main categories can be identified. The first is the Taliban hard-core fighter, driven by ideology. This is often the madrasa student or the local youngster recruited by clerics. The second category is the non-core fighter. He is often a local, perhaps part of a militia that joined the Insurgency for different reasons. Pure ideology is not his main motivation. Mercenary elements and part-time fighters are included in this second category⁽⁸²⁾.

In *Thirty Years of Conflict: Drivers of Anti-Government Mobilisation in Afghanistan 1978–2011*, Giustozzi and Ibrahim distinguish between community mobilisation and the mobilisation of individuals. The different incentives can play a role in both kinds of mobilisation⁽⁸³⁾. According to a contact in Afghanistan, the Taliban seek, as described above, the 'buy-in' of communities much more than the recruitment of individuals, although they always welcome individuals to join them⁽⁸⁴⁾. Collective recruitment happens also through individual strongmen or commanders that are attracted by the Taliban's strength of organisation offering opportunities for them⁽⁸⁵⁾.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ Borchgrevink, K. ([http://www.prio.no/sprtrans/234636690/PRIO %20Paper_ %20Borchgrevink_ %20Beyond %20Borders %20Diversity %20and %20 Transnational %20Links %20in %20Afghan %20Religious %20Education_ September %202010.pdf](http://www.prio.no/sprtrans/234636690/PRIO%20Paper_%20Borchgrevink_%20Beyond%20Borders%20Diversity%20and%20Transnational%20Links%20in%20Afghan%20Religious%20Education_September%202010.pdf)) (accessed 5 June 2012).

⁽⁷⁸⁾ Giustozzi, A., *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop — The Neo-Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan*, 2007, p. 52.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ Major Afsar, S., Major Samples, C., Major Thomas, W. (http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/MILREVIEW_Taliban_Organizational_Analysis.pdf) (accessed 5 January 2011); Ruttig, T. (<http://aanafghanistan.com/uploads/20100624TR-HowTribalAretheTaleban-FINAL.pdf>) (accessed 5 January 2011).

⁽⁸⁰⁾ Zarak, F. (<http://iwpr.net/report-news/occasional-taliban>) (accessed 7 January 2011); Rahmani, F. (<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2010/10/30/afghan-youth-gather-show-unity>) (accessed 5 January 2011).

⁽⁸¹⁾ Local contact with long experience in Afghanistan who monitors and reports on the Afghan context for a major international organisation, e-mail correspondence, 12 April 2012.

⁽⁸²⁾ Jones, S. G. (<http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG595.html>) (accessed 9 March 2012); Rashid, A., *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia*, 2008, p. 367; Giustozzi, A. (<http://tcf.org/publications/2010/6/pb716>) (accessed 14 March 2012).

⁽⁸³⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽⁸⁴⁾ Local contact with long experience in Afghanistan who monitors and reports on the Afghan context for a major international organisation, e-mail correspondence, 12 April 2012.

⁽⁸⁵⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

During the Danish Immigration Service's fact-finding mission in Afghanistan, 25 February to 4 March 2012, the Civil Society and Human Rights Organisation (CSHRO) and an independent research institute stated that the Taliban are trying to recruit more educated people in universities and schools in the big cities. They are in need of more people who are able to read and write for the expansion of their communication and propaganda efforts. Furthermore, new and more advanced weapon systems require more technical knowledge and there is the need for more educated medical staff. So, engineering and medical students, especially, are wanted by the Taliban ⁽⁸⁶⁾. Enayatullah Baleegh, an influential mullah and lecturer in Kabul University, preaches and lectures strongly in favour of the Taliban. He is also the imam of the largest mosque in the city, Pul-e Khishti Jamei ⁽⁸⁷⁾.

Summary — General recruitment

The base of the Taliban recruitment is the local cell. This can be a madrassa, mullah or religious network, a local commander or the village or tribe. There are hard-core and non-core fighters. The recruits used to be deployed outside their home area, but according to a local source this strategy is changing. The Taliban are seeking a greater 'buy-in' of local communities and, therefore, they deploy the fighters and commanders in their own area. There is a difference between community-based or collective recruitment and individual recruitment.

The Taliban are trying to recruit more educated people from schools and universities in the big cities such as Kabul. This should serve the development of their communication and provide more technical and medical knowledge to the organisation.

3.2 Drivers and mechanisms for recruitment

Different circumstances have an impact on the success of the recruitment of new fighters. Poverty, governmental failing, the presence of foreign troops etc. encourage to be recruited. The Taliban have used unemployment, community conflicts, lack of education, religion, disenfranchisement in communities, indoctrination, and even the co-opting of former enemies and so on to their advantage. They also managed to exploit some xenophobic feelings in the country ⁽⁸⁸⁾.

3.2.1 Economic incentives

The International Council on Security and Development (ICOS) carried out a survey in Helmand in March 2010 after the large military operation 'Moshtarak', an operation that caused a severe setback for the Taliban. More than 400 men were interviewed in areas that were previously dominated by the Taliban. Some 57 % of the people questioned stated that economic incentives or poverty were a reason to enlist ⁽⁸⁹⁾.

A key factor in the recruitment of fighters is the demographic situation. More than half of the Afghan population is under 19 years old. Older people govern the country at all levels and are not able to fulfil the needs of these youngsters. A lack of education, high unemployment and lack of future perspectives are the basis for young people to turn to alternative livelihood provisions ⁽⁹⁰⁾. Taliban payments for the services and activities of local fighters are the main incentive to join the fight for the so-called Tier 2 Taliban ⁽⁹¹⁾. Because of the high unemployment rate, a system of part-time fighters has developed; they are paid after conducting an operation ⁽⁹²⁾. A report from the

⁽⁸⁶⁾ Danish Immigration Service (<http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf>) (accessed 31 May 2012).

⁽⁸⁷⁾ International Crisis Group (ICG) (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf>) (accessed 9 May 2012).

⁽⁸⁸⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.aren.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽⁸⁹⁾ ICOS (<http://www.icosgroup.net/2010/report/operation-moshtarak-lessons-learned/>) (accessed 26 March 2012).

⁽⁹⁰⁾ Azarbaijani-Moghaddam, S., 'Northern exposure for the Taliban', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 247–268.

⁽⁹¹⁾ Kilcullen, D. 'Taliban and Counter-Insurgency in Kunar', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 231–246; Giustozzi, A., *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop — The Neo-Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan*, 2007.

⁽⁹²⁾ Zarak, F. (<http://iwpr.net/report-news/occasional-taliban>) (accessed 7 January 2011); Rahmani, F. (<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2010/10/30/afghan-youth-gather-show-unity>) (accessed 5 January 2011).

Institute for War and Peace Reporting mentions that, according to some estimates, up to 70 % of the young Taliban fighters in Afghanistan fight for money and not for ideology⁽⁹³⁾. A local source explained that the offer of pay is a strong incentive in areas with massive underemployment⁽⁹⁴⁾.

A 22-year-old man from the district of Pushtrod in Farah testified about his work. He was the sole breadwinner of his family and faced difficulties in finding work. Two friends advised him to contact the local Taliban. He joined the insurgents and was involved in different operations. After an operation, he was paid, up to AFG 400. He earned around AFG 1 000 each week. The rest of the week, he was a civilian and did not carry a weapon⁽⁹⁵⁾. According to a Taliban commander in Logar, in 2011, their fighters were paid an average income of USD 240 per month and an additional USD 170–240 for an attack on a school, clinic or dam. Targeting ISAF troops was even better paid⁽⁹⁶⁾. A local Haqqani district commander explained that his fighters were paid monthly salaries of USD 110–120. He, as a commander, received USD 170–220. Separately, a group received USD 4 000–5 000 for each foreign soldier they killed⁽⁹⁷⁾.

Giustozzi and Ibrahim state, however, that mercenary motivations do not constitute a long-term incentive. They appear to dissipate when the Taliban have the opportunity to socialise and indoctrinate. In areas where the Taliban are very strong, the economic incentive loses weight. Where the Taliban is weak, opportunism can be a strong driver for the conflict. Disgruntled or marginalised persons or communities, who are not ideologist supporters of the Taliban, can be easily pulled over by offering them money. This type of incentive involves risks, nonetheless. Opportunities might easily cause these fighters to switch sides again. As this motivation fails in a long term, socialisation and indoctrination processes are introduced. This does not mean that fighters aren't paid: many of them have families and there is strong social and cultural pressure on them to provide for their families⁽⁹⁸⁾. Here are indications that communities involved in opium-growing tend to join the insurgency when efforts are made to stamp out opium. The incentive is clearly an economic one⁽⁹⁹⁾. This was, for example, the case for Alizai communities in central-northern Helmand: fearing poppy eradication, the communities which did not support the Taliban before, actively joined the Insurgency⁽¹⁰⁰⁾. A local correspondent in Helmand testified that the Taliban are encouraging people to cultivate poppies. They promise the farmers they will protect their poppy fields and, in exchange, they demand support and the payment of ushr⁽¹⁰¹⁾.

There is also a monetary concern for drug addicts. Having no money to buy drugs, they are an easy target for recruitment when offered a salary. They often prove to be unreliable fighters because of their addiction. Insurgent groups then force them to leave their ranks⁽¹⁰²⁾.

Families contributing at least one fighter to the jihad might be exempted from paying taxes to the Taliban. On the other hand, the Taliban approach villagers in some regions to demand financial contributions or weapons. If the families can't pay, they're released from this debt by giving a male to become a fighter⁽¹⁰³⁾.

⁽⁹³⁾ Zarak, F. (<http://iwpr.net/report-news/occasional-taleban>) (accessed 7 January 2011); Rahmani, F. (<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2010/10/30/afghan-youth-gather-show-unity>) (accessed 5 January 2011).

⁽⁹⁴⁾ Local contact with long experience in Afghanistan who monitors and reports on the Afghan context for a major international organisation, e-mail correspondence, 12 April 2012.

⁽⁹⁵⁾ Zarak, F. (<http://iwpr.net/report-news/occasional-taleban>) (accessed 7 January 2011).

⁽⁹⁶⁾ International Crisis Group (ICG) ([http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207 %20The %20Insurgency %20in %20Afghanistans %20Heartland.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf)) (accessed 9 May 2012).

⁽⁹⁷⁾ Waldman, M. (<http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Guardian/documents/2010/06/13/SISFINAL.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areas.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽⁹⁹⁾ Azarbaijani-Moghaddam, S., 'Northern exposure for the Taliban', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 247–268; ICOS (<http://www.icosgroup.net/2010/report/operation-moshtarak-lessons-learned/>) (accessed 26 March 2012); Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areas.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Coghlan, T., 'The Taliban in Helmand: An Oral History', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 119–154; Giustozzi, A., *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop — The Neo-Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan*, 2007; Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areas.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Local press correspondent based in Helmand, telephone interview, 23 April 2012.

⁽¹⁰²⁾ Hakimi, M. H. (<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2010/12/18/out-work-youth-filling-ranks-taliban>) (accessed 5 January 2011).

⁽¹⁰³⁾ Giustozzi, A. (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012); Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012); local press correspondent based in east Afghanistan, e-mail correspondence, 2 May 2012.

Summary — Economic incentives

Money is an important recruitment driver. In a country where many young men are unemployed and poverty is widespread, the offer of a payment is attractive. A Taliban fighter can gain hundreds of dollars in a month or even in a week.

According to Giustozzi and Ibrahim, it is not a long-term incentive. Socialisation and indoctrination are important for the Taliban to ensure coherence in their ranks.

There are other economic drivers besides direct payments. The fear of opium eradication by the government or the foreign troops is an example of an economic motive for joining the Insurgency. Another example is the Taliban exemption for paying taxes for families contributing fighters to their ranks.

3.2.2 Honour and prestige

In the Pashtunwali, affronts to honour (nang) inflict revenge (badal), which is discussed later. Hospitality (malmastia) and refuge (nanawatey) are other Pashtunwali principles that could be drivers to support Taliban groups arriving in an area ⁽¹⁰⁴⁾.

Social status is an incentive for enlistment. The history of armed factions, war, commanders and warlords teaches us that prestige is gained via bravery on the battlefield. Tier 2 Taliban are often driven by feelings of honour, prestige and adventure to join the ranks of the insurgents ⁽¹⁰⁵⁾.

Local youngsters are often proud to be able to cooperate with the Taliban. They alert Taliban fighters via cell phones about foreign troop movements. US soldiers have noticed young males releasing pigeons when approaching them; they have also noticed them using mirrors to reflect sunshine ⁽¹⁰⁶⁾.

3.2.3 Individual threats, the use of force and coercion by Taliban

Sippi Azarbaijani-Moghaddam stated that, in 2001, the Northern Alliance and the Taliban had to use force for recruitment because of reluctance in the war-fatigued communities ⁽¹⁰⁷⁾.

According to the above mentioned query conducted by ICOS in March 2010, 34 % of the people questioned in Helmand stated that the Taliban recruited by means of coercion ⁽¹⁰⁸⁾. An informant of Landinfo mentioned that, in Marjah in Helmand, direct coercion was used by the Taliban for the recruitment of fighters ⁽¹⁰⁹⁾. A local source in Helmand confirmed the use of dictatorship and coercion in Helmand by the Taliban: "If someone resists, they accuse the person of being a spy and a 'slave to the foreigners' and punish or kill this person. This was the fate of hundreds of tribal leaders, elders and local chiefs in the south-western zone. They also force people to provide food and shelter" ⁽¹¹⁰⁾. The IDP camps in Helmand are a location where the use of coercion for recruitment is reported ⁽¹¹¹⁾.

An RFE/RL article from June 2012 based on the testimony of Murad, an Anti-Taliban Militia fighter, states that families in Kunduz are joining the Taliban because they fear to be killed if they do not ⁽¹¹²⁾.

According to a local source based in the east of Afghanistan, the Quetta Shura Taliban force people in regions under their control to take up weapons and fight with them. They approach people at home and accuse them of being spies. They also demand huge fines which the poor villagers can never afford. They ask for weapons. If they can't

⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ Hussain, R. G. (<http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA479934>) (accessed 13 March 2012); International Crisis Group (ICG) (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf>) (accessed 9 May 2012).

⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ Kilcullen, D. 'Taliban and Counter-Insurgency in Kunar', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 231–246; Giustozzi, A., *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop — The Neo-Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan*, 2007; ICOS (<http://www.icosgroup.net/2010/report/operation-moshtarak-lessons-learned/>) (accessed 26 March 2012).

⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Reuter, C., Younus, B., 'The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 101–118; Wikileaks (<https://wikileaks.dk/wp/files/wikileaks/afg-war-diary/afg/event/2004/02/AFG20040209n7.html>) (accessed 20 January 2011).

⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ Azarbaijani-Moghaddam, S., 'Northern exposure for the Taliban', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, p. 256.

⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ ICOS (<http://www.icosgroup.net/2010/report/operation-moshtarak-lessons-learned/>) (accessed 26 March 2012).

⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ Landinfo (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1985/1/1985_1.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Local press correspondent based in Helmand, telephone interview, 23 April 2012.

⁽¹¹¹⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.aren.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽¹¹²⁾ Tahir, M. (http://www.rferl.org/content/Afghan_Village_Fights_To_Keep_Taliban_At_Bay/2172831.html) (accessed 12 April 2012).

pay or give weapons they have to become a fighter. Those who refuse are either driven away from the region or labelled as spies and killed. The Taliban sometimes arrive in a group at a mosque and demand that the people provide 10 or 20 young men to join them for the jihad. It happens that young people are recruited for suicide bombings. According to the source, this kind of recruitment tends to happen on an individual basis. Local Taliban commanders are responsible for recruitment in their own area, but they receive help from the Pakistani intelligence network ⁽¹¹³⁾. According to David Kilcullen, Tier 2 Taliban in Kunar could be driven by fear of Taliban retribution if they would not cooperate with them ⁽¹¹⁴⁾.

According to a local source in Khost, Afghan insurgent groups reside in North Waziristan and Kurram Agency in Pakistan where they can recruit easily among their own tribes, such as the Wazir and Dawar. The source mentions that the insurgents use coercion in areas under their control in order to recruit. The population does not dare to resist out of fear of execution ⁽¹¹⁵⁾.

In Uruzgan, it happened that Taliban from Pakistan replaced local commanders. This was the case in Gizab, in 2008. There are some reports of forced recruitment in Uruzgan by these foreign, Pakistani Taliban. Young men enlisted under coercion and often died afterwards in battles against foreign troops and government forces. This undermined local support for the Taliban in the province. According to Martine Van Bijlert, this happened rather rarely and, in general, recruitment by local commanders based on tribal loyalty remained the main resource for the Taliban in Uruzgan ⁽¹¹⁶⁾.

According to Reuters and Younus, coercion was of no use for the insurgents in Andar in Ghazni because rivalry between groups caused the need for strong loyalties within the groups ⁽¹¹⁷⁾. In April 2012, a local source confirmed explicitly that the Taliban in Ghazni never uses coercion for the recruitment of fighters ⁽¹¹⁸⁾.

In April 2012, a local correspondent in Logar stated the following about Taliban recruitment: “They did this by using religious persuasion rather than a political one. In Logar, people are joining the Taliban ranks voluntarily. Coercion or other means are not used” ⁽¹¹⁹⁾.

Ahmad Quraishi, Director of the Afghan Journalists Center and a correspondent at the Pajhwok Afghan News, explained that there are no reports of forced recruitment in the province of Herat ⁽¹²⁰⁾.

A local source in Afghanistan stated in April 2012 that there has been greater use of genuine persuasion and appeal to patriotic or religious duties to fight the ‘foreign invaders and the puppet regime’ and much less coercion which is currently rarer than before. According to the same source there are few recorded cases of actual violence against individuals escaping recruitment and it would be against the Taliban’s stated aims of justice and good governance and it would alienate communities ⁽¹²¹⁾.

According to Giustozzi and Ibrahim, Taliban cadres suggested that the refugee camps are the only locations where they have been able to forcibly recruit fighters. Families were forced to contribute one man ⁽¹²²⁾. Giustozzi states explicitly that forced recruitment has not been a salient characteristic of this conflict. The insurgents applied it very marginally. According to Giustozzi, the use of direct coercion happened only in areas under their control to force men to serve as porters. Since 2006, there have also been reports of forced recruitment by the Taliban of medical staff in some areas for the treatment of wounded fighters ⁽¹²³⁾.

⁽¹¹³⁾ Local press correspondent based in east Afghanistan, e-mail correspondence, 2 May 2012.

⁽¹¹⁴⁾ Kilcullen, D. ‘Taliban and Counter-Insurgency in Kunar’, Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 231–246.

⁽¹¹⁵⁾ Local contact based in Khost, e-mail correspondence, 10 April 2012.

⁽¹¹⁶⁾ Van Bijlert, M., ‘Unruly Commanders and Violent Power Struggles: Taliban Networks in Uruzgan’, Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 155–178; Giustozzi, A., *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop — The Neo-Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan*, 2007.

⁽¹¹⁷⁾ Reuter, C., Younus, B., ‘The return of the Taliban in Andar District: Ghazni’, Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 101–118.

⁽¹¹⁸⁾ Local press correspondent based in central Afghanistan, telephone interview, 23 April 2012.

⁽¹¹⁹⁾ Local press correspondent based in Logar, telephone interview, 23 April 2012.

⁽¹²⁰⁾ Quraishi, Ahmad, Director of the Afghan Journalists Centre and a correspondent at the Pajhwok Afghan News, e-mail correspondence, 5 April 2012.

⁽¹²¹⁾ Local contact with long experience in Afghanistan who monitors and reports on the Afghan context for a major international organisation, e-mail correspondence, 12 April 2012.

⁽¹²²⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽¹²³⁾ Giustozzi, A. (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012); Giustozzi, A. (<http://tcf.org/publications/2010/6/pb716>) (accessed 14 March 2012).

During interviews conducted in the framework of a fact-finding mission in Kabul in October 2011, Landinfo obtained information which corroborates the rare use of coercion in recruitment. It was mentioned that the Taliban have enough volunteers, so they didn't have to rely on this strategy. Exceptions might exist in areas under full control of the Taliban ⁽¹²⁴⁾.

During the Danish Immigration Service's fact-finding mission in Afghanistan, 25 February to 4 March 2012, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) stated that "there is no reporting of forced recruitment by the Taliban and that most recruits joined voluntarily". The organisation mentioned Hazara communities in Uruzgan, subject to intimidation by the Taliban in order to make them join their ranks. This source explicitly added that this was exceptional. The Danish fact-finding mission report mentions UNHCR's statements about recruitment by the Taliban: 'UNHCR referred to a leaked ISAF report on the state of the Taliban in relation to the change of strategy of the Taliban. According to this report, the Taliban do not have difficulties in recruiting people for their force. They have many volunteers and there is a willingness to join the movement. The Taliban may recruit collectively in the villages by offering education to poor people's sons and by brain washing people. Considering the acceptance by the local population of the Taliban, it could be assumed that forceful recruitment is not widely taking place, however, UNHCR added that very little is known on this at the present time.' The Cooperation for Peace and Unity confirmed that there is no need for the Taliban to forcibly recruit. According to this source, they would rely on forced recruitment only in emergency situations. The source explained that the Taliban visited villages in the south to request a number of fighters, but that there was, in general, no need for them to recruit people by force, since there were sufficient volunteers. The Civil Society and Human Rights Organisation (CSHRO) stated that 'the Taliban doesn't have the possibility to approach people at home and force them to join their ranks'. An independent research institute in Kabul explained during the Danish fact-finding mission that the Taliban, in general, does not recruit by using force. According to this source, it could happen that the Taliban demands a number of fighters from a certain village, but they wouldn't put a request to an individual family ⁽¹²⁵⁾.

Summary — Individual threats, use of force and coercion by Taliban

Forced recruitment has happened in the past in Afghanistan. Recent sources (2010–12) mention that direct coercion for recruitment has happened in Helmand. Places mentioned are Marjah and the IDP camps. Furthermore, there are reports of fear of retaliation in case of refusing recruitment in Kunduz, Kunar and areas in Pakistan under the control of Afghan insurgent groups.

Two sources mentioned the use of coercion or intimidation for recruitment in Uruzgan. In 2008, some foreign Taliban commanders recruited by force. The other source reported some Hazara communities who were intimidated to join the Taliban. Both sources stated that this has been rare or exceptional.

Other sources stated explicitly that force or coercion were not used for recruitment in their provinces: Ghazni, Herat and Logar.

Sources discussing the general situation in Afghanistan commonly state that coercion is rare in the recruitment process. They sometimes refer to locations where it did happen: refugee camps and areas under strong influence of the Taliban. One source mentioned that the Taliban recruited porters and medical staff by force in areas under their control.

Some sources gave arguments against forced recruitment: it would alienate communities or there is no need for it, since the Taliban dispose of sufficient volunteers.

3.2.4 Kinship and tribal loyalty or tradition

The Taliban also rely on kinship and tribal connections for recruitment ⁽¹²⁶⁾. A local source in north-east Afghanistan stated that the Taliban leadership used the influence of powerful people or tribal elders who are living in Pakistan but who have an origin in Baghlan. The Taliban leaders sent these people back to Baghlan to contact their tribal relatives and ask for support for the Taliban ⁽¹²⁷⁾.

⁽¹²⁴⁾ Landinfo (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1985/1/1985_1.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽¹²⁵⁾ Danish Immigration Service (<http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf>) (accessed 31 May 2012).

⁽¹²⁶⁾ Borchgrevink, K. (http://www.prio.no/sprans/234636690/PRIO%20Paper_%20Borchgrevink_%20Beyond%20Borders%20Diversity%20and%20Transnational%20Links%20in%20Afghan%20Religious%20Education_September%202010.pdf) (accessed 5 June 2012).

⁽¹²⁷⁾ Local press correspondent based in north-east Afghanistan, telephone interview, 23 April 2012.

The Haqqani network in south-east Afghanistan is an example of an insurgent group that is strongly based on tribal kinship. Within the Zadran tribe, the Mezi qawm formed the main source for the recruitment of the hard core fighters⁽¹²⁸⁾. Zadran tribal leaders are often obliged to respect quota for the contribution of fighters. Outside the Zadran regions, recruitment happens mostly by way of paying the fighters⁽¹²⁹⁾.

It is common that tribal leaders decide to switch sides or start supporting the Insurgency. Tribal loyalty might then force individuals to enlist as fighters. This community mobilisation can vary in different levels of support, such as allowing free movement, providing shelter and food, information and intelligence, up to really engaging in the fighting. Early forms of support by communities were often attempts to attract the government's attention to their cause after diplomacy and lobbying had failed. Obtaining protection against rivals where the authorities fail and the provision of justice by the Taliban shadow government appeared to be important factors in community mobilisation. Other reasons for this community mobilisation are loyalty to the old Taliban regime, economic incentives, power play against governmental figures (often driven by corruption and discriminatory practices) or feuds with other communities and revenge against indiscriminate killings committed by foreign troops⁽¹³⁰⁾.

In some cases of community mobilisation, the tribal leaders might have forced reluctant families to respect the Pashtun tribal tradition to contribute a male of fighting age to the tribal army (Lashkar)⁽¹³¹⁾. When fighters die or are wounded, they have to be replaced by family members, for example a brother, son or nephew. This is the system of 'call-ups', often relied on by the Taliban. This was, for example, the case in the province of Kandahar⁽¹³²⁾. David Kilcullen gives the example of the Mahsud tribe in Waziristan, Pakistan: the tribal leaders decided that each family should provide two youngsters to fight on the side of the Taliban⁽¹³³⁾.

Summary — Kinship and tribe

Tribal kinship or relationship is a mechanism for recruitment. Tribal elders from the diaspora in Pakistan have, for example, been sent back by the Taliban to their region of origin in Baghlan to find support. Another example is the Haqqani network, strongly based on the Zadran tribe.

Tribal leaders take decisions about the position of the tribe. They might switch sides in the conflict. This community mobilisation is often driven by economic incentives, power struggle, feuds or revenge, but there are also communities that have picked up their old loyalty to the former Taliban regime again.

There are some Pashtun tribal traditions active in the recruitment process that can involve tribal pressure or even coercion on individuals or families.

3.2.5 Religious persuasion

ICOS carried out a survey in Helmand where 54 % of the people questioned stated that religion or jihad was a reason to enlist⁽¹³⁴⁾. The Taliban combine Deobandi and Salafist calls for jihad with the Pashtunwali principles described before in their propaganda⁽¹³⁵⁾. The role of clerics is not to be marginalised since they take care of the indoctrination, socialisation and common identity of the recruits in the madrassas and mosques⁽¹³⁶⁾.

Where the Taliban cannot rely on extensive community support, the religious element becomes one of the most important tools for recruitment. In this respect, clergy and madrassas represent the main enrolment channels in these areas. In order to transcend tribal and ethnic borders, the ulema delivered a good tool: the flag of jihad. Tablighi

⁽¹²⁸⁾ Ruttig, T., Trives, S., 'Loya Paktia's Insurgency', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 57–100.

⁽¹²⁹⁾ Dressler, J. A. (http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/Haqqani_Network_0.pdf) (accessed 5 January 2011).

⁽¹³⁰⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areas.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽¹³¹⁾ Giustozzi, A. (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012).

⁽¹³²⁾ Forsberg, C. (http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/The_Talibans_Campaign_For_Kandahar.pdf) (accessed 13 March 2012); Smith, G., 'What Kandahar's Taliban say', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 191–210.

⁽¹³³⁾ Kilcullen, D. 'Taliban and Counter-Insurgency in Kunar', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 231–246.

⁽¹³⁴⁾ ICOS (<http://www.icosgroup.net/2010/report/operation-moshtarak-lessons-learned/>) (accessed 26 March 2012).

⁽¹³⁵⁾ International Crisis Group (ICG) ([http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207 %20The %20Insurgency %20in %20 Afghanistans %20Heartland.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf)) (accessed 9 May 2012).

⁽¹³⁶⁾ Ruttig, T. (<http://aanafghanistan.com/uploads/20100624TR-HowTribalAretheTaliban-FINAL.pdf>) (accessed 5 January 2011); Indian Express, (<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/taliban-using-mosques-as-recruitment-centre/446439/>) (accessed 6 January 2010).

preachers, and young madrassa students moving from place to place, were sent out to local mosques and people's houses to preach and convince young men to join the jihad. In the recruitment of other ethnicities, these religious elements have played a strong role. The clerics transcend ethnic divisions ⁽¹³⁷⁾.

In 2009, for example, two Uzbek Tablighi preachers in Takhar, linked to the Deobandi madrassas in Pakistan, were the main drivers for recruitment in Takhar. They recruited young followers in the madrassa (Dar-ul Ulum Rahmaniya) of the village of Qoroq, where a Tajik and a Chechen had been preaching as well ⁽¹³⁸⁾.

A local correspondent in Logar explained in April 2012 that the Taliban mostly recruit by way of preaching and influencing people: "They attend religious meetings in the villages, such as Friday prayers in mosques, funerals, condolence gatherings and so on. They encourage people to take part in the jihad and to let their sons join the Taliban, which is presented as a religious instruction" ⁽¹³⁹⁾.

A survey in *The Globe and Mail* carried out by a former Taliban police commander in Kandahar presented interviews with Taliban fighters about their motivation. The fighters often gave rehearsed and standardised answers that could indicate their indoctrination: "Afghans should expel infidels" or "infidels subjected our government". Often religious sentences were quoted. Becoming a martyr, jihad and God were also mentioned as important reasons to fight ⁽¹⁴⁰⁾.

During the Danish Immigration Service's fact-finding mission in Afghanistan, 25 February to 4 March 2012, the Cooperation for Peace and Unity stated that people consider it as a religious good deed (Sawab) to provide a recruit to the Taliban ⁽¹⁴¹⁾.

3.2.6 Revenge (badal)

Revenge-killings or badal as a principle in the Pashtunwali is an important driver for recruitment or enlistment on the side of the insurgent groups. Badal revolves around Zan, Zar, Zamin (Women, Wealth, Land). It could also happen to restore honour related to the loss of lives ⁽¹⁴²⁾. The indiscriminate killings of civilians by foreign troops in particular lead to revenge ⁽¹⁴³⁾. The destruction of property and search operations violating houses and private spheres invoke the same feelings of revenge ⁽¹⁴⁴⁾. The local population in the south often call the insurgents who are driven by badal, the majburi (forced) Taliban as opposed to the maktabi (school or ideological) ⁽¹⁴⁵⁾.

A survey in *The Globe and Mail* carried out by a former Taliban police commander in Kandahar presented interviews with Taliban fighters about their motivation. The most common drivers for joining the insurgents as fighters were the following: air attacks by foreign troops on family members, the killing of civilians by the government and opium eradication ⁽¹⁴⁶⁾.

3.2.7 Geographical situation

Giustozzi and Ibrahim state that insurgents stay away from easily accessible areas in the early phases of their infiltration, but that this strategy changes afterwards. Once they grow in strength and gain control over areas, they do appear in the accessible areas. A division between the big cities and remote or rural areas causes a polarisation of the population. Economic growth, government control and changing social values are rather taking place in the cities as opposed to the more conservative rural areas. This division provides a recruitment base for the Taliban outside

⁽¹³⁷⁾ Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽¹³⁸⁾ Giustozzi, A. (<http://www.cigionline.org/publications/2010/7/taliban-beyondpashtuns>) (accessed 11 January 2011); Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽¹³⁹⁾ Local press correspondent based in Logar, telephone interview, 23 April 2012.

⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ Smith, G., 'What Kandahar's Taliban say', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 191–210.

⁽¹⁴¹⁾ Danish Immigration Service (<http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdoonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf>) (accessed 31 May 2012).

⁽¹⁴²⁾ Hussain, R. G. (<http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA479934>) (accessed 13 March 2012).

⁽¹⁴³⁾ International Crisis Group (ICG) (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf>) (accessed 9 May 2012); Major Afsar, S., Major Samples, C., Major Thomas, W. (http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/MILREVIEW_Taliban_Organizational_Analysis.pdf) (accessed 5 January 2011); Nurzai, A. (<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2006/08/21/feature-civilian-casualties-trigger-anti-govt-sentiments>) (accessed 5 January 2011).

⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ Hussain, R. G. (<http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA479934>) (accessed 13 March 2012); Ruttig, T. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=114>) (accessed 12 March 2012); International Crisis Group (ICG) (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf>) (accessed 9 May 2012).

⁽¹⁴⁵⁾ Ruttig, T. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=114>) (accessed 12 March 2012).

⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ Smith, G., 'What Kandahar's Taliban say', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 191–210.

the cities. Throughout Afghan history, this urban-rural divide has been an element influencing politics. A livelihood surplus, monetisation and access to foreign and luxurious products only found in the cities, led urban dwellers to seek domination over the rural population. Conversely, the latter intended to oppose this domination⁽¹⁴⁷⁾.

David Kilcullen sees the natural isolation of groups of the population as an element that opens up possibilities for the influence of extremist movements. Examples of this are the valleys of Watapur and Korengal in Kunar. The geographical remoteness of the mountainous areas has led to the absence of governmental structures. Traditional power relations between the government (malik), tribe (khan and jirga) and religion (mullah and ulema) were destroyed by years of war and conflict. The Taliban used this situation to set up a shadow government, establish religious institutions and put pressure on tribal structures⁽¹⁴⁸⁾.

3.2.8 Government inefficiency and corruption

The dysfunctional and corrupt Afghan authorities are other important drivers for Taliban recruitment. The failings in, for example, the fields of economy and security created dissatisfaction among the Afghan population, who were largely prosperous and hopeful briefly after the fall of the Taliban regime⁽¹⁴⁹⁾. This is especially the case in the justice sector. The Afghan police are notoriously corrupt and bribes have to be paid even to gain access to the courts. Judicial procedures last a long time and the outcomes are influenced by corruption. The Taliban gains popularity by providing security and justice⁽¹⁵⁰⁾.

Many Afghan communities are motivated by their rejection of, and their exclusion from, the corrupt authorities. Local strongmen who monopolised governmental authority and abused it for settling their personal or tribal feuds, often directed Afghan or international forces against their personal opponents accusing them falsely of being Taliban. Targeting communities or tribes in this way resulted in pushing them towards the Taliban in order to defend themselves⁽¹⁵¹⁾.

A leaked ISAF report holding an assessment on the Taliban stated: 'In the last year, there has been unprecedented interest, even from GIROA [Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan] members, in joining the insurgent cause. Afghan civilians frequently prefer Taliban governance over GIROA, usually as a result of government corruption, ethnic bias and lack of connection with local religious and tribal leaders. The effectiveness of Taliban governance allows for increased recruitment rates which, subsequently, bolsters their ability to replace losses'⁽¹⁵²⁾.

British military commanders, returning from Afghanistan, claimed that the ill-disciplined and corrupt Afghan National Police in the province were most mentioned by locals as the main reason for joining the Taliban⁽¹⁵³⁾. A local correspondent in Helmand explained that the Taliban have been successful in curbing and preventing corruption, crime and other misbehaviour. They have also been able to maintain a secure harbour in the areas under their control. The same source states that people trust the Taliban because they provide protection against rivals, criminals and the government⁽¹⁵⁴⁾.

3.3 Minors

Unicef is concerned about the recruitment of children for the armed conflict in Afghanistan. In 2010, the organisation stated that children were recruited as spies and informants, to transport explosives or conduct suicide attacks⁽¹⁵⁵⁾. Recruitment of minors by different armed groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan is reported by different sources. Insurgent groups recruit minors as fighters, informants, guards or even as suicide bombers. Cases of forced

⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areas.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ Kilcullen, D. 'Taliban and Counter-Insurgency in Kunar', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 231–246.

⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ International Crisis Group (ICG) (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf>) (accessed 9 May 2012); Jha, (<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2009/04/11/poor-governance-responsible-taliban-resurgence-ghani>) (accessed 21 January 2011).

⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ International Crisis Group (ICG) (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf>) (accessed 9 May 2012); Peter, T. A. (<http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/story/2012-03-06/afghan-justice/53392066/1>) (accessed 31 May 2012).

⁽¹⁵¹⁾ Ruttig, T. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=114>) (accessed 12 March 2012).

⁽¹⁵²⁾ BBC News Asia (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-16829368>) (accessed 1 March 2012).

⁽¹⁵³⁾ Norton-Taylor, R. (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jun/03/afghanistan-police-fuel-taliban-recruitment>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ Local press correspondent based in Helmand, telephone interview, 23 April 2012.

⁽¹⁵⁵⁾ Unicef (http://www.unicef.nl/media/362246/hac2012_low_web_final.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012); Unicef (http://www.unicef.org/har2010/files/Unicef_Humanitarian_Action_Report_2010-Full_Report_WEB_EN.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012).

recruitment of minors have been mostly reported in the border area between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Children are most vulnerable to recruitment by insurgents in areas where returned refugees and IDPs are living and where protective social and governmental structures do not exist ⁽¹⁵⁶⁾.

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Quetta Shura Taliban) made a statement on the claim that they would recruit children. They refer to Article 69 of their Code of conduct: ‘There is a ban on accommodation of adolescents in places where mujahideen stay and in military centres.’ They argue that they have no need to recruit children as there are more than sufficient adult fighters. They also state that it is against the Sharia and that children are not capable of conducting serious military attacks. The criterion for identifying minors is the ability to grow a beard. This criterion appeared to be largely respected in the Taliban ranks but is, of course, not in line with the criterion of reaching the age of 18 years ⁽¹⁵⁷⁾.

A Taliban commander in the Pakistani Federally Administered Tribal Areas, discussing his recruits, explained: ‘The kids want to join us because they like our weapons. They don’t use weapons to begin with. They just carry them for us. [...] Ours are five, six and seven years old.’ Recruitment of children as young as five years is, indeed, reported. They often do engage in the fighting at a very young age ⁽¹⁵⁸⁾.

According to a Canadian commander, a local recruiter in the district of Panjway in Kandahar, was known (in 2010) for recruiting boys, even as young as eight years, to place IEDs on roads and close to Canadian positions ⁽¹⁵⁹⁾.

3.4 Suicide bombers

According to Giustozzi, the Taliban have been quite ruthless in the recruitment of suicide bombers. They recruited adults for this but also young males 12–17 years old. Since 2010, female suicide bombers have appeared on the field as well. Giustozzi states that there is no real evidence of forced recruitment of suicide bombers. Young boys are trained and indoctrinated, which takes from months to years. Many of them are madrassa students, Afghans or others in the Pakistani madrassas. Sometimes families linked to the Insurgency voluntarily give one of their youngsters to the insurgents for martyrdom in order to gain status within the insurgent organisation ⁽¹⁶⁰⁾.

During the Danish Immigration Service’s fact-finding mission in Afghanistan, 25 February to 4 March 2012, UNHCR mentioned that it was not very informed on this matter, but they assumed that conducting a suicide attack would possibly require a very religious and trained person. The Cooperation for Peace and Unity (CPAU) stated that recruitment for suicide attacks mostly happens in Pakistan. They excluded the possibility of forced recruitment for this, because a suicide attack would require a level of willingness and persuasion. An independent policy research organisation believed that suicide bombers have not been recruited by force and that the Taliban has no difficulties recruiting voluntary suicide attackers. The Civil Society and Human Rights Organisation (CSHRO) stated that the suicide attackers are recruited and indoctrinated in Pakistani madrassas. The organisation explained that after one or two years of education in the madrassa, some youngsters could be selected to attend special classes. After three to four years, a student would be ready to conduct a suicide attack. An independent research institute in Kabul explained during the Danish fact-finding mission that most suicide bombers were recruited in Pakistani refugee camps or among poor families in the south and south-east of Afghanistan. The families are often told that their child would receive an education in a madrassa. The institute also reported that drug addicts and disabled persons have been recruited to become suicide attackers ⁽¹⁶¹⁾.

⁽¹⁵⁶⁾ Coalition to stop the use of child soldiers (http://www.childsoldiersglobalreport.org/files/country_pdfs/FINAL_2008_Global_Report.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012); UN Security Council (<http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/sgrep10.htm>) (accessed 4 January 2011); Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict (<http://www.watchlist.org/reports/pdf/Afghanistan%20Report%202010.pdf>) (accessed 4 January 2011); UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4c1732dc2.htm>) (accessed 4 January 2011); UN Human Rights (<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4c8f28b32.html>) (accessed 4 January 2011); UNAMA (<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4c0e143b2.html>) (accessed 4 January 2011); Irinnews (<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=91676>) (accessed 24 January 2011); Pajhwok Afghan News (<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2009/06/01/swat-taliban-recruit-teenaged-bombers>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽¹⁵⁷⁾ Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (http://shahamat-english.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=10606:statement-of-the-islamic-emirate-in-response-to-the-propaganda-about-recruitment-of-children-in-mart&catid=4:statements&Itemid=4) (accessed 18 April 2012); Landinfo (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1985/1/1985_1.pdf) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽¹⁵⁸⁾ Frontline World (http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/pakistan802/video/video_index.html) (accessed 14 March 2012); Owens, N. (<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/2008/08/02/child-soldiers-trained-by-the-taliban-to-kill-british-soldiers-115875-20681500/>) (accessed 11 January 2011).

⁽¹⁵⁹⁾ Hutchinson, B. (<http://www2.canada.com/ottawacitizen/story.html?id=b611f8ef-4515-4554-aceb-9df794198136&p=1>) (accessed 9 March 2012).

⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ Giustozzi, A. (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012).

⁽¹⁶¹⁾ Danish Immigration Service (<http://www.nydanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf>) (accessed 31 May 2012).

Some minors were given amulets with Koran citations. Their mullahs told them these amulets would protect them. All the people around them would die from the explosion but they would survive thanks to the amulet. They would be heroes on their return and their parents would be allowed into heaven ⁽¹⁶²⁾.

An article mentions a suicide letter given to the father of a martyr in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan. It mentions: 'Infidels have invaded the Muslim country of Afghanistan, and it is our religious duty to support our mujahedeen brothers. Do not mourn my death. It is my will to my brothers, cousins and other relatives to adopt the holy and best way of jihad.' The note was given by unknown men to the father and the young martyr died in a suicide car bomb in Kandahar ⁽¹⁶³⁾.

Summary — Minors and suicide bombers

Different sources report the recruitment of minors by the Taliban, but also by other actors in the Afghan conflict. Forced recruitment of minors is also reported. They are especially vulnerable to recruitment in areas where social and state protective systems are absent, such as refugee and IDP locations.

The Taliban leadership denies the recruitment of underage persons, but they use a different criterion to determine minority. A testimony of a Taliban commander in Pakistan and a commander of Canadian forces could illustrate that the reality does not suit the claims of the Taliban leadership.

According to sources, minors are recruited as suicide attackers. Most of the sources mention that madrassas are a crucial mechanism for the indoctrination and training of suicide bombers. Most sources agree that conducting a suicide attack would require a persuaded, indoctrinated and trained person. Some sources exclude the possibility of forced recruitment for this by the Taliban.

Different sources indicate that the recruitment of minors and suicide attackers by the Taliban happens mostly in the border area: the south and south-east of Afghanistan and in madrassas and refugee communities in north-west Pakistan.

3.5 Recruitment of different ethnicities

In the early years of the Insurgency the recruitment among non-Pashtun groups was negligible (see Section 2.5). Some exceptions were reported, such as the Nuristani and the Pashai in the east of Afghanistan. Starting in 2006, the Taliban's attitude changed. They infiltrated new areas in the west and the north and they accessed non-Pashtun regions ⁽¹⁶⁴⁾. Giustozzi and Ibrahim indicate that there is growing evidence of the Taliban trying to recruit non-Pashtun ethnicities ⁽¹⁶⁵⁾. In 2009, the Taliban recruited among some non-Pashtun groups in Takhar and Baghlan (e.g. Uzbeks and Tajiks) ⁽¹⁶⁶⁾. Uzbeks appear to be the largest group of recruits in the Insurgency in the north apart from the Pashtun ⁽¹⁶⁷⁾. Turkmen have also been recruited in the north. Since the spring of 2010, ethnically mixed Taliban fronts have been seen. Non-Pashtuns are appointed as local commanders, in order to be able to connect to non-Pashtun village elders. In early 2010, the Taliban leadership for the north decided that the fronts and shadow government should be ethnically mixed ⁽¹⁶⁸⁾.

The ethnic composition of known Taliban fronts in northern Afghanistan in summer 2010 is shown in Figure 4 ⁽¹⁶⁹⁾:

| | | | | |
|---------------|------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|
| LEGEND | A: Aimaqs | I: IMU | MX: mixed | NK: not known |
| | P: Pashtun | T: Tajiks | Tu: Turkmens | U: Uzbeks |

⁽¹⁶²⁾ Farmer, B. (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/8515012/Taliban-recruiting-nine-year-old-suicide-bombers.html>) (accessed 1 March 2012).

⁽¹⁶³⁾ Khan, R., Pennington, M. (http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/nationworld/2003545857_pakjihad29.html) (accessed 1 March 2012).

⁽¹⁶⁴⁾ Azarbaijani-Moghaddam, S., 'Northern exposure for the Taliban', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 247–268; Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=24>) (accessed 7 January 2011); Giustozzi, A. (<http://www.cigionline.org/publications/2010/7/taliban-beyondpashtuns>) (accessed 11 January 2011); Ruttig, T. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=114>) (accessed 12 March 2012).

⁽¹⁶⁵⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahim, N. (<http://www.areas.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽¹⁶⁶⁾ Giustozzi, A. (<http://www.cigionline.org/publications/2010/7/taliban-beyondpashtuns>) (accessed 11 January 2011).

⁽¹⁶⁷⁾ Giustozzi, A. (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012).

⁽¹⁶⁸⁾ Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽¹⁶⁹⁾ Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).



Figure 4: Ethnic composition of known Taliban fronts in the north

During the Danish Immigration Service's fact-finding mission in Afghanistan, 25 February to 4 March 2012, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) stated that in non-Pashtun areas, the Taliban would often ask the community to join them or in poor areas individuals would be offered money to fulfil tasks for them⁽¹⁷⁰⁾. A contact in Afghanistan pointed out that where other ethnicities than the Pashtun were recruited, financial incentives are often key⁽¹⁷¹⁾. When insurgents try to reach out to other ethnicities than the Pashtun, religious motives as well are important as a mobilising factor⁽¹⁷²⁾.

During the Danish Immigration Service's fact-finding mission in Afghanistan, 25 February to 4 March 2012, the Cooperation for Peace and Unity stated that it would be 'quite improbable' that the Taliban would try to recruit in Hazara areas and that they 'would definitely not do it by force'. An independent research institute in Kabul confirmed this information. UNAMA shared this opinion. They mentioned, however, that they didn't have a lot of information on this issue. The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) mentioned Hazara communities in Helmand, Ghazni, Wardak and Uruzgan subject to intimidation by the Taliban in order to make them join their ranks. This source explicitly added that these examples are exceptional and Taliban recruitment of Hazaras is not widespread. An independent research institute from Kabul stated that there are some Sunni Hazara groups in Uruzgan, Ghazni and other areas bordering Hazarajat, but that the decision to provide fighters to the Taliban would rather be made by the community than by individual families⁽¹⁷³⁾.

Giustozzi estimated that, as of September 2011, the number of Hazara commanders that had joined the Taliban ranks was fewer than 10 in the whole country. Some of them were allies of the Taliban regime that reconnected during the current insurgency. Others have been mobilised because of local conflicts⁽¹⁷⁴⁾.

For example, some Hazaras joined the Taliban ranks in the province of Samangan, because of local conflicts against rival communities, Uzbeks who formed an Arbakai militia and tried to control the Hazara communities⁽¹⁷⁵⁾. Starting in 2006, there have been reports about attempts by the Taliban to recruit Shia in Ghazni. They succeeded in convincing a few Hazara commanders, with at least a couple of dozen fighters, who were former allies of the Taliban regime between 1996 and 2001 to rejoin their ranks. Financial motives were an important incentive for them. There are reports about there being Taliban spies present among the Shia population of the city of Ghazni⁽¹⁷⁶⁾.

⁽¹⁷⁰⁾ Danish Immigration Service (<http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf>) (accessed 31 May 2012).

⁽¹⁷¹⁾ Local contact with long experience in Afghanistan who monitors and reports on the Afghan context for a major international organisation, e-mail correspondence, 12 April 2012.

⁽¹⁷²⁾ Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽¹⁷³⁾ Danish Immigration Service (<http://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/3FD55632-770B-48B6-935C-827E83C18AD8/0/FFMrapportenAFGHANISTAN2012Final.pdf>) (accessed 31 May 2012).

⁽¹⁷⁴⁾ Giustozzi, A. (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012).

⁽¹⁷⁵⁾ Giustozzi, A. (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012); Giustozzi, A., Reuter, C. (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/uploads/AAN-2011-Northern-Insurgents.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽¹⁷⁶⁾ Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009; Giustozzi, A., *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop — The Neo-Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan*, 2007; Giustozzi, A. (<http://www.cigionline.org/publications/2010/7/taliban-beyondpashtuns>) (accessed 11 January 2011); Giustozzi, A. (http://www.landinfo.no/asset/1745/1/1745_1.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2012).

Summary — Different ethnicities

Since 2001, some small groups of non-Pashtun ethnicities have joined the ranks of the Taliban. The numbers increased from 2006, because the Taliban infiltrated more non-Pashtun areas, and included, for example, Uzbek, Tajik and Turkmen fighters. Financial and religious drivers are important in the recruitment of other ethnicities. Some sources mention Hazara groups or communities that joined the Taliban. Some sources state that individual Hazaras are not the target of Taliban recruitment.

3.6 Pakistan as a recruitment base for the insurgent networks

Different insurgent networks have madrassas and training camps for the recruitment and education of their fighters on Pakistani territory. The groups recruit their full-time fighters in the transboundary Pashtun tribes, in the Afghan refugee community in Pakistan and in the Pakistani madrassas⁽¹⁷⁷⁾.

Already in the first half of 2002, Mullah Omar had started recruiting fighters via his commanders in madrassas in Karachi and Baluchistan. A small group of recruiters visited the Afghan refugee camps, madrassas and mosques in Pakistan. They also visited villages around Quetta to find recruits. The Taliban created training camps in the areas around Quetta and in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (North-West-Frontier Province at that time). These initiatives yielded no success among the old Taliban ranks. Mostly new volunteers aged 20–25 joined the movement⁽¹⁷⁸⁾.

An article mentions, for example, recruitment for the Afghani Taliban in the Charsadda district in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. In some 25 Pashtun villages, recruiters have been looking for fighters. The recruits were sent to Waziristan to training camps⁽¹⁷⁹⁾.

The provinces of Baluchistan, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) are the most important locations for the Afghan insurgents, but Karachi's importance is steadily growing⁽¹⁸⁰⁾. There are lots of small madrassas in Karachi with youngsters who are motivated to join an international jihad. This region has the potential to become one of the most important recruiting grounds for the Taliban⁽¹⁸¹⁾.

3.6.1 Madrassa

Deobandi and Wahabi madrassas in the north-west of Pakistan have for long been an important recruitment base for Afghan insurgent groups such as the Taliban. Some of the most important are: Darul Uloom Haqqania (in Akora Khattak), Darul Uloom Hashemia and Imdadul Uloom-e Sharia. Many young people receive an ideological and religious education in these madrassas and are recruited as fighters. The students are often Afghans living in the refugee camps or areas in Pakistan, but also Afghans coming from Afghanistan especially to attend the madrassas and receive an education there. It is not only Pashtun youngsters who come to these madrassas but also, for example, Uzbeks and Tajiks from Badakhshan⁽¹⁸²⁾.

Various Afghan communities are eager to send their children to madrassas. One of the reasons is that it brings Sawab or the Islamic reward for the performance of good deeds. By sending children to a madrassa, a family also reduces the risk of being accused of infidelity. Moreover, a 'mullah' in the family can create important opportunities for the upwards social mobility of the family. Another important motivation is economics as madrassas offer room and board and feed the students, which releases the families from this burden. Pakistani madrassas are more attractive than Afghan madrassas from this point of view, since they have more resources: this means Afghan families send their children across the border. In some cases, monthly allowances are offered to families for the children attending the madrassa⁽¹⁸³⁾.

⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ Hussain, Z., Page, J. (<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/pakistan-provinces-hotbeds-of-talibanrecruitment/>) (accessed 7 January 2011).

⁽¹⁷⁸⁾ Giustozzi, A., *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop — The Neo-Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan*, 2007.

⁽¹⁷⁹⁾ Khan, R., Pennington, M. (http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/nationworld/2003545857_pakjihad29.html) (accessed 1 March 2012).

⁽¹⁸⁰⁾ Hussain, Z., Page, J. (<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/pakistan-provinces-hotbeds-of-talibanrecruitment/>) (accessed 7 January 2011).

⁽¹⁸¹⁾ Frontline World (http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/pakistan802/video/video_index.html) (accessed 14 March 2012); PajhwokAfghanNews (<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2007/09/15/unregulated-madrassas-flourishing-pakistan-us>) (accessed 21 January 2011).

⁽¹⁸²⁾ Azarbaijani-Moghaddam, S., 'Northern exposure for the Taliban', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 247–268; International Crisis Group (ICG) (<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/207%20The%20Insurgency%20in%20Afghanistans%20Heartland.pdf>) (accessed 9 May 2012).

⁽¹⁸³⁾ Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009; Giustozzi, A., *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop — The Neo-Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan*, 2007; Frontline World (http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/pakistan802/video/video_index.html) (accessed 14 March 2012); Waldman, M. (<http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Guardian/documents/2010/06/13/SISFINAL.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

As many madrassas in Pakistan served as the main recruiting grounds for the Taliban at the beginning of the movement in the 1990s, they fulfilled the same role in the early phases of the Insurgency after 2001. In both cases, the Taliban had only a limited influence in local communities in Afghanistan and the madrassas allowed them to grow in capacity. The Pakistani madrassas are not all supportive of Afghan insurgents or Pakistani militants. Some of them simply tolerate the presence of Taliban recruiters on their territory, whereas, in others, the mullahs actively indoctrinate and recruit themselves. A Taliban commander who attended a madrassa in Quetta witnessed the theme of jihad in Afghanistan often being discussed, as it is in the Islamic legal classes. The teachers claim that it is a good cause and everyone is convinced of that. Students are sometimes sent to Afghanistan to participate in jihad for 10–20 days even before they graduate⁽¹⁸⁴⁾.

Some examples of madrassas facilitating Afghan insurgent recruitment now follow. In the Pashtun Abad quarter in Quetta, the most important madrassa was headed by a hard-line cleric, Maulana Noor Mohammed, in 2009: his students were mainly Afghans. A lot of madrassas are located in the border region around Chaman. In this region, 3 000 students graduate each year and this is an important recruitment base for the Quetta Shura⁽¹⁸⁵⁾. In Bajaur Agency, the Tehrik-e Nafaz-e Shariat-e Muhammadi (TNSM) network facilitated the recruitment of new militants through its Salafi madrassas⁽¹⁸⁶⁾. Some madrassas in North Waziristan are linked to the Haqqani network: Manba-ul-Ulum Madrassa in Dand-e Darpakhel near Miran Shah, Dergey Manday Madrassa, Khalifa Islami Madrassa, Gulsha Madrassa, Abu Shoaib Madrassa, Darul Uloom Faredia Gulshan-e Iulum Madrassa (destroyed in 2006), and Ziul Uloom Madrassa in Dattakhel and the Anwarul Uloom Islamia Seminary in Mir Ali⁽¹⁸⁷⁾.

3.6.2 The refugee camps

Already in the 1980s, the refugee camps in Pakistan were an important base for recruitment. The refugees often needed registration within one of the recognised mujahideen political parties in order to receive a temporary residence permit from the Pakistani government and access to basic livelihood services. In this way, the connection with the armed factions was already present. Young men living in the refugee camps were often highly motivated to take up their task in the jihad against the Russians and liberate their native country⁽¹⁸⁸⁾.

The camps still constituted an important recruitment base at the beginning of the Insurgency after 2001. They were out of the control of the international forces and the Pakistani government was largely ignoring recruitment activities in the camps. Since indoctrination and motivation of the Afghan refugees have always been present since the creation of these camps, these kinds of activities could easily be continued. As the insurgents gained influence in Afghanistan, the relative weight of the camps decreased since more recruiting was gradually happening on Afghan soil⁽¹⁸⁹⁾.

An example of an important recruitment base for the Taliban was the camp Girdijangle in the Chagai hills⁽¹⁹⁰⁾. A main base of support for Hezb-e Islami faction is the Shamshatoo Refugee Camp near Peshawar⁽¹⁹¹⁾.

3.6.3 Training camps

In the border area with Afghanistan, there are a lot of insurgent or militant training camps. According to Matt Waldman's analysis of the relation between the ISI and the insurgents, the Pakistani ISI organised many of these. The camps are training grounds for Jihadists of different groups. Among them is the Afghan Taliban. Many members of the Afghan Taliban, even those recruited in Afghanistan, receive training in the camps or at locations in Pakistan. An example of this was a house in Wana in South Waziristan. A Taliban commander witnessed the ISI training 20–50 people in this place on the use of suicide vests and car bombs (Vehicle Borne IEDs — VBIEDs). Another commander explains how he spent a year in a very large madrassa in Pakistan, with 2 000–4 000 students. The madrassa included a military training camp, where combat techniques, such as the use of IEDs, attack and ambush were taught. Most of the students were Afghans. Another commander also explains that he and other Afghan students in the madrassa

⁽¹⁸⁴⁾ Zaeef, A. S., *My life with the Taliban*, 2010; Giustozzi, A., Ibrahimi, N. (<http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽¹⁸⁵⁾ Hussain, Z., Page, J. (<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/pakistan-provinces-hotbeds-of-talibanrecruitment/>) (accessed 7 January 2011).

⁽¹⁸⁶⁾ The American Foreign Policy Council (<http://almanac.afpc.org/taliban>) (accessed 9 March 2012).

⁽¹⁸⁷⁾ Dressler, J. A. (http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/Haqqani_Network_0.pdf) (accessed 5 January 2011).

⁽¹⁸⁸⁾ Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, pp. 238–239 and p. 321; Oxfam International, *The Cost of War*, 2009, pp. 7–9; Zaeef, A. S., *My life with the Taliban*, 2010, p. 19, footnotes 10 and 11, p. 20 and pp. 24–27.

⁽¹⁸⁹⁾ Giustozzi, A., Ibrahimi, N. (<http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012).

⁽¹⁹⁰⁾ Giustozzi, A., *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop — The Neo-Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan*, 2007.

⁽¹⁹¹⁾ Marzban, O. ([http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=4189&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=182&no_cache=1](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=4189&tx_ttnews[backPid]=182&no_cache=1)) (accessed 28 May 2012); Moreau, R. (<http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2011/04/24/the-jihadi-high-school.html>) (accessed 1 March 2012).

went to a military training camp for a couple of months and had training in fighting in Afghanistan for a month. Then they returned to the madrassa. The training camp was located in Mansehra in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and sheltered up to 2 500 men. They received a comprehensive training: attack and ambush techniques, the use of RPGs (Rocket Propelled Grenade) and Kalashnikov PKM heavy machine guns and escape tactics. IED training took place in other locations. ISI trainers appeared to be present in this camp as well. It is believed that the training camps were reduced in size and better concealed in the recent years, probably due to US drone attacks on the large camps in the past ⁽¹⁹²⁾.

There are small, covert Haqqani training bases in North Waziristan, Kurram Agency and Quetta. They are often combined with a madrassa and include suicide bomber cells. According to Waldman, the suicide cells are believed to be led by Pakistanis, Arabs, Chechens and other foreigners who use teenagers from the madrassas. A description of a Haqqani training base in Miramshah: 'The base I use is a house, with a huge basement, for around 50 people. Outside is a big board saying it is an office: the basement is divided into sections; for example, some groups are being trained in IEDs. They sleep and eat in these rooms. People being trained for suicide attacks are kept separate. There is also a big madrassa hall. Groups are taken off to other places to practice shooting or whatever. People stay for a month' ⁽¹⁹³⁾.

Summary — Pakistan as a base

Pakistan has been an indispensable recruitment base for opposition and insurgent groups in the past decades.

The Taliban and other groups have been able to recruit fighters in transboundary tribes, Afghan refugee communities and Deobandi and Wahabi madrassas in Pakistan. This proved particularly valuable in the eras when they had only a limited influence in the Afghan territory. Training facilities have been established on Pakistani soil as well.

The most important regions supportive of the Afghan Taliban and other insurgent groups are: the province of Baluchistan, around the city of Quetta; different areas of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas; and the city of Karachi.

⁽¹⁹²⁾ Waldman, M. (<http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Guardian/documents/2010/06/13/SISFINAL.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

⁽¹⁹³⁾ Waldman, M. (<http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Guardian/documents/2010/06/13/SISFINAL.pdf>) (accessed 28 March 2012).

Analysis

1. Recruitment in general

A Military Review report ⁽¹⁹⁴⁾ states that the base of the Taliban recruitment is the local cell. This can be a madrasa, mosque, mullah or religious network, a local commander, the village or tribe ⁽¹⁹⁵⁾.

Thomas Ruttig ⁽¹⁹⁶⁾ confirms this statement and adds that “local populations tend to see ‘external fighters’ with suspicion”. He also refers to the Lahya which does not encourage commanders’ activities outside their own areas and even regulates the local restrictions of fronts heavily ⁽¹⁹⁷⁾.

Information on events in the history of Afghanistan illustrates how social structures were formed that influence the situation today ⁽¹⁹⁸⁾.

COMMANDER Through decades of social fragmentation, caused by consecutive conflicts, and through a continuously changing context, the strong need for protection was organised locally. The geographical situation, level of development and lack of infrastructure strengthened this fragmentation. Armed forces protecting communities needed structural flexibility to be able to survive the changing circumstances. This flexibility was found in the autonomy of the local commanders and their followers. This autonomy is often based on the support of a village or area, a tribe or qawm, personal affiliations and relations. The autonomy includes recruitment and the choice of the side of a political faction ⁽¹⁹⁹⁾.

TRIBE In many regions of Afghanistan, tribal structures are still strong, especially among Pashtun. Tribal relations can facilitate the persuasion of communities to join the Taliban. Tribal or qawm leaders determine the position of the tribe and its individuals. This community based recruitment determines the mechanisms for individual recruitment. Tribal loyalty and/or tradition are active drivers ⁽²⁰⁰⁾.

CLERIC Religious clerics gained influence in the past decades in Afghanistan ⁽²⁰¹⁾. Local mullahs have been co-opted by the Taliban movement and preach in their favour in local mosques ⁽²⁰²⁾. Mullahs, mosques and madrassas have played a very important role in the recruitment of Taliban fighters ⁽²⁰³⁾.

Some sources provide information that is indirectly indicative of the importance of these local structures; the Taliban usually seek approval of local leaders before entering or starting activities in an area, and they co-opt local

⁽¹⁹⁴⁾ Major Afsar, S., Major Samples, C., Major Thomas, W. (http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/MILREVIEW_Taliban_Organizational_Analysis.pdf) (accessed 5 January 2011). About the authors of the report: Major Shahid Afsar is a Pakistani army infantry officer attending the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA — Major Afsar has served in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas; Major Chris Samples is a US Army Special Forces officer attending the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA — Major Samples has deployed to Afghanistan three times; Major Thomas Wood is a US Army psychological operations officer attending the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA.

⁽¹⁹⁵⁾ See Section 3.1.

⁽¹⁹⁶⁾ Thomas Ruttig is co-director and co-founder of the Afghanistan Analysts Network. He studied Afghanistics at Humboldt University, Berlin (Germany) and has spent almost 10 years working in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

⁽¹⁹⁷⁾ Ruttig, T. (<http://aanafghanistan.com/uploads/20100624TR-HowTribalAretheTaleban-FINAL.pdf>) (accessed 5 January 2011) (<http://aan-afghanistan.com/index.asp?id=49>).

⁽¹⁹⁸⁾ See Section 1.

⁽¹⁹⁹⁾ Barfield, T., *Afghanistan — A Cultural and Political History*, 2010, pp. 240–245 and p. 282; Giustozzi, A., Ibrahimi, N., (<http://www.areu.org.af/EditionDetails.aspx?EditionId=573&ContentId=7&ParentId=7&Lang=en-US>) (accessed 8 February 2012); Giustozzi, A., *Empires of Mud*, 2009.

⁽²⁰⁰⁾ See Synthesis of information, 3.2.4.

⁽²⁰¹⁾ See Synthesis of information, 1.1.

⁽²⁰²⁾ See Sections 2.4 and 2.3.1.

⁽²⁰³⁾ See Sections 3.1, 3.2.5 and 3.6.

mullahs⁽²⁰⁴⁾. According to a contact in Afghanistan, there is a trend to further localise the organisation of the Taliban. This contact, who monitors and reports on the Afghan context for a major international organisation, and has had long experience in Afghanistan, was contacted and questioned via e-mail in April 2012⁽²⁰⁵⁾.

Conclusion

Two sources are presented that state explicitly that the local cell is the base for Taliban recruitment. Historical developments and the available information on the commander, tribe and cleric provide confirmation of this statement. Furthermore, some sources explain elements or developments that can be seen as an indirect confirmation of this principle.

Recruitment of individual fighters is in general organised locally and happens through existing social structures: (i) the local commander leading the lowest level of military organisation, a front, who autonomously recruits and replaces fighters — his human resources are located within his atmosphere of influence and could be, for example, his qawm, tribe or village; (ii) the tribal or qawm leaders who decide on the position of the families and on recruitment; (iii) the local mullah, mosque or madrassa who are involved in the recruitment.

Interactions between these social structures and the different recruitment drivers create recruitment grounds. For example, ideological and religious motivations or incentives are used to try to co-opt commanders and tribal leaders to make them join the insurgency. The commanders recruit their own fighters locally in their region and via their personal and tribal relations. The tribal leaders might decide to deliver fighters for the jihad. This decision can be based on tribal tradition. Another example considers that unemployment and poverty might be drivers for sending children to madrassas. In this way, they stop being an economic burden on the family. In the madrassas, ideological and religious persuasion are drivers for recruitment of children or young men in armed groups⁽²⁰⁶⁾.

2. Forced recruitment

One of the mechanisms or drivers for recruitment is the use of coercion or the so-called forced recruitment. Generally, sources do not specify what is exactly meant by this. In defining this phenomenon, a distinction should be made between the different, possible actors.

Family members or near relatives could use coercion against an individual relative in order to force him to become a fighter. The available information gives indications of economic, religious and other factors pushing a family towards enlisting one of their young males in the Taliban forces or sending them to madrassas where they could be subject to recruitment⁽²⁰⁷⁾. The available information does not provide indications on if and how individual families would use coercion against family members.

Tribal or community leaders could use coercion against families or individuals in case of community mobilisation for the Taliban's cause. The available information presents different reasons for communities to join the insurgency, such as loyalty to the old Taliban regime, economic incentives, power play against governmental figures, feuds with other communities and revenge against indiscriminate killings committed by foreign troops. In some tribes (especially among Pashtuns), two specific recruitment mechanisms could be active within the community mobilisation: an obligated conscript per family for the tribal armed group or Lashkar and the duty to replace killed fighters by relatives (call-ups)⁽²⁰⁸⁾.

In the case of mullahs or religious persons, the available information indicates that they use religious persuasion and indoctrination in the recruitment process⁽²⁰⁹⁾.

Forced recruitment by Taliban military commanders, leaders or fighters refers to situations where individuals or their families are directly approached and forced to join up under threat of retaliation or violence if they refuse.

⁽²⁰⁴⁾ See Section 2.3.1.

⁽²⁰⁵⁾ Local contact with long experience in Afghanistan who monitors and reports on the Afghan context for a major international organisation, e-mail correspondence, 12 April 2012.

⁽²⁰⁶⁾ See Section 3.2.

⁽²⁰⁷⁾ See Sections 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.4, 3.2.5, 3.2.6, 3.2.8 and 3.6.1.

⁽²⁰⁸⁾ See Sections 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.4, 3.2.5, 3.2.6, 3.2.8.

⁽²⁰⁹⁾ See Sections 3.2.5 and 3.6.1.

Different sources provide evidence of forced recruitment in the province of Helmand, Kunduz (the source is an anti-Taliban militia leader, however), Kunar and places in Pakistan. Two different sources report forced recruitment in the province of Uruzgan. Both mentioned explicitly that these cases were exceptional. Sources stated explicitly about Logar, Herat and Ghazni that forced recruitment did not happen there ⁽²¹⁰⁾. In a survey in *The Globe and Mail* carried out by a former Taliban police commander, Taliban fighters in Kandahar were interviewed and questioned about their motivations. None of them mentioned the use of direct force or coercion by the Taliban ⁽²¹¹⁾.

Different sources refer to locations where forced recruitment did happen: IDP and refugee camps and areas under strong influence of the Taliban ⁽²¹²⁾.

Different sources arguing on the general situation in Afghanistan commonly state that coercion is rare in the recruitment process: Giustozzi and Ibrahim, Landinfo, AIHCR, CPAU. Some even mentioned that it does not happen. Sometimes, sources give arguments to support these statements. It is mentioned that there is no need for the Taliban to recruit fighters by force, because they have sufficient volunteers. Another argument is that forced recruitment would alienate communities from the Taliban. An illustration of this was given by Martine van Bijlert ⁽²¹³⁾ about forced recruitment in Uruzgan that undermined the local support for the Taliban ⁽²¹⁴⁾.

Conclusion

Forced recruitment by Taliban military commanders, leaders or fighters (i.e. situations where individuals or their families are directly approached and forced to join up under threat of retaliation or violence if they refuse) has to be considered as exceptional. Many reliable sources state this explicitly and plausible arguments are given for this statement.

The available information provides examples of these exceptional cases in Helmand, Kunduz, Kunar, areas in Pakistan and in Uruzgan. The sources often mention where these exceptional cases can be found: in areas under strong Taliban influence or full Taliban control and in areas where social and state protective structures are absent, such as refugee and IDP camps.

3. Non-Pashtun ethnicities

Since 2001, a few groups of non-Pashtun ethnicities have joined the ranks of the Taliban. The numbers increased from 2006 onwards because the Taliban infiltrated more non-Pashtun areas, and included, for example, Uzbek, Tajik and Turkmen fighters. The recruitment of other ethnicities depends on financial incentives and religious persuasion ⁽²¹⁵⁾.

Different sources state that the Taliban would not go into Hazara areas to recruit fighters. One source mentions explicitly that the decision to join the Taliban would be for the community and not for an individual Hazara to make. Reports found about Hazaras joining the Taliban all mention community mobilisation or Hazara commanders joining the Taliban ranks with their armed group. It concerns former Taliban allies, mobilisation because of local conflicts or driven by financial incentives ⁽²¹⁶⁾.

⁽²¹⁰⁾ See Section 3.2.3.

⁽²¹¹⁾ Smith, G., 'What Kandahar's Taliban say', Giustozzi, A., *Decoding the New Taliban*, 2009, pp. 191–210.

⁽²¹²⁾ See Section 3.2.3.

⁽²¹³⁾ Martine van Bijlert was political adviser to the EU's Special Representative for Afghanistan and independent consultant on Afghanistan, among others, for the Netherlands Embassy in Kabul. She worked for a humanitarian organisation in Afghanistan during the Taliban regime.

⁽²¹⁴⁾ See Section 3.2.3.

⁽²¹⁵⁾ See Section 3.5.

⁽²¹⁶⁾ See Section 3.5.

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Glossary

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| ANA | Afghan National Army: the internationally trained Afghan Army (2002) |
| Arbaki | Arbaki are locally organised tribal or community militia. |
| Badal | Badal is the Pashtunwali principle of revenge, which revolves around zan, zar, zamin (Women, Wealth, Land), or in order to restore honour in case of the killing of a family or tribe member. |
| Bayat | Bayat originates in the Arabic word for oath or allegiance and is an Islamic oath of subservience. |
| Deobandism | The Deobandi school of Islam originated in 1866 in the town of Deoband in northern India at the Dar-ul-Uloom Seminary. It is a revivalist movement based on strict adherence to Sunna and Sharia. The core beliefs of the Deobandi school include: a Muslim's loyalty to Islam first and then to the nation; adherence to the primacy of the Ummah, or global Muslim community over all other communities; and a belief in the sacred obligation to wage jihad to protect Muslims. |
| FATA | Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Pakistan) |
| Hawala | Hawala is an informal money transfer system, based on a hawaladar (money broker) who receives the money together with some kind of password. He contacts another hawaladar where the money can be collected by providing this password. The money transfer happens without really moving the money. The hawaladars receive a commission. |
| Hazarajat | The land of the Hazaras in central Afghanistan, centered around Bamyan and Daykundi. It includes large parts of the provinces of Ghor, Uruzgan, Wardak and Ghazni. |
| IED | Improvised Explosive Device — usually a self-made bomb. It can be remote controlled (RCIED), vehicle or body-borne (VBIED or BBIED — car or suicide bombs), other variants are also possible. Used in asymmetric warfare. |
| Imam | Title and term of respect for the Islamic person who leads in the five daily prayers. It can also refer to a distinguished religious leader. |
| IMU | Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan |
| Insurgency | Armed rebellion against the government. This term is the most used in the literature and by sources about the conflict in Afghanistan from 2001 and still ongoing. |
| ISAF | International Security Assistance Force — an international military coalition, based on the NATO alliance, active in Afghanistan to support the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) and to secure and stabilise the country (http://www.isaf.nato.int/). |
| ISI | The Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence is the most important intelligence agency of the Pakistani authorities. It is known for its strong independency and often called a state within the state. It has been strongly involved in the conflict with India and in the Afghan conflicts of the past decades. |
| Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan | The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan was the state form in Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001 under the Taliban regime, the Taliban still use this name (http://www.shahamat-english.com/). |

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| Jihad | Jihad is a term derived from an Arabic root meaning ‘to struggle’ or ‘to strive’. It has different meanings. The term is used in this report in the meaning of the by Islamic law legal war. |
| Khalq | Literally, ‘people’ or ‘masses’ — the faction of the PDPA headed by Noor Muhammad Taraki and Hafizullah Amin. |
| Khan | A tribal chief or leader of a community. It is also an honorific title for landowners. |
| Lahya | ‘Book of rules’, the Taliban code of conduct for fighters and organisational rules. |
| Lashkar | A Lashkar in Pashtu is a tribal militia, a form of tribal mobilisation for war, where every household has to contribute a male of fighting age. |
| Loya Jirga | A Loya Jirga is a ‘grand assembly’ or ‘grand council’ in which tribal leaders, coming from different areas gather to discuss important political topics. Originally, this was a Pashtun tradition but, in the Afghan context, other ethnicities also participated in Loya Jirgas. |
| Madrasa | A madrasa is an Islamic religious school. |
| Malik | Tribal leader and local strongman on a district or sub-district level — often the representative of the community in the government for local affairs. |
| Malmastia | Malmastia is a Pashtunwali principle which prescribes the duties of hospitality and protection of guests. A person visiting a Pashtun tribe or family can claim asylum here regardless of the previous relationship between the parties. Pashtuns rely on this principle to travel through Pashtun areas and find food and shelter. |
| Mawlawi | Mawlawi is an Islamic title used by graduates of madrassas who have also received further religious education: the equivalent of postgraduate study for scholars of Islam. They are members of the ulema. |
| Mujahideen | Mujahideen are Islamic holy warriors. |
| Mullah | A mullah is a religious functionary or cleric extremely prevalent outside the cities in Afghanistan. They are usually the single religious authority in a village and studied in a madrasa. They can often read Arabic and the Koran. They are teachers and preachers. |
| Nanawatey | Nanawatey is the Pashtunwali principle that means ‘to seek forgiveness’. As the sole alternative to badal, an offender could address their victim to seek forgiveness. |
| Nang | Nang is the Pashtunwali principle of honour. A Pashtun is obliged to protect his and his family’s honour. |
| Northern Alliance | ‘The United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan’ was an alliance opposition group to the Taliban regime under the leaderships of Rabbani, Massoud, Dostum, Sayyaf and Ismail Khan. The alliance was pushed back by the Taliban regime into a northern corner of Afghanistan. It was supported by the USA in 2001 in order to defeat the Taliban regime. It is called ‘the Northern Alliance’ by the international community. |
| Parcham | The faction of the PDPA headed Babrak Karmal. |
| Pashtunwali | The Pashtunwali is the Pashtun tribal code of honour, a customary law system providing rules of behaviour and organisation of life. |
| PDPA | People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan, leftist party in power in Kabul from 1978 until 1992. |

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| Tablighi Jamaat | Tablighi Jamaat is a Deobandi missionary organisation. |
| Qawm | Qawm is the basic social unit in Afghanistan, based on relationships such as kinship or residence. In English, the words ‘tribe’ or ‘clan’ are often used to translate it. |
| Quetta Shura | The leadership of the Afghan Taliban is located in Quetta. It is known as the Rabari (leadership) or Markazi Shura (Central Council), but is also often referred to as Quetta Shura. It is led by Mullah Mohammad Omar. It is not to be confused with the Taliban military council for the south of Afghanistan, which is also often called ‘Quetta Shura’. |
| Salafism | Salafism is a Sunni Islamic Theology School known for its strict and puritanical interpretation of Islam. |
| Sawab | Sawab is an Islamic spiritual reward for good deeds and piety. |
| Sharia | Islamic law, used and interpreted by the schools of jurisprudence (Hanafi, Hanbali, Maliki, Shafii and Ja’fari). |
| Shura | A Shura is a Community council. |
| Strongman | A powerful, influential political figure who exercises leadership and control by force. |
| Sunna | Established Islamic custom or precedent established by the example of the Prophet Muhammad: the Prophet’s companions recorded this set of principles and traditions in the ahadith (plural of hadith, prophetic norm). |
| Tablighi | An Islamic missionary revivalist tendency |
| Talib | Religious student — the plural ‘Taliban’ is used to identify the Taliban movement with its leader Mullah Mohammad Omar. |
| Ulema | The plural of alim, which means Islamic legal scholar. |
| Ushr | Ushr is an Islamic tax on certain products, for example on agricultural products: normally, 10 % of the value. |
| Wahabism | Wahabism is an ultra-conservative Sunni Islamic movement, based on the Salafi theology and characterised by the strict observance of the Koran. Its origins and heartland are in Saudi Arabia. |
| Warlord | A legitimate, charismatic and patrimonial military leader with autonomous control over a military force capable of achieving/maintaining a monopoly of large scale violence over a sizeable territory ⁽²¹⁷⁾. |
| Zakat | Religious tax on assets and liquidity (2.5 %): the practice of almsgiving or zakat is one of the five pillars of Islam. |

⁽²¹⁷⁾ Giustozzi, Empires of Mud, 2009, p. 5

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European Asylum Support Office

EASO Country of Origin Information Afghanistan: Taliban Strategies - Recruitment

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

2012 — 52 pp. — 21 x 29.7 cm

ISBN 978-92-9507906-9

doi:10.2847/13321

BZ-30-12-564-EN-C



Publications Office



ISBN 978-929507906-9

9 789295 079069

doi:10.2847/13321