



Afghanistan Annual Program Performance Report 2011

July 2012

Summary

This report summarises the Australian aid program's progress—as delivered by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)—in Afghanistan in 2011. The aim of the program is to build the Government of Afghanistan's capacity to deliver basic services and provide economic opportunities to its people. In 2011, AusAID delivered the majority of Australian official development assistance to Afghanistan. Assistance is delivered in accordance with *Australia's Strategic Approach to Aid in Afghanistan 2010–2012*.

Context

Afghanistan's development gains over the last 10 years are impressive. The country is on track to achieve, or partially achieve, two of the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2020, namely universal primary education (MDG 2), and improve maternal health (MDG 5), as measured by a 50 per cent reduction in the maternal mortality ratio.¹

There have been substantial and, in some cases, remarkable gains in Afghanistan's key development indicators, to which Australia has made a strong contribution. Despite its progress, the country remains among the poorest and least developed in the world. Since development is a long-term process, progress in Afghanistan will continue to be incremental, and it will take a generation or longer to bring Afghanistan to the level of many other Least Developed Countries.

In November 2011, Australia's Prime Minister stated that the Government is committed to long-term engagement with Afghanistan through this decade at least. We will support the Afghan Government's efforts to ensure long-term peace and prosperity. It is in our national interest that Afghanistan never again becomes a safe haven for terrorists.

The aid program is an increasingly important part of Australia's engagement in Afghanistan and will continue to be more so in its post-transition environment.

¹ MDG Monitor, Afghanistan (2012), http://www.mdgmonitor.org/country_progress.cfm?c=AFG&cd=4

Security, diplomatic and development assistance are pursued jointly in Afghanistan by Australia and the international community. The Australian aid program operates as part of a broader international and whole-of-government reconstruction and development effort in Afghanistan. Australia is part of the UN-mandated International Security Assistance Force—representing 50 countries—to support the Afghan Government to stabilise the country and build capacity to take responsibility for its own security.

Australia's aid program supports the Afghan Government in its transition to Afghan-led security by 2014,² Both security and development will be important to ensuring the transition is sustainable. The World Bank forecasts that Afghanistan will face a major economic shock post-transition, possibly a fiscal gap of up to \$4.1 billion in what is known as the Transformation Decade (2014 to 2024). Prioritising expenditure, increasing revenue and creating jobs are therefore urgent tasks for the Afghan Government. The Australian aid program is well placed to assist Afghanistan as it attempts to meet these challenges.

Uruzgan is one of the poorest provinces in one of the world's poorest countries. The literacy rate for women is less than 1 per cent, compared to 18 per cent across the rest of Afghanistan. Less than 10 per cent of people living in the province have access to safe drinking water.

Australian aid is making a real difference to the lives of people in Uruzgan. Australian civilian development and stabilisation advisers work in-province, alongside the Australian Defence Force, as part of the multinational Provincial Reconstruction Team. In 2011, with the support of the International Security Assistance Force, a team of Australian civilian advisers played a pivotal role in Uruzgan. They brought resources and cohesion to its stabilisation agenda and worked with the provincial government to lay the foundations for continued development progress.

Transition poses a number of changes and challenges for Afghanistan. The Australian aid program's efforts through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) and bilateral assistance in education, agriculture and rural development, and governance are well placed to support the Afghan Government's efforts to continue to improve the lives of its people post-transition, through the Transformation Decade. Australia's support will aim to help the Afghan Government:

² This date marks the end of the withdrawal of foreign armed forces and the beginning of Afghanistan taking full responsibility for the security of the country.



- maintain and continue to improve development progress for women and girls
- implement electoral reforms required to ensure inclusive, credible and democratic elections are conducted in 2014 and 2015
- institute requisite anti-corruption and economic reforms
- create necessary short, medium and long-term jobs to foster long-term economic growth.

Sustained and continued progress in the areas of human rights and inclusive development, especially for women and girls, as well as tackling corruption and undertaking electoral and economic reforms will be crucial to maintain development progress.

Australia's 2011 *Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness* was 'impressed by some of the Australian aid program's achievements in Afghanistan, which deserve wider recognition.' In 2011, Australia's contribution made a difference in the day-to-day lives of the Afghan people.

Program objectives and strategy

Australia's current development objective in Afghanistan is to build the Afghan Government's capacity to deliver basic services and provide economic opportunities to its people.

The Australian aid program focuses on:

- enhancing basic service delivery in health and education
- supporting rural development and livelihoods
- improving governance and the effectiveness of the Afghan Government
- supporting vulnerable populations.

The majority of Australian official development assistance to Afghanistan is delivered by AusAID, with expenditure by program objective listed in the table below.

Expenditure

Table 1: Estimated AusAID expenditure in 2011–12 ³

Objective	A\$ million	% of bilateral program
Enhancing basic service delivery in health and education	\$32.1m	19%
Supporting rural development and livelihoods	\$54.5m	33%
Improving governance and the effectiveness of the Afghan Government	\$67.7m	41%
Supporting vulnerable populations	\$11m	7%
	\$165.3m	100%

Afghanistan receives a significant amount of development assistance from a large number of bilateral donors, multilateral organisations, UN and humanitarian agencies, and Afghan, Australian and international non-government organisations (NGOs). The aid dependency ratio as a component of gross domestic product is one of the highest in the world and region.⁴ The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ranks Australia as the eighth largest bilateral donor to Afghanistan.

Donor coordination, led primarily by the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, is key to the effective delivery of reconstruction and social and economic development assistance. Australia works closely with national, international and multilateral organisations, other bilateral donors and NGOs to maximise the impact of Australian official development assistance. One of our major partners is the World Bank, which manages the ARTF.

³ This table of expenditure above involves a different breakdown to the pie chart included in AusAID's submission (submission 16) to the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade *Inquiry into the administration, management and objectives of Australia's overseas development program in Afghanistan in the context of the 'Transition Decade'* http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Committees?url=fadt_ctte/afghanistan/submissions.htm but both are based on the same data. This table provides a breakdown of AusAID's Afghanistan Program's estimated expenditure for 2011-12 according to the objectives contained in the country strategy *Australia's Strategic Approach to Aid in Afghanistan 2010–2012*. The pie graph in the submission provides a breakdown of AusAID's Afghanistan Program expenditure for 2011-12 according to AusAID's strategic goals as detailed in *Helping the World's Poor through Effective Aid: Australia's Comprehensive Aid Policy Framework 2015-16* <http://www.aisaid.gov.au/Publications/Pages/comprehensive-aid-policy-framework.aspx>

⁴ Afghanistan Ministry for Finance (2010), *Development Cooperation Report*, p. 15.



Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund

The ARTF remained a major component of the Australian aid program in Afghanistan in 2011. AusAID contributions to the ARTF represented approximately 50 per cent of AusAID's total development funding to Afghanistan in 2011. The ARTF provides a vehicle for donors to pool resources and direct their support towards the Afghan Government's development priorities.

Australia plays an increasingly important role in the management and policy direction of the Fund. In 2011, AusAID participated in the ARTF Strategy Group, Donor Committee and Incentive Program Working Group. AusAID also encouraged an external review of the ARTF's capacity to remain as the main mechanism for providing international assistance through Afghan government systems beyond transition. The review concept received strong support from other ARTF donors. The review is scheduled to start in early 2012.

The ARTF aligns with the Australian Government's commitments under *An Effective Aid Program for Australia*. It works to strengthen the Afghan Government's budget as the main policy tool for allocating resources to priority needs. The ARTF is also helping the Afghan Government to prepare to take on a greater leadership role in both security and governance as it heads into its Transformation Decade.

As the Afghan Government prepares to take on a greater leadership role in security and governance, the ARTF is promoting the reforms necessary for gradual transition towards Afghan ownership. By providing assistance for Afghan development priorities directly through Afghan systems, the ARTF strengthens the Afghan budget as the main policy tool for directing and allocating resources for priority needs, and assists in building the capacity of the Afghan Government.

In late 2010, there were significant delays in agreement between the International Monetary Fund and the Afghan Government on a new Fund support package for Afghanistan, particularly as a result of the Kabul Bank crisis (a major corruption scandal in 2010, with \$900 million in fraudulent loans diverted to bank insiders). In 2011, Australia—with other key donors— withheld its planned, substantial, financial contributions to the ARTF until the Afghan Government committed to a program of necessary fraud mitigation and financial reform measures developed by the International Monetary Fund. A package of reform measures was agreed in November 2011.

Despite the challenges in 2011, ARTF-funded development programs continued to deliver substantial results, including:

- rehabilitating more than 400km of additional rural roads under the National Rural Access Program
- creating more than 1400 additional Community Development Councils under the National Solidarity Program
- since 2008, increasing the number of additional classrooms built through the Education Quality Improvement Program II, to 1733 .

Progress against objectives

Table 2: Ratings of the program's progress towards the objectives

Objective	Current rating	Relative to previous rating
Enhancing basic service delivery in health and education	■	Consistent
Supporting rural development and livelihoods	■	Consistent
Improving governance and the effectiveness of the Afghan Government	■	Consistent
Supporting vulnerable populations	■	Consistent

Note:

- The objective will be fully achieved within the timeframe of the strategy.
- The objective will be partly achieved within the timeframe of the strategy.
- The objective is unlikely to be achieved within the timeframe of the strategy.

Objective 1: Enhancing basic service delivery in health and education

Australia's cooperation with the Afghan Government in the health and education sectors is critical to helping the Afghan people overcome poverty. Australia's assistance focuses on increasing the availability of these basic services, improving their quality and building the Afghan Government's capacity to manage health and education services.

The delivery of education and health services in Afghanistan faces significant challenges. Ongoing conflict and a legacy of low public investment and capacity have affected the country's education and health outcomes. Access is difficult in remote and insecure areas, which compounds the issue for women and girls more generally. There are low levels of literacy, low school enrolment and retention, and high drop-out rates—especially among girls. Demand for education is high but there is a persistent shortage of qualified teachers.

Afghanistan's health indicators rank among the lowest in the world and in the region. Maternal and child health is of serious concern. Home delivery of newborns is still the norm, with less than 25 per cent of births attended by skilled health personnel.⁵ Approximately 1 out of every 11 women dies from pregnancy-related causes.⁶ In 2011, ongoing conflict and insecurity across Afghanistan remained the fundamental impediment to improving the delivery of basic education and health services. The capacity of the Afghan Government at national, provincial and district levels remained low during the year and there was

⁵ Save the Children, *2012 State of the Worlds Mothers Report*.

⁶ *ibid.*



a persistent shortage of trained candidates to fill positions in both sectors. Uruzgan continues to face major development challenges in these sectors.

Australia's main contribution to development in education and health is through the ARTF. AusAID's contribution to the Fund supports activities such as constructing schools and clinics, training and funding teachers and medical staff, and strengthening the Afghan Government's capacity to deliver services through National Priority Programs such as the Education Quality Improvement Project (EQUIP) and Strengthening Health Activities for the Rural Poor (SHARP).

In 2011, Australia continued to deliver bilateral assistance to the education and health sectors through phase two of the Development Assistance Facility for Afghanistan⁷ and NGOs. We also supported UN agencies delivering these services in remote and isolated areas.

Afghanistan has moved up one place in Save the Children's *State of the World's Mothers* report, and is no longer the worst place in the world to be a mother.⁸ Skilled birth attendance rose from 14 to 24 per cent.⁹ Maternal mortality decreased from 1000 annual deaths per 100 000 live births in 2000 to 460 deaths per 100 000 live births in 2010 (World Bank). Child mortality for children under the age of 5 years decreased from 1 in 5 in 2006, to 1 in 10 in 2010.¹⁰ Today, 85 per cent of the population live in districts that have access to basic health services, compared to less than 10 per cent under the Taliban.

Education

1. Enhancing access to basic education

Australia's support to the ARTF contributed to increased enrolments in basic education from around 1 million in 2001 to almost 8 million in 2012, including more than 2.7 million girls. As at December 2011, the ARTF-funded EQUIP had completed the construction of 271 schools across Afghanistan and was in the process of building another 500 schools. It is estimated that more than 500 000 students (more than 191 000 female) are now studying in EQUIP-supported schools.

Australia is helping to fill a critical gap, particularly for girls, in basic education services in remote and rural communities. In mid-2011, Australia began supporting CARE's Empowerment through Education Program that aims to

⁷ Development Assistance Facility for Afghanistan Phase II is a bilateral contracted facility through which Australia provides, training and technical assistance to the Afghan Government. It aims to build capacity at national and provincial levels within the Afghan ministries of: rural rehabilitation and development; education; public health; and agriculture, irrigation and livestock. It also supports Australian reconstruction efforts in Uruzgan. It provides flexible funding, using a broad range of modes of assistance covering: deploying advisers in counterpart ministries; providing technical assistance through small projects; providing Australian Development Scholarships to public sector candidates; and supporting trilateral training through the Malaysia – Australia Education Project for Afghanistan (MAEPA).

⁸ Save the Children, *2012 State of the World's Mothers Report*.

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ Afghanistan Mortality Survey 2010.



improve access to community-based education in Kapisa, Khost and Parwan provinces. In 2011, Australian assistance delivered by CARE supported 2686 primary school students (79 per cent female), 212 lower secondary school students (100 per cent female), 110 primary school teachers (20 per cent female) and 30 lower secondary school teachers (37 per cent female). It provided all students with classroom kits and textbooks, and access to library materials through the establishment of 87 libraries. The initiative also established 127 Village Education Committees to build community accountability and ownership in education.

Australian funding to the World Food Programme (WFP) promoted the enrolment and attendance of 42 000 children by providing them with high energy biscuits. It also encouraged girls' education by providing more than 19 000 female students with a take-home ration of vegetable oil.

2. Improving the quality of basic education services

By December 2011, EQUIP had helped more than 67 000 teachers graduate from Teacher Training College, trained more than 150 000 teachers, and provided school management training to more than 11 000 principals and school managers.

Australia is working with the Afghan Government to improve its ability to deliver basic education services. In 2011, activities managed through the Development Assistance Facility for Afghanistan included:

- relocating 7 qualified female teachers to Uruzgan Province, and 13 qualified female teachers and 1 male master teacher trainer to Paktia Province
- training 60 Afghan master teacher trainers (39 male and 21 female) in modern teaching methods under phases two and three of MAEPA
- training 320 teacher trainers through practicums conducted by MAEPA-trained master teacher trainers upon their return to Afghanistan.

AusAID's Australian Development Scholarships support six Afghan Government ministries to develop and train future leaders. This program grew from 25 awards in 2010 to 36 awards in 2011 (5 female and 26 male awardees). In 2011, approximately 73 recipients were studying in Australia across a range of disciplines. In 2011, 8 male awardees and 1 female awardee successfully completed their studies and returned to Afghanistan.

Health

1. Enhancing access to basic health services

The Afghan Government's national health program—Basic Package of Health Services—requires donor funds to operate. Australia contributes to ARTF's SHARP program, which delivers the Basic Package of Health Services. In 2011, Australia's support contributed to almost 85 per cent of the population living in

Australia continued to support the International Committee of the Red Cross and Afghan Red Crescent Society to provide access to basic health care services for people in remote communities through the Afghanistan Health Services Program. In 2011, the program provided:

- immunisations to more than 302 219 people
- maternal and child health consultations to more than 100 000 people
- health education to more than 280 000 people
- HIV/AIDS and sexual reproductive health education to more than 39 000 people.

2. Improving the quality of basic health services

In 2011, Australia helped improve the Afghan Ministry of Public Health's ability to deliver basic health services by strengthening records management, information technology, human resources and policy development capabilities.

Polio remains endemic in the southern region of Afghanistan, including in Uruzgan Province. AusAID supports the World Health Organization to deliver polio vaccines to all children under 5 years of age. In 2011, AusAID helped immunise the target population of approximately 196 000 children in Uruzgan. Through national immunisation days, polio coverage in Uruzgan reached 87 to 89 per cent of children under 5 years of age.

Future actions

Further work is required to improve the Ministry of Education's capacity to manage improvements in the administration and quality of basic education.

In 2012, AusAID will continue to support training opportunities through the Australia Awards program.

In 2012–13, AusAID will prepare a delivery strategy to guide its increasing engagement in the education sector. The strategy will identify the education priority areas in which AusAID will work in 2013–15 and the types of assistance suited to delivering effective aid in the Afghanistan context.

In Uruzgan, Australia is working with Save the Children in a number of areas, with a focus on women and girls, including: improving the quality of and access to education; increasing the demand for education; as well as enhancing access to, and the quality and use of, basic health services. The ‘Children of Uruzgan’ initiative was established in mid-2011 and will be delivered over 2012 to 2015. It will build schools, train women as teachers and community educators, establish literacy groups, and educate women and children about health, nutrition and sanitation. The initiative also includes providing maternal and child health and hygiene services and training community health workers (including midwives).



Objective 2: Supporting rural development and livelihoods

Afghanistan is a predominantly rural society. Eighty per cent of its population relies on agriculture for their livelihoods. With only 12 to 15 per cent of the country's land being arable, farmers are under pressure to improve agricultural efficiency. Revitalising Afghanistan's rural economy is critical to the country's long-term economic growth and to food and national security. It also provides alternatives to poppy cultivation.

Australia and Afghanistan share similar agro-ecological climate challenges and a common interest in farming semi-arid areas with significant water limitations. Australia has agricultural expertise in dry-land farming and natural resource management which we can use to help the Afghan Government. We are a world leader in this field and have a comparative advantage in agricultural technologies relevant to Afghanistan.

Rural development is a relatively new component of AusAID's country program. The timeframes for achieving sustainable outcomes are long in this sector. Despite this, important results were realised in 2011.

Australian support provided to the Aga Khan Foundation trained 1587 farmers in improved cropping techniques in Bamiyan and Parwan provinces, and 5016 farmers in improved livestock management. The ARTF-funded National Solidarity Program enabled 22 000 communities to identify and manage 39 000 development projects such as canals for on-farm irrigation. The National Rural Access Program rehabilitated and built rural roads to improve access to markets and create employment for rural labourers. Better access to markets improves livelihoods and creates new economic opportunities for farmers.

Through the Development Assistance Facility for Afghanistan, AusAID has worked to improve the capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock by: supporting the development of training materials for the Dryland Farming Policy Unit; providing project management training to 60 ministry managers; and developing leadership training programs for female employees. In Uruzgan, AusAID worked with the provincial Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock to construct flood control structures and assisted with building the Directorate's capacity through recruiting, training and funding three interns.

Future actions

When Australia's Foreign Minister visited Afghanistan in March 2011, a commitment was made to cooperate in areas of rural development and livelihoods, such as dry land farming, where Australia has a competitive advantage. AusAID is working with Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research to develop an expanded agricultural research program aimed at increasing on-farm productivity in dry-land areas.



Australia remains committed to supporting Afghan Government priorities in line with its relevant National Priority Programs and further building its capacity in this sector. The planned expansion of AusAID's support to rural livelihoods will maintain this commitment, including additional support to agricultural development and economic growth for the south of Afghanistan.

Objective 3: Improving governance and the effectiveness of the Afghan Government

Effective governance remains an ongoing challenge for Afghanistan. Capacity to deliver basic services, provide inclusive and transparent systems of voting and representation, provide access to justice and enforce human rights at all levels of government is weak. The reach of the central government beyond Kabul and provincial capitals remains heavily dependent on informal relationships and parallel governance structures rather than formal authority. This limits the capacity to effectively develop and strengthen links between national and sub-national levels of government.

In 2011, Australia continued to support governance activities at national and provincial levels. Support for improved governance primarily focused on improving public sector operations, strengthening electoral and judicial processes and improving human rights.

Governance nationally

The World Bank is Australia's largest development partner in Afghanistan. It established a trust fund (supported by Australia) in December 2010 to improve its delivery mechanisms in Afghanistan and achieve better program outcomes in conflict-prone areas, such as in Uruzgan.

Achievements of the Support Strengthened Service Delivery at the Community Level Trust Fund include:

- Conducting analysis to inform planning for the transition to Afghan-led security, including by:
 - financing a study of operations and maintenance expenditure at national and provincial levels that informed discussion on the sustainability of transition in Afghanistan
 - inputting into analytical work on sustainability in Afghanistan to consider issues such as the political economy of transition and lessons learned from the Russian withdrawal after 1989.
- Funding two exchange trips for Afghan National Solidarity Program delegates to visit Indonesia to learn how to better administer community-driven development programs.

In 2011, Australia contributed \$2 million to the Afghan Government's newly established Civilian Technical Assistance Program to strengthen state institutions.



This funding will cover the costs of providing at least four advisers over two years to work in the areas of agriculture, education, health and public financial management.

The Civilian Technical Assistance Program has encountered a number of issues that have constrained progress. These have included difficulties recruiting the number of advisers required by government ministries, and operational constraints such as inadequate office space for advisers, the language barrier between counterpart and supervisors, and the high turnover of recruited advisers. High levels of turnover have also impacted effectiveness. The program's recruitment is affected by competing donor offers made to potential advisers. A review is underway on how to improve its operation.

In 2011, Australia continued to support the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission to help it protect and promote Afghans' human rights. Together with other donors and the Commission, we secured Afghan Government funding of US\$0.5 million for its operations in the calendar year 1390 (March 2011 to March 2012). In 2011, the Commission:

- investigated and reported on human rights violations
- monitored the treatment of detainees
- conducted human rights training, and conducted workshops on and work through the media to raise community awareness of human rights issues
- advised the Afghan Government on policies and issues affecting the situation of human rights in-country
- released a shadow report on the Afghan Government's performance in implementing the international Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women¹¹
- invested in capacity building and training opportunities for its staff.

In 2011, AusAID developed a new strategy for future support to electoral processes in Afghanistan. The strategy builds on the lessons learned from our previous support to the UN Development Programme's (UNDP) Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow program and the Asia Foundation's activities in civic education, public outreach and election observation.

AusAID's new elections program will focus on three areas: strengthened electoral institutions, civic awareness and election observation. The program will begin in 2012 and run through the electoral cycle up to and beyond the next Presidential and Parliamentary elections, scheduled for 2014 and 2015 respectively.

¹¹ The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly. It is often described as an international bill of rights for women. Consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination.



In 2012, AusAID will begin support for public financial management. Improvements in these systems will help efforts to align funding with Afghan priorities, to deliver more aid through Afghan systems and, ultimately, to improve the level of service delivery to the people.

Contributing to the Afghan Government's budget execution target (10 per cent to 20 per cent as articulated in its Public Financial Management Roadmap) will be the central goal of Australia's assistance in this area. This goal will be achieved through these three interventions:

1. Technical assistance to key service ministries (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Livestock, Ministry of Public Health, and Ministry of Public Works) to build capacity for project design and implementation, financial and procurement planning, and budget execution monitoring and reporting.
2. Technical training and support to government directorates in Uruzgan to build on regional institutions supporting provincial budgeting.
3. Support to the World Bank's new national program of financial and technical assistance (Public Financial Management Reform Project Phase II) to improve procurement procedures and processes.

Governance in Uruzgan

With AusAID support, sub-national governance in Uruzgan improved during 2011. The provincial government was able to appoint new, competent line directors in key directorates, such as Education, Public Works, Energy, Economy, Counter Narcotics, Labour and Social Affairs. It was also able to recruit more qualified public service staff, reducing vacancies from 60 to 40 per cent.

AusAID funded a UNDP public sector internship program to help the Uruzgan Government recruit qualified public service staff. In April 2011, 38 interns graduated from the program. Sixteen of these gained employment, including one who became the new Provincial Director for Energy.

Accountability has improved in Uruzgan line directorates from a very low base. Evidence of this is seen, for example, through quarterly reporting on portfolio activities. Linkages between national, provincial and district centres have also improved but these and overall capacity remains considerably weak. Directors are now seeking funding from their respective national ministries more often than before. Linkages are fundamental to developing proper budget processes. They also help build more local government responsibility and legitimacy and overcome expectations for direct donor financing. AusAID expects trends to continue improving from 2012 when support for public financial management begins.



Australia supports mine clearance, landmine victim assistance and mine risk reduction education in Afghanistan, in accordance with both the international Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction and our commitment to disability-inclusive development. Australia's support for mine action relies on partnering with local institutions and groups for delivery and monitoring. Working with local partners helps promote local ownership and increases prospects for longer-term sustainability of activities. Performance monitoring in 2011 showed that all mine action partner centres were operating above threshold performance levels and displaying increased productivity and quality.

Australia's mine action support incorporates the perspectives of people with disability. While reducing the number of active mines will help prevent new cases of disability, physical skills workshops for victims of mining and advocating for the inclusion of people with disability in Afghan communities has helped these individuals lead better lives.

In 2011, Australia provided \$10 million to the United Nations Mine Action Service as part of a \$20 million, four-year commitment to mine action in Afghanistan. In 2011, this contribution:

- helped clear 1 724 684 m² of land in Ghor and Kandahar provinces
- supported training, a mine action exchange with Tajikistan – Azerbaijan and field visits for the Afghanistan Department of Mine Clearance
- delivered mine risk education to 264 562 Afghans and enabled the collection of mine casualty records in 29 of 34 provinces
- funded disability-inclusiveness victim assistance performance shows for 79 788 Afghans and 20 physical skills workshops for children with disability
- provided technical support to help the Physiotherapy Institute in Kabul deliver physical therapy classes for 58 enrolled students, upgrade the skills of 50 physical therapists and provide physiotherapy services for 204 female and 302 male patients.

Support to food insecure populations

In 2011, Australia contributed a further \$9 million to the current WFP's Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (taking total contribution to \$12 million since 2010). WFP delivers relief food assistance to help tackle Afghanistan's food security challenges. Our support to WFP for food relief in Afghanistan is pooled with that of other donors including Canada, Japan, and the United Kingdom—to achieve a greater impact. AusAID's 2011 contribution supported more than 240 000 beneficiaries, including 59 000 (mostly women) participants in a food-for-training program in 17 provinces. More than 100 000



Afghans were assisted through a food-for-assets watershed management program aimed at improving agricultural productivity and resilience.

In response to worsening drought conditions in northern and central Afghanistan, Australia contributed \$2 million to WFP's Emergency Operation to deliver emergency food assistance to millions of drought-affected Afghans. This builds on previous support to WFP in Afghanistan, including \$17 million in 2008–09 and \$5.25 million in 2007–08.

AusAID also supports humanitarian NGOs in Afghanistan that are able to react quickly to emerging crises and adapt response measures to local environments. AusAID disbursed \$600,000 through Oxfam for the emergency response and agricultural recovery in drought-affected villages of Dai Kundi Province. This contribution provided: fertiliser and seeds for 400 farmers; agricultural training for 382 farmers; financial support to 150 vulnerable households (86 headed by women); and livestock donations to 235 women from vulnerable households; a cash-for-work program that benefited 540 Afghan men; and dairy production and animal health care training for 160 women.

Improving the lives of women and girls in Afghanistan

Improving gender equity is a fundamental objective of Australia's aid program. In 2011, Australia funded significant efforts to improve the lives of Afghan women and girls.

Save the Children's 2012 *State of the World's Mothers* report found that sustained donor funding from countries such as Australia has helped improve maternal, newborn and child health. Australian funding to initiatives such as Save the Children's 'Children of Uruzgan' project (\$35.7 million 2011–15), is contributing to improved maternal health care. In Uruzgan, 80 per cent of pregnant women now receive at least one antenatal health care visit, and 147 health professionals (22 per cent female) and almost 250 community health workers (one-third female) have been employed.

Australia's support to national programs funded through the ARTF (\$204 million for 2003–12) has contributed to increased girls' school enrolment from virtually zero under the Taliban to around 2.7 million today (37 per cent of all enrolments). The proportion of the number of functioning primary health care facilities with skilled female health workers increased from 25 per cent in 2003 to 72 per cent in 2011. By the end of 2011, Australia's support to SHARP contributed to more than 130 000 women receiving antenatal care and enabling 36 per cent of births to be attended by skilled attendants.

Australian funding provided to The Asia Foundation (\$3.1 million from 2010–11), has provided more than 13 000 home-bound women in Uruzgan and Baghlan provinces with training on electoral processes and the legal rights of women. It has also provided 225 women in 15 provinces with election observation training.



Results in Uruzgan Province

AusAID's program of assistance to Uruzgan aims to improve the:

- provincial administration's capacity to deliver basic services and essential infrastructure
- links between provincial and national governments to support the delivery of national programs in the province
- community ownership of development activities.

The scale up of AusAID's programs in Uruzgan continued during the year with many programs progressing to implementation.

Development efforts in Uruzgan are constrained by the province's difficult security environment. This environment limits the number of credible implementing partners willing to operate in Uruzgan. Australian Defence Force protection is required for AusAID personnel to engage with provincial government counterparts, meet with communities to establish their needs and priorities, and monitor activities.

Development leadership of the Provincial Reconstruction Team

AusAID's main role in Uruzgan is to lead the development arm of the multinational Provincial Reconstruction Team. AusAID has deployed the Deputy Director of Development, seven development advisers and six stabilisation advisers to the province.

The work of the development advisers includes:

- mentoring provincial and district Afghan government officials,
- conducting key leader engagement throughout the province
- facilitating Afghan Government engagement with the population
- working with the Afghan Government to identify potential projects and capacity building needs
- liaising with implementing partners
- designing coordinating and monitoring development activities.

Deployment of stabilisation advisers, through the Australian Civilian Corps, began in 2011. The advisers worked from Tarin Kowt and forward operating bases in Chora and Deh Rawud districts of Uruzgan. They assist with planning and implementing district-level stabilisation activities and supporting Afghan government officials to deliver essential community services.

Uruzgan programming

2011 was a period of consolidation, both in terms of increasing staff numbers and designing and contracting initiatives in support of service delivery, capacity building, and rural development and livelihoods. Achievements to 2011 included:



- construction of four schools for 2300 students and three community resource centres
- provision of basic health and hygiene education to 7950 primary school students (34 per cent girls) and 192 teachers
- starting a school feeding program for at least 19 655 beneficiaries in Chora, Deh Rawud and Tarin Kowt districts to encourage school enrolment and attendance, particularly for girls
- generation of thousands of local labour days through the building of more than 30 kilometres of road, two bridges and municipal works in district centres
- clearance of more than 244 000 square metres of contaminated land and training of more than 100 Afghans in community demining and mine risk education
- provision of literacy, numeracy and administrative training for provincial officials, including 38 interns
- provision of equipment and training for the Australian Defence Force-supported institutions, such as the Trade Training School, Tarin Kowt Hospital and Malalai Girls School.

National support and advocacy

AusAID funds key national programs delivered in Uruzgan. AusAID staff in Kabul and Tarin Kowt work closely with central ministries and implementing partners to help promote the drawdown of national programs to the province. Development advisors also work with the provincial government to strengthen national – provincial linkages. Nationwide programs funded through the ARTF, such as the National Solidarity Program and EQUIP, have delivered outcomes including: construction of 30 schools with another 36 under construction; support for a provincial hospital, six community health centres, six basic health centres, a health sub-centre and 192 health posts; and microfinance loans for more than 2000 people. Support from Australia and other donors through EQUIP helped lift the number of schools operating in the province from 34 in 2006, to more than 160 in 2011.

Program quality

A progressive scale up in funding and the level of engagement in Afghanistan took place in 2010 and 2011. During 2011—in preparation for transition—changes were made to reduce the number of activities and establish a more consolidated and relevant program focused on a set of core areas where Australia can make a difference.

AusAID's 2011 quality at implementation (QAI) process showed that the quality of initiative-level performance data had improved over that available for 2010.



The 2011 QAI data showed that the highest performing programs for the year were Empowerment through Education in Afghanistan, ARTF and the Mine Action initiative.

There was not a huge variation in performance ratings of initiatives between the 2010 and 2011 QAIs. Reporting showed that the initiatives progressed consistently and well. It is promising that the ARTF continues to be a high-performing initiative, despite the challenges of the decision to delay funding pending agreement on the new International Monetary Fund-support package, including in relation to responding to the Kabul Bank crisis.

The program's ability to report overall results is limited. This was not a requirement when the existing program strategy, set in *Australia's Strategic Approach to Aid in Afghanistan 2010–2012*, was prepared.

A new country strategy will be developed for 2013 and 2014. An explicit program-change logic and a country-level performance assessment framework will be developed as integral parts of the new strategy. The performance assessment framework will include performance indicators for measuring and reporting progress to demonstrate aid results achieved. It will also draw on reporting mechanisms from various sources to aggregate a picture of Australian aid performance in Afghanistan. Mechanisms include initiative progress reports, reports against the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework¹⁴, independent evaluations, direct AusAID staff monitoring, and results reporting systems established by the Afghan Government and other donors.

Throughout 2012 and 2013, AusAID's Afghanistan Program team will develop delivery strategies for major sectors. The education, governance, and agriculture and rural development strategies will define and organise the aid investments necessary to implement the new country strategy. They will also articulate how AusAID will make a difference in specific outcome areas and will each include a performance assessment framework that will link to the country strategy's own performance assessment framework.

Robust data collection is a widely acknowledged challenge across Afghanistan. In 2012, AusAID will begin support for in-country data gathering exercises to strengthen the level and quality of development data available. This is to enable more informed aid programming decisions. Australia, with other donors, will contribute funding from 2012–14, to the annual *Survey of the Afghan People*, conducted by The Asia Foundation in conjunction with the Central Statistics Office of Afghanistan. The survey, published each year, canvases the views of Afghan citizens from all provinces on a wide variety of issues such as basic

¹⁴ The Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework was agreed between the Afghan Government and the international community during the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan held 8 July 2012.



services, economic development, political participation, justice, corruption, status of women, and reconciliation and reintegration.

AusAID will also work to improve the monitoring and evaluation of the aid program in Uruzgan. A performance assessment framework will be developed to measure the program's results in-province. This framework will underpin an online monitoring database that will be created to track AusAID-funded programs in Uruzgan including, to the extent possible, Australia's contribution to the ARTF. The system will collect and establish baseline information on Uruzgan's development, and collate information on Australia's aid activities in-province. The database, similar to one developed for the United Kingdom's Department for International Development in Helmand Province, can be adapted for Australia's broader aid program to Afghanistan.

The ARTF contributes to Australia's commitments to increase the effectiveness of aid through donor coordination and harmonisation. The ARTF provides a vehicle for international donors to pool aid funding in direct support of the Afghan Government's development priorities. It also reduces the burden on the Afghan Government of dealing with multiple donors, and uses its own budget system. Operating in the way, the ARTF:

- improves the Afghan Government's budget as the main policy tool for directing and allocating resources for priority needs
- helps build the Afghan Government's ability to effectively and transparently manage its resources, while maintaining accountability
- strengthens the Afghan Government's ownership of its development activities by providing significant funding for 13 approved of an anticipated 22 National Priority Programs.

AusAID is working with the World Bank and other donors to develop a comprehensive results framework for the ARTF. This framework will help measure the development impact of the Fund over time.

Integrating strategies into the program that aim to improve the situation of women in Afghanistan continues to be a challenge. In 2011, AusAID's Gender Adviser visited Afghanistan to identify ways the aid program can improve the focus on gender equality. AusAID has decided to recruit a dedicated Gender Specialist in 2012, who will work in cooperation with the country team and gender thematic area to develop a gender strategy and expand targeted gender programs. The specialist will also help further integrate gender within the program, implement AusAID's Afghanistan Program's Gender Action Plan, and develop a program that will help reduce violence against women in Afghanistan.

Working with partners in Afghanistan

Strengthening Australia's partnership with the Afghan Government is an essential component of an effective aid program in-country. Conclusion of a



comprehensive long-term partnership between Australia and Afghanistan, will be a significant milestone for 2012. In 2012, AusAID will also negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding on Development Cooperation to guide and improve the effectiveness of Australia's aid program. Both agreements incorporate a number of mutual accountabilities. The memorandum will include commitments by the Afghan Government to the rights of women and girls, holding transparent, inclusive and credible elections, reducing corruption, and improving the integrity of public financial management.

Afghanistan remains a high risk environment, in terms of security, the threat of corruption, and the challenges of improving and working with weak governance systems. To mitigate these risks, Australia works with credible partners with a strong in-country presence, long-term experience and demonstrated effectiveness. Partners are selected based on their alignment with Australia's objectives, as well as their performance, reliability and value for money.

The World Bank is a trusted and committed partner. It has more than 30 years' experience managing multi-donor trust funds, and administers more than 80 separate trust funds across the world.

UN agencies are also important partners for Australia in Afghanistan. In 2011, partnerships deepened with UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan on donor coordination, UNDP for elections, UN Office for Project Services for rural infrastructure, UN Mine Action Centre, and the WFP and UN High Commissioner for Refugees for humanitarian responses.

Other trusted partners who help implement Australia's aid program in Afghanistan include CARE, Save the Children Australia, the World Health Organization, International Committee of the Red Cross, Afghan Red Crescent Society, GIZ, Oxfam and The Asia Foundation.

Management consequences

Afghanistan's country context is consistently evolving. Australian aid to Afghanistan is expected to increase in line with our commitment to deliver 0.5 per cent of gross national income on overseas aid. Delivering an efficient and effective scaled up aid program will require a clear strategy that ensures value for money, consolidation of initiatives, attention to results, and performance oversight. AusAID will pay attention to how best to deliver aid during ongoing conflict, incorporating the principles identified in the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan (December 2011) for effective aid in fragile and conflict settings.

With a larger program, Australia expects to become an increasingly important donor in the Afghan context. To make a real difference in-country, and align with international best practice in aid effectiveness, AusAID's staff in Kabul will work

