

A photograph of a female soldier in camouflage gear talking to a smiling Afghan woman. The soldier is on the left, wearing a tan and brown camouflage uniform with a name tag that says 'AUDE'. She is looking towards the woman on the right. The woman is wearing a green and orange patterned dress and is smiling. The background is a textured, light brown wall.

Women sensitive CIMIC in Afghanistan

Uruzgan and Bamyan compared on women sensitive CIMIC

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INTRODUCTION

In November 2009, a small group of teenage girls was walking home after attending classes at school in Kandahar city. They were discussing a test they just finished, when suddenly two men on a motor sprayed acid into the faces of three of the girls. One of the girls lost her eyesight, the others had severe burns in their faces. (Guardian, 22-11-08) Acid attacks on girls and women are executed regularly. Sometimes at a group of girls, but most often individual girls, or their teachers, are victim of these assaults. (BBC, 12-11-08)

September 2008, twelve men gang raped a 7 year old girl in Kabul. (RAWA, 25-09-08). Unfortunately, this is not an incident either. Violence against women is a symptom of the low position of women in Afghanistan.

According to United Nations reports, violence against women has increased dramatically in Afghanistan. The security of women and girls is not guaranteed, not even in the capital of Afghanistan, which is considered to be a relatively safe area. Furthermore, the problem is not being handled adequately by the government. The most horrific example being that president Karzai gave amnesty to three men who gang raped a woman in front of her whole village only to punish her. (RAWA, 25-09-08) These stories unleashed many questions amongst the international community with regard to the position of women and the security situation in Afghanistan. Also, the ongoing North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) operation aimed at enhancing assisting in the rebuilding of the country, raised questions. These incidents questioned the statements that the situation in Afghanistan is improving. Furthermore, announcements that the position of women is getting better, which would illustrate the safer environment, are doubtful. (Speech Van Middelkoop, 19-03-09)

THE RESEARCH QUESTION

As recent reports and research indicate, the participation of women in peace building and reconstruction is crucial for the success of the aforementioned efforts. However, is this also true in very conservative countries like Afghanistan? Or does it have the reverse effect because it could alienate the people and reinforces Taliban? Another question arose with regard to the role of military Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT's). These teams are engaged in military reconstruction projects (Civil Military Cooperation abbreviated as CIMIC), like building schools, to serve the goals of the mission by winning the 'hearts and minds' of the local population. Some of these schools are built for the education of girls, since that is deemed important for development. Are the PRT's, however, aware of the position of

local women and girls and do they act on it? Would it be worthwhile to involve the local women in reconstruction projects to win those ‘hearts and minds’ or would it be better to leave the gender dimension alone? With all these issues in the back of my mind, the following research question arose; *Does a women sensitive CIMIC approach contribute to the goals of ISAF and to what extent is women sensitive CIMIC executed by the Provincial Reconstruction Teams of New Zealand and the Netherlands in Afghanistan?*

SOCIETAL RELEVANCE

Recently, the Dutch have received many compliments for conducting a military operation in Afghanistan with a comprehensive view on security. The Secretary of State of the USA has said that the USA will use this Dutch strategy as a blueprint for American contribution to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. (Speech Clinton, 20-04-09) The comprehensive approach entails CIMIC projects to win the ‘hearts and minds’ of the local population and consequently advance the goals of the military mission. This way of working has been called the Dutch 3 D approach. 3D is an abbreviation for Defence, Diplomacy and Development and aims to build up a country by simultaneously focusing on all three areas to strengthen security and government and to set in the country’s development.

The comprehensive approach, however, is a very hot and debated issue in both the academic world, the military, the media, among policy makers and development organizations. Especially the role PRT’s play in the reconstruction of a war torn country is up for discussion. Since this thesis focuses on the military part, mostly arguments from the military debate will be used in these discussions in order to describe the current situation.

Many important actors in the international community, such as the United Nations, are convinced that the comprehensive approach is both a peace building and a conflict prevention tool. The NATO operation in Afghanistan is still ongoing. Some argue that the security situation is improving, others believe it is not. Naturally, an unstable security situation will affect the development and reconstruction of Afghanistan as well, which in turn might have an effect on international terrorism. And terrorism is the immediate cause for the military operation in this country. Therefore, much attention will be directed towards the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) and every step forward or backward will be closely monitored and scrutinized. All suggestions for improvement that might increase the effectiveness of the operation, could help support the work that is currently being carried out by ISAF. This paper aims at formulating such suggestions.

During the last decade, the role of women in peace building has been recognized by the international community, especially by the UN. In 2000 the UN Security Council passed resolution 1325 which recognized women's contribution to conflict resolution and sustainable peace. (UN SC Resolution 1325, 2000) One of the aspects of women and conflict is that women play a specific strategic role in the reduction of poverty in households and communities. (Corner, 2005, pp. 2) It is argued that inclusion of women will enhance effectiveness of peace building efforts.

Reconstruction projects aim to help rebuild an area to give the people the means to further development. In turn, development is supposed to be a diminishing factor for terrorism and violence. An important factor to successfully help an area to develop is to entangle the local population in development and reconstruction projects. The involvement of local women in CIMIC reconstruction projects, however, is not common practice, as effects of their participation on the goals of the mission are still uncertain. A recent NATO report of a few troops contributing governments to ISAF, *Operational effectiveness and UN Resolution 1325*, indicate that the researchers are serious about the involvement of women and about women's rights. It also indicates that they believe in a positive effect of improving the position of women by projects of PRT's. Maybe even more important for ISAF, the involvement of women in projects may benefit the operation in many aspects. (Houdijk, 2008)

This thesis is an attempt to give helpful and relevant insights on CIMIC and women sensitive projects in order to contribute to both the debate and hopefully also to CIMIC projects on the ground.

SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

The current literature on the role of women in development suggests that inclusion of women can be of value for the stabilization of a country. This literature, however, focuses on development via development organizations and government projects and not on projects of PRT's. Up for discussion are the possible benefits for the operation in Afghanistan as a result from CIMIC projects aimed at women.

The scientific relevance of this thesis is multiple. First, this thesis could contribute to the current debates held on both CIMIC and the contribution of women to stability and development in (post) conflict states. The debates have narrowly focused on their own field of study and have rarely been combined. Therefore, both debates will be integrated in this thesis. Hopefully, this research will fill a small gap in the current literature.

The debate on the role of women in reconstruction efforts after a conflict has primarily focused on their exclusion at the negotiation table and in the execution of projects. Peace building processes rarely include the ideas and perspectives of women even though the participation of women has been widely advocated. (Afshar, 2004, pp.2) Recent reports on this issue argue that women are of much value for reconstruction due to their different experiences and responsibilities than men. Conflicts can have both an empowering and a victimizing effect on women at the same time. This is because they can be included and excluded in peace building efforts and they can be both victims and agents of change at the same time. (Afshar, 2004, pp. 15)

Critics argue that in the emergency phase, the entire population needs to be helped and there is no time nor money to focus especially on the needs of women. Furthermore, attention from Western organisations that are focusing on women might be interpreted as neo colonialism and seen as without respect for the native culture. However, the role of CIMIC and women sensitive projects has not been widely discussed by academics while many development organisations have been criticised or praised because of their attitude towards local women. In many (post) conflict countries, the military was heavily involved in development and reconstruction projects for the population, not specifically for women only. Even though some national governments and NATO do recognize the different needs women have in (post) conflict state, not many countries and organisations have developed policy to translate this recognition into action with regard to CIMIC projects.

The CIMIC debate has been conducted by many different parties, from policy makers and NGO employees to academics. Especially the necessity of reconstruction projects of the military and the cooperation between the CIMIC units and NGO's have been and are fiercely discussed. Unfortunately, CIMIC for local women has not been up for a large scale academic discussion although awareness is growing.

METHOD

In order to collect as many arguments to support this thesis as possible, use was made of literature, policy documents, news sources, reports of think tanks and NGO/ IGO's, and interviews. Since there was no possibility to conduct a field research, the interview, newspapers and reports were very important to gain more insight in the topic of this thesis.

Interviews bridged the gap between the research question and the answers and arguments the newspaper articles and policy documents offered. Also, to verify all arguments, opinions and possibilities, interviews were conducted with people working for different kind

of organizations. For the interviews people from the (Dutch) Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Defence, Women NGO's, development organizations, PRT's, think tanks, Afghan refugee organizations in the Netherlands, and an Afghan female interpreter were contacted. Unfortunately, not every organization contacted was willing or able to cooperate. The ministry of Foreign Affairs, PRT's and the female interpreter were able to help me with gathering information on this topic. They also gave me their personal opinions that did not always correspond to the way things were done in Afghanistan. By accident, I met the civilian representative (Michel Rentenaar) a few days before he went to Afghanistan to lead the PRT. He was very enthusiastic and proactive about this topic. He told me he intended to focus more on CIMIC and Afghan women when in Uruzgan. The interviews were not planned according to a fixed questionnaire nor is the amount of interviews enough to make a statistically relevant claim. The interviews were only meant to give the writer more insight, other opinions and creative solutions. Furthermore, the information from the interviews is used as an illustration to support the points made in this thesis.

The reports used come from widely diverse organisations. Several institutions of the United Nations wrote reports about Afghanistan on the position of women, the level of violence, development efforts and so much more. The Afghan Research and Evaluation Unit provided some interesting reports. Also, RAND Corporation and military actors published some reports on counterinsurgency which were useful. Also, several women organisations, both Afghan and Western, researched how to improve the position of women in conflict states and suggested projects that could be started.

The last source that was important to get more insight were the newspapers from different countries. They were mostly used to collect examples to clarify a statement and to make the section more up to date.

The first three chapters of this thesis are fundamental to answer the first part of the research question. They form the theoretical foundation for the factors that are used in chapter 4 to determine the level of women sensitive of the PRT's and CIMIC in Afghanistan. These factors are the most important aspects of the answers to the sub research questions. Together, these factors are used as the theoretical framework in this thesis.

In chapter 4, the PRT's of The Netherlands and New Zealand are investigated with regard to their women sensitivity. These two PRT's are compared to each other in order to be able to a judgement on how they deal with women's issues and how important they think it is to involve local women. Although the situation on the ground is different in the Bamyan and Uruzgan province, there are some similarities which make a comparison possible. Several

reasons are behind choosing the PRT's of New Zealand and the Netherlands. Firstly, although the level of violence is different both provinces are relatively stable security wise. Secondly, both countries are very serious about reconstruction and development projects and believe that these projects are important tools to provide more stability and security. Thirdly, the local population is consulted regularly and is an active participant in the projects of the PRT's. Fourthly, women have a very low status in both provinces, have to oblige to many restrictions and it is more difficult to engage them than it is to involve local men. Also, both PRT's are placed in the middle of the PRT spectrum which means that they deal with security and development issues. Moreover, both PRT's come from countries with similar values and gender relations. Lastly, they were willing to give a lot of information for this thesis. Direct contact with both PRT's has been established which was very helpful to get information and very exciting for the author.

CONTENT THESIS

In this thesis, firstly, the involvement of women in post-conflict reconstruction will be dealt with. Recently, several reports have been written on this subject and as many opinions have been ventilated. Many researchers and NGO's advocate that women should be included in the reconstruction and peace building process of their country. Also, women's organizations are pleading for a more women sensitive way of reconstruction and development. A women sensitive approach takes into account the different experiences and interests of women from men. Furthermore, the different effects of projects on men and women must be considered from the planning until the execution phase. (Corner, 2005, pp. 2) It seems that this insight has reached governments too as some are trying to implement UN resolution 1325 into their policy framework. Resolution 1325 underlines the role of women in conflict and the need for peace operations to pay attention to the gender dimension. In chapter 1, arguments pro and contra the involvement of women in reconstruction projects will be discussed. Important to remember is that this thesis refers to women's needs rather than gender needs. However, the terms are used interchangeable, because gender is frequently the basis for problems faced by women in a post-conflict situation.

Secondly, the concept of Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and PRT's will be up for discussion. What does CIMIC entail and how do PRT's bring this into practice? CIMIC and gender are also part of this chapter as NATO has realized that contact between Afghan women and PRT's may be of positive influence. Furthermore, much debating is going on regarding the involvement of the military in reconstruction which may or may not hinder Non

Governmental Organisations (NGO) in their work. (Among others; Volkskrant 01-02-06 and Frerks; 2006)

The characteristics of the Afghan society with regard to women, which are important for the way CIMIC is conducted, are addressed in the third chapter. As this particular society is influenced by the Taliban regime, this period and its effect on the position of women is explained in chapter 3. Then the priorities for Afghan women and the sort of projects that could be beneficial for them are discussed.

Following from the first three chapters, factors that determine the level of women sensitive CIMIC are formulated. In chapter 4, the PRT's of The Netherlands and New Zealand are investigated with regard this factors and hence their women sensitivity. These two PRT's are compared to each other in order to be able to a judgement on how they deal with women's issues and how important they think it is to involve local women.

1 IS THE INCLUSION OF WOMEN IMPORTANT IN RECONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN A POST-CONFLICT STATE?

'Peace is something where women have honour, respect, dignity and social justice.'

(El Bushra, 2003, pp.33)

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter it is researched whether or not it is important to include women in the reconstruction process. First, the relation between reconstruction on development and peace is discussed. Second, the topic of women in reconstruction is elaborated on which includes power balances and female headed households. Gender has been criticized many times and in paragraph 1.3 the main arguments are addressed. After this section, the concept of gender equality and mainstreaming is explained. The way to plan and execute women sensitive projects is elaborated on in section 1.6. After this, UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1889 will be discussed. Following from this chapter, some factors are formulated that may contribute to women sensitive project planning. These factors are used in Chapter 4 to assess the women sensitivity of the PRT's in Uruzgan and Bamyan.

1.1 IS THERE A RELATION BETWEEN RECONSTRUCTION, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE?

Nowadays, rebuilding schools, hospitals, roads and other infrastructure of the international community are always part of reconstruction efforts in a post- conflict state. Reconstruction is defined as an integrated process designed to reactivate development while simultaneously creating a peaceful environment. (Barakat 2005, pp. 12) Reconstruction is supposed to be the first step in the recovery of a war torn country, after security has been re-established. The goal is be to contribute to future, long term development of a country. (Barakat, 2001, pp.31) A lack of economic and social development are seen as crucial determinants of violent conflict. As World Bank research claims, poverty makes societies more prone to conflict while conflict also causes poverty. (Collier, 2003, pp. IX-X) Consequently, many post-war countries find themselves in a vicious circle.

The reconstruction or construction of infrastructure, hospitals and other important buildings enable economic development which is suppose to diminish the chance of conflict. Reconstruction consists of infrastructural restoration and structural reforms of the economic, social and political sector. Reconstruction thus has a corrective function as well in that it promotes socio-economic change. Important to note is that reconstruction is not just about

what it delivers but how it delivers. (Barakat, 2001, pp.31) Fairly spread benefits will avoid tensions over the distribution of projects and resources.

More positive side effects of economic development are, amongst others, that it offers conflict survivors an alternative to fighting and a prospect of a peaceful future. Furthermore, a new professional identity, an identity drawn from someone's work or profession, could arise and resistance to renewed fighting may develop. However, development may contribute to violence if it reinforces inequality between groups or grievances. For example, rebuilding the infrastructure as it was is sometimes not beneficial to long term economic development as it was build to suit colonial interests. Reconstruction projects for infrastructure are important sources of employment for the local population and local contractors while they also broaden access to markets, connect cities and villages and enable more trade. More trade means more economic activity and thus more opportunities for employment or entrepreneurship. In the planning of these projects, however, the effects on power relations are to be considered as the economic opportunities might benefit only one group. (Verkoren, 2005, pp. 1-9) Assistance by donors must thus be given with consideration for, unforeseen, negative effects of development. (Anderson, 1999, pp. 1)

Peace dividend is a term often used to describe visible benefits from the absence of violence. Originally, the term indicated the allocation of the defence budget of a state towards development projects and the following economic growth. (Knight, 1996, pp. 1) Nowadays, the expression is also used to point to visible effects of the end of a war, such as new buildings. Infrastructural projects are very visible, and therefore popular, among NGO's and policy makers in donor countries. These kind of projects show that they are doing good things for the population and that peace enhances the people's living conditions. By doing so, development actors hope to win local support.

1.1.1 POSITIVE PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

As mentioned before, economic development can be an important factor for a peaceful future. For peace to be sustainable, development needs to be sustainable as well. The concepts of positive and negative peace are a way of explaining sustainable peace. Galtung has conceptualized these two sorts of peace. Negative peace refers to the mere absence of violence. Positive peace is more comprehensive and sustainable. Positive peace refers to the absence of structural violence or in other words, the presence of social justice which is achieved by an egalitarian distribution of power and resources. (Galtung, 1969, pp. 183) As economic development influences power relations and the distribution of resources, positive

peace is consequently achieved by assuring that economic development and its effects are equally beneficial to all people. As a result, a society is established in which the root causes for conflict are practically non-existent. The concept also claims that a sustainable peace is only feasible in a socially just society. (Galtung, 1969, pp. 179-180) The concept of positive peace also considers equal power relations between men and women. All forms of structural violence are to be diminished and power relations are not to be harmful to any group to come to positive peace. Hence, structural inequality has to end, which also encompasses the backward positions women have in some societies. (Afshar, 2004, pp.11) Or as Sweetman states; “*without gender equality, it is impossible to achieve secure and prosperous societies free of structural violence*”. (Sweetman, 2005, pp. 79)

The concept of positive peace and a socially just society without structural violence is very interesting. In reality, however, it is not as black and white as suggested. It would mean that almost no country in the world would experience positive peace. As a theoretical concept it remains, despite the short comings in the real world, a useful idea.

With regard to reconstruction projects to be sustainable, the equal power relations between men and women are to be incorporated. According to Galtung’s idea, sustainable peace with economic and social justice is only achieved if social relations are altered and turned into just and equal social associations. Therefore reconstruction has to rebuild not only visible objects but also social relations by giving all parties an equal share and role in this process. Exactly this transformation of attitudes and behaviour is one of the most difficult but important elements in peace building. (El Bushra, 2003, pp.34) Consequently, the role of women is necessary in reconstruction processes in order to achieve a sustainable and thus just peace. (Moghadam, 2005, pp.71) Nevertheless, changes in power relations between the two sexes can be a threat to a newly established peace and the timing of these changes must be considered carefully. (Afshar, 2004, pp.12)

The main idea remains that sustainable development will not take place without a lasting peace and peace can never be achieved without effective reconstruction and sustainable development. (Barakat, 2001, pp.31) This makes successful peace building prone to become an egg-and-chicken discussion.

1.2 IS THE FOCUS ON GENDER AND WOMEN IMPORTANT FOR PEACE BUILDING IN POST CONFLICT STATES?

Traditionally, in most societies women are seen as passive and men are seen as the ones that decide for them, also when deciding over peace or war. (Sweetman, 2005, pp. 2) For a long

time, the woman was seen as peaceful and anti-war and in favour of peace while the man was seen as a more war prone fighter. However, in many conflicts women are very active participants. There are many different roles for women to play in supporting the war effort: assisting the fighters, maintaining high morale, logistical tasks or being a combatant themselves. (Sweetman, 2005, pp. 3) Womanhood is sometimes also misused in a conflict state. For example, in Afghanistan, cultural notions prohibit male police officers from searching the bodies of women. Some women use this prohibition to smuggle weapons and explosives under their clothing to supply armed groups. (Alison, 2004, pp. 456) In other words, prejudices about women being passive victims in war zones can be dangerous when trying to resolve conflict.

Research, however, indicates that the highest number of victims of contemporary conflict is made up of women and children indeed. Not only if they are directly affected by violence but also with regard to socio-economic consequences of war. This further enhances the prevalent image of women primarily as victims of war instead of agents of change. As a result, women are overlooked during peace negotiations and in decision-making bodies because they are 'only the victims', while it is deemed more important to engage the predators to keep them committed during and after peace talks. This mentality ignores the active female combatants and supportive roles of local women in a conflict.

The involvement of women and 'mainstreaming' of gender issues throughout all aspects of peace and reconstruction processes has been widely advocated for at least a decade now. Women, however, are still often absent from peace processes. Furthermore, post-conflict planning for reconstruction does not often include the female perspective. (Sweetman, 2005, pp. 60) The idea is that a women's perspective on peace is more broadly and inclusively defined than just the cessation of violence. It resembles more the concept of positive peace in which all people's needs are equally important. The exclusion and marginalisation of women is therefore a handicap for peace. (El Bushra, 2003, pp. 64)

Another aspect is that in order to secure long term sustainable peace, the involvement of all local stakeholders, including women, is needed. The same goes for the success of reconstruction projects. (Sweetman, 2005, pp. 39) Since women make up half of a given population, in some post-conflict countries even more than 50 percent, they have to play an equal part in the peace process, Sweetman argues. Therefore, women must be empowered politically and economically. (Sweetman, 2005, pp. 5) Another point is that women are assets that a national economy can not ignore to utilize in order to grow sustainably. (Sweetman, 2005, pp. 77)

1.2.1 FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

Conflict causes large amount of widows who inevitably experience changes in their economic and social position. Due to their status as a widow, their security might be affected as are their economic possibilities and access to services and basic goods. Furthermore, war destroys social structures that normally would have helped widows survive. Their families are struck by war as well and might not feel any responsibility towards the widow since she is no longer officially a family member by marriage. (Lindsey, 2001, pp. 32-33) These women often have children to take care of and need a job, a house and food to survive. On the other hand, widows in Afghanistan normally have a greater mobility and freedom than married women as their male relatives can not control her movements. Projects can make use of the knowledge widows have of the community, resources and culture in order to plan works that are suited to the needs and demands of the community including women.

Moreover, reconstruction programs often do not take into account the new roles women have to adjust to in the aftermath of conflict. For instance, as the following example illustrates, it might be difficult to get into one of these programs for female headed households or women alone. (El Bushra, 2003, pp. 65) When many Afghan refugees returned to Afghanistan it became clear that most families were female headed. However, since there were no women in the community councils, information on refugee programs that could have benefitted these households did not reach them. The women were not part of an extended family anymore and as a consequence nobody's responsibility. As such, the male dominated councils did not think of their needs. With women on board, it would have been more likely that the female headed household would have received more support and information as they could have imagined their position and needs. Although this particular refugee program was willing to help female refugees, they did not succeed as information was not effectively spread to reach this group. (Soderberg, 2004, pp. 30) This example shows the importance of the participation of women in organisations at all levels for the effective execution of projects.

1.2.2 POWER BALANCES

Any project or program that does not consider women's needs will probably strengthen existing power imbalances between men and women. In doing so these programs will undermine any chance on long term development. (Sweetman, 2005, pp. 43) Many even argue that development projects and policies fail, especially on the long run, because they do not include a gender perspective, or the female perspective. (Afshar, 2004, pp.12) Since only men are involved in reconstruction processes, chances are that they forget about the needs of

women, or that facilities are not adequately adapted to be used by both men and women. For example, the building of a school without sanitary facilities for female students and teachers. (Asian Development Bank, 2006) Furthermore, it is men that decide what happens when and how. This practice marginalizes the voice of women even more and confirms the male's position in society as the decision makers.

Another advantage of engaging women, is that female leaders or women in a public position provide others of the same sex powerful role models while they are able to challenge gender relations and put new issues on the agenda. (Sandler, 2007, pp. 47) Education, child mortality, maternal health and poverty can all be influenced by a more equal position of women in society and contribute to economic development in the future. Furthermore, women are to work outside their homes to earn money and to contribute to the economic development of their country. Due to their improved position they will have more influence on the decision making in their own house holds. This will give them more power to spend money and resources on their family's needs. (Sandler, 2007, pp. 47)

At the same time, women are regarded as bridge builders as they are often brought into a new family by marriage and thus have already crossed divides. Since they have personal relations with other groups, they have a personal interest in building bridges between these groups. Furthermore, due to their movement from one family into another, they often have experience in building trust and new relationships with others. (Anderson, 2009, pp. 1) Building bridges between different groups that might have fought each other is a quality that is considered very important for rebuilding a country. In the end, people need to work together, trust each other and try to forgive one another in order for a durable peace to develop. Besides, civil society is strengthened.

Civil society is seen as an important factor in rebuilding a country's economic and social structures. Due to war, these structures are often destroyed or severely damaged. Grass root organisations, or small local organisations, are mostly the ones that try to rebuild these structures. Part of the capacity building of the civil society might be done by strengthening of the position of women within organisations and their programs. It is suggested that a special fund could be established to support peace building initiatives from grass roots organisations that benefit women and their families. Investing in women leads to quicker and more sustainable results and stimulates economic activity according to the research Soderberg discusses. Furthermore, education and a ban on sexual discrimination in work places greatly enhance economic growth. (Soderberg, 2004, pp. 7) Supporting women and the organisations

they work for might hence be an important stimulus for both the rebuilding of civil society and for other reconstruction efforts.

Also, when women have a stake in the reconstruction of a post-conflict state, they are more likely to get involved in building stronger social institutions and service organisations such as schools and health facilities. Last but not least, by involving women in reconstruction, they could help develop and transform the culture of violence, often present in a post-conflict state, into a culture of peace. (Moghadam, 2005, pp. 71) The transition towards a culture of peace is needed for long term stability as violence is being disapproved of and people live together in an orderly manner.

Summarized, it is important to include women in peace building processes in order to accomplish sustainable peace.

1.3 WHAT ARE ARGUMENTS CONTRA GENDER AND WOMEN SENSITIVE PEACEBUILDING AND RECONSTRUCTION?

The issue of a women or gender sensitive approach for peace building projects was and still is very much debated. Counterarguments against gender range from pointing at all the generalizations about women to the difficulty of integrating the concept of gender. All arguments bring forward valid criticism and many lessons are obviously to be learned.

As Sweetman points out, assessments of the needs of the whole population are often blurred by assumptions the staff of the organization has about the role and position of women as victims. These assumptions influence the perceptions of the real power relations between men and women and do not lead to understanding of gender issues in a particular society. (Sweetman, 2005, pp. 43) Women are too often seen as powerless victims, especially widows and female headed households. Much more attention, however, can be directed at the way these women handle themselves and the possibilities of improving the possibilities these women have. This method will provide these women with better tools than by looking at the way a society disempowers them. (Manchanda, 2005, pp. 4740)

Furthermore, in the complexity of reconstruction and peace building in a post-conflict state, the issue of simultaneously addressing gender issues is too much of a challenge for the staff of an international organisation. They may feel that gender awareness is an additional complication to their work. (Sweetman, 2005, pp. 43) International organisations find it too difficult to involve women due to communication limitations and the restricted mobility of local women. Cultural notions of the abilities and the constraints on women make it for NGO's a challenging issue. (AREU, 2004, pp. 7)

Ostergaard argues that development models have to be human centred because people are both the end and the means of development. These models must aim to improve human welfare and recognize the role women play in sustainable development due to their active and productive input in society. (Ostergaard et al, 1992, pp. 2) Too much attention for women, however, distorts the balance since attention has to be given to the human being, regardless of its sex. Human welfare is the ultimate goal and the improvement of the position of women is just a part of the bigger picture.

Another warning for too much a focus on gender inequality is given by Afshar. She warns that tensions can be created by paying attention to a certain kind of group since other groups may feel scarce resources are unequally distributed by affirmative action. The men who are unemployed may feel they are forgotten and get frustrated. Besides, with job scarcity, competition between men and women may get fierce, causing even more tensions. The frustrated men may feel they lose control over their spouses and their own lives which may further fuel unrest. Furthermore, the expectation may arise that the groups that receive the resources shall bring peace exclusively. (Afshar, 2004, pp. 22) With regard to women, it means that if too large a share of resources is going to projects solely for their benefit, expectations may arise that these women are responsible for peace and reconstruction. Not only is this dangerous since all responsibility is laid on the shoulders of these women, but also the responsibility is taken away from the other members of the community. In other words, where it used to be the men who were responsible for security, it now become women who are held accountable for security. The world is turned upside down and still one single group is expected to bring development and stability.

1.3.1 INVOLVEMENT OF MEN

Zuckerman adds that the role of men must not be forgotten when planning projects that are women sensitive. It is important to work with both men and women. (Sweetman, 2005, pp. 70) Both will benefit most if the facilities are built with their consent, advice and labour. The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit recognizes exactly this point; '*not only women are important*'. Men are equally important and need to be engaged in a dialogue to make them understand the benefits of women's involvement in projects. (AREU, 2004, pp. 5) International actors have to be careful to consider men as being against the wellbeing of women. The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit argues that if the project benefits the community when it is women sensitive, men are mostly very cooperative. (AREU, 2004, pp.5)

A different argument against a more women sensitive approach is that many men are reluctant to invite and accept women as equals in decision making processes. This reluctance may present an obstruction for their participation in peace building since the influence of women is diminished due to their apparent subordinate social position. Therefore, it may be difficult to work on women sensitive projects since the resistance of local men may be too strong. This hostility may make women's organizations, who are challenging existing power relations, targets for insurgents. Justifications for targeting them are that these organisations receive money from foreign partners and their objectives are incompatible with Taliban values.

1.3.2 ALL WOMEN ARE THE SAME

With regard to a women's agenda, there is another point of critique. It is assumed that all women want the same things and have the same identity. Therefore it is asserted that women are able to speak with one voice. There is, however, as much evidence that points to the contrary due to the many different roles and experiences women may have during and after conflict. (El Bushra, 2003, pp. 60) Status, age, ethnicity or clans are also very important in determining what women deem important.

All women are natural peace builders is another generalisation frequently claimed. Obviously this is not the case. Women have been very active in committing or supporting violence. (Van Tongeren, 2005, pp.97) Besides, it again ignores the many differences between women, situations and opportunities.

Another assumption is the prejudice that all women are eager and intellectually capable to participate in public activities and reconstruction. Many women, however, are often reluctant to be the first to take on a proactive role. (AREU, 2004, pp. 7) Or they have enough things to do as it is. Besides, most women are not educated nor trained. They need the opportunity to acquire the necessary knowledge before being intellectually capable of taking up certain public responsibilities. The point made by all the arguments above, is that '*the normal woman*' or '*Jane Doe*' does not exist, all women are shaped by their particular circumstances and characters.

A different counterargument for involvement in gender issues is that the focus on the subordinate position of women is frequently seen as a western idea. Therefore, the involvement of women in projects of international actors may cause resentment. It might create a much feared backlash, which is a reason for not being too much involved in these kind of affairs. (AREU, 2004, pp. 13) The issue of women's rights is sometimes called feminism- as- imperialism. This term reflects the idea that it is a Western concept, involuntary

laid on states with different cultural values. (Kandiyoti, 2005, pp.1) The possibility is ruled out by Westerners that women from these states may have another idea of what social justice is. As a result these women might strive for different rights and opportunities than Western organisations think. Also the focus on the unequal position of women neglects the functioning of local culture, in which this inequality might not be seen as a problem. (Kandiyoti, 2005, pp.1)

1.3.3 ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES

Many international organisations claim they want to engage with women in order to strengthen the peace process. But do they? It is said that these organisations often consign women's work to executive level and consequently accept their marginalisation in decision making. (El Bushra, 2003, pp. 64)

Also, projects undertaken in conflict states might have other priorities than gender inequalities. If NGO's work in the emergency relief modus, development projects do not have to be sustainable but visible results are needed. People need to be helped quickly and the focus is on the most needy groups, regardless of their sex. (AREU, 2004, pp. 7)

Politicization of gender issues is another complication development actors want to prevent. (AREU, 2004, pp. 7) Politicization could lead to the mobilization of groups against the organisation because of their focus on the position of women. Most organisations want to be impartial and to be equally accessible for all groups. In a society where gender is a sensitive issue, attention of the organisation might be on other problems in order not to be discredited by the population.

The sustainability of women's projects is also questioned. Women may receive greater responsibilities and mobility due to these projects but their traditional tasks are not diminishing. In reality, they have an even higher workload than before. Gender equality is neither automatically enhanced by opportunities of non traditional tasks. In fact, research has not yet made a solid assessment of the impact that the many tasks and role women perform, have on their position in society. (Manchanda, 2005, pp. 4739) Hence organisations have to be careful with focussing too much on the involvement of women.

All these points of critique are relevant and can be used to improve and maybe to rethink the way gender is handled in peace operations and reconstruction projects. The simple fact, however, that 50% of the population is often underrepresented and not involved in reconstruction does make the topic very relevant. And as all people deserve equal opportunities, women have to be consulted and involved in the whole planning of projects, just

like men. The comments made in this chapter have to be considered carefully and implemented for the sake of a more effective women sensitive way of conducting projects. Furthermore, remember that women sensitive does not equals men insensitive.

1.4 WHAT IS WOMEN AND GENDER SENSITIVE?

Gender and women are often used as interchangeable terms, which technically they are not. Gender is not determined by biological characteristics but by social systems. Furthermore, divisions based on gender are reinforced by religious and cultural factors that are dominant in society. Gender relations are based on social factors that are revealed in power relations and dominance that frame the conduct and the way of living of men and women. (Ostergaard et al, 1992, pp. 6) These relations are not necessarily conflicting but they may be opposed to each other. Since gender is socially constructed, these relations are changeable and may be influenced by politics or other opinion shaping tools. Gender factors differ in this way from biological characteristics that determine the sex of people which are in principle unchangeable and are established by birth. The term gender does not always refer to women. Instead, it focuses on socially constructed relations between different groups of people of which one is less powerful than the other. (Ostergaard et al, 1992, pp. 7) Ironically, most definitions focus on the power balance between men and women. For example, according to UNDP gender sensitive means to '*capture the different experiences and/or interests of women and men*'. (UN DP, 2005, pp.4)

A more narrow definition is used to describe a women sensitive way of working for PRT's. A women sensitive approach takes into account the different experiences and interests of women. Furthermore, the different effects of projects on women must be considered from the planning until the execution phase. This could involve adapting to cultural issues or a different perspective on interests of women compared to the ones PRT's imagine. In Afghanistan, sex determines much of the possibilities women have and the way they are living.

Relations and power balances in Afghanistan are strongly influenced by the ideology of sex-differences. This is the view that the sex of a person brings particular factors that predispose this person to a certain role in society. For instance, women are supposed to be naturally suited to reproduction and caring while men are the best providers and protectors. These assumptions are the basis for the division of labour and the position of the sexes in society. (Ostergaard et al, 1992, pp. 14) Thus, the division of labour and consequently the place of both sexes in society are socially constructions based on certain believes.

The constructed basis of gender division of labour suggests that it is subject to change, like all other social and economic relations. As the economy transforms or further develops, this influences the socio-economic relations in a society. (Ostergaard et al, 1992, pp. 41) The ability for gender relations to change due to economic development is important for the projects conducted by PRT's in Afghanistan. Their projects are suppose to contribute to economic development and in the end will alter socio- economic relations.

In Afghanistan, gender is one of the motives for exclusion which takes the form of not allowing women to participate in society. Women are excluded from economic and political decision making processes and public life because of gender relations. This exclusion may be formal and informal. The first form of exclusion means that laws which discriminate against women exist, while the second refers to traditions and other cultural practices that deny women the same opportunities men have. (Acharya, 2005, pp. 4720) Informal exclusion is much more difficult to change. Besides that, legal adjustments that improve the position of women do not necessarily stimulate changing attitudes towards women. In Afghanistan, both forms of exclusion are firmly embedded in society.

During conflict, gender relations are especially subjected to change, as the behaviour of women and men are incorporated as key elements of the group identity. Simultaneously, the results of conflict put stress on gender relations and can affect women in particular. Consequently, the resilience of the society to the results of conflict is in danger and complicates the process of conflict resolution. (El Bushra, 2003, pp.31) Furthermore, policies, societal structures and the presence and work of international actors may create new or enforce existing gender inequalities. These consequences are caused mostly unintentionally. (Lithander, 2000, pp. 14) Inequalities, especially based on gender, complicate the peace process as women are not allowed to participate equally.

1.5 WHAT IS GENDER AND WOMEN MAINSTREAMING?

The Economic and Social Council of the UN has defined Gender Mainstreaming as *'the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislations, policies or programmes in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.'* (ECOSOC, 1997/2)

Gender mainstreaming is not the same as to add a few magic ingredients for women in projects. A gender sensitive approach requires a change in the whole way of thinking during the planning phase of projects. (Acharya, 2005, pp. 4724) In all phases and aspects, gender issues have to be considered. This requires quite a change the way most organisations work. The issue of gender concerns all who are involved in the reconstruction of a war torn state. It is meant to be an inclusive part of the whole process from planning, to implementation, to execution. The analysis of a certain area ought to take into account the needs of both sexes on an equal basis. (Soderberg, 2004, pp.24)

Furthermore, the implementation of reconstruction projects has to be perceptive to both women and exclusion issues. Both informal and formal exclusion will effectively keep women out of the public sphere in which project planning is executed. In order to diminish exclusion, organizations have to try to involve women in all phases of the project, from planning and implementing to monitoring and evaluation. In '*all points where process, beneficiary and or participation are involved*' the gender aspect has to be incorporated. (Acharya, 2005, pp. 4725)

With regard to the reconstruction of Afghanistan, the *2002 Needs for Assessment for Afghanistan* did not include any recommendation nor measure to address women's issues while the advance of the position of Afghan women was indeed recognized by the government and the international community as important. (Corrin, 2004, pp. 12)

1.6 HOW TO PLAN AND EXECUTE WOMEN SENSITIVE PROJECTS?

While many argue for more women sensitive ways of planning reconstruction projects, the implementation of this approach proves to be challenging. Ostergaard and others devised recommendations that could help to adopt a more women sensitive way of working.

Reconstruction projects are generally planned in such a way that local women have difficulties to get involved. Common obstacles are both local customs, cultural barriers and the way the international organisation works. Examples of the impediments by cultural norms are for example that they might be restraint by men in their society to approach an NGO. Or they are unable to access land ownership since they do not have the right to purchase land. They might be pushing the accepted forms of female behaviour and therefore be stigmatized. The participation of local women might be constrained by their responsibilities at home, or women compete with men over available jobs and the latter are favoured over the first. (Ancil, 2007, pp.61-62) Although all these obstacles exist in Afghanistan, it is widely believed that the participation of women will stimulate development.

1.6.1 WORK WITH WOMEN

Ostergaard emphasizes the need to work with women, instead of doing things for them. By working with them, these women gain knowledge, contacts and skills themselves. Consequently, they will be able to continue after the international organization has left.

Not only is involvement of women important but practical support is a priority as well. The income opportunities for women do not only increase, but economic development is stimulated too. (El Bushra, 2003, pp. 65) Income generating projects need to be accessible for women because they are important in helping them to become self sufficient and to obtain a more equal position to men in society. However, since many women lack education, skill training is important to help them bridge this gap. Furthermore, access to markets and marketing skills are needed to make it possible for them to sell their products. (Lindsey, 2001, pp. 103)

Furthermore, not only the differences between men and women has to be acknowledged but also those between women. The class, position in the household and age can be crucial factors for a woman's social situation. Evans agrees that the social and economic positions of women have to be taken into account when planning projects since the differences between socio-economic groups can vary significantly and therefore have different needs or wishes. (Ostergaard et al, 1992, pp. 9-11)

1.6.2 CULTURE AND POWER BALANCES

Due to a country's culture, it might be difficult to get in touch with local women. In Afghanistan, the mobility of women is often restricted because of their gender but it is crucial to their participation. The understanding of the factors that hinder their mobility could help solve these restrictions or work a way around them. The women themselves are often very creative in dealing with their restricted mobility and can offer some more practical solutions. A women friendly assembly place is partly a solution to this mobility problem.

In addition to this meeting place, there is another huge but necessary challenge on to the road to change existing power relations between men and women. This challenge is getting the attention and interest of the ones possessing local power. (Sandler, 2007, pp. 47-48) Local leaders have direct influence on the mobility and possibilities of women. A good relationship with local leaders is especially important for organisations that work on local scale and want to involve the local population as much as possible. The contacts they have with the local leaders may be used to alter attitudes and customs that limit the participation of women in public works. Changing attitudes of local leaders may be important for the

empowerment of women. As Acharya states; '*empowerment is a process that increases women's abilities to change and challenge the power structures and ideologies that keep them inferior*'. (Acharya, 2005, pp. 4720) Accordingly, by empowering women, power structures are changed in such a way that more equality arises. In turn, a more equal position benefits economic development and hence stability.

Projects that are to make the local people more self sufficient in terms of food or water have to be directed at and accessible for women too. Since women, however, have many other tasks in their household, limitations on their participation have to be considered. Furthermore, cultural sensitivities with regard to the public work of women ought to be handled with care when planning for these projects. (Lindsey, 2001, pp. 103) Participation of local women in reconstruction projects can not be forced but a more extensive information flow can help making women aware of their rights and possibilities. (AREU, 2004, pp. 11)

Also to increase women's participation, Acharya suggests that equal employment and training opportunities have to be available for both women and men. Furthermore, the working environment ought be adjusted to the needs of women. For example, adequate sanitation facilities and security issues. Above all, especially in rural areas, projects ought to address male supremacy that prevails. (Acharya, 2005, pp. 4724)

In addition, organisations could develop certain codes of conduct so the local population will not take offence by the way the organisation operates. (AREU, 2004, pp. 11-14) Organisations can be aware of diversity and not just focus on men- women relations but also take into account other differences such as between young and elderly women. They learn about the local opinions, customs and attitudes in order to understand the situational context.

In societies where men are both the family decision makers and run the community councils and political bodies, women are little involved in the selection, management and planning of projects. In order for their voices to be heard and to increase their participation, women's organizations can be contacted and supported. (Reisen, 2005, pp. 40-41)

1.6.3 WOMEN ORGANISATIONS

Working with organisations run by women is recommended, as they are capable of analysing and assessing power relations in their society and challenge these on their own terms and in accordance with cultural factors. They may give valuable information on the position of women in their society and provide organisations with means and intelligence to undertake projects that have a real impact. They may also develop a 'women's agenda' with issues that

connect local women and their needs. (El Bushra, 2003, pp. 31-34) Another advantage of working with such an organisation is that contact is more easily established than with individual women. This statement, however, presupposes that women have common goals and are united by their values and experiences, their role as caretakers and their position in society.

Women organizations may be supported by international actors to increase the effectiveness of both parties. Dialogue between all parties and at all levels needs to be prioritized in order to explain the needs of women and society and to find realistic solutions that fit all parties. The promotion of peace, human security and the rise of civil society may improve prospects for sustainable peace. (El Bushra, 2003, pp. 57)

1.6.4 OBSTACLES

A note of caution is given by Sandler, who warns that gender relations are not easily changed and large scale, comprehensive policies are necessary to achieve change. It is not done by one interaction with women in one project. Furthermore, local practice and the hearts and minds of the people have to embrace these changes in order to be really sustainable.

Surprisingly, on many occasions, the NGO is the one that complicates the possibility for participation of women. For instance, in order to enter a project for refugees, the handover of official papers was required. Unfortunately, many women did not have or could not access these documents. As a result they were not allowed to participate and these projects eventually did not fulfil the economic and social demands of men, women and their communities. (Sweetman, 2005, pp. 5) Some of these organisations are reluctant to engage in the difficult field of women's issues. In others, women are underrepresented in their own organisation. Also it is found too hard to make contact with local women's organisations due to their informal character. These constraints can be overcome by letting women's organisations assist local women in acquiring access to help and reconstruction aid. (Ancil, 2007, pp.61-62)

Lastly, women above all need security and access to basic necessities like water and food. (El Bushra, 2003, pp. 33) Without security, women are not able to leave their homes to take care of their families or to take part in other activities that foster peace. Therefore, organisations need to keep in mind the priorities people set in post-conflict situations. Since women are the primary care takers of the family in many countries, these basic necessities are beneficial for the survival of the whole family, including themselves.

An example of a typical reconstruction project is the construction of a water pump. As water facilities are mostly used by children and women to collect water for cooking, washing and drinking they need to be accessible and usable for women and kids to be effective. Women are likely to know very much about local water facilities and how these installations would be best reconstructed. Their advice on these projects could thus be very helpful to plan and deliver installations that are usable for their target group. (Lindsey, 2001, pp. 92) Sustainability of these projects could be enhanced by letting the most frequent users give advice and let them help developing the plans. By educating them on the maintenance and minor reparations of the pump, long term use is assured. The location and design can be topic of discussion to make the pump easy to reach and to operate for the users. However, at the moment, women are not included in the preparing of these projects. Neither are they trained in the maintenance of these installations. Inappropriate facilities could be installed which are not used and maintained by locals, making them unsustainable as a result (Lindsey, 2001, pp.124)



Water pump in Afghanistan,
a men's business?



Water pump in Afghanistan,
a woman's business?

1.7 WHICH UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS ON WOMEN AND CONFLICT ARE RELEVANT?

The problems and needs of women in post-conflict states are not new and many international agreements promote equal rights and opportunities for women. Examples are *the Millennium Development Goals* and the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*, but the most widely known one is *Security Resolution 1325* adopted by the United Nations Security Council in 2000. This resolution focuses especially on the rights and roles women play during and after war. (Policy document, 2007) Resolution 1325 underlines the need to pay more attention to women in conflict zones. This document aims to make everyone more aware of violence women face and to recognize their peace building capabilities. Special recommendations are made with regard to operations in conflict and post conflict states. (UN resolution 1325, 2000)

One of the key recommendations in resolution 1325 was that the gender perspective has to be incorporated in all mandates of peace operations. Besides, gender specialists and funding of gender activities should be made available for peace missions. Furthermore, the resolution recommends training on gender and women's rights for all personnel active in a peace keeping operation. (Africa Recovery, 2003, pp. 19) Moreover, Resolution 1325 the

suggests that reconstruction is the outcome of active involvement by the community in order for it to be most effective. Otherwise, it will be perceived as an imposed condition, making it destined to fail to reach its goals. (Sweetman, 2005, pp. 39)

Unfortunately, it is not elaborated on how these recommendations are to be incorporated into peace operations and there is no enforcement mechanism that pushes key parties to take action. (Ancil, 2007, pp.16)

In 2009, a new resolution that focuses on women in conflict was unanimously adopted by the Security Council. Resolution 1888 prohibits all forms of sexual violence during conflict and promotes the inclusion of women in peace negotiations and peace keeping missions. Furthermore, this resolution urges member states to mainstream gender issue within their institutions, including the army. The Security Council recognizes the added value of more women in peace keeping troops since local women will feel more secure with them and the female soldiers might act as good role models. (UN Resolution 1888, 2009)

Resolutions 1325 and 1889 proof that it is internationally recognized that women in war zones deserve special attention. Unfortunately, UN resolution do not always reflect the reality on the ground.

1.8 CONCLUSION

The central question in the first chapter of this thesis is *'why is inclusion of women important in reconstruction projects in a post-conflict state?'*

Reconstruction is the first step in the recovery of a war torn country. Donors must be aware of the fact that aid has to contribute to long term development of a country and consider negative effects of their assistance. This long term development contributes to a positive peace and a situation in which all forms of structural violence and unequal power relations are abolished. Gender equality is one of the forms of structural inequality and therefore needs to be abolished because social and economic justice is an important basis for a sustainable peace. Therefore, the inclusion of women in reconstruction projects is important to develop a sustainable, positive peace. Also, reconstruction can play a part in the change of socio economic gender relations. It promotes socio- economic change and agents. Besides, reconstruction can attempt to correct inequalities by addressing unequal gender relations in reconstruction projects.

From this chapter, the following factors arise that may determine the level of women sensitive CIMIC. The first is to see women as be agents of change instead of powerless victims. Many prejudices about the female nature, however, have to be reconsidered as

women play different roles in supporting either the war or the peace efforts. With regard to development and reconstruction projects, any program that does not consider women's needs will probably strengthen existing power imbalances between men and women. In doing so, these programs will undermine any chance on long term development since unequal power relations and positive peace do not go hand in hand.

Work with women instead of working for them is the second factor. Measures to encourage women in the reconstruction phase and work with them are numerous. Involving them in discussions and decision making is one of these measures. Some research even indicates that investing in women leads to quicker and more sustainable results and stimulates economic activity. Another advantage is that women in a leadership or public position provide other women and girls powerful role models and they are able to challenge gender relations. Furthermore, education and a ban on sexual discrimination in workplaces greatly enhance economic growth. A neglect of women in the planning of reconstruction further strengthens the image of the powerless, victimized women. By engaging women, the whole community can see what they are capable of.

As for the third factor, important is that effects on both men and women are considered when planning and executing projects. This is called gender sensitive planning. As this thesis focuses on women, a women sensitive approach considers both positive and negative effects of projects on their lives.

The women's organisations that are already working in the field and that have build important networks can be a valuable partner. Working with these organisations and provide them with the necessary resources is the fourth factor that determines the level of women sensitivity.

For projects to be sustainable, opportunities have to be offered to both sexes. This is the fifth factor. It is important to not forget about the men as women get more chances. Men are equally important and need to be engaged in a dialogue to make them understand the benefits of women's involvement in projects.

The sixth factor that may contribute is the involvement of men, in particular local leaders. Their cooperation is necessary in order to accomplish results. Furthermore, it has been said that most leaders are willing to listen and cooperate with women sensitive projects as long as they see the benefits for their community.

As women sensitive activities are implemented, the points of critique have to be carefully considered. These projects will only get better and more effective if lessons learned and feedback are regularly given and taken into consideration.

INTRODUCTION

Chapter two explains the concept of CIMIC and the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT's) that are executing CIMIC activities. Furthermore, the goals and linkage between CIMIC and security is addressed in 2.3. The role of CIMIC in the rebuilding process of a country is elaborated on too. Criticism on CIMIC has been fierce and arguments against CIMIC will be up for discussion in section 2.5. Local ownership and the participation of locals in projects is the theme of 2.6. Also, up for discussion is whether or not it is an good idea to involve women in projects. This section is followed by a conclusion and from all the information in Chapter 2, several factors are deducted that are used in Chapter 4 to assess the women sensitivity of the PRT's in Uruzgan and Bamyan.

2.1 WHAT IS CIMIC?

2.1.1 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NINETIES

In the 1990's, due to the nature of contemporary conflict, a more comprehensive view on security was developed. Intrastate conflicts had a devastating effect on the population, economy and regional stability. At the same time transnational security threats developed as criminal networks, drugs and weapons trade and terrorism grew stronger. International criminals and terrorists found safe havens in so called fragile states with a weak government. As a way to deal with these new security threats, a more extensive approach to handle post-conflict situations was needed. Humanitarian aspects were included in military operations and the amount of NGO's independently working in crisis areas increased. As a consequence contact between military units and NGO's expanded as well. A number of peace operations were not able to keep the peace and other ways were sought to stabilize an area. (Rehse, 2004, pp. 3-8) Thus a more humanitarian and political approach was chosen as it was believed that military action would not improve the situation.

Simultaneously, as the activities of NGO's expanded to cover many different areas, peace operations became multidimensional and often did not confine to activities with a military character only. During the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, NGO's and military units were in close contact while working to improve the situation in these countries. Because of that, the need for closer cooperation between these actors became clear. The activities with a non-military character and the interaction with NGO's made a more managed

relationship between military and humanitarian organisations important. (Rehse, 2004, pp. 9-13)

2.1.2 THE DEFINITION OF CIMIC

CIMIC is the abbreviation for this managed relationship and stands for Civil Military Cooperation. CIMIC, however, is not such a broad term as it may seem at first. Many different definitions are used to describe the relations between NGO's, other societal actors and military personnel causing confusion for the reader. In this thesis, Civil Military Relations (CIMIR) refers to the relation as described above. The term CIMIC, as used in this thesis, refers to civil- military projects and relations that are initiated in order to serve the goals of the mission. These projects may or may not be undertaken together with NGO's or other organizations. CIMIC is part is often part of CIMIR and is widely seen as a military doctrine. (Rehse, 2004, pp. 14) Currently, this explanation of the term CIMIC is most commonly used in military jargon.

The Dutch doctrine of CIMIC, based on the NATO definition, is defined as *'The coordination and co-operation, in support of the mission, between the NATO Commander and civil actors, including national population and local authorities, as well as international, national and non-governmental organisations and agencies.* (Dutch ministry of Defense, 13-07-09) The most important part of this definition is *'in support of the mission'*. All CIMIC activities are conducted to assist the goals of the military mission whether these are short or long term objectives. Therefore, the definition is narrowed down to cooperation that will benefit the mission only. CIMIC is therefore more or less a tool in achieving the objectives of the military operation. Any project or other sort of assistance which does not contribute to the mission is not considered CIMIC. (Rehse, 2004, pp.32)

CIMIC is part of the whole planning of a peace operation. In every aspect of such an operation, CIMIC and its effect on the operation are considered. For example, from a military perspective destruction of a bridge may be seen as necessary. However, from a CIMIC point of view, it may have dramatic consequences for both the support of the population and the chances for economic development. Furthermore, supply lines are dependent on that bridge and chances are that the bridge needs to be rebuild eventually. In the end, keeping the bridge intact may benefit the operation more. (Defensiekrant, 04-09-08)

CIMIC in Afghanistan is not an element of a peace operation but it is part of the counterinsurgency efforts of the ISAF forces. The idea is that CIMIC contributes to winning the hearts and minds of the local population by undertaking projects. As a result, the level of

insurgency and violence, especially against the government and protecting forces, will decrease as people experience the benefits of cooperation. Furthermore, attacks by insurgents at schools or other newly build facilities will create resentment against these rebels which will decrease their level of support. (Gombert, 2009, pp. 83). In short, CIMIC will create more support for their mission with the local population and diminish approval of the rebels.

2.2 WHAT ARE PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAMS AND WHAT IS THEIR TASK?

On 13 October 2003, resolution 1510 authorised NATO to expand the mission area in Afghanistan. Phase One of this expansion was started by the deployment of the PRT's in the Northern and the Eastern provinces. (Klep, 2005, pp. 3) Almost three years later, NATO took control over the whole of Afghanistan. In this mission area, CIMIC activities are mostly conducted by the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT's). Twenty six PRT's are currently working in Afghanistan, divided over four Regional Commands. (NATO, 25-4-09) (See appendix 1)

The concept of the PRT's in Afghanistan is essentially an American idea. In 2002, the Americans started integrating security and reconstruction projects to increase both security and popularity of the foreign troops in Afghanistan as counter insurgency measures. First they were called the Joint Regional teams, later they were named the Provincial Reconstruction Teams. The idea was that civil actors would cooperate with soldiers to monitor, assist and enable development and security. (Goodson, 2003, pp. 95-96) In July 2009, most provinces were covered by one or more PRT's. (NATO, 02-02-09)

PRT's typically contain team members with different specialities and backgrounds. Some are soldiers, others are civilians who are temporarily hired. (Bebber, 2008, pp.3) Civilian PRT members may be specialized in infrastructure, agriculture, banking, or other useful areas. Their knowledge contributes to the expertise of the military members of the PRT's. In most provinces, the work of the PRT's focuses on security sector reform, reconstruction and development. As a general rule, these projects are related to the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and must fit its goals. (NATO, 02-02-09)

2.3 WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF CIMIC?

There are several environments in which CIMIC may be conducted. A conflict may still be ongoing, there may be a substantial level of violence or a war may already have come to an end. (Gombert, 2009, pp. 1-2) The ISAF operation aims at stabilizing the country and is suppose to terminate when stability is accomplished. The operation has counterinsurgency

aspects. According to David Gombert, senior fellow at RAND corporation, '*insurgency is an armed internal challenge to a government that appeals to and exploits the support of important segments of the population.*' Counterinsurgency, or COIN, is the effort to keep the population on the side of the government and in Afghanistan, of the coalition troops. Providing services and support development is suppose to weaken the appeal of the insurgents and increase support for the initiators. (Gombert, 2009, pp.2) In other words, it is about winning the hearts and minds of the local population.

CIMIC facilitates in stabilizing the country by conducting development and reconstruction projects. It also aims to support the exit strategy of the military units since these projects aim to enable a country to go on independently. (Defensiekran, 04-09-08) Furthermore, CIMIC serves the goals of the mission by providing the military command with situational awareness, force acceptance and protection, force multiplier and an increase of force acceptance. (NATO, 02-02-09) All these aspects will be discussed below.

2.3.1 SITUATIONAL AWARENESS AND FORCE ACCEPTANCE

Situational awareness points to the knowledge of the environment, including the relations between people, in which the mission is operating. Sharing information and the interaction with the local population increase situational awareness. Interaction and cooperation with local people and NGO's are therefore very important in gaining information about social, political, cultural, religious, economic and humanitarian issues.

Force acceptance and protection are other objectives of CIMIC. Increasing force acceptance by way of interaction and projects, also enhances force protection. The idea of '*feeding hands will not get bitten*' applies to the role of CIMIC in enhancing force protection. (Ankersen, 2002, pp.4) The population will be more supportive of the mission and less likely to engage in attacks at the military units. It has also been called 'winning the hearts and minds' and is especially important in COIN.

CIMIC projects and cooperation with local organizations may give the commander an extra tool to influence the behaviour of the people and thus CIMIC may act as a force multiplier. Less military power and intervention are needed to stabilize the area and cooperation is intensified with the local population to achieve the goals of the mission. (Longhurst, 2005, pp. 37-38) Along with all the other military goals, CIMIC aims to build trust and credibility between the military and the population. As a result the objectives as stated above are made possible. (Ankersen, 2002, pp.5)

Furthermore, the use of projects allows the mission to act quickly and flexibly with a large impact on the population and hence enhanced force protection and acceptance. (Longhurst, 2005, pp. 44) In general, CIMIC officers identify projects that are both meeting local demands and fit in the mandate of the operation. They decide which projects are to be undertaken in consultation with local leaders or authorities and based on their own assessments. (Longhurst, 2005, pp.38) This way projects are executed that benefit both parties.

2.3.2 SECURITY AND CIMIC

In Afghanistan, the security situation calls for a stabilization operation with COIN aspects. Due to security concerns, the concept of the PRT's was designed. As the objectives of ISAF are interrelated, the three focus areas (security, governance and development) are mutually dependent. Security, however, is probably the most essential since a secure environment enables the improvement of governance and development. As the coalition forces provide the security, the PRT's can contribute to the other two focus areas to support the security efforts. This is especially important in regions where NGO's are not yet willing or able to set up projects. (Bebber, 2008, pp.3-5) Furthermore, the PRT's are present in areas in which government entities are not able to contribute to development and security. (Abbaszadeh, 2008, pp.12) Another complication for security arises out of the nature of contemporary conflict which contains characteristics of guerrilla war techniques. Consequently, there is less time and ability to plan the control of the post-conflict situation. As a consequence, security may deteriorate again after the initial violence has come to an end. The imbalance between relative security and development, of which the latter may be almost non-existent in a post-conflict state, can cause both short and long term instability. Insurgents and criminals may return to violence in the near future. In the long run, resentment among the population, local power structures and an informal economy may be threats to security. (Hoshmand, 2005, pp. 5-7)

If the security situation is very unstable, as in Afghanistan, the need for quick impact projects is all the more urgent. (AREU, 2004, pp. 2) As visible reconstruction projects are undertaken, peace dividend is more evident and other opportunities arise for the population to earn a living. Important for erasing ground for insurgency is that stability is rewarding and benefits are immediately visible. In a more secure area, many organizations will conduct projects as well that give development and consequently security a boost.

With regard to building security, the PRT's are also engaged in peace brokering between war lords and information provision to the UN and other organisations about the

level of security. Furthermore, the training of security forces and the establishment of check points at highways are stimulants for an increased level of security. (Hoshmand, 2005, pp.22)

Another aspect of the relation between security and CIMIC is the perception of the local population on security. The local perspective is often very different from the military one. The military perceives security in relation to the amount of violence and hostility against its soldiers. This perceived insecurity affects their behaviour and might alienate the population as all locals might be seen as enemies. Civilian victims of military actions may also increase as the army tries to stop insurgents.

The locals face different threats. A situation might be safe for locals since they are not the victims of attacks, while soldiers are feeling insecure. On the other hand, the local population might be more vulnerable for kidnapping or other sort of attacks and are not able to defend themselves. For example, on 15 June 2009, several musicians were beaten and tied up by Taliban soldiers since they had performed on a wedding in Afghanistan. Singing and dancing is a traditional way of celebrating a wedding but was forbidden under Taliban rule. (Reuters, 15-06-09) These citizens were not targeted for their cooperation with coalition troops. Still they were attacked to make them, their neighbours and the foreign troops, aware of their vulnerability for Taliban aggression. These sort of examples illustrate the vulnerability of ordinary citizens for attacks by insurgents.

The perceptions of the local population play another role as well, with regard to security and the PRT's. As the expectations arise that violence and terrorist attacks may increase in the nearby future, CIMIC personnel may appear less in public than before. The fear of the Afghan people, already worried about the possibility of more violence, is confirmed by the disappearance of mission teams. Not only are the foreigners in danger, also the locals that were working with them might be in trouble as well. As a consequence it might be better for them not to cooperate or even to work against CIMIC people as this behaviour protects themselves from harm.

2.4 WHAT IS THE ROLE OF CIMIC IN RECONSTRUCTION PROCESSES ?

Large scale reconstruction is mostly the task of the central government with the assistance of major IGO's and NGO's. On a more local scale, however, reconstruction proceeds even without the support or guidance of the government. The resilience and power of people to survive and to invent alternative coping strategies is not be underestimated. (Moghadam, 2005, pp. 34) Bas Rietjens argues that societies reconstruct, they are not reconstructed by outsiders. This means that the local population drives development and is the motor behind

reconstruction. It is a long term process which takes time, energy and dedication. (Rietjens, 2008, pp.113) The PRT's may play a supporting role in the reconstruction process but cannot reconstruct a whole country themselves.

Reconstruction in a secure environment is, however, seen as a condition for the implementation of peace building programs and has to be addressed in any post conflict development strategy. (Barakat, 2005, pp. 5) CIMIC is not an equivalent for reconstruction although small scale reconstruction projects are executed. (Lecture drs. De Hoop, April 2008) Nevertheless, these small projects are in line with the goals of the operation. Overall, the PRT's can contribute to reconstruction with small projects like restoring electricity supply or repairing water services and medical facilities. These projects are mostly conducted by PRT's who consist of both military and civilians. PRT's are in close contact with the local population and try to initiate projects that meet their needs and support the operation. (Rietjens, 2008, pp. 5)

Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, former Secretary General of the NATO, has underlined the importance of the work of the PRT's for ISAF as he stated that *'reconstruction and development are as important as civilian presence and civilian presence is as important as a military presence'*. (Paktribune, 15-05-09) The goal is not to have a military victory in Afghanistan but to build a sustainable and stable state. Reconstruction efforts are thus very important in building this state. Not just NGO's are needed for rebuilding Afghanistan but also the energy of the PRT's are required. The link between reconstruction, security and the role of the PRT's is underlined in his speech. Unfortunately, this sustainable state is not yet within reach as violence seems to increase, corruption is still widespread and the overall level of development is low. (UNAMA, 2009, pp. 1-10)

2.5 WHAT ARE THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST CIMIC?

As CIMIC has developed, criticism has grown. The arguments most often used to criticize CIMIC or PRT's will be discussed in this part of chapter 2. It must be emphasized that not all parties involved in giving or taking critique are alike. Since so many different organizations, different ways of working, and just as many opinions exist, these arguments differ per organization. Sometimes even per person. Therefore, comments on CIMIC are generalized and only serve as an illustration of the ongoing debate.

One part of the criticism focuses on the activities that the PRT's undertake. It has been said that an army does not have the knowledge and experience for reconstruction or development projects. They may have the resources but that does not mean that they know

what they are doing. As NGO's are the ones that have the expertise, experience and specially trained personnel, they are better suited to undertake these projects. (Bollen, 2002, pp. 6) Besides, it is not a military job to do these kind of projects but they have to ensure security so that NGO's can initiate activities. (Borker Bjerre, 2007, pp. 4)

2.5.1 COOPERATION MILITARY AND NGO'S

With regard to the anticipated cooperation between military actors and NGO's, widespread resistance exists. The army is mostly willing to cooperate in order to ease the workload, collect intelligence and to assure that reconstruction projects are executed, in turn benefitting the security situation. Some NGO's, however, are not that enthusiastic about working together. They argue that the military is not neutral and that by cooperating their impartial objectives are in danger. Furthermore, by being associated with military actors, they are afraid to become a target for the opposing military forces since they are seen as 'collaborates' of the foreign troops. For other organisations it depends on the kind of activities that PRT's undertake. They recognize that military actors may have a comparative advantage when it comes for example to transport or Security Sector Reform. Or when they handle emergency relief situations where there is simply no other organisation available. (Frerks, 2006, pp. 2-10)

Some NGO's are very pragmatic and do cooperate if necessary. For example, Stan Klinkenberg of Save the Children, used the Dutch Compound in Uruzgan to sleep and to eat. During the day, he visited local schools without military protection. He was accompanied by an interpreter, not by any soldiers. The reason for cooperation was that the NGO did not want to wait with providing help in Uruzgan. Normally, Save the Children is not in favour of CIMIC activities. However, if the level of insecurity forces the organization to work with soldiers, they will do so. (Save the Children, 19-04-09)

Cooperation with military actors by local NGO's is often more pragmatic. The benefits and resources that the military has to offer outweigh any inconveniences. Occasionally, field workers of larger NGO's are grateful for any support they can get, even if that means they have to work with the army. For most locals, it does not really matter who is doing reconstruction projects, as long as they deliver. (Frerks, 2006, pp. 5)

Cooperation is further complicated by the differences in organisational structures and hierarchy, which is an obstacle in their cooperation. Since both sorts of organisations work so differently, they do not understand each other. Communication is also hindered because of the differences in organisational hierarchy. When working with a military actor, the commander's permission is needed but in most NGO's the individual aid worker has much more freedom to

make his own decision. This difference in hierarchy can also frustrate coordination. (Bollen, 2002, pp. 6)

Most NGO's also mistrust the motives and objectives of military forces when involved in humanitarian operations. They work independently and are only accountable to their own organisation and to the people they are trying to help. The military are always working under a political mandate and are accountable to the sending government. As a consequence their work is political and can not be impartial. Another consequence is that projects and activities are also political and not necessarily in the interest of the population. Furthermore, the NGO's are worried that the goals of the military and political might prevail over theirs. Moreover, the assumption that the work of international NGO's is subordinate to or depended on the military is resisted. (Rehse, 2004, pp.13) The timetable of both kinds of organisations is a complication too. The military forces will stay in the conflict zone as long as the politicians in their home country decide and the soldiers themselves are mostly working in six month shifts. The NGO's are not reliant on the decisions of politicians and are able to decide these sorts of things for themselves. (Bollen, 2002, pp.)

2.5.2 *EFFECTIVENESS*

The activities of the PRT's have to be in line with the ANDS. There is, however, no overall coordination mechanism for all CIMIC activities. The amount and the way CIMIC is implemented depends on the personality of the Commander. (Rietjens, 2007 2, pp.174) This lack of coordination causes many differences in the handling of CIMIC between the rotating personnel. Budget, projects, priorities and the involvement of locals differ per rotation. (Rietjens, 2007 2, pp.174) Furthermore, it not only complicates cooperation between locals and the PRT's but also between PRT's of different nationalities. The lack of coordination has some advantages as well, as it facilitates flexibility, adaption of projects to the exact needs of the area and it stimulates rapid execution of projects.

The most sensitive issue is the effectiveness of CIMIC with regard to the security situation. Not much research has been done to the actual effectiveness of CIMIC on the security level. Evidence from the Khost province shows that development projects did not improve the level of security. As the Opposing Military Forces (OMF) grew stronger, the level of violence rose. For the population the choice between supporting NATO forces or the OMF became a matter of survival. Since the OMF were perceived as more dangerous, people rationally choose to support the Taliban, if in name only. They choose whatever option they could in order to keep the OMF out of their village and increase their own security. (Bebber,

2008, pp.9) The activities the PRT's initiated did not alter the situation. The Dutch government claims that the PRT's and the 3D approach do influence the security situation in a positive way. (Speech Van Middelkoop, 4-12-09) The level of security, however, is not satisfying yet as attacks by insurgents and IED's are very common. Also worrying is that the police and army are not working together but against each other. (Radio Netherlands Worldwide, 04-01-10) These two security forces are suppose to provide security after the Dutch soldiers leave Uruzgan.

James Dobbins suggests that PRT's are a second best solution compared to a multilateral peace operation to secure the area. In this safe environment, the deployment of civilians and development organisations are able to take on the reconstruction process. The members of the PRT's can contribute less to reconstruction efforts than specialized NGO's because they drive around in armed vehicles and are staying on military bases. The environment does not necessarily need to be 100 percent safe for them to work. On the other hand, in an unsafe area their work is seriously hindered since they are not able to move freely. (Dobbins, 2008, pp.133)

Last point of criticism is the opinion of military personnel themselves about CIMIC. Some soldiers think that reconstruction projects are not the work soldiers should do. The softer side of stabilizing an area is the job of NGO's and locals. Soldiers only bring hard security, they stop and deter violence. On the other hand, many soldiers recognize the need to deal with poverty and development. They are convinced that in order to establish long term peace, the country needs economic prosperity. Furthermore, they see the positive effect that CIMIC activities have on the attitude of the population towards the soldiers. And the soldiers are glad to make a difference. (Frerks, 2006, pp. 61-62) NGO's, however, are needed in order to give development an extra boost as CIMIC is not meant to be the motor behind development. Besides, resources and man power are scarce in military units, as is time.

2.6 IS IT IMPORTANT TO INVOLVE THE LOCAL POPULATION IN CIMIC?

Local reconstruction projects can benefit greatly from knowledge of the local population, for example by asking for survival strategies they developed during conflict. The transition from emergency projects towards more long term development reconstruction is enabled by that knowledge and the participation of the inhabitants. Projects aim to improve the livelihoods of locals and allow them to become independent of development aid. (Moghadam, 2005, pp. 34)

Local organizations are often running reconstruction projects and are in close contact with the community. Resources are mostly their weak spot, which may be filled with money

and other assets the PRT has available. Besides the relation with the population, the more or less organized structure of such an organization is an advantage. By contacting the leader of the organization, communication is easier to establish. Furthermore, commitments are made more easily by dealing with one person than getting in touch with many different persons. Interaction with other stakeholders are still part of the process in order to prevent that a project benefits just a small group. (Rietjens, 2007 2, pp. 190)

Also, by giving people a say in the planning of projects ownership is stimulated. This in turn increases the chances that a project will succeed and that maintenance will be taken care of securing long term benefits. Local organizations can be strengthened by involving them in CIMIC projects. Not only will that assure a more appropriate and needed activity, it also strengthens civil society. Furthermore, knowledge is gained on how to plan and execute such a project and thus enhances local capacity.

By engaging in contact with the local population and involving them in the whole process of planning projects, their demands and needs can be heard. The project can thus be designed in such a way that it really suits the needs and wishes of the people who are going to use it. (Rietjens, 2008, pp.148) Sometimes projects can be set up in such a way that the result is culturally inappropriate. For example, the rebuilding of a medical facility without a separate wing for women. A very nice and appealing project it is. It will not, however, facilitate medical care for the whole community since women are not allowed to be treated in this building. By communicating and involving the local population, these sort of cultural blunders are prevented. Sustainability is increased if local people are involved because projects are undertaken that are suited to their wishes, they have to know how to maintain the result and the ability to deliver more activities. The impact of the project will simply last longer. (Rietjens, 2008, pp.148)

Moreover, the perception gap of both PRT's and locals is filled by a closer cooperation. Especially with regard to security, locals and military often have widely diverging views and understandings of peace and security. More interaction between all actors will bring these views more in accordance with one another. Increased understanding of what security means to locals, enhances the ability of the military to adept its way of working to assure security. That way, CIMIC has even more impact on the security of the area since people are feeling more secure and support for the operation will grow. Furthermore, interaction will align the expectations of both parties more and as a result decrease the chance of deception which could undermine the goals of CIMIC. (Rietjens, 2008, pp.149)

It seems to be beneficial to cooperate with locals and NGO's to enhance available information, to foster a sense of ownership, to create a demand-led project plan, to design more sustainable projects and to develop more aligned perceptions.

2.6.1 CIVIL SOCIETY IN AFGHANISTAN

As much as the participation of locals in projects is advocated, Andreas Winner, on the contrary, argues that in the case of Afghanistan, civil society is not an appropriate partner for reconstruction projects. War lords and corrupt state institutions make up a large part of the existing civil society structures. By involving them in reconstruction projects, state failure and the power of war lords are strengthened. (Winner, 2002, pp. 5) Evidence from the Khost province supports this argument. The appointed governor was suspected of having ties with criminal networks, favouring high positions to his relations, accepting bribes and even providing the Taliban with intelligence. Furthermore, high officials frequently requested items from the PRT's for their own use. As a consequence, the PRT became literally a partner in crime which damaged their image. Locals came, to avoid paying bribes to officials, directly to the PRT. Unfortunately, they were send back to the officials since that was the channel through which the PRT was working. This method further alienated the population and deteriorated the popularity of the PRT in the Khost province. (Bebber, 2008, pp.9)

Also a difficult issue in certain parts of Afghanistan is that civil society is hardly existent. Therefore, it is hard to find organizations that are able and willing to cooperate. And working with requests from individuals is more complicated and time consuming. Moreover, the collective interest might not always be served by realizing wishes of individuals. The structures that do exist are the councils of elders or organized systems which are sometimes run by dubious characters. Even newly appointed leaders are not always for the better. (Winner, 2002, pp. 8) Maybe working with these questionable people is not the ideal option but at times it might be the only working one.

2.7 IS IT BENEFICIAL TO INVOLVE WOMEN IN CIMIC?

Military projects are generally focused on men because they are seen as the 'war makers', especially in COIN operations. Recently, women are also recognized as important targets for CIMIC projects. As the former Secretary General of the NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said at the annual meeting of the Committee of Women in NATO Forces in June 2009, '*Women and gender issues can play a vital role as an enabler in peace building and nation stabilisation*'. (NATO, 02-06-09) Therefore, he argued, the most has to be made of women's abilities that

could benefit to the goal of an operation as ISAF. In addition, Colonel Bert Kuijpers of the CIMIC Centre of Excellence, thinks that gender awareness is of vital importance to the success of a mission. (Houdijk, 2008, pp. 3)

The CIMIC Centre of Excellence (CCOE), supports these statements and argues that a better awareness of gender issues will indeed benefit the mission. Firstly by better access to and communication with the whole local population and NGO's. Also, the situational awareness will increase which will provide the commander with more information to make more effective decisions. (Houdijk, 2008, pp. 10) These two benefits are closely related as more contact with locals will provide more information sharing and builds mutual respect and trust. More information and trust will positively influence both the amount and quality of information for the civil assessments which are the basis for the situational awareness of the commander. The more knowledge that is gained, the better for the operation. Access to local women builds trust between them and the coalition forces. (Valenius, 2007, pp.16) This will benefit knowledge about the local culture and thus improves situational awareness.

2.7.1 SUSTAINABILITY

Furthermore it is argued that projects are more effective if they consider the different effects on local men and women. (Houdijk, 2008, pp.16-23) As CIMIC is meant to be a force multiplier, it makes sense to reach out to as many people as possible in order to make CIMIC effective. (Houdijk, 2008, pp. 36)

The Afghan Women's Network argues for the inclusion of gender in PRT's because of the PRT's own guiding principle '*lay the foundation for long-term sustainable changes*'. (Roberts, 2007, pp.4) Since one of the aims of the PRT is to contribute to the basis of a sustainable development, inclusion of women practised from the start, will fosters security. That way, women are empowered, the PRT's win support and work on the foundation of a durable development. It sounds very simple. The cultural specifics that define gender relations are excluded from this argument. As a result, this argument depends on the situational and cultural context in which PRT's work.

Also, Johanna Valenius argues that since the contemporary security situation is more complex than before, the need for diversity within a military unit is growing. Not only tough fighters are needed for the combat tasks but also people that are good at the more social tasks such as contact with local power holders. These more social tasks are may be even better undertaken by women than men. (Valenius, 2007, pp. 32) Although this argument might contain some level of truth, it is based on a generalized image of women. This image, that all

women are the same, is the exact thing she tries to counter when addressing local women and peace operations. Consequently, there is a inconsistency in her work. The argument for more diversity within military units in complex security situations, however, makes sense and can not be disregarded because of an inconsistency.

2.7.2 FEMALE PRT MEMBERS

In August 2009, an all female US marine unit was deployed in the province Helmand in order to reach out to local women. Already extraordinary, this unit was particularly culturally sensitive and was wearing head scarves when they were out of the compound. Approaching Afghan women is seen as crucial in collecting intelligence and winning the support of the population. As US captain Zachary Martin told an US news paper *"I've found you get great intel from the female population.. because these women don't want their men out there conducting jihad and getting killed."* This might be a promising initiative if it would be easier to get in contact with women. A mixture of fear for reprisals of the Taliban, communication problems since the interpreters are male and the indoor oriented lives of most women in Helmand hinder the success of this initiative. (NATO, 02-06-09) But these problems may be overcome.

Female military personnel might also be misused as a distraction. A blond, female American soldier was sometimes put on a truck for sale when the US military wanted to search the area for weapons. All men from the village would come to see this blond, mysterious woman and the search could be executed. It is not to say that this method is woman friendly or cultural appropriate but for the short term it was effective. (Polman, 2008, pp. 700) The longer term effect might not be so positive as the image of (western) women is affected and houses were searched by male soldiers in the absence of male relatives which could cause quite some resentment.

Also, it is useful too to deploy more female personnel in the PRT's to facilitate better access to local women and provide role models. Furthermore, they are crucial in body checks of women and other difficult situations for male soldiers. (Houdijk, 2008, pp. 23- 38) Not only are they more easy to approach for women, they are also seen as less threatening than male soldiers by local men. (Valenius, 2007, pp. 28)

2.9 CONCLUSION

The central question in the second chapter of this thesis is '*How is CIMIC conducted in Afghanistan?*' The most important thing to remember about CIMIC is that all activities and contacts are conducted '*in support of the mission*'. In most provinces in Afghanistan, the work of the PRT's focuses on security sector reform, reconstruction and development. As a general rule, these projects are related to the Afghan National Development Strategy.

Important links exist between development, reconstruction and security. CIMIC is the military tool to assist in rebuilding a country and thus contributing to development and reconstruction. It is widely believed that reconstruction and development contribute to a country's stability. In Afghanistan, the coalition forces provide security while the PRT's can contribute to the other two focus areas to support the security efforts. The idea is that as visible reconstruction projects are undertaken, peace dividend is more evident and other opportunities arise for the population to earn a living. Stability is thus rewarding and benefits are immediate and tangible. This is especially important in Afghanistan, where CIMIC is part of COIN efforts. Furthermore, CIMIC serves the goals of the mission by providing the military command with situational awareness, force protection, force multiplier and an increase of force acceptance.

CIMIC is not an only meant for reconstruction although small scale reconstruction projects are executed. Nevertheless, these small projects are in line with the goals of the operation. Overall the PRT's can contribute to reconstruction with small projects. According to NATO, the goal of ISAF is to build a sustainable and stable state. Therefore reconstruction efforts are important in building this state. local ownership is an important principle when conducting CIMIC. The PRT's may help the locals with projects but eventually is the populations the motor behind reconstruction.. PRT's often cooperate with local organizations or NGO's that are running reconstruction projects. Also, military units are in close contact with local people. The first factor that determines women sensitive CIMIC is that local ownership has to be incorporated as an important principle when conducting activities.

The work of the PRT's are seen as important for both the level of security and as a stimulator for reconstruction efforts. Obviously, their work is not uncontested and still many adjustments might be made to improve their functioning and to limit side effects. In secure areas, where NGO's are able to conduct projects, PRT's might return to undertaking only projects or activities they have a comparative advantage.

CIMIC, however, will remain an important tool for the coalition troops in Afghanistan in the foreseeable future as it provides military units with the means to bring visible benefits

of their presence. As CIMIC is seen as a security enhancing tool, the assumption is made that every adjustment that will make CIMIC more effective is welcome. It is recommended that if security decreases, the CIMIC efforts are increased to turn the spiral of violence around. As the role of the local population is emphasized, it follows that a demand-led and cooperative way of working of the PRT's is the most sustainable and effective course. Hence, the second factor is to always consider the overall perspective and the benefits of the project for the mission.

Caution is required, as most PRT's are of western origin. Cultural sensitivity is needed in order to avoid cultural blunders that may jeopardize the positive impact of projects and the image of the military mission. Therefore, the third factor is that there need to be codes of conduct for military personnel in their contact with Afghan women. Also, awareness of cultural sensitivities is needed.

The avoidance of cultural miscalculation, however, may not be an excuse to neglect local women in the work of the PRT's. The same goes for the perceived difficulty of including a woman's perspective in planning and executing CIMIC. Several reports, also from military institutions, indicate that the inclusion of local women and female military personnel has several advantages for both the country, the security situation and the effectiveness of the PRT's. Advantages are among others more and better intelligence, a better situational awareness and an increased force acceptance. To address the feeling that gender awareness is an additional complication to work will help to gain more support for women sensitive CIMIC. This is the fourth factor that determines the level of women sensitive CIMIC.

More women in the PRT's may seem as useful, not only to reach out to local women but also to men. Women within the PRT are needed as role models and tools for communication which is the fifth factor that determines the level of women sensitive CIMIC. Moreover, since the variety of tasks within a PRT is great and diversity within the teams is seen as more effective, a better gender balance might not be such a bad idea. For the goals of CIMIC, access to women may increase the situational awareness and trust between foreigners and locals. Also, empowered women can help build a sustainable society together with their husbands, brothers and sons.

3 IN WHAT WAYS COULD WOMEN SENSITIVE PROJECTS BE CONDUCTED IN AFGHANISTAN?

INTRODUCTION

When the Taliban regime fell, Afghan women were one of the symbols that justified the American led invasion. (Fowler, 2007, pp.4) These women were seen as oppressed by radical and aggressive males, victims of violence and not able to gain access to any sort of public service. (Womankind, 2006, pp. 31) For example, a few weeks after 9/11, CNN broadcasted the documentary '*Beneath the veil*'. (Documentary made by Saira Shah, 2001) It is a story about the hardship of women in Afghanistan and shows executions, torture and many other horrible things practised under Taliban rule. The video was shown four times after 9/11, in September, October, November and December 2001. The broadcasting of the documentary was meant to justify the invasion partly by showing the inhumanness of the Taliban regime. (RAWA, 2001) The war on terror was not only to protect the citizens of the USA but it would also free the people of Afghanistan from a terrible oppressor of innocent, vulnerable women. Statements by influential American people like the First lady Laura Bush and members of the government supported this idea. 17 November 2001, Laura Bush had a radio speech in which she emphasized that Afghan women were now liberated from Taliban rule. (Speech Laura Bush, 17-11-01)

The focus in chapter 3 is on Afghanistan, its culture and traditions and the position of women in this country. As the position of women in Afghanistan is among the worst in the world, it is a serious impediment to sustainable development. (UNAMA, 2009) In chapter 1, it was deduced that women are important contributors to sustainable peace and have to be involved in the reconstruction process. People and organizations in Afghanistan, although still a conflict state, are working hard to rebuild the war torn country. Unfortunately, Afghan women are a potential resource not fully utilized to assist and pull this reconstruction process.

This chapter aims at gaining some insight in the way Afghan women can be involved in reconstruction efforts, however complicated it may be. This section does not presume that full understanding of the complicated situation will be achieved. Furthermore, a rather generalized picture of Afghan women is created since the complexity of the Afghan society needs more pages than the ones available for this thesis. Only some guiding points are formulated based on texts written by organisations in the field, Afghan authors, Afghan women and other experts.

In this chapter the position of women in Afghan society will be explored. Therefore, insight will be given in the factors that shape the lives of women in Afghanistan. The way Taliban rule did or did not affect their lives is discussed as is the situation for women after 2001. More insight in the cultural specifics and the position of women could be helpful in understanding how women sensitive projects could be handled in Afghanistan. Furthermore, it is researched what the official priorities are for the development and empowerment of Afghan women. Also, in 3.4 the most important sectors in which to conduct projects that are women sensitive is covered. Following from this chapter, some factors are formulated that may contribute to women sensitive project planning. These factors are used in Chapter 4 to assess the women sensitivity of the PRT's in Uruzgan and Bamyan.

3.1 DID THE TALIBAN RULE AFFECT THE POSITION OF AFGHAN WOMEN?

When the Taliban came to power, women's movements and behaviour were restricted. Contact between men and women was only allowed in certain conditions and women were not supposed to go out on the streets alone. Working outside the home was forbidden, as was going to school. The dress code for women was imposed very strictly and those who did not oblige could be punished severely. (Tell, 2002, pp.9-11) In some areas Taliban rules resembled customs and did not have such a great impact as in Kabul, where before women lived in relative freedom to work, go outside and dress as they wanted.

Most women found ways to get around Taliban regulations, for instance by setting up secret institutions like schools for girls. These schools were founded by the whole community and thus also supported by men. These schools served two goals, education for girls and an income for female teachers. (Rostami, 2007, pp.7) Rostami argues that due to hardship on both sexes, gender solidarity increased in order to survive and made these kind of arrangements possible. (Rostami, 2007, pp.7)

Support from families for widows unfortunately decreased. During the civil war and Taliban rule, many women became widows and were supposed to look after themselves and their children. Before the war, families and communities would have taken these widows in. Due to poverty and destruction of social structures, however, these women did not have a social network to fall back on. Furthermore, since they were not allowed to work, they had to rely on begging, on their children's labour or sex work to have some sort of income. (World Bank, 2005, pp.67) Many women and girls were forced to marry Taliban officers, sometimes at the age of 8. After being raped or kidnapped by Taliban, they lost their honour and were

evicted by their families, losing any other option but to stay with their 'husband'. (RAWA, 09-03-00)

The Taliban era also changed gender relations. Women had to obey their male relatives and were almost totally dependent upon them. Due to the strict rules that women had to obey, they found different ways to influence community affairs. For example by hiring men from their community as their chaperone since women were not allowed to go out on their own. In turn, those women became the employers of men and showed that they were not submissive but able to turn the situation around. Important too, is that many men did not agree with the ideas of the Taliban concerning women. (Rostami, 2007, pp.36-37) A few examples of the Taliban regulations are that women were not allowed to travel, to visit male doctors, to go to school, to recreation, travel in private vehicles, not laugh, not raise their voices, not to use cosmetics or to make any noise when walking in the street. (RAWA rules, 2009) Taliban made women less than secondary citizens who did not have any right but to obey their husbands. (Video Rethink Afghanistan, part 5) Men became the masters of their wives, daughters, sisters and other female relatives. (UNAMA, 2009, pp. 5-6) The subordinate position of women did not only influence their income generating abilities but every aspect of their lives.

3.1.1 WAYS AROUND RESTRICTIONS

Despite strict rules and many restrictions, women in Afghanistan found ways round them. Their survival strategies rested mostly on social networks among women. Social solidarity was stimulated by creating networks in which education opportunities for women were established, small businesses were set up and safe houses for abused women were started. These organisations were very important in teaching women skills to earn a living and to provide them with the contacts to receive basic commodities, as blankets or food. Some even say that the only trusted organisation during Taliban rule were the secret women's organisations. Taliban regulations were sometimes even useful. Burqa's became handy items in the survival strategies of Afghan women. These body covering dresses were used by women to hide materials for classes or other products from Taliban. Unfortunately many women were caught by the Taliban and prosecuted but there were others who continued their work, (Rostami, 2007, pp.29-35)

Rostami also counters the prevailing image of helpless, marginalized Afghan women that exists in most western countries. She argues that Afghan women know how to fight for their rights in order to survive. Of course there are many tragedies and women are

discriminated in many ways but that makes Afghan women strong and survivors. They have resisted the strict rules that the Taliban had imposed on them and they will do the same with Western values laid on Afghan women and society. (Rostami, 2007, pp.2)

3.1.2 DEFINING IDENTITY OF AFGHAN WOMEN

To understand the Afghan society a little, it is important to understand how identity is shaped since that is one of the things very different from Western countries. Ethnicity, or the clan, is very important for defining identity in Afghanistan. For a woman, ethnicity may be most significant in shaping her identity. Women in Afghanistan do not define themselves as individuals as women in Europe do. They see themselves foremost as members of a family, or community. Furthermore, they do not see their own needs as separate from men, only different. Their lives are influenced by the same economic, political and social factors that makes their needs complementary to those of men. (Rostami, 2007, pp. 7) Also very important for Afghanistan is that gender relations evolved through conflicts, different ethnic identities and interethnic marriages. Through these marriages, cultures mingled and relations changed.

The lesson here is that projects for women are probably more appealing if they benefit their whole family or society. Women are generally less individualistic and are more in favour of activities that provide their whole social network with more opportunities.

3.2 HOW IS THE SITUATION FOR WOMEN IN POST TALIBAN AFGHANISTAN?

When in 2001, Afghanistan was freed from Taliban rule, the feeling of solidarity between men and women slowly disappeared. In stead of fighting against Taliban rules, both sexes felt another set of values imposed on them. For example, the emphasis of Western troops on the wearing of the burqa as a symbol of subordination of women, was seen as a renewed form of telling women what to do. Many women argue that this dress became part of their culture and that women who go bareheaded are not accepted by their community. The burqa is still worn by many women, either because of above mentioned reasons or because they do not want to take it off because the West wants them to. The pressure to abandon the burqa is seen as just as bad as the obligation to wear it under Taliban rule. (Sultan, 2005, pp.5)

Another point of annoyance towards the West is the way NGO's behave. Many NGO's, who think gender is an important issue, are providing special opportunities for women. Some women also resist the initiatives to get women to work outside of their homes. They find that the men are left out of their policies and projects. Since women put their

families and communities welfare first, this argument makes sense. Although it could be good for reconstruction and long term development to focus more on women, the males can not be ignored. In Afghan society, men are working outside of the homes and have to provide their families with basic commodities. As not enough opportunities exist for men to take care of their family, it is seen as inappropriate that there are possibilities for women to participate in projects of NGO's. As a women in Mazar-e-Sharif said to Rostami that *'we want to work side by side with our men. We cannot ignore our men.'* She further stated that it is not understood by these organisations that women are not enthusiastic about the offered opportunities if their men do not have the same options. (Rostami, 2007, pp. 40-41)

3.2.1 SECURITY

The fall of the Taliban caused widespread disappointment among Afghan women since the peace and stability that were promised by the international community did not materialize. (Rostami, 2007, pp. 41) A spokesperson from RAWA in the documentary 'Rethink Afghanistan' said: *"There is now more violence than there was before. Women are increasingly under attack, domestic violence is also growing. Also more women are imprisoned than before for running from home, refusing marriages or rape."* Anand Gopal, a journalist from the Wall street journal found that the situation is now worse because women are, as before, kept at home and in burqa's but now they have to live in a war zone. Women in Afghanistan suffer disproportionately the effects of war. (Video Rethink Afghanistan, part 5) Also, Human Right Watch interviewed many Afghan women. One of them, Wazhma Frogh, said: *"We welcomed [the international community's] words on the Shia law– really–they said many beautiful things, as they did in 2001. We have the promises of the world. But still we wait to see what more they will do..."*(Human Rights Watch, 2009, pp. 2)

Along with insecurity, another immense problem is violence against women, sexual and non sexual. According to UN reports the number of incidents is still rising. (RAWA, 09-03-09) The culture of shame and honour reinforces the psychological and physical problems of victims. Several cultural customs have institutionalized the way victims are treated, or rather not treated, and are very difficult to change. For example, a rape victim is the person who bears the shame, not the perpetrator. Often the victim is pushed into marriage with the rapist in order to protect the honour of the family. Or she is prosecuted for adultery without access to legal help. (UNAMA, 2009, pp.2) Either way, women are not protected from violence, sexual or non sexual, as it is a matter of family honour. To complicate things, violence is usually conducted by family members. As a consequence, only increasing security

outside of the home is not helping most victims of violence. Changes in culture are needed in order to improve the records on domestic violence.

As for violence against women outside of their homes, the coalition forces have not been able to bring stability and security to the country. Rapes still do occur as do acid attacks on women who are on the street without male protection. Insecurity outside makes it harder for women to leave their homes to work and travel. Moreover, attacks by both foreign troops and insurgents increase the chances of becoming a widow, losing their homes or even their own lives. (Human Rights Watch, 2009, pp. 68-70)

3.2.2 LITERACY AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Another sign of the subordinate position of women in Afghanistan is that child marriage is still widely practised and these girls are mostly not allowed to go to school. Illiteracy is estimated around 85% for Afghan women, although this percentage is slowly decreasing. (Afghanistan Relief Organisation, 30-07-09) Also, 53% of Afghan men are illiterate which is a daunting figure when considering the importance of education for development. Primary school attendance for children is also increasing although still more boys than girls are going to school. Programs for vocational training and catch up classes on reading and writing are organised in Afghanistan in order to increase literacy among women and men. (UNICEF, 30-07-09) These vocational trainings will enable them to start their own business or to increase their chances on finding a job.

Entrepreneurship could help women Afghanistan to enhance the socio economic status of women. Since the war, estimations are made that some 10.000 women have started their own business and 75 percent of micro credits are borrowed by women. Beauty shops, tailoring shops and bakeries are some of the businesses typically started by women in Afghanistan. (Christian Science Monitor, 08-05-06) Huma Ahmed-Ghosh argues that economic participation of Afghan women is crucial for the reconstruction and development of the country. Furthermore, economic participation will educate women and make them able to renegotiate their position within their families as their economic dependence on their husbands decreases. (Achmed- Ghosh, 2003, pp. 11)

3.2.3 GOVERNMENT POLICY

Government policy is, due to international pressure, trying to implement and adopt more women friendly laws. A special Ministry of Women Affairs has been established to advance the position of women. Also affirmative action for women in political functions is pursued.

For example, the governor of the Bamyan province is a women and so is the director of the Human Rights Commission. (Sultan, 2005, pp. 5) Most female friendly policy, however, is not adequately exercised and cultural barriers prevent full participation of women in public life. Besides, insufficient money is reserved for women affairs and the women in parliament are not taken seriously by their male colleagues. Female MP Malalai Joya even received dead threats by fellow male MPs. (Alertnet, 21-05-08)

Rostami argues that although some positive signals are send by the government, no attention is paid to the physical and material wellbeing of women. These positive signs mostly consist of laws or other measures on paper. Enforcing these measures is still a bridge too far. (Rostami, 2007, pp. 59) The Afghan constitution, for example, grants equal rights for both men and women as is anchored in article 22 of the Afghan Constitution of 2004. (Constitution Afghanistan, 2004) Equal rights are, unfortunately, not exercised since much of Afghan law is based on Sharia law. For instance, with regard to marriage, a man may marry up to four women. His other wives have to consent to these marriages. A woman, however, is never allowed to marry a second man, not under any circumstances. Furthermore, existing equal rights are not exercised in courts or other legal institutions and therefore they are more or less meaningless in the daily lives of women. Besides this, these laws are not backed up by equal opportunities to improve the socio-economic conditions of women. (Rostami, 2007, pp. 60)

For most women, especially in the country side, little has changed since the fall of the Taliban regime. Strict rules controlling women's behaviour became or already were part of their culture and still are exercised. In areas where Taliban is in control, these rules are still closely watched. Women that are involved in projects of NGO's or in government positions are still at risk since they are seen as 'impure'. (RAWA, 30-07-09) This was apparent when the highest ranking female police officer, Lieutenant Colonel Malalai Kakar, was killed in Kandahar in September 2009. The murder was claimed by the Taliban, who continue to control a large part of Kandahar province. (Al Jazeera, 29-09-08) Furthermore, all projects and policies aside, no real improvements in living standards have been achieved. Poverty and insecurity are still the main concerns for most women, which prevents them from being really involved in reconstruction and improvement of the position of women in their country. For the moment, the few women in power and female entrepreneurs are the hopeful initiators for a more equal position of the women in Afghanistan. Challenging gender relations is not yet a priority for normal women as they are struggling for food and other basic necessities in order to survive.

3.3 WHAT ARE THE OFFICIAL PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT OF AFGHAN WOMEN?

The Afghan government has set up the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) which is the leading document for development in that country. (ANDS, 2008) Within this framework for development there is a National Action Plan for Women (NAPW) which focuses on eight main goals. Security; good governance and the rule of law; infrastructure; education and culture; health and nutrition; agriculture and rural development; social protection and humanitarian aid; and economic governance and private sector development are the eight pillars of the NAPW. Furthermore, the NAPW aims to include gender mainstreaming in the ANDS. (NAPW, 2008) The goals are very ambitious. Especially when remembering the fact that Afghanistan is the least developed country in the world and the second worst state to live in for women according to the UN and the OECD. (UN LCD list 2009, OECD Gender Index list 2009)

Other organisations also have made priority lists for the improvement of the position of women in Afghanistan. Among the most important actors for the advancement of women in that Central Asian country is the Afghan Women Network (AWN). The AWN has indicated that there are four main areas that have to receive attention. These areas are education, violence against women, health and security. (AWN, 2007) These four elements are seen as crucial in improving the position of women in contemporary Afghanistan. Development and reconstruction programs have to focus more on these focal points in order to slowly but sustainably advance the living conditions of ordinary women.

ActionAid International argues for the same priorities as basic healthcare, literacy and accelerated education. Furthermore they would like to see that more resources are located towards political and civic engagement training, and economic opportunity for entrepreneurial women. (ActionAid, 2005, pp. 1)

Apparently, organisations in general agree on the development goals set by the Afghan government for the advancement of women. The amount of money reserved for goals directed at women, however, is not nearly as impressive as the goals suggest. For example, ActionAid International estimated that only five percent of all resources was spend on women empowerment in 2004. (ActionAid, 2005, pp. 2) Fortunately, there is a growing amount of donors that pay special attention to women's projects and are funding NGO's and projects that deal with gender and the position of women.

The NAPW is all about the empowerment of women and focuses more specifically on programs and projects that aim to improve their position. Their empowerment is seen as crucial for long term development and stability as most scholars do too.

3.4 WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT SECTORS FOR WOMEN SENSITIVE PROJECTS?

A project is women sensitive if it takes into account the different experiences and interests of women. Furthermore, the different effects of projects on women must be considered from the planning until the execution phase. Certain fields of work are suppose to be priority when focusing on projects for women. The issues that both the government and the aforementioned NGO's agree on that are important for women are security, economic opportunity, education and healthcare. Security is an all encompassing issue as it is the basic condition for all the other areas to develop and for women to be able to participate. The Afghan police, army and NATO are together responsible for a secure environment.

3.4.1 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

With regard to economic opportunities for women, several sectors are worth looking at. Women play an extremely important role in all dimensions of agricultural production ranging from working on the land, processing raw products, live stock production and the production of dairy products, to the fabrication of opium. Depending on the region and their traditions, women's contributions may equal males output in agriculture although there is a gendered division of tasks. (AWN, 2007) For some regions, South Afghanistan above all, women are more likely to be involved in domestic tasks as the men are working on the land. (World Bank, 2005, pp.55) Projects that focus on agriculture may increase peoples ability to earn a better income for their families.

These projects may also enhance the entrepreneurial capabilities of women by learning them market skills. The teaching of skills is seen as an important tool in providing women, especially widows, with capabilities to survive. As most women are illiterate, education taught by books is very difficult. Vocational skills training, however, provide these women with skills that they can easily use to earn money. Moreover, due to restrictions for women to work outside of the home, vocational training may teach them things that they can produce at home. Care Canada, for example, has started helping widows in Kabul by providing them with food rations and vocational trainings. By helping them with such a basic necessity as food, women were much more inclined to go to these trainings. The widows are taught trade skills and financial management. Furthermore, the program involves widows' rights

associations to create more acceptance of working women in society. (Care Canada, 02-08-09) These women do not have many options to earn a living and these sort of programs give them and their families a chance at a better future. In the projects mentioned above, education and economic opportunities are closely intertwined. Women are taught certain skills which they can use to earn a living.

A beautiful expression found in the book of Rostami is the following statement of a man who had to handle many problems with his neighbours concerning his working wife. He said that the woman is one wing of a bird, the man is the other one. With one wing, a bird is not able to fly. A society is not able to book progression without the participation of women. (Rostami, 2007, pp. 109) Although his wife started working because they needed the extra income, he came to see the necessity of the participation of women for the wellbeing of the whole society.

3.4.2 EDUCATION

For girls, going to school is seen as the best way to help them in their education and in improving their position in society. As more girls receive education, child and maternal survival rates increase. Furthermore, girls learn skills and will be able to participate more in business and government positions. Also, educated women can become teachers and health workers. They are urgently needed in this society, where girls can get their education only from female teachers and get medical care from female health workers. (Human Rights Watch, 2009, pp. 77-78) Besides, government positions can only be filled by women with a higher education. It is necessary for the advancement of women in Afghanistan to be able to work for the government. (Human Rights Watch, 2009, pp. 78)

In 2008, over six million kids were able to go to primary school of which 1.7 million are girls. (Reliefweb, 2009) In secondary schools, only 97,310 girls are attending classes of which 4% is in the highest two levels. (Human Rights Watch, 2009, pp. 77) These numbers are very low indeed. One of the reasons is that there are not that many girls schools in rural areas. Schools for girls are build throughout the country to facilitate in this need. The US PRT in Khoshi has build the first girl school in the area. (Reliefweb, 29-04-09) Furthermore, since girls are only allowed to be taught by female teachers in many parts of the country, many women are being trained in teaching skills. Also, women who were in charge of secret schools during the Taliban regime, are encouraged to keep teaching girls. The Dutch government, for example, is supporting accelerated training of teachers, both male and female, who may be recruited for schools in Uruzgan. (Reliefweb, 29-04-09) Besides building and rebuilding

schools, the PRT funds projects that provide older children with access to accelerated learning classes. (Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs, 02-08-09)

3.4.3 HEALTH CARE

The last focus area is health care in Afghanistan. It is stated in several reports that health is one of the most urgent issues in that country. The World Health Organisation argues that the health care system is one of the poorest in the world. (WHO, 2008) The health system is almost destroyed due to twenty years of war and the level of underdevelopment. The majority of the rural population has no access to health care. Because of cultural norms, women receive even less medical care. (Sultan, 2005, pp. 17) The numbers confirm the inferior level of the health system as the average life expectancy is 44 for women. Furthermore, diseases that have been eradicated in many other countries still kill people in Afghanistan. Another worrying fact, Afghanistan has the second highest maternal mortality rate of the world and less than 15% of the births are accompanied by a trained health professional, often a traditional birth attendant. (UNIFEM, 2008) The women are mostly giving birth by themselves or with female relatives, as men are not allowed to be present at such an occasion. (Afghan Relief Organisation, 05-08-09) Clearly, the health care system needs much attention and resources.

One of the programs that aims to improve the health care system, especially for women, is a project by Terre des Hommes. A mother-child-health home-visiting program was executed in Kandahar province, providing pregnant women, mothers and their newborns with prenatal care and other essential health services. By visiting them at home, the project has adjusted to cultural norms that restrict women in Kandahar to leave their homes. (Terre Des Hommes, 04-05) The project is regarded as successful as it helps many women. It is, however, not sustainable as it does not enable women to practice the profession of midwife themselves. As soon as the NGO leaves, the women are without the pre and post natal care they so desperately need.

A project in Bamyan, run by an Afghan NGO and supported by the New Zealand PRT, has set up a training for local women to become midwives, enabling them to assist women during childbirth. The project was designed with the help of local Afghan midwives and created a program that was based on real needs and was adjusted to local customs. (Afghan Relief Organisation, 05-08-09) This project is more sustainable as it teaches women to become health workers themselves. The footprint is larger in the long run. At the moment, it may not help as many women during their pregnancy as the other project. This project contributes to the empowerment of women as it improves their health and that of their

children. Furthermore, it teaches them a profession, making them more economically independent and they provide youngsters with a nice example.

3.5 CONCLUSION

The situation and position of Afghan women is multidimensional and very complicated. On the one hand, women can be strong, active and agents of change. On the other hand, women can be marginalized and subordinate to men. Culture and customs differ per ethnic group and complicate this picture and efforts directed at helping women to survive and improve their position in society. Especially for international actors with a totally different set of values, it might seem almost impossible to make a valuable and effective contribution.

The central question in the third chapter of this thesis is *'in what ways could women sensitive projects be conducted in Afghanistan?'* Some factors arise from literature on Afghan women and development projects that could contribute to women sensitive CIMIC. One of these factors is that both men and women have to be offered opportunities to participate in projects. As reconstruction is now a male business, more women have to be included. In the future, however, men are not to be ignored as the women are right now. Hence, equal opportunity is the keyword.

The priorities of Afghan women are to be considered when planning projects for reconstruction. Western organisations, however, have to understand that preferences of Afghan women might be different than those of Western women. This is the second factor that is deducted from this chapter. As Afghan identity is defined through their family or community, the wellbeing of these institutions has top priority. If that means that job opportunities are offered to men in order to raise the wellbeing of their family, that might be the best option. Not to be forgotten however, is that also in Afghanistan, women are important actors, though more informal, in reconstruction and development. Furthermore, women's organisations did play an important role during Taliban era and might be a working alternative structure for cooperation next to the male shuras.

A cultural appropriate way for the involvement of women in projects and for the improvement of the women's position has to be found. This is the third factor that will contribute to women sensitive projects. Probably the best way to do this, is to talk to as many men and women, find out what and how they want things, and enable them to conduct projects together for the best interest of the community. By convincing both sexes of the benefits of participation of women in society and showing that it can be compatible with Islamic values, small steps towards equal opportunities may be taken. It may be so that at first

it is out of economic necessity that women are taking jobs, education and enjoy other sort of opportunities. Later it might become an issue of women's rights. However, perceptions are changeable as is culture. The opportunities that arise out of economic reasons may very well be the motor behind more equality between the sexes.

The fourth factor refers to the sectors that are important for Afghan women in order to raise their status in society. There seems to be a general agreement on which sectors has to be focused. These areas are security, health, economic opportunity and education. In accordance with the female Afghan identity, these projects have to be beneficial for the whole community. The project with the midwives is a good example as it improves the current and future health of the mothers and their children. Therefore the whole family benefits from this project.

While the Afghan government is aware of the necessity to improve the living conditions of women, it is not yet very concrete in the development strategy of Afghanistan. The NAPW is more clear cut and could serve as a guideline for prioritizing and assessing women's projects that PRT's would like to undertake.

It should be noted though, that the country is the least developed in the world and therefore the overall level of development and welfare is very low for all people. It follows that challenging gender relations is not yet a priority for normal women as they are struggling for food and other basic necessities in order to survive.

4 TO WHAT EXTEND ARE THE PRT's AND CIMIC PROJECTS IN BAMYAN AND URUZGAN WOMEN SENSITIVE?

INTRODUCTION

Deducted from the previous chapters are the factors below. They are used to assess the PRT's in Bamyan and Uruzgan.

From the first chapter it is deducted that the inclusion of women in reconstruction projects is important to develop a sustainable positive peace. Furthermore, women need to be identified as agents of change to be included in reconstruction. Also, there is a need to work with women and it actively involves them. Cooperation with women's organisations is recommended and to involve local leaders. Equal opportunities for both sexes is one of the factors as well. Following from chapter 1, a women sensitive approach considers the positive and negative effect of projects on local women.

Factors specific for CIMIC and the PRT's come from chapter 2. With regard to CIMIC, it is assumed that CIMIC will remain an important tool for the coalition troops in Afghanistan as reconstruction and development is considered to contribute to a country's stability. Moreover, CIMIC serves the goals of the mission by providing the military command with situational awareness, force protection, force multiplier and an increase of force acceptance. It is an important part of the COIN efforts. These goals, however, are only served if CIMIC is conducted with cultural sensitivity. Since there is a cultural gap between the western coalition forces and the Afghan population, it is important to consider Afghan values to avoid blunders that will backfire. Therefore, soldiers have to behave according to a code of conduct and need to be made alert to the importance of gender awareness. The consideration and involvement of women contributes to an improved situational awareness, force protection, force multiplier and force acceptance and therefore have to be part of the way PRT's work. The implications for both women, men and the goals of the mission have to be considered. Also, female PRT members make interaction with women more easy. And local ownership is supposed to be an important principle for CIMIC.

The third chapter is all about Afghan women, whose identity is defined through their family. Therefore, opportunities are to be offered to both women and men. Furthermore, in Afghanistan, the development level and the degree of welfare is very low for all people. To raise the standard of living and improve the status of women in Afghan society, there seems to be an agreement on sectors that are important; security, health, economic opportunity and education. Also, understanding of the different priorities of Afghan women is needed. As it is

not for everyone acceptable for women to work outside of their homes, this issue has to be handled with care.

In 4.1, these factors are separated in two categories. In the next section, the Dutch PRT is assessed according to the factors as mentioned in 4.1. After the Dutch, the PRT from New Zealand is put under a loop according to the same factors. After that, the two of them are compared to each other.

4.1 WHAT ARE THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO WOMEN SENSITIVE CIMIC PROJECTS CONDUCTED IN AFGHANISTAN?

Following from the arguments made in the first three chapters, a few guiding factors may be deducted to design more women sensitive PRT projects in Afghanistan.

A distinction may be made between factors that are of influence on the actual planning of projects and contact between PRT's and Afghan women and factors that involve the behaviour and mindset of the members of the PRT. Therefore, these factors are split up in internal factors (factors that contribute to the PRT structure) and external ones (factors that contribute to the execution of CIMIC projects). The internal factors for the PRT structure refer to the structure and mind set of the PRT teams. The external recommendations on the execution of PRT projects focus on the way to involve women in Afghanistan and on what projects to initiate. When assessing the work of the PRT's, the factors are leading in seeing to what extend the PRT's have incorporated a women sensitive approach in their work. Since it requires extensive research to make a judgment on how women sensitive PRT's are, PRT units from only two countries are compared. This way, it is possible to judge whether one of the units has a more women sensitive approach compared to the other PRT.

4.1.1 CONTRIBUTING FACTORS IN THE PRT STRUCTURE

Summarized, these are general factors that will increase gender awareness and hence women sensitivity CIMIC within the PRT's.

1. Address the feeling that gender awareness is an additional complication to work.
2. Do not see women as victims but as agents of change.
3. Consider the implications for both men and women and the benefits of the project for the mission.
4. Create and live up to codes of conduct for military personnel in their contact with Afghan women.
5. Women within the PRT are needed as role models and for communication.

4.1.2 *CONTRIBUTING FACTORS IN THE EXECUTION OF CIMIC PROJECTS*

Summarized, these are the factors that will increase the level of women sensitivity of CIMIC projects.

1. Work with women instead of doing things for them.
2. Provide resources to local women's organisations and make use of the social networks of Afghan women.
3. Engage local leaders
4. Incorporate local ownership as an important principle when conducting activities.
5. Provide equal opportunities for men and women.
6. Understand the priorities of Afghan women.
7. Handle cultural sensitivities with regard to women in public with care.
8. The most important areas in which to conduct projects are security, health, economic opportunity and education.

4.2 HOW WOMEN SENSITIVE ARE THE DUTCH PRT AND CIMIC IN URUZGAN?

In 2006, Dutch PRT's in Uruzgan started working after having been deployed for two years in Baghlan. (Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 15-07-09) In Uruzgan, the main areas where the Dutch PRT are working, Tarin Kowt, Deh Rahwod and Chora. The PRT is primarily responsible for reconstruction and development projects, Security Sector Reform and contact with local people and organizations. The Dutch CIMIC activities are clustered in five categories; Civil Infrastructure, Economy and Commerce, Civil Administration, Humanitarian Affairs and Cultural Affairs. (Dutch Ministry of Defense, 13-07-09) The Battle Groups take care of the security situation and protect the PRT outside the compound.

4.2.1 *CONTRIBUTING FACTORS IN THE PRT STRUCTURE*

1. *Address the feeling that gender awareness is an additional complication to work.*

There is no official instruction from the Dutch government hence the attitude and priorities of the commander are key to the degree in which the code of conduct or knowledge with regard to gender is described. Hence, gender awareness is not something that is actively stimulated by government policy.

The commander of PRT 5 was very active in this area and tried to educate his PRT soldiers on gender and women in Afghanistan. He appointed a Project Officer Gender who was responsible for sharing information about women with the other PRT members. At their own initiative, PRT 5 organised informal briefings about several topics that they considered

relevant for their work. These briefings were considered very useful and the attendants learned much about NGO's, gender and Afghan women. For instance, one of the outcomes of this meeting was the decision to focus on the possibilities to involve women, not the impossibilities. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 48)

Other PRT commanders found that there were twenty other priorities that needed their attention. In PRT 7, there was little left of the awareness for gender issues and Afghan women. They did not see the benefits of involving women in their projects since men were seen as the enemy and hence more important in their COIN efforts. Rotations between the PRT complicate things since the trust that has been build up between the PRT and the local people disappears when they leave Afghanistan. Especially, if a female PRT member is replaced by a man, it is even harder to rebuild trust when it comes to involving Afghan women. (Interview Jos Hoenen, 12-08-09)

With the start of the new rotation, Michel Rentenaar, a civilian, took shared command over Task Force Uruzgan (TFU) and PRT 8. General Marc van Uhm was the military commander of the TFU. For the first time, the responsibilities in Uruzgan were shared between a general and a civilian. Before he went to Afghanistan, Rentenaar indicated that 'security, good governance and women's rights were high on the agenda'. (Netherlands Mission to the UN, 25-07-09) Furthermore, Rentenaar said that he thinks involving women in Afghanistan is particularly important for the success of the mission and a sustainable result. He was aware of the complexity of the Afghan culture and position of the women. Therefore he thought that some random projects for women are not very effective. He suggests that projects that will influence the whole family will be more successful in improving women's position. (Email Rentenaar 12-07-09, 3.52 p.m) Also, PRT 8, requested special training and more information about women in Afghanistan prior to their deployment. They showed great interest in the position of women in Uruzgan and ways to improve their situation. (Report training Gender and PRT's, 19-08-09.) The attitude of all PRT members promised a more women sensitive approach of projects and contacts with locals.

The Gender Focal Point (GFP) of PRT 8 pointed out that is important that both male and female PRT members are concerned with gender issues. She clearly sees the differences between the PRT's in which all members are aware of the gender component and the PRT's in which only the women are dealing with gender. Also, she argues that the former gets better results than the latter. (Email Maes, 19-01-10)

The degree of gender awareness was relatively high in some PRT's while in others it was not. The attitude of the commander seems to be important in stimulating awareness. More

education on gender may enhance the willingness of PRT members to focus more on local women as well.

2. *Do not see women as victims but as agents of change.*

Afghan women are mostly regarded as victims of their culture and religion. The stories in the newspapers about domestic violence, sexual violence, attacks on women in public and the legal rights of Afghan women strengthen this image with the Dutch soldiers. They recognize that women can make a difference but do not see this happen any time soon in Uruzgan. Maha Khan did underline the influence women usually have inside the qala's on family issues but the idea of women as less powerful than Afghan men remained. (Report training Gender and PRT's, 19-08-09.)

The civilian representative of PRT 8, did admit that in Afghanistan women are part of the solution. Also, with regard to COIN. Addressing their needs is important as they do have influence on many issues. (Email Rentenaar 12-07-09, 3.52 p.m)

In the course that soldiers receive before leaving for Afghanistan, or in other briefings, the role of women as agents of change may be emphasized. There are many powerful examples of strong, determined Afghan women who did make a change. These stories may balance the image of powerless victims. The commander of civilian leader of the PRT, if he has the knowledge or experience, can also take his or her part in educating the soldiers on the roles of women in peace building.

3. *Consider the implications for both men and women and the benefits of the project for the mission.*

The planning of projects of the PRT's in Uruzgan usually takes the effects of activities into account for men and the security situation. Only in certain cases, the effects on women are considered. For example, for the police academy a new building was being constructed. One of the PRT members suggested to build a separate wing for female recruits. This suggestion was turned down, since there were no female recruits at the time and they did not expect any in the nearby future. It was argued that women are not even allowed to work outside of their qala's. For the police training they needed to stay at the academy for 8 weeks. Therefore, it was deemed to be impossible for any women to sign up for the training. (Conversation Godie van der Paal, 05-08-09.)

There is no systematic way of considering the effects of projects on both sexes. It depends more on the people already involved if there is an assessment whether or not the project has

benefits for the women in Uruzgan. If in some cases, Afghan women are considered, there is a tendency to think about all the impossibilities to involve them. This tendency does not come from unwillingness but is more an issue of other priorities and lack of time, personnel and money. Also, the benefits for the mission are mostly not immediate or unclear because more research is needed to find out. Creative thinking can often offer simple solutions to gender specific problems.

4. *Create and live up to codes of conduct for military personnel in their contact with Afghan women.*

All Dutch military personnel receive a culture training before leaving for Afghanistan. The training include specific information on their behaviour towards Afghan women. For example, the soldiers are told not to look directly at local women or to start a conversation with them. In reality, things are not as black and white as they learned but the classes are regarded as useful. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 48) Contact between male soldiers or interpreters and Afghan women is regarded as difficult by the soldiers. An inventive way around the sex barrier was found by a military officer who spend six months in Deh Rahwod. (Conversation Herman van de Tempel, 17-07-09) The male interpreter stood behind a curtain so he could not see the women in the room. Invisible, he was able to translate the conversation for both female PRT members and the Afghan women. More creative solutions were sometimes found to speak to local women. One of the female doctors visited female patients at the compounds clinic where she received much valuable information from the patients. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 41)

The GFP of PRT 8 stated that in Tarin Kowt and Deh Rahwod it was indeed possible to contact women without female interpreters. In Chora, however, it was seen as impossible to do so. Instead, female interpreters of the US troops to make contact with women were sometimes borrowed. (Email Maes, 19-01-10)

Thus, it might take some creative adaptations to normal procedures to include women in PRT work. Even if there are no female interpreters or female soldiers available, Afghan women can be contacted through other female personnel or a male interpreter. For male soldiers, however, it is advised to keep a distance from Afghan women and not to approach them without taking precautions.

5. *Women within the PRT are needed as role models and for communication.*

The importance of female personnel is recognized by the TFU and the Dutch government but no national guidelines exist on the amount of women in PRT's. The availability of women in

the military for operations is determinant for their presence in Uruzgan. (Genderforce, 2005) In PRT 5 there were 9 women among 65 PRT members which was seen as a minimal amount of women to contribute to contact and projects that involved local women. These women experienced that it was relatively easy, contrary to what soldiers experienced more recently, to contact Afghan women and talk to them. Furthermore, they were easily approached by Afghan men and invited to their homes to talk with their wives. Due to the male interpreter which hindered contact, the interaction with Afghan women remained limited. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 40) In Deh Rahwod, they tried to find a way around cultural barriers. Khan told PRT 8, that female soldiers could seek contact with women in Uruzgan when in company of a male interpreter. It would be more difficult but not impossible. Hence, more female PRT members and female interpreters might facilitate conversations with Afghan women.

An unforeseen advantage of female soldiers was that villagers came to them to give them information. They came voluntarily and were more open towards the female PRT members because they found these Western women very interesting. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 41) Before the preparation of their mission started, the commander of PRT 8 expressed the need for a woman in each mission team. As a result, enough female soldiers are recruited to serve in each of the mission teams. (Report training Gender and PRT's, 19-08-09)

Normally, there is a shortage of women and of female interpreters in the PRT's. To be able to address the female population, Rentenaar said he would suggest to send other female personnel with the PRT's if one of the mission teams would lack female personnel. He would also pass this idea on to his successors. (Interview Michel Rentenaar, Civrep Uruzgan, 25-06-09) As the GFP of PRT 8 confirmed, women from the Battle Group and the TFU staff are invited to join the PRT when they are leaving the compound. Sometimes other female staff members are also added to the mission teams. The Battle Group and TFU are favoured over other female staff since they are used to the conditions outside the compound. (Email Maes, 19-01-10)

PRT 8 did try something new with the female PRT members and Battle Group soldiers they had. Since the amount of women in PRT 8 allowed them to form a patrol with only women, an all female team visited Chora. (Email Maes, 19-01-10) They went there to talk to the women about a women's park. The patrol was seen as a success and the PRT would like to do it more often. (Radio Netherlands Worldwide, 10-12-09) Surprisingly, many women were curious and were able to speak to the Dutch women. The men in the streets, however, did not approve and tried to prevent the Afghan women from interacting with the Dutch. Some local women were even called names in order to scare them off. (Email Maes, 19-01-10) The

female patrol is a nice example to show the outside world that the PRT has attention for the position of women and the wish to contact them. So far, however, it is a one time action so far and it has yet to be seen if there will be a second patrol. Furthermore, it was said that it was very hard to meet women in Uruzgan because usually they do not go out on the streets. (Radio Netherlands Worldwide, 10-12-09)

Female soldiers seem to be a good way to interact with the local population. they are able to talk to both men and women. Moreover, female soldiers do not necessarily need a female interpreter to talk to afghan women. It takes a little adaptability but it is not impossible. Furthermore, the all female patrol is not only a way to get in touch with the women in Uruzgan but could also serve as a method to show all Afghans what women are capable of. Also, it displays the strength of women because they do not need any men to join them for protection. This role model function of female PRT members is not fully recognized and part of the Dutch strategy.

4.2.2 CONTRIBUTING FACTORS IN THE EXECUTION OF CIMIC PROJECTS

1. Work with women instead of doing things for them.

PRT projects are preferably demand driven, especially when the project aims at improving the position of women. Luckily, Afghans approach the PRT sometimes with specific wishes for the female part of the population. Consequently, projects were started on the cultivation of vegetables, sewing machines were handed out, a women's wing was build in the hospital of Tarin Kowt. Furthermore, at this hospital a separate garden is constructed in order to let recovering women take a walk and get a breath of fresh air. (Defensiekrant, 02-10-08, pp.2) Another request came on the reconstruction of a local mosque. There was no special section for women so the PRT made separated entrances, washing facilities and sections for both men and women. (Olsson 2009, pp. 50)

All these projects were started on request and therefore demand-driven. Nevertheless, these projects were not executed in cooperation with women, only on their plea. Hence, the PRT still works for women, not with them.

In Uruzgan, women from Tarin Kowt and Deh Rahwod are seen as more inclined to talk to the female PRT members than in Chora. The women shura in Deh Rahwod is an important mechanism to learn more about the wishes of women. unfortunately, often male leaders are present and try to control the conversation. In Tarin Kowt, a female shura meeting was planned without any men present. It was perceived by the PRT as more valuable in terms of information than meetings with local male leaders present. Other places were found by

PRT 8 to contact Afghan women. The hospital proved to be a good place for female PRT members to meet local women. (Maes, 19-01-10)

Widows received special attention from PRT 5 as they were regarded as an extra vulnerable group and easier to involve. The team started programs to provide them with chicken, sewing machines and micro credits in order to enhance their economic situation. In order to prevent the endangering of the goals of CIMIC, local authorities were also involved. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 52) PRT 8 also planned on cooperating with widows. (Report training Gender and PRT's, 19-08-09) The projects that focus on widows consist of providing them with small items to earn some money. One example is the provision of fruit trees so they can grow fruits themselves and sell them on the market. (Radio Netherlands Worldwide, 10-12-09)

These small projects make a difference for these widows as they can earn a little money to survive. There is, however, not a strategic plan or long term vision on how to improve their lives and the lives of their children. The same goes for all other women in Uruzgan. The PRT seems to want to work with afghan women. There is, however, no systematically implemented way of doing so. A long term strategy and a consistently way of involving them, may not get immediate results but it could help to plan more sustainable projects.

2. *Provide resources to local women's organisations and make use of the social networks of Afghan women.*

With regard to cooperation with women's organizations, in 2009, none were identified by the PRT to work with in Uruzgan. The team did try to cooperate with the Ministry of Women's Affairs (DOWA) but due to administrative problems, corruption, a workforce of five women and the limited presence of this ministry, this relationship is fragile. The woman in charge of this department in Uruzgan, is known as a corrupt woman. The PRT does try to work with her. Moreover, the PRT keeps in touch with the female member of the provincial council. In 2009, no Afghan women were known working for NGO's nor UNAMA in Uruzgan. (Email Maes, 19-01-10)

Regarding international or Dutch NGO's who are working on women's issues, contact is made by the PRT's and coordination takes place. Some organisations, however, are reluctant to strengthen their relationship with military actors in order to emphasize their independency and out of fear for Taliban reprisal. (Trouw, 02-02-09)

In July 2009, the women shura was revived by the PRT in Deh Rahwod which now meets every Sunday. Many subjects are discussed. These discussions provide the PRT with valuable input. Furthermore, the PRT feels that the attending women are becoming more confident and willing to speak up. (Military forum, 09-07-09) The shura was made possible in close cooperation with the local district chief who supported the project. (Maha Khan, 19-08-09)

Contrary to the claim that there are no women's organisations in Uruzgan is that the Afghan Women Business Federation (AWBF) is present in Uruzgan. It appears that they have been trying to settle in this province since mid 2009. Of course, it did take time for this organization to arrange everything necessary to start working in Uruzgan. This organisation has started a project for women to market their hand made products. Also, they have established their own office in Uruzgan in January 2010. The centre has received funds from the Dutch government and PRT. In the centre, computer and business courses are offered for both men and women. (UNIFEM, 14-01-10) Although funds were provided for the centre, the AWBF has started the courses and the project for hand made products on their own initiative. (Email Maes, 19-01-10)

Although women's organisations be either hard to find or to contact, there is a way of working with organised women. This can be done by working through the formal institutions as the ministry of women's affairs. This department may not work as efficiently as the PRT would like but it could be a start. Furthermore, the idea of the women shura is a starting point for institutionalizing contact with an organised group of women. Also, the AWBF could be a valuable partner in the future for women sensitive projects.

3. *Engage local leaders.*

In Deh Rahwod, the PRT had a good relationship with the district chief, facilitating the PRT to convince him of the benefits of admitting women into the district centre. Also, a women's meeting was organised, with the consent of the chief, to discuss all sorts of issues. (Conversation Herman van de Tempel, 17-07-09) Discussions with mullahs, religious leaders, about the freedoms of women and the Koran were seen as effective in creating more awareness around this issue. Engaging in a dialogue over projects may not always benefit the local women as sometimes the advice from local leaders is not to proceed with a certain plan. For example, there was the idea of a women's bazaar in Chora. Local advisors, however, warned that this project was too progressive and could backfire. This would not support the missions goals and was therefore cancelled. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 53)

Local leaders are believed to be important to involve with regard to women's issues and their position in society. However, targeting them may be risky and is therefore not done frequently. Maha Khan, a female interpreter, underlined the importance of convincing local men of the need to improve the position of women for development and stability. She argued that both sexes have to be involved and that the women shura in Deh Rahwod is a nice example of how things can be accomplished. (Maha Khan, 18-08-09)

Local leaders are mostly consulted for CIMIC projects to increase local ownership and to make the projects more effective. On women's issues, however, not much contact is upheld with leaders. It is not regarded as important enough by most leaders. Sometimes, the wife of a leader is consulted but in the presence of her husband. It was suggested by Maha Khan that she will not express her real feelings when he is around. An idea of Maha Khan was that the women who have been appointed for government institutions, can be contacted.

The PRT talks to local leaders frequently to discuss several issues. Gender issues may be part of one of these issues. The local leaders seem to be cooperative as long as they see the benefits of a project. The involvement of women in projects may be supported by them if the benefits for themselves and their community are apparent.

4. *Incorporate local ownership as an important principle when conducting activities.*

The PRT's preferably work with local leaders through the shuras. This structure works most of the time for both parties. In fact, it works so well for the leaders that they try as much as possible to work around government institutions and with the foreign donors. Security sector reform and larger reconstruction projects are usually discussed with the male leaders in the weekly shura meetings. (TLO, 2009, pp. 3) The PRT ask the shura what the priorities are and they have to come up with a list. The village receives an instalment and get each additional instalment when progress can be showed to the PRT. This way, the local people feel they have autonomy over the project and responsibility. (TLO, 2009, pp. 3) This approach has been called 'under the radar' and is important in the Dutch 3D COIN approach.

While this approach is successful in gaining support for the Dutch, it is undermining the trust locals have in the government. The PRT's should be supporting the building of government capacity and good governance. (NATO, 16-08-09) In Uruzgan, however, trust in these government structures is virtually non existent since there is no visible improvement. The projects that are visible and delivered are initiated by foreign donors, not their own government. (TLO, 2009, pp. 11)

The 'Under the Radar' approach of the Dutch PRT seems to increase local ownership. This method of supporting projects could be changed a little as to increase the legitimacy of the local government. These changes may consist of shared supervision over projects. This way, civil servants learn how progress is measured, how a project is supervised and how to effectively manage projects. It is not recommended yet, to share the instalments since corruption is still prevalent.

5. *Provide equal opportunities for men and women.*

Most of the projects in Uruzgan are focused on men. The female part of the population is mostly left out of their projects. Equal opportunities are hence not provided. The PRT's, however, are trying to increase the amount of girls that go to school and get other kinds of education. Also, a micro credit arrangement, promoted by the Dutch PRT, has been set up to help entrepreneurs with starting a new business. This program is equally accessible for men and women. So far 8 women have received a loan to start their own business. (TLO, 2009, pp.13) Equal opportunities for both sexes in PRT projects appear to be a bridge too far as also most men are illiterate as well (93%) while unemployment is very high. Joining or working for Taliban may be a more attractive alternative than being unemployed or have a wife working outside their homes, as it provides an immediate cash flow without having the shame that comes with a woman working in public. (Islamonline.net, 11-08-09)

A difficult consideration is to engage the men in order to give them an alternative or to engage women so stability on the long run is stimulated. There needs to be a balance between both options and neither sex can be excluded from PRT projects.

6. *Understand the priorities of Afghan women..*

Most projects are directed at men and will eventually benefit the whole community and their families, which is supposed to be the women's priority. Nevertheless, it seems that this is more or less an extra advantage from targeting men as project beneficiaries. In the short run, as a COIN strategy it makes sense to involve only the men in Uruzgan and give them immediate results as they cooperate. On the long run, it may give more sustainable results if there is an actual strategy to target these men's families.

7. *Handle cultural sensitivities with regard to women in public with care.*

As Hoenen suggested, more use could be made of women that are already in public functions since they have overcome cultural biases against working women. Moreover, it is required by

law that all decision making bodies consist of both men and women. The team could insist on the female members to attend meetings or organise separate meetings for them. (Interview Jos Hoenen, 12-08-09) As far as is known, this is not done yet.

Therefore, it is recommended to ask female members to join the meetings and to give input on the issues discussed. Also, women that are already working outside of their homes and have their own business could be asked to cooperate in projects. The Dutch are maybe a little to careful with the sensitivities that come with women in public.

8. *The most important areas in which to conduct projects are security, health, economic opportunity and education.*

The Dutch CIMIC activities are clustered in five categories; Civil Infrastructure, Economy and Commerce, Civil Administration, Humanitarian Affairs and Cultural Affairs. (Ministry of Defence, sectors CIMIC) Entrepreneurship, which fits into the category Economy and Commerce, is also one of the areas in which CIMIC activities are conducted. Integrated Development of Entrepreneurial Activities (IDEA) is an initiative that supports economic reconstruction by encouraging small business by training people and giving them advice.

The PRT focuses on the most important areas according to the factors in 4.1.2. Security is provided by the Battle Groups in cooperation with the Afghan Army and Police. There is progress reported on the amount of soldiers and police men that are trained. (Nieuwsbank, 28-10-09) cooperation between the ANP and ANA remains problematic. The soldiers come from other areas in Afghanistan while the police officers are local. In an area where someone's networks is really important, this leads to distrust. Besides, police officers are more easy to influence since they are family. The ANA is seen as too strict and do not hold back when there is a security situation. (Radio Netherlands Worldwide, 04-12-09)

Uruzgan is regarded as an unsecure province with a reasonable amount of insurgency. (TLO, 2009, pp. 21-22) The main areas where the Dutch PRT initiate activities, Tarin Kowt, Deh Rahwod and Chora seem to benefit from the PRT projects. Insecurity, however, is still an issue since in these areas, tribes are at odds with each other and many insurgents are active in the area.

Education is an important focus area of the PRT. It cooperates with a few NGO's who try to train teachers and provide books. Also, the amount of schools has doubled in the past three years and 43.000 children are currently going to primary school. Accelerated learning classes and other skills teaching courses have been set up. The numbers of girls and women receiving education are growing but are still extremely low when compared to the amount of

boys. For example, only 10% of the 43.000 children is a girl and among the more than 7.000 students that go to secondary or higher education are 260 girls. (Policy document, 2009-2, pp. 18) Improvements have been made but there is still much work to do.

The health sector of Uruzgan was largely destroyed or non existent after so many years of war and Taliban rule. Especially with regard to the health of women. A few hospitals have been built with separate wings for women and female health workers are trained. Also, a community midwife program has been set up in cooperation with an NGO. Afghan Health and Development Services has said that many women are now more willing to go visit a health worker and to make use of the health care centres. (AHDS, 2009) Although progress has been made in this sector, much remains to be done.

Uruzgan is one of the least developed areas of Afghanistan and the economy is mostly based on agriculture. (AISA, 2007, pp.2) The PRT is focusing on rebuilding new infrastructure like a road to facilitate transport of products to markets, bridges and walls to prevent flooding. Seed has been distributed in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization. Also, a micro credit program, encouraged by the PRT, has been set up to help starting entrepreneurs. (Policy document, 2009-2, pp. 10) Moreover, it is stimulated for local people to participate in all projects. Furthermore, there have been initiated a few small projects for women like giving them chickens or sewing machines. Also, the PRT came up with the idea of helping women achieve home gardens in which they could grow vegetables and flowers for either their own consumption or for sale. The idea was that they were given seeds and training on how to grow these crops. (Policy document, 2008, pp.19) This way, women could work in their homes, not violating cultural norms. For the sale of their products they would need men relatives, who also benefit from this way of working. In order to raise the family's well being, cooperation between males and females would grow too, which could slowly change gender relations.

The PRT employs functional specialists to help improve existing methods of growing crops, to find the right technology, to help improve seeds, to enhance storage facilities, to teach about marketing and finance or to build dams. According to the TLO research, most farmers were content with the support provided.

The four most important areas in which to conduct areas are all covered by the Dutch PRT. In the health and education sector, special attention exists for women and girls. This attention, however, does not seem to be systematically implemented. For the other two focus areas, there is even less awareness for gender specific issues.

4.3 HOW WOMEN SENSITIVE ARE THE NEW ZEALAND PRT AND CIMIC IN BAMYAN?

The PRT of New Zealand started working in Bamyan in 2003 initially under *Operation Enduring Freedom*. From 2006 onwards, the mission is under supervision of ISAF. The PRT is responsible for the security situation, which is stable, they help train the ANA and ANP and goes out on patrol from time to time. Furthermore, they identify, prepare and provide project management for NZAID and maintain contacts with civil actors. (New Zealand ministry of Defence, 18-08-09)

4.3.1 CONTRIBUTING FACTORS IN THE PRT STRUCTURE

1. Address the feeling that gender awareness is an additional complication to work.

The mission of New Zealand in Afghanistan tries to work as much as possible with programmes which are characterized by a gender focus. (New Zealand ministry of Defence, 18-08-09) The government of New Zealand always supports international agreements that centre on improving the position of women and on their contribution in peace processes. They say that they will double their efforts to increase the participation of women in peace keeping and peace building operations. Also, the special representative at the UN, states that women need to be part of the decision making process and feels that their PRT is doing exactly this. (Speech UN Permanent Representative, 05-10-09)

In practice, however, women's needs or a woman's perspective are not considered when planning projects. Neither were women's projects or their involvement marked as a priority. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 76) An indication of the lack of a female perspective is that there is no information available at the ministry of Defense of New Zealand concerning PRT's and Afghan women. (Email Nicole Munro Johnson, 27-07-09 7:29 a.m.)

The New Zealand PRT regards its own position as gender neutral, with attention for the whole population and not just one group. As Luitenant Pinny wrote *'I think due to the open and equal rights culture that NZ holds, issues related to women's rights etc are just ingrained into us as people and we carryout respect and actions to ensure it in our everyday tasks without specifically identifying it as an issue.'* (Email Luitenant Pinny, 21-08-09, 09:16 a.m.)

There is no gender advisor on the compound, only one PRT member who is responsible for contact with the Bamyan province Social Protection Officer as well as with the Bamyan Province Women's Affairs Organisation. This lieutenant is committed to her task and she says about her work; *'this position provides me with a rare opportunity to be involved*

in the Provinces drive and goals for the development and empowerment of Afghanistan women as identified equals in the Afghan culture.' (Pinny, 20-08-09) At times, the female governor was used as a gender advisor. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 76)

The commander, who knew much about gender, did not see the need to focus more on local women. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 77) Contrary to the commander, the Aga Khan Foundation has been urging for a long time, for all international parties to create more opportunities for women in Bamyan as they see will make progress more sustainable. (AKDN, 23-03-02) Furthermore, there was no internal wish to make a change in the position of women in Bamyan and no knowledge about this issue among other soldiers. That made the PRT not the most suitable actor to get involved with women's issues in the eyes of the commander and team members. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 77)

The PRT members are not really interested in gender issues and do feel they have other priorities to address. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 76) The influence of a commander can be key in motivating soldiers to make it a priority, not an additional problem. Furthermore, courses or more information on the position of women and their role in peace building might enhance their commitment. Gender awareness within a PRT unit is the starting point for women sensitive projects.

2. *Do not see women as victims but as agents of change.*

PRT 13 did realize that women were not treated well as they experienced that surgery was performed on a raped girl by her brother in order to remove the baby. She barely survived, was treated in an American hospital but needed to return sometime. What would happen to her was not certain. It made the PRT realize that the treatment of women and girls is indeed very different to what they consider normal. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 71) All members memorized this event as something horrible and they were concerned. However, as this girl was victim she was no threat to the military. Like all other women so to say.

Indeed, the image of women as victims was confirmed and their role in stabilisation and security not recognized.

3. *Always consider the implications for both men and women and the benefits of the project for the mission.*

The case of the surgery on the raped girl confirmed women's subordinate position in the Afghan society. Moreover, not all team members thought that the involvement of local women was necessarily important for their mission. Some thought it was more important to

become friends with local leaders and influence shura meetings since women were not the ones trying to kill them. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 75) The position of women is not seen as a priority for a successful mission since females are not seen as a threat to security and stability.

Projects that try to reach out to women are regarded as potentially dangerous as local men, the latent insurgents, might be offended and strike back. (Email Luitenant Pinny, 21-08-09, 07:12 a.m.) This could endanger the goal of ‘winning the hearts and minds’ of the male part of the population.

More knowledge about the role women can play in COIN and peace building might change the attitude towards involving women in projects. The influence women have in their families could be used to ‘win the hearts and minds’ of their relatives. With regard to the potential danger of projects for women, discussions with the shuras about the benefits of these projects could be initiated. The well being of the whole community could be a valid argument in winning their support.

4. *Create and live up to codes of conduct for military personnel in their contact with Afghan women.*

All soldiers received a cultural training in preparation of the mission and learned how to behave in front of Afghan women. They did not, however, receive any information on gender, relations between men and women, and other issues concerning Afghan women. Neither did they ask for it.

In their contact with Afghan women, male soldiers keep in mind cultural sensitivities and do not approach them in open environments. If they need to talk to women, they ask permission first. In meetings, the equal treatment and rights of both sexes to speak and interact is emphasized while still trying to respect cultural differences. (Email Luitenant Pinny, 21-08-09, 07:12 a.m.) Also the female soldiers try to be respectful towards the Afghan culture, even on the compound. For instance, women are not allowed to run laps in shorts but need to wear pants to not disrespect the locals. (Email Luitenant Pinny, 21-08-09, 07:12 a.m.)

When in the presence of Afghan women, the men try to behave as culturally appropriate as possible. The female PRT members also adjust themselves a little to the Afghan culture. The PRT does try to emphasize their value of equality of sexes in the meetings they have with local representatives. This might set an example for the Afghans on more equal gender relations.

5. *Women within the PRT are needed as role models and for communication.*

With regard to their own personnel, the army in New Zealand is concerned about the amount of women in the service and has been trying to attract more female personnel for a decade. Despite these efforts, the mission teams still lack female personnel. Sometimes nurses or other supporting personnel are going with the mission teams in order to leave the possibility open to get in touch with Afghan women. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 72) In PRT 14 there were 15 female soldiers at the compound of which 9 work in the mission teams. (Email Luitenant Pinny, 21-08-09, 00:24 p.m.)

One of the female police officers, Rezaie, feels that there are no real Afghan women detectives to serve as a role model for her. That is because she is the first, and only, female detective in Bamyan. (NPR, 03-05-07) Female personnel from New Zealand might be the role model, Rezaie and other women need in order to pursue their dreams and to see what women are capable of. PRT 14 believes firmly in the importance of a signal function of female soldiers. By showing that women are also capable soldiers, walk next to them and lead projects and negotiations, they try to set an example. This example and interaction with locals could provide them with role models and open up their minds to change.

4.3.2 *CONTRIBUTING FACTORS IN THE EXECUTION OF CIMIC PROJECTS*

1. *Work with women instead of doing things for them.*

Furthermore, it was said that if women wanted something they would come anyway. And they did. A female shura leader asked the PRT to come to their meetings and she argued that women should be invited to meetings about development projects. Unfortunately, it was not done. The PRT believed that it would hurt the mission if too much interaction with local women was undertaken. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 78) As a general remark, people in Bamyan felt that not enough attention was paid to women by the PRT. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 76)

While not actively searching for local women to involve in projects, the PRT did support projects for women like the building of the Women's peace park, schools for girls, a Maternity Ward at the Bamyan Hospital (NZPRT/ SWG, pp. 3) and organising market days for female entrepreneurs of the Women's Business association. These projects are mainly carried out through the Social Protection Sector Working Group (SPWG). (Email Luitenant Pinny, 21-08-09, 07:12 a.m.) Projects that are initiated through the SPWG, a partner of the New Zealand PRT, are receiving input from female employees.

In a way, the PRT works with women since they cooperate on projects with the SPWG and the female governor. Nevertheless, the number of projects and activities for women is

very low and the attitude towards interaction with local women hinders a women sensitive approach.

2. *Provide resources to local women's organisations and make use of the social networks of Afghan women.*

In 2003 already, a representative of the NZAID came to Bamyan to make contact with the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and women organisations. The idea was to start supporting women's organisations in order to receive information about Bamyan. The support would enable the same organisations to provide education for other women too. Until now, the PRT only offer limited support of women organisations and on an ad hoc basis.

Sometimes, there is contact with influential women in Bamyan and the PRT. The governor of Bamyan, the only female governor in Afghanistan, has often been consulted on several issues. For example, the case of the surgery on the raped girl was discussed with her. Furthermore, there is contact over projects and local needs.

The director of SWGP is also a women, Fatima Kazimyan. (Email Luitenant Pinny, 21-08-09, 07:12 a.m.) It must be noted, however, that only a certain amount of CIMIC is done through the SPWG. Moreover, the local ministry of Women Affairs is one of the partners when discussing the possibilities to employ women. Also, the women's protection network is supported by the PRT. (Speech UN Permanent Representative, 05-10-09)

The provision of resources to women's organisations is not regular, neither is interaction between these organisations and the PRT. The exception is the SPWG as the lieutenant responsible for gender meets this working group on a regular basis.

3. *Engage local leaders.*

Local leaders are consulted regularly by the PRT. It is deemed important to become friends with local leaders and influence shura meetings in order to increase security. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 75) These leaders are seen as the ones who can help to counter the insurgents in Bamyan and the surrounding provinces.

Also, with regard to projects with more development characteristics, local leaders are asked for advice on priorities. Currently, the influence of shuras is decreasing as the Community Development Councils (CDC) are more and more involved in decision making about development and reconstruction. The shuras are feeling marginalized as they loose their

influence AISA recommends to address these feelings of marginalisation since cooperation with the shuras is important for successful projects and the community. (AISA, 2008, pp.8)

Another problem arises at every rotation. Trust and relations take time to build and the rotations hinder long lasting relationships between soldiers and locals. (Wired.com, 23-07-09)

The PRT also works closely with government institutions like the governor and sub governors. They consult them regularly and help them initiate small community projects by providing funds. The aim is to strengthen local authorities and to give them a little more power. (Wired.com, 24-07-09)

Both leaders and government institutions are partners of the PRT. The team puts much effort in keeping the influential people on board. Moreover, the believe of the PRT in the knowledge of locals of their society, is strong.

4. *Incorporate local ownership as an important principle when conducting activities.*

The government of New Zealand is very committed to local ownership and programs financed by the NZAID. The PRT projects are financed with ODA money and therefore supervised by NZAID. The NZAID is the New Zealand's International Aid & Development Agency. This means that working with local partners is obliged and that programmes must contribute to sustainable development and a just society. (AISA, 2008, pp.8) Also, there is an NGO law that restricts organisations from doing any construction work themselves. Therefore, local contractors need to be hired to do the heavy work.

Listening to the needs of local people and letting them initiate projects themselves could result in different projects than are currently being done. In a meeting with locals it was put to the attention of the governor that there is only 1 health clinic that is shared by 14 villages. (BBC, 17-08-09) Not only the execution can be delegated to the local population, also their part in the decision making process may be enhanced.

5. *Provide equal opportunities for men and women.*

Equal opportunities are sometimes offered by the PRT in Bamyan. In 2006, for example, the first female police recruits in Afghanistan were trained by the New Zealand PRT. Three women were enthusiastic about joining the police and were given the opportunity. Special facilities are available on the police academy to help women enter the program. These facilities are child care, women instructors and separate sanitary facilities. (Speech UN Permanent Representative, 05-10-09) Besides, the academy is nearby Bamyan city and makes it easy for women to travel to. (NPR, 03-05-07) The instructors from New Zealand show

creativity when working with cultural notions about what women are and are not supposed to do in public. For example, physical activities as fitness are not regarded as decent behaviour for women. In order to convince the female recruits to do the exercises, all men are banned from the class room. (NPR, 03-05-07)

This example shows what can be accomplished if one focuses on the possibilities to involve women, not the impossibilities. The PRT tries to work around cultural issues that might be a problem when Afghan men and women are both participating in one project. The participation of women, however, is not often actively sought. Neither is their participation part of the policy of the PRT. The factor deducted from literature was not to forget to involve men and women equally. For the New Zealand PRT, the focus in their projects and policies is almost entirely on men.

6. *Understand the priorities of Afghan women.*

It is widely believed by the PRT that reconstruction and development projects need to be carried out for the benefit of the whole population. Many projects have positive externalities for Afghan women as they benefit from the facilities that are build or the salaries their husbands receive when working on a project. Because of these side effects, it is believed that there is no need to implement an affirmative action strategy in order to improve the position of women. Afghanistan is a country with a complex culture which is so different from what the PRT regards as normal. Time is only a factor for the coalition forces who would like to see quick results, not for the population. (Email Luitenant Pinny, 21-08-09, 07:12 a.m.) The position of women needs to be improved but that will take a long time, as it did in New Zealand. As one PRT member said: *'But I think they know that good things take time, and that there are many small steps and milestones that must be met to ensure it is not short lived and that its benefits are for the long term.'* (Pinny, 20-08-09)

Summarized, the New Zealand PRT believes that as soon as the economy is growing and developing, families and hence women will benefit too. For gender relations to become equal, a long time is needed and must be done by the people themselves

7. *Handle cultural sensitivities with regard to women in public with care.*

Although Bamyan is considered as an province where women are strictly constrained by cultural and religious norms, it has the only female governor in Afghanistan. The PRT consults her regularly on several women issues. Interaction with women who are in government or other public institutions, is the way the PRT tries to handle cultural

sensitivities with women in public. These women are used to contact with men and have already fought for their position. The female employees of the Social Protection Working Group serve sometimes as advisors. (Email Luitenant Pinny, 21-08-09, 07:12 a.m.)

There is another resource that may be used to work with women in Bamyan. Approximately, 482 women work for government institutions in the Bamyan province. (AISA, 2008, pp. 2) These women have broken more or less the same boundaries as the women of the SGWP.

What is more, the provincial department of the ministry of economic affairs has several departments where women affairs are part of their tasks. For example, the education department and social protection section. (AISA, 2008, pp.3) According to UNAMA, the PRT and Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), the functioning of the provincial department, however, is not effective since they lack the capacity to improve coordination. (AISA, 2008, pp.4) Nevertheless, meetings are organised every month which the PRT may attend.

Interaction with other local women is considered difficult. When on patrol, PRT 13 felt that not having a female interpreter was a constraint in the contact with local women. (Olsson, 2009, pp. 74) PRT 14 at the other hand, did not have any problems with not having a woman as interpreter. The women they had contact with were in government institutions and were used to contact with men and did not require a woman to talk to. (Email Luitenant Pinny, 21-08-09, 07:12 a.m.)

The lesson here is that if it is considered inappropriate or too hard to speak to local women, the women in public positions may be approached to help out. Also, a female interpreter is by some PRT's seen as useful when interacting with local women.

8. *The most important areas in which to conduct projects are security, health, economic opportunity and education.*

The NZ PRT is led by a military commander and is more focused on security than the Dutch PRT is. (Nieuwsbank, 28-10-09) There is no separate Battle Group to take care of the security situation. Two development advisors, one from the United Kingdom and one from New Zealand, are part of the PRT to plan CIMIC projects. (Bennet, 2009, pp.) Furthermore, the focus areas are foremost security. Infrastructure, health, education and alternative rural livelihoods are the other priorities. (Post-Election Brief, 11-09, pp. 23)

Security is the sector in which the PRT is involved. The security situation in Bamyan is regarded as one of the most stable in Afghanistan. (Wired.com, 23-07-09) Nevertheless, violence has been increasing during the past months as more roadside bombs have exploded

and there was a fire fight between insurgents and the police. Since the PRT has invested much efforts in the relations with local leaders and involve them in projects, they are sometimes warned about locations where bombs may have been planted. (Wired.com, 23-07-09) In this regard, the 'hearts and minds' of the people in Bamyan seem to have been won over by the soldiers from New Zealand.

In the fight against the insurgency, the PRT has been training the Afghan National Police to be the first in line of defence. Basic supplies and their salary is provided by the national government. In reality, however, the ANP receives no or little salary and they are short of all basic supplies as ammunition, fuel and food. (AIHCR, 2009) The training of the police officers is therefore seriously hindered as they do not have anything to practice with. One of the trainers explained that when on patrol, the PRT has to provide everything from food to fuel. When doing shooting practise, the police does not even have ammunition to train with. (Wired.com, 24-07-09)

Although the police is being trained by the PRT to the best of their ability, the lack of resources is hindering all efforts. With no salary, corruption and working for insurgents becomes an option again for these police officers. Without ammunition or fuel, patrols and maintaining order become very difficult. As a result, the trained police officers are practically powerless.

Bamyan is one of the least developed areas in Afghanistan and most people are living of their own land.(Wired.com, 23-07-09) Economic opportunity is not one of the key focus points as such but the PRT tries to give the local economy a boost by restoring infrastructure. Only 3 kilometres of road in Bamyan are paved and travelling from Bamyan city to Kabul takes about 9 hours while it could be done in only 3 hours. (Eurasia.net, 03-06-09) The bad roads are seen by the governor of Bamyan Province as one of the most important priorities in order to revive the local economy. Only better infrastructure makes transport of agricultural products, mining and tourism possible. Restoration of the roads is thought to benefit everyone in the province (Eurasia.net, 03-06-09). As a result, not only the people working on the roads are gaining but also their families and all their neighbours that are now able to sell their products on markets or can serve the needs of tourists.

Economic development is more stimulated by NGO's and local organisations that are also present in the province. (AISA, 2008,pp. 2) A worrying trend, is that many development organisations are leaving Bamyan and continue working in the southern provinces. Also, the population feels that they are punished for the relative secure environment in which they are living since all the better funded PRT's (US and UK) are stationed in the South. (AISA, 2008,

pp. 1) The UN Special Representative, Kai Eide, underlines the need to keep supporting stable areas in order to keep them stable. The governor of Bamyan strongly agrees with him and provokes the international community often by saying things like: “*Do we need Taliban to get your attention?*” (BBC, 17-08-09)

Literacy levels of all people in Bamyan are extremely low. For women, literacy ranges from 0,6% in inaccessible districts to 6% in Bamyan city. (AISA, 2008,pp. 2) In 2008, many girls were going to school and education for girls was widely supported by their families. As girls grow older, however, their families keep them home if the distance to their schools is too far. Since most of the schools in Bamyan were either destroyed during the Taliban period or never there, only a few functioning schools remained. The PRT has been busy rebuilding schools. Education and accelerated learning classes are left to NGO’s as the Aga Khan Development Network. The PRT seems to focus only on Quick Impact Projects and then only if it seems urgent. The more long term projects for which they do not seem to have the knowledge are done by aid organisations. This is possible in Bamyan because there are still enough organisations left to do the work due to the secure environment.

With regard to the health sector, Bamyan remains a province with minimal services available to the population. Besides, almost all services are provided by aid organisations. Especially the number of infant and maternal mortality is one of the worse in Afghanistan. (AISA, 2008,pp. 8) The PRT was involved in the building of a maternity ward, laundry room and new kitchen in the Bamyan Hospital. This hospital is managed by Aga Khan Health Services and the building of the ward was in cooperation with this NGO. (NZAID, 05-05-09)

Most health services are being conducted by NGO’s. the PRT is little involved in the long term aspects of the health sector. Whenever buildings are needed or other constructions, they are available.

The focus areas of the PRT are consistent with the factor that mentions the most important sectors. The PRT makes use of the presence of NGO’s in the province that are conducting many projects in the same focus areas. Since security is relatively stable, progress in the other sectors is more easily achieved than in some other provinces.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The PRT’s of the Netherlands and New Zealand score differently on the factors that contribute to women sensitive CIMIC. With regard to the first set of factors, the ones for PRT structure, both PRT’s reveal different degrees of women sensitivity.

Gender awareness differs greatly between the Dutch and New Zealand PRT but also per rotation. The Dutch PRT requested more information about gender before they left to Uruzgan. In previous PRT's, the commander influenced the way of thinking about gender. The leader of PRT 8 is also concerned about Afghan women and is likely to pass this concern to the team members. Attention for a more women sensitive approach is approved of by most soldiers and civilian actors. They are aware of the role women may play in society and how they could contribute to a more secure area and development. Access to information and force acceptance are also seen as positive side effects of the involvement of local women in projects and more contact. The informal meetings and the training before they started their term in Afghanistan have certainly helped gain this insight.

The case of the PRT NZ shows that the role of the commander is indeed very important. The commander of PRT 14 did not prioritize the position of Afghan women and in his PRT the feeling that women do not have to be addressed separately prevails. Women are not regarded as important for the security situation and their potential contribution to development and stabilization is regarded as small.

Both PRT's have in common that they see Afghan women foremost as victims and not as agents of change. They are not aware of the strength and things that some Afghan women already have accomplished.

Therefore, the benefits of involving women for the missions are not always clear for the team members. The Dutch PRT tries to implement a more women sensitive approach by keeping the interests of Afghan women in the back of their mind, which is a positive first step. The team shows willingness to include local women in their projects. In Bamyan, the position of women is not seen as a priority for a successful mission since females are not seen as a threat to security and stability. Projects that try to reach out to women are regarded as potentially dangerous as the local men might be offended.

When interacting with Afghan women, soldiers of both PRT's try to adjust to the Afghan culture in order not to offend anyone. In Uruzgan, creative solutions were found to go around problems of communication between men and women. In Bamyan, most contact between the PRT is conducted with women that are working in public institutions. These women are already used to male contact.

In Uruzgan, less women work in public and can serve as role models for other women. The role model function of female PRT members is not yet fully recognized and part of the Dutch strategy. On the other hand, the New Zealand PRT believes firmly in the importance of

a signal function of female soldiers. By showing that women are also capable soldiers, walk next to them and lead projects and negotiations, they try to set an example.

With regard to the contributing factors for the structure of PRT's, the Dutch PRT is more aware of the possibilities and benefits of involving women in their projects. Their case shows that more knowledge and a passionate leader make all the difference. Both PRT's score even when it comes to their behaviour towards Afghan women, they are both respectful and considerate. The New Zealand PRT is doing a better job with understanding the power of female role models as they deliberately try to show that women are equal to men.

For the execution of PRT projects, the second set of factors have been formulated. The PRT's in Uruzgan en Bamyán plan and execute projects in different ways. The level of women sensitivity diverges per factor.

To work with women is the first factor that contributes to the level of women sensitivity in the execution of CIMIC projects. The Dutch PRT has conducted some projects for women and local leaders are involved in these projects. There is, however, no structural implementation for the way the PRT's work with, or contact Afghan women. Projects that are conducted are mostly for individual women, they are not involved as a group which could stimulate the development of civil society. Difficulties with finding women's organisations might be impeding factors if the PRT would try to involve groups of women. More use could be made of women that are already in public functions since they have overcome cultural biases against working women. Also, the PRT could insist on the female members to attend meetings or organise separate meetings for them. The women shura is a nice initiative that seems to work.

The PRT in Bamyán, has initiated some projects for women. Since these projects are initiated through the Social Protection Working Group and in consultation with the female governor, these projects could be labelled as women sensitive. Besides, by working with the SPWG and contacts with the governor, women's networks are reached but there is much more potential for cooperation which is currently not used. These projects, however, are few and all other projects are directed at the whole community in which women do not have much influence on decision making. Summarized, projects are not consequently planned and executed with women.

Involvement of the Afghan community is mostly accomplished by meetings with shuras and local leaders. Both PRT's have established good relationships with these councils and meet on a regular basis. The Dutch found out that, by underlining the benefits of projects for women, the shura could be persuaded to go along with the idea.

The incorporation of local ownership is further established by meetings with local people. The 'Under the Radar' approach in Uruzgan seems to increase the feeling of local ownership. This approach, however, does undermine one of the main goals of ISAF, increasing the legitimacy of the government. This method of supporting projects could be changed a little as to increase the legitimacy of the local government. These changes may consist of shared supervision over projects. This way, civil servants learn how progress is measured, how a project is supervised and how to effectively manage projects.

The government of New Zealand favours local ownership of projects and works as much as possible through local NGO's and other structures. This is mirrored in the way the PRT NZ works. Contacts with local leaders are firm and regular. Besides, projects are put out under contract with local companies.

With regard to equal possibilities for both men and women, it seems that both PRT's still focus on Afghan men. Considering the level of development, the high rate of unemployment and the attitude towards working women, this can be seen as the safe option as it will not jeopardize the goals of the mission.

In a way is the way the PRT's handle projects and contacts very culturally sensitive. They believe that projects for the whole population will affect women in a positive way, as these projects are affecting everyone. Recalling the way Afghan women view themselves, as part of a family and community, this way of working might be very appropriate. The family benefits from the projects and in the end these women's lives will improve. Nevertheless, culturally sensitive is not necessarily women sensitive. And as became clear in the other chapters, the involvement of women will support sustainable development. Everyone will eventually benefit from sustainable development, including widows and other people that are not likely to benefit from community projects.

Nevertheless, implications of projects for women are not systematically considered. Consistently listing these implications could be a major improvement in the planning of reconstruction projects. Furthermore, when consequences are systematically considered, a better cost benefit analyse may be made with regard to the benefits of the project for the goals of the mission.

The last factor states that the most important areas in which to conduct projects are security, health, economic opportunity and education. The areas in which projects of both PRT's are conducted largely fall in to the categories set in the guidelines. In Bamyan, the PRT leave much of the projects with a long term focus to NGO's. The PRT undertakes the projects that are regarded as Quick Impact Projects. Remarkable is that the PRT NZ, instead of the

Afghan Army or a Battle Group, is responsible for security in the area. The Dutch have to work in a less secure area and have less partners to start projects with. Unfortunately, the projects undertaken in these four areas gender awareness does not seem to be systematically implemented. This awareness could contribute to more sustainable results and more women sensitive CIMIC.

Summarized, the PRT's in Bamyan and Uruzgan work from time to time for women but not really with them and is therefore not very women sensitive. Both PRT's fail to systematically consider the implications of projects for women and the result of involving them for the project. With regard to the structure of the PRT, the Dutch possess more gender awareness and knowledge on how involving women can contribute to counterinsurgency. Nevertheless, the New Zealand PRT has more possibilities to involve women easily since more women already work in public.

CONCLUSION

This thesis was intended to explore if there are any benefits in involving Afghan women in CIMIC for ISAF and to assess the degree of women sensitivity of PRT's in Afghanistan. Therefore, the central research question was; *'Does a women sensitive CIMIC approach contribute to the goals of ISAF and to what extend is women sensitive CIMIC executed by the Provincial Reconstruction Teams of New Zealand and the Netherlands in Afghanistan'*

There seems to be consensus among research institutes, governments and NATO that the involvement of local women in CIMIC brings certain benefits to the operation in Afghanistan. More contact and communication with the female part of the population will increase the amount of information due to mutual trust and respect, which will enhance situational awareness. As a consequence, decisions of the commander, which are based on civil assessments, are founded on more and better information. Another advantage is that reconstruction efforts are more effective if they take into account the different outcomes of projects on both women and men. In order to make CIMIC the most effective as an force multiplier, as many people as possible need to benefit from projects. Also, projects will contribute to a sustainable development in Afghanistan which is one of the goals of ISAF.

The benefits of involving women are not really recognized by PRT's working in Afghanistan. There is no institutionalized framework for PRT's with regard to Afghan women and CIMIC. The importance ascribed to involving women depends on the commander and his ideas and priorities. His influence is not only felt in the amount of attention that is paid to local women but also in the attitude of PRT personnel as was apparent in the case studies of the PRT's of New Zealand and the Netherlands. It is recommended to commanders of PRT's about the benefits for COIN and peace building of involving local women and women sensitive project planning.

A significant difference exists between the disposition towards local women of the members of both PRT's. PRT New Zealand regards the needs of the entire population as most important and does not consider a women's perspective. Women are not seen as dangerous or potential enemies. PRT in Bamyan needs to learn about the advantages of involving women in the military operation as it could be a stimulus to change their attitude. The PRT in Uruzgan on the contrary, is voluntarily taking classes on gender in order to learn how to involve women more in their activities. The advantages of contact with local women are also clear to them. The attitude of Dutch PRT members does differ per rotation. It is recommended that PRT members are taught about the different roles of women in Afghanistan but also about the

benefits of involving them for their mission. Courses on gender could raise awareness and increase efforts to interact and work with local women. A gender specialist or gender focal point can also stimulate awareness and a more systemic consideration of women in CIMIC.

Both teams have participated in cultural awareness classes and follow strict guidelines in their behaviour towards Afghans. In general, female team members are in contact with local women. Therefore, it is recommended to include at least one woman in each mission team. Since in Bamyan more women are in government position, male soldiers are able to be in direct contact with women. In Uruzgan, more strict codes of conduct are necessary. There, the lack of female interpreters is seen as an impediment to contact with women in some areas. Since female interpreters can also speak to local men, it might be more efficient to recruit more female interpreters. Also, the Dutch PRT could learn from PRT New Zealand and try to reach out to women that are supposed to be in decision making bodies. These women are often not attending shuras and other meetings while they are officially members. Their presence could be a point of discussion between the PRT and the leader of the shura. Besides, the women in public services can serve as contact points for the PRT.

Increased gender awareness of PRT mission teams and the internal structure of the teams are important to increase the women sensitivity of the execution and planning of CIMIC projects. More awareness will lead to more consideration for gender issues and a more consistent way of working with local women.

In general, both PRT's did not really work with women. PRT New Zealand is in close contact with the SPWG and the female governor who comment on projects they initiate for women. These projects are nice examples of how it could be done, as they are operating in close cooperation. Unfortunately, only a small amount of projects is handled this way. The bulk of activities does not focus on women but on the whole community since the PRT NZ wants to offer opportunities to everybody. In a way, this approach is culturally sensitive since the aim is to let the community and the extended families benefit, which is supposed to be the major priority for Afghan women. The line of thought is that if the community benefits, the women do too. The PRT New Zealand feels that everybody must be treated equally and affirmative action is therefore not appropriate. As a side note, the position of women in Bamyan is certainly not equal to men's position in society and get little opportunity to participate. As a result, women are left out of these projects and do not benefit in terms of empowerment. This way, equal treatment and opportunity for both sexes is certainly not practised and sustainable development is far away.

On the contrary, the Dutch PRT would like to try to involve more women but has difficulties in reaching them due to a lack of female soldiers, interpreters and women's organisations to work with. The projects they initiate for women are focused on individuals and on ad hoc basis. There is no long term vision on the empowerment of Afghan women and how this could contribute to a stable Uruzgan. In order to really let Afghan women contribute to development and security, this vision must be developed. Also, since it is observed that there is a shortage of female interpreters, facilities need to be adjusted to fit the needs of these women in order to attract them to work for the PRT.

The PRT in Dehra Wood is in close contact with the local chief and has been able to convince the chief of the benefits of engaging women for his own community. It is a good example of how important it is to discuss this issue with local leaders. This way, there will be no resistance to discuss women's issues from their side and cooperation can be established. This sort of cooperation could serve as a prototype for contact with other leaders and other provinces. PRT New Zealand's commander is regularly in touch with the female governor of Bamyan. They discuss projects in the province. It seems, however, that there is more to gain from this contact in terms of reaching out to women in Bamyan. Reaching out to local leaders is therefore recommended as a way to conduct more and better women sensitive projects.

With regard to local ownership, PRT New Zealand scores high since they are putting all projects under contract with local businesses. Local ownership is something they highly value. NGO's and businesses work very close together in the province of Bamyan on projects which are supported by the PRT. With regard to the Dutch PRT, there are less NGO's in Uruzgan to work with and since the security situation is not as stable as in Bamyan, the willingness to cooperate is little. Visible projects, executed by military personnel are more important to enhance the security situation in Uruzgan as they are in Bamyan. It can not be forgotten that working with local partners is very important for a sustainable development and thus stability.

Both PRT's are, when conducting projects for women, focusing on the areas that are recommended by several institutions. Health care, economic opportunity, security and education are the main pillars of their projects. Now, PRT work with the ANDS as a guideline for what sort of projects can be initiated. In stead, another document of the government could be used as a starting point. The NAPWA offers more useful guidelines to improve the position of women and to engage them in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Furthermore, by consulting Afghan women and NGO's on these issues, more appropriate programs could be

started and supported. Conversations and discussions on people's, especially women's, needs are the only way to find out what is really needed and what actually works for them.

Is women sensitive CIMIC an utopia or necessity? At the moment it seems more an utopia when assessing the PRT's of New Zealand and the Netherlands. Although, with regard to the structure of the PRT, the Dutch possess more gender awareness and knowledge on how involving women can contribute to counterinsurgency. The New Zealand PRT, nevertheless, has more possibilities to involve women easily since more women already work in public. Optimism, however, is allowed for, since awareness about women's issues is growing. Furthermore, the advantages for the operation of more contact with local women are becoming more obvious.

Summarized, women sensitive CIMIC may contribute to the goals of the ISAF operation in Afghanistan. The PRT's in Uruzgan and Bamyán, however, do not really seem to realize this contribution and direct most of their resources and attention to Afghan men. Hopefully, soon the PRT's will realize that women are to be involved and that they are able to influence their communities and stability. As Eleanor Roosevelt once said; *'A woman is like a tea bag. It's only when she's in hot water that you realize how strong she is.'*

REFLECTION

The main problem when writing these thesis was that so many problems in Afghanistan exist. It was really hard to determine the priorities and to balance the need to involve women and the dangers in doing so. Since also men are offered little opportunity, it is especially hard to determine whether or not women must receive special attention. In a country where women have such a low status, it is much easier to focus just on men. On the short run this seems the way to work. In the end I came to the conclusion that PRT's aim to support sustainable development. Therefore, women must be more involved to become more independent, raise their status and support the economic development. This argument is, however, hard to make since there are just too much things that need attention in this part of the world.

With regard to the method, more diverse interviews should have been conducted. Also, the interviews should have been more systematically organised. Since the interviews were very useful in getting more insight in Afghanistan, how the PRT's work and what their considerations are, more interviews would have been useful. With more interviews, more and better information would be received. As a result, a more balanced and better founded thesis could have been written. Besides, it would have provided more criticism and useful insights in how women in Afghanistan can be involved. The lack of critical remarks that I could have extracted from interviews did influence my abilities to be more objective or more critical towards the used sources.

Policy documents were an important source with regard to the CIMIC activities of both countries. At times, it was hard to determine whether the information in these documents were wishful thinking or true and objective.

Also, not so many reports were found that gave exactly the information that was needed. Sometimes, misty websites were used that did contain useful information for the examples. Of course, it would have improved the academic level of the thesis if everything could have been based on research done by proper researchers. In order to maintain a certain level, only some examples to clarify statements were withdrawn from these websites.

This thesis is foremost a research based on literature. A field research would have contributed a great deal. Seeing with your own eyes how things are done and how the situation on the ground really is, give more feeling for the subject.

For the first chapter, many theories were taken together to establish a framework on the role of women in post conflict states. Maybe it would have made a stronger case, if only one theory would have been discussed more extensively. Furthermore, Afghanistan is not really a post conflict country but parts of it are still very much in conflict. Especially in Uruzgan, no post conflict situation has yet been established. Also, a very generalized image of Afghan culture and Afghan women was painted in this thesis. The reality was simplified a great deal in order to make it easier to work with these issues and to formulate the factors that contribute to women sensitive CIMIC. Therefore I do not pretend to fully understand the Afghan culture nor the position of all Afghan women.

The aim was more or less to give an oversight of all the possible effects and benefits of involving women because there is, as far as I could find, no article or research yet published that focuses on women sensitive CIMIC in conflict states. This made my choices about what factors to use to compare the PRT's more difficult. It would be really my choice, not somebody else's. Somebody with more research experience or knowledge.

Moreover, the PRT's were maybe not the best choice for comparison since the security situation is very different. At first, mostly the differences between the two cases were apparent. In the end, when focusing on their women sensitivity more similarities were found. Also, the different level of violence could be an advantage for a research like this one. The advantage would be to see what kind of women sensitive projects could work in a relatively stable environment. Unfortunately, the PRT in Bamyan does not really see the need to implement women sensitive projects.

Another weakness of this thesis is that only 2 PRT's per country were researched and assessed. The PRT's rotate every six months and their attitude and way of working may differ greatly. Since only 2 PRT's were investigated, it is hard to make valid statements and judgements in general about the women sensitivity of the PRT's of the Netherlands and New Zealand. The thesis would improve considerably if all PRT's were compared to each other, to see the development of women sensitivity and to see how they decide what priorities are. This was, however, not feasible due to a lack of information on these PRT's and the amount of pages available in this thesis.

Also, the examples used in Afghanistan are merely illustrations to show how the PRT's work. This thesis does not aim to give a full overview of all activities and or projects for women and contact with Afghan women. The projects and contacts mentioned are to give a better idea of how the PRT's work and illustrate possibilities. Also, these examples might

serve as inspiration for future planning as some projects and ways of interacting with local women are very inventive and dynamic.

Information from Afghanistan was abundant. The PRT's in Bamyan and Uruzgan were very obliging and answered all my questions. The direct email contact worked as a great motivator to keep on searching for information. Several researchers and activists also replied to my emails. Mostly by referring my questions to someone else or sending me their articles or researches.

Surprisingly, it was really hard to get in contact with Afghan refugees in the Netherlands. Many organisations in the Netherlands are involved in helping Afghan refugees. The calls and emails were rarely answered. Moreover, if there was a reply, it was mostly a reluctant reply. Fortunately, I met an Afghan woman who was interpreter for several PRT's. She was very helpful and gave truck loads of information.

Writing this thesis was a great exercise and I learned many things. For example, to try to comprehend a society that is totally different from what I am used to, to try to put three subjects together that are not obviously connected to each other, and to consume many, many pages of literature and use these pages for my thesis.

Although many alterations and improvements may be suggested to upgrade this thesis, I think that it is still a small contribution to the discussion on CIMIC and the involvement of Afghan women. Especially now awareness about this issue seems to be growing.

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INTERVIEWS

- Contact by email with Luitenant Casey Pinny, PRT New Zealand 14
- Michel Rentenaar, Civilian representative Taskforce Uruzgan, TFU 8
- Godie van der Paal, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Taskforce Uruzgan
- Dimitri van Rijn, Ministry of Defence,
- Maha Khan, interpreter TFU 3,4,5
- Nicole Maes, Gender Focal Point TFU 8

PICTURES

Cover

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Chapter 1

1.6 Water pump in Afghanistan, picture 1,

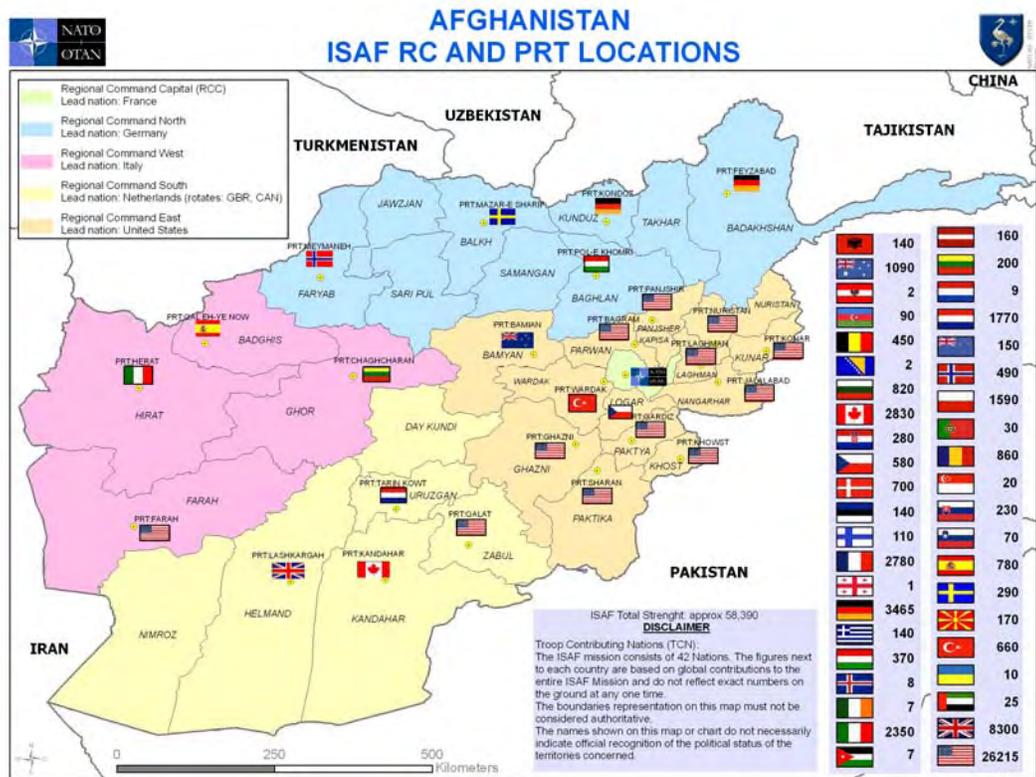
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 MAP PRT'S IN AFGHANISTAN



Map location PRT's in Afghanistan

http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/maps/graphics/afghanistan_prt_rc.pdf (15 July 2009)

APPENDIX 2 EMAIL MICHEL RENTENAAR

12 juli 2009

15:52 uur

Beste Brenda,

Even kort want ik heb weinig tijd. Ik heb je korte beschrijving gelezen en dat ziet er goed uit. Je zou kunnen overwegen om je vraag: "to what extent" om te schrijven in de vorm van een stelling: "a women civic sensitive approach contributes to peace building and reconstruction".

In je scriptie kan je dan uitleggen hoe dat verband dan werkt. Een ding dat je vaak ziet is dat er allerlei zogenaamde genderprojecten worden uitgevoerd die feitelijk meer 'een paar leuke dingen voor vrouwen doen' zijn.

Een gender-aanpak lijkt mij echter wat ander. Volgens mij zou een gender aanpak gebaseerd moeten zijn op de analyse dat een reeks aan maatschappelijke problemen (dus ook in

Afghanistan) een belangrijke gender component hebben. Vaak is het zelfs zo dat bepaalde problemen pas opgelost kunnen worden door de oplossing via vrouwen te zoeken. Tenslotte zijn vrouwen 50% van de bevolking en hebben zij over een reeks aan zaken een belangrijke doorslaggevende stem.

M.a.w. die projecten die gericht zijn op de zogenaamde emancipatie van de vrouw zullen het m.i. niet redden. Projecten die via vrouwen proberen de mannen, de kinderen, het interne huishouden te beïnvloeden hebben waarschijnlijk meer kans van slagen,

Groetjes,

Michel

APPENDIX 3 INTERVIEW MICHEL RENTENAAR

Gespreksverslag Michel Rentenaar, Civrep Uruzgan
25 juni, Borrel op Het Plein

Rentenaar wil meer aan gender doen, helaas zijn er te weinig vrouwen in de PRT's beschikbaar om dit goed te faciliteren.

Rentenaar zal hierom vrouwelijk personeel uit andere disciplines, artsen etc, meevragen als de PRT's op pad gaan. Zodoende kunnen zij met de Afghaanse vrouwen praten en kijken welke projecten geïnitieerd kunnen worden.

Rentenaar ziet het belang van genderprojecten in en heeft het gevoel dat iedereen zich hiervan bewust is.

Nieuwe OSAD is Nicole Maas.

APPENDIX 4 INTERVIEW GODIE VAN DER PAAL

Gesprek Godie van der Paal
TFU BZ
5 augustus 2009

Genderrapport moet genuanceerd worden. Er gebeurt inderdaad weinig binnen de veiligheidsprojecten voor vrouwen. Maar de mogelijkheden hiervoor zijn dan ook zeer beperkt. Bijv. bij het bouwen van de politie academie werd er voorgesteld om een apart deel voor de vrouwen te maken. Dit is niet gebeurt aangezien er nu, en voorlopig, geen vrouwelijk kadetten zijn. De training duurt namelijk 8 weken en is intern. Vrouwen in Uruzgan mogen vaak niet buitenshuis werken, laat staat 8 weken elders verblijven.

De situatie in Uruzgan is op het moment nog zo dat er weinig mogelijkheden zijn om echt aan gender mainstreaming te doen.

Wel proberen we af en toe projecten voor vrouwen op te starten bijv. Chickens for chicks. Lokale vrouwen kregen kippen zodat zij hiermee geld konden verdienen binnen hun eigen erf. Ook worden er naaimachines uitgedeeld. Ook is er een vrouwen shura opgericht waar elke maand een groep vrouwen bijeenkomt om de situatie te bespreken.

APPENDIX 5 INTERVIEW JOS HOENEN

Gespreksverslag

Jos Hoenen, DSI BZ

12 augustus

Gender en conflict expert

- Hoe ziet ideaal gezien vrouwen projecten en het contact met Afghaanse vrouwen en PRT's eruit?
Allereerst moet er een analyse van de positie van vrouwen zijn en van hun praktische behoeften. Daarnaast moet er een analyse zijn van de strategische belangen van een betere positie van de vrouw. Dit kan gedaan worden dmv dialoog met Afghaanse vrouwen. In dit contact dient informatie ingewonnen te worden over de mogelijkheden in de huidige situatie en context.
In Uruzgan is het PRT voornamelijk bezig met het invullen van de praktische behoeften van de vrouwen. Er is geen aandacht voor de strategische kant van het verhaal. Dit is jammer want nu kan er geen pad worden uitgestippeld naar het ideaal en blijft het op ad hoc basis.
- kritiek op functioneren PRT's
De PRT's bekijken gender te beperkt. Ze zijn vooral gefocust op de praktische behoeften. Zo is er geen stimulans om vrouwen in beslissingen te betrekken.
Bovendien, als men contact met een vrouw zoekt, gaat men bij de vrouw van de dorpsoudste op bezoek. De man blijft er dan bij. Dit bevordert het vrij spreken niet.
Volgens de grondwet moet een bepaald percentage van de beslissings- en overlegorganen uit vrouwen bestaan. Deze vrouwen zijn benoemd maar worden in de praktijk niet betrokken in de Shuras. De PRT's kunnen naar deze vrouwen vragen en hen betrekken in Shura bijeenkomsten. Deze vrouwen hebben zich al een beetje vrijgevochten en zijn al door de normvorming heen. Met hen kan je kijken wat de mogelijkheden zijn.
- Hoe moet je omgaan met de Afghaanse familie cultuur en gender?
Belangrijk is om niet uit te gaan van autonomie van de vrouw maar van empowerment. Dit houdt in dat men de situatie voor hen, en henzelf, probeert beter te maken in hun sociale setting. De familie wordt dan als uitgangspunt genomen in Afghanistan. In ieder geval in het begin.
- Er wordt in theorieën aangegeven dat men met ipv voor vrouwen moet werken. Hoe ziet u dat?
Daar ben ik het mee eens, het moet vanuit de vrouwen zelf komen. Het PRT kan hierin faciliteren door in te spelen op hun wensen en vragen. Het moeilijke in Uruzgan is alleen het contact tussen de PRT en lokale vrouwen. PRT vijf had een aantal vrouwen, ook op leidinggevende functies. Het contact verliep dus iets makkelijker. Echter, door de halfjaarlijkse wisselingen is de manier waarop alles gaat wisselvallig. Bovendien verloopt het opbouwen van vertrouwen moeizaam. Vertrouwen komt als een slak, en rent als een haas. Deze uitspraak geeft dit mooi weer. Elk PRT is dus veel tijd kwijt met het opbouwen van vertrouwen voordat er überhaupt iets mogelijk is. Helemaal als een vrouw in het PRT wordt vervangen door een man. Voor de gender component is dit catastrofaal aangezien mannen dit niet makkelijk kunnen uitvoeren in Uruzgan.
- PRT 8, hoe gaat dat?
Ze zijn net begonnen dus daar is nog weinig over te zeggen. Rentenaar heeft veel ideeën en gaat, in tegenstelling tot vorige bz'ers, uit van een missie die gericht is op het opbouwen van stabiliteit en reconstructie. Terrorisme bestrijding is een middel

- hiertoe. Vorige BZ mensen zagen terrorismebestrijding als het doel. Bijv. als er een bericht kwam van een gewonde Taliban in het ziekenhuis, gingen ze met veel mannen naar het ziekenhuis om deze man te pakken. Ook de vrouwenvleugel werd doorzocht, door mannen. Dit zet natuurlijk veel kwaad bloed en kan het vertrouwen weer laten verdwijnen. Rentenaar begrijpt dit heel goed. Er is nu ook een gender focal point, Nicole Maes.
- Heeft u ideeën hoe de houding van mannen tov werkende vrouwen veranderd kan worden?
Stapje voor stapje, door hen ook te betrekken in het gehele proces.
 - Er wordt uitgegaan in ons beleid van de gemiddelde vrouw. Deze bestaat niet echt. Er zijn veel verschillende vrouwen met verschillende gradaties van moed. De moedige vrouwen, die bereid zijn hun leven te riskeren, moet je proberen te betrekken. Hen moet je de middelen en de hulp bieden om daadwerkelijk verandering te kunnen doorvoeren.
 - Weduwen hebben over het algemeen meer vrijheden en economische noodzaak om te werken. Zij zijn een goede doelgroep voor de PRT's.
 - Wat betreft corruptie meten wij met twee maten. In Uruzgan werken wij met veel mannen die allemaal erg corrupt zijn en discutabele vrienden hebben. Er was ook een hooggeplaatste vrouw die corrupt was. Zij is onmiddellijk ontslagen vanwege de corruptie. De mannen niet. Misschien vanwege hun gevaar voor de veiligheid maar als iedereen corrupt is, wat blijkbaar geen probleem is, waarom moet deze moedige vrouw dan ontslagen worden wegens hetzelfde vergrijp?
 - Om vrouwen in Uruzgan te bereiken zijn vrouwen in het PRT nodig. De communicatie verloopt dan echter nog steeds niet soepel door het gebrek aan vrouwelijke tolken. Om deze tolken te krijgen, waar overigens genoeg vrijwilligers voor zijn, dienen sanitaire voorzieningen en de slaapplekken apart van de mannen te zijn. Op Kamp Holland is dit niet het geval. Het wordt lacherig afgedaan als onzin. Maar voor Afghaanse vrouwen is het noodzakelijk. Waarom doen we dit dan niet? De Britten en Nieuw Zeelanders hebben wel gescheiden douches en slaapplekken. Bovendien kunnen vrouwelijke tolken ook communiceren met Afghaanse mannen. Ze zijn dus in staat om beide sexes te benaderen, een stuk effectiever en efficiënter lijkt mij.
 - Wij, Nederlanders, denken met bepaalde normen en waarden die ons ongemerkt hinderen in onze benadering naar vrouwen toe. Het 'iedereen is gelijk' principe hindert ons dus in de mogelijkheden tot contact met Afghaanse vrouwen aangezien iedereen dezelfde faciliteiten gebruikt, ongeacht het geslacht.
Bovendien denken wij nog steeds in termen van conflict als a mens business. Dit is de reden waarom wij alleen mannen betrekken in de besluitvorming. Veel studies tonen echter aan dat als je vrouwen ook laat meebeslissen, dit de stabiliteit ten goede komt. Ik zeg altijd, betrek de vrouwen dan komt de rest vanzelf. Hiermee bedoel ik dat als je de vrouwen mee hebt, zij hun families mee trekken. Ook delen zij alles met hun familie, ook geld, middelen en andere zaken.
De Britten belijden in hun humanitaire hulpverlening beleid dan ook het 'women first' principe.
- Gender focal point TFU, PRT 8, Nicole Maes ncj.maes@minbuza.nl

PINNY CASEY, LT

to me
-----Original Message-----
From: GILLARD NICHOLAS, LT COL
Sent: Tuesday, 28 July 2009 9:04 a.m.
To: PINNY CASEY, LT
Subject: FW: More Information

Casey,

A good start and please forward. No doubt Brenda will have more questions. If she requires any unclassified generic info on the PRT then co-ord with me and I will prepare something.

Thanks

COS

-----Original Message-----
From: PINNY CASEY, LT
Sent: Monday, 27 July 2009 10:41 p.m.
To: GILLARD NICHOLAS, LT COL
Subject: RE: More Information

Good evening Sir,

Can you please review the attachment and inform me if you are happy for me to present this information to Brenda Grinwis for her study.

Thank you
LT Pinny

-----Original Message-----
From: GILLARD NICHOLAS, LT COL
Sent: Monday, 27 July 2009 8:45 a.m.
To: Munro-johnson Nicole, MRS; PINNY CASEY, LT
Cc: CURRY DAVID, SQNLDR
Subject: RE: More Information

Nicole,

I have forwarded this to Lt Casey Pinny. Casey is involved with womens issues via the Sector Working Groups. Casey will also be able to provide unclassified info on the PRT itself. We have a number of presentations that casey could forward.

Casey - Co-ord with S5 or me for any additional info.

Thanks

Nick

Nick Gillard
Lieutenant Colonel
Chief of Staff
NZ PRT 14

-----Original Message-----

From: MUNRO-JOHNSON NICOLE, MISS
[mailto:NICOLE.MUNRO-JOHNSON@nzdf.mil.nz]
Sent: Monday, 27 July 2009 7:29 a.m.
To: GILLARD NICHOLAS, LT COL
Subject: FW: More Information

Hi Nick,

This is an interesting one, and as we hold no information on this topic I think it's best to get a response from the horse's mouth. Could you please ask the right person in your team to respond to this query.

Thanks,

Nicole

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 **ANNEX H - SECTOR WORKING GROUP INFO.doc**
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PINNY CASEY, LT

to me
[Good evening,](#)

[I will ask around about the answers to your questions. I am the PRT rep for the Bamian Woman's Affairs only so a lot of the questions I will not be able to answer as they are in](#)

relation to the PRT and the development side which is carried out more by the S5 cell. But I will see what I can find out.

Unfortunately at the moment things are a little busy over here with elections and prep for CRIB 15. I will ask around but will not be able to get on to this job until I am up to date with my primary role. I should be able to get some info back to you in about 10 days to two weeks.

Cheers
LT Pinny

PINNY CASEY, LT

to me
Info as below from Flt Lt Bannan from our deevlopment cell.

From: BANNAN ANDREW, FGOFF
Sent: Friday, 21 August 2009 9:18 a.m.
To: PINNY CASEY, LT
Subject: RE: Unclassified FW: More Information

Casey,

Unfortunately most of these answers are No
All of our projects are aimed at helping the wider population as a whole. Although some of them may have a spin off that directly relates to women, we don't have a special framework that we work to, and the only womens perspective in planning that springs to mind would be the projects raised through Social Protection.

The rest of the questions are mainly general PRT questions.

Cheers

Andrew Bannan
FLTLT

A/S5
TU Crib 14

From: PINNY CASEY, LT
Sent: Thursday, 20 August 2009 7:17 p.m.
To: BANNAN ANDREW, FGOFF
Subject: FW: Unclassified FW: More Information

Hi,

I know I am the Bamian womens rep but the question below are directed more at PRT info from the development cell. can you therefore answer any of the below questions.

Cheers KC

PINNY CASEY, LT

to me

Good morning,

- Is there special policy or framework concerning gender in PRT's? not hat I am aware of all policies and frameworks are as standard from the NZDF back home. nil deployment specific gender ones.
- Does the PRT conduct projects especially directed at women? If yes, what sort of projects? As per Flt Lt Bannans e-mail. all projects are carried out for the greater population and province. we do address women's issues and have projects that assist in these areas such as with development at girls schools, holding market days for the Women's Business association to show the PRTs support.
- Does the PRT include a women's perspective in the planning of projects or activities? If yes, in what way? if the project is specific to women or carried through the Social protection sector working group then female input is addressed. the director for this organisation is a female Fatima Kazimyan.
- Is there systematically contact with local women or women organisations and the PRT? yes, through the commander to the governor who is female and through my SWG Social protection and Woman's affairs.
- How is contact with local women conducted? Respectfully through normal meetings with a interpreter. males do not approach females in open environments unless permission is gathered first. in meeting NZ pers conduct themselves to respect the culture while trying to initiate equal rights for females to speak and interact.
- How many female PRT members are working in Bamyan? I am waiting for this info from our S1 cell. I think there is aprox 15 NZ per and three Us females military and 1 civi
- Is there a training or booklet for PRT members before they go on mission? all training is given during our Pre Deployment training
- How is the attitude of PRT members towards women's issues? As conducted at home. we are lucky to come from a culture that is equal and respectful. this shows through in our conduct here in Afghanistan. Comd is aware and respectful of the difference in culture and implements manners to respect this. eg. female PRT members

are not aloud to run around the running track in shorts but must wear pants to ensure no disrespect to the locals.

- Is gender inequality one of the priorities of the Commander of the New Zealand PRT's? [As above.](#)
- Has there been a growing awareness or interest in improving the position of Afghan women in society? [yes, as shown by the recognised government Social protection group and Woman's affairs group.](#)
- Does the PRT have female interpreters? Do they feel the need for women as interpreters in order to get into contact with local women? [not currently but we maybe getting one back. most females in business sector positions within the province are use to communicating with males. this is obviously something they have had to develop in there culture to get to the positions they are at. if patrols etc need to interact with females it is usually done as the environment allows through the females per in the patrol and the interpreter.](#)
- Has the position of women improved in the past few years? [I believe it has. there are more and more rights being passed in law. the extent to which these are picked up by the society will take a long time however.](#)

PINNY CASEY, LT

to me

<<THE COMPLEXITY OF AFGHANISTAN bugle article.doc>>

Don't know if I had already sent this to you, just an article I wrote for army paper

LT Pinny

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PINNY CASEY, LT

to me

[Good morning,](#)

I am glad I can help. Sorry the info isn't that good and in-depth it is a hard subject you have chosen. I think due to the open and equal rights culture that NZ holds issues related to women's rights etc are just ingrained into us as people and we carry out respect and actions to ensure it in our everyday tasks without specifically identifying it as an issue. This is a positive action we bring to this deployment which from our perspective does not require much effort but can have such a positive effect of the inequality of culture that exist within this country. The mere action of females being here in a security and active role provides insight for the local female population and I believe opens their mind to the possibility of equality. Bamian province is a unique and privileged province on this issue as it holds a female governor.

I will see if there are any other contacts I can get for you on this topic.

Cheers
LT Pinny

PINNY CASEY, LT

to me
just found out there are 15 NZ females and 9 us that work out of our PRT

APPENDIX 7 REPORT GENDER TRAINING PRT NL 8

J. Postkazerne. Havelte
19 augustus

Sprekers; Jos Hoenen, BZ (H)
 Maha Khan, Tolk PRT 3,4,5 (M)
 George Frerks, Professor Conflict studies (F)

Aanwezigen; OSAD, ongeveer 40 PRT team leden (waaronder 4 vrouwen)

Opening

De reden van deze training is dat iedereen (PRT) in de inter-persoonlijke kennismaking heeft aangegeven iets voor de vrouwen in Afghanistan te doen.

Met betrekking tot gender is vooral de positie van de vrouw belangrijk. Er is vooruitgang vergeleken met vroeger. Voor de missie naar BiH werd er niet eens over gender gesproken.

De voordelen van een beter contact met Afghaanse vrouwen zijn duidelijk en een verbeterde positie van de vrouw zorgt voor meer stabiliteit en een snellere en duurzame ontwikkeling.

H; Er is beleid op het gebied van gender en conflict maar in de praktijk gebeurt er vrij weinig. PRT: Dit is het eerste PRT waar een sterk gevoel bestaat dat gender belangrijk is. In PRT 5 was gender door de commandant gekozen als 1 van de prioriteiten. Andere commandanten konden altijd 20 andere prioriteiten noemen die belangrijker waren. In PRT 7 was het gevoel voor gender al een stuk minder geworden.

F; het besef dat gender belangrijk is voor een missie begint al in de voorbereiding; het aantal vrouwen in de missieteams, het begrip van de situatie van vrouwen en cultuur.

Afghanistan is waarschijnlijk het moeilijkste land qua gender. Uit trainingen die ik voor gender focal points in Afrika voor de VN heb gegeven begreep ik ook dat alles af hangt van de commandant.

PRT; Wat heeft NL beleid voor nut als er geen Afghaans beleid bestaat voor gender?

M; er bestaat wel Afghaans beleid maar de praktijk is vaak anders.

F; je moet soms niet naar de nationale overheid en mogelijkheden kijken maar juist op lokaal niveau werken. Blijf dus letten op lokale mogelijkheden. De centrale overheid weet heel goed wat donor landen willen horen!

M; de officiële documenten over vrouwen lijken soms wel direct gecopypaste van VN resoluties. De uitvoering blijft achterwege.

Bovendien is cultuur en geloof sterk met elkaar verweven. Ze maken daar geen onderscheid in zoals in NL. Hier zien mensen normen en waarden los van geloof. In Afghanistan niet.

F; onderdrukking en achterstelling is vooral een product van cultuur niet van de Islam.

Het is van belang om je bewust te zijn van je eigen normen en waarden. Onze opvattingen verschillen enorm met de Afghaanse. Het is dus moeilijk om je in elkaars wereld in te leven. Onze maatschappij is een feminiene terwijl de Afghaanse een masculiene is volgens de typering van Hofstede. Wees je bewust van stereotypering. Dit doe je vaak onbewust en hierdoor veroordeel je andere opvattingen.

Er zijn een aantal termen die handig zijn om te weten;

Gender equality; mannen en vrouwen hebben dezelfde mogelijkheden

Gender equity; deze mogelijkheden moeten wel fair zijn. Een achtergestelde groep dient dus meer aandacht te krijgen aangezien de verdeling anders niet eerlijk is omdat zij al minder mogelijkheden hebben dan de andere groep. Hier komt het principe van affirmative action vandaan.

Gender transformation; het duurzaam veranderen van gender relaties.

Voor je een missie begint zou er eigenlijk een gender specifieke analyse van het conflict gemaakt moeten worden. Dit gebeurt eigenlijk nooit. Er bestaan wel diverse toolkits voor. Ik heb een aantal zelf naast elkaar gezet. De UNDPKO en UNIFEM hebben ze ook. BZ heeft ongetwijfeld ook een analyse model.

Je moet je realiseren dat gender rollen bestendig zijn, na een conflict is de situatie snel weer zoals voor het conflict qua gender betreft. Ook al hebben vrouwen tijdens het conflict taken van mannen overgenomen, na het conflict zullen de mannen deze taken weer terugnemen.

Rol PRTs

Gender speelt altijd een rol, vooral in de contacten met de bevolking.

Erken je eigen gender normen en kijk wat zij willen, niet jij.

Probeer niet je eigen normen en waarden op te leggen. Dit kan soms erg moeilijk zijn. Bijv. als je ziet dat een vrouw door een man op straat in elkaar wordt geslagen.

Grijp niet zomaar in, maar vraag de tolk hoe te handelen. De tolk kent zowel de taal en cultuur en zal weten wat te doen. Je hoeft het niet te laten gebeuren maar zomaar er tussen springen heeft vaak een tegengesteld resultaat. Ga de discussie aan met behulp van de tips van de tolk.

Aankomend PRT

Elk missieteam heeft minimaal 1 vrouw wat bevorderlijk is voor de contacten met lokale vrouwen.

M; Mannen kunnen ook contact hebben met vrouwen maar alleen als zij al een publieke functie bekleden, bijv overheid.

Ook een vrouwelijke militair kan contact hebben met vrouwen via een mannelijke tolk. Het zal misschien ietwat moeizamer gaan maar het is zeker wel mogelijk.

Vrouwen in Uruzgan

M; U is de meest conservatieve provincie, minst ontwikkeld en vrouwen zijn het meest achtergesteld. Gender data is schaars.

Er leven ongeveer 300.000 mensen waarvan 48,6% vrouw is. Hiervan kan 0,6% lezen tegenover 7% van de mannen.

De achtergestelde positie is het resultaat van traditie, armoede en ongeletterdheid.

Ze hebben bijna geen toegang tot onderwijs, gezondheidszorg, economische mogelijkheden, wetgeving en het publieke leven. Waar in de meeste provincies nog veel vrouwen op het land werken is dat in U ook niet zo. Het leven van vrouwen speelt zich af in de quala.

Geweld tegen vrouwen komt op grote schaal voor, net als discriminatie. Cultuur is de oorzaak hiervan. De sociale structuren zijn gebaseerd op cultuur en een conservatieve opvatting van de Islam. Er is dus een culturele omslag nodig van binnen uit. Dit zal dmv sociaal economische ontwikkeling gestimuleerd worden. De internationale gemeenschap kan hierin assisteren maar zal deze omslag niet zelf kunnen leiden.

Projecten voor vrouwen zullen niet alleen geïnitieerd moeten worden, ook in andere sectoren moet er aandacht aan gender besteed worden.

Je kunt als militair op de NAPWA wijzen en vragen hoe deze geïmplementeerd wordt/ zal worden bij het ministerie van vrouwen zaken in U. Ze horen van dit document op de hoogte te moeten zijn.

Elke week hebben ze vergadering met alle departement hoofden en de districtchef. Er was eerst geen agenda, men praatte over wat er op dat moment speelde. Het plan was om wel een agenda in te voeren en ook resultaten te gaan meten. Ik weet niet hoe het daar nu mee gesteld is.

Hoeveel inzicht hebben jullie in de positie van de vrouw in U?

Bijv. hoeveel vrouwen komen in aanraking met de ANP?

Antwoorden PRT; Geen idee, niet bekend bij wie je informatie moet halen, gezien als te moeilijk, niet bekend wat de behoeften zijn.

M; praat met de betrokkenen, ANP, overheid, gevangenen etc. kijk hoe groot de behoefte is voordat je iets initieert. Er is veel mogelijk als je het vanuit henzelf laat komen.

Ga ook uit van Afghaanse wetgeving, ook al is dat onder druk van het Westen gemaakt, het is een Afghaans product.

Vraag aan mensen hoe zij iets willen/ gaan aanpakken? Hoe kunnen we jullie daarin ondersteunen?

Waar hebben vrouwen behoefte aan op sociaal economisch vlak?

Mogelijkheden op het gebied van onderwijs, landbouw, veeteelt en gezondheidszorg.

Bijv. oeverbescherming. Vrouwen kun je leren hier dingen voor te maken. Dit kunnen ze thuis maken waarna het aan bedrijven, NGO's die het uitvoeren kunnen verkopen.

Besteed dit ook uit aan NGO's, je hoeft niet alles zelf te doen.

Doordat vrouwen in U niet gewend/ mogen buiten werken is dit erg moeilijk te bewerkstelligen. Een vrouw buitenshuis is gezien als erg kwetsbaar en een man zal dus proberen haar te beschermen door haar binnen te houden. Dit betekent niet dat vrouwen geen invloed hebben. Zij hebben binnenshuis erg veel invloed op de familie en andere gezinszaken.

Weduwen

Er is een grote groep weduwen in U, deze zijn ook geregistreerd bij Sociale Zaken. Je kunt makkelijk contact opnemen met Sociale Zaken en kijken hoe je hun projecten kunt ondersteunen.

PRT; Vrouwen mogen toch geen land bezitten?

M; Dat klopt, kijk dus naar projecten waar geen landbezit voor nodig is maar wat binnenshuis gedaan kan worden zoals kleine veelteelt of fruitteelt. Trainingen die weduwen helpen voorzien in hun onderhoud zoals naailes. Deze lessen liepen in Chora en TK erg goed.

Blijf echter wel monitoren om de effectiviteit, behoefte en de follow up in de gaten te houden.

M; Om goed te weten wat er nodig is, praat veel met de bevolking en gebruik de tolk als adviseur. Deze persoon is niet dom, spreekt de taal en kent de cultuur en gebruiken. Hij of zij zal nuttige tips kunnen geven wat wel en niet te doen.

M; Het ministerie van vrouwen zaken is alleen actief aanwezig in TK.

Resultaten

Op het gebied van gezondheidszorg is er verbetering zichtbaar. Zo zijn er meer vrouwelijke hulpverleners en is er veel overleg met organisaties en het ministerie van volksgezondheid.

Wat betreft onderwijs is er ook resultaat. Er zijn 4100 meisjes geregistreerd in het basis onderwijs, 260 in het vervolg onderwijs, 950 meisjes volgen versneld onderwijs (accelerated learning classes) en er zijn 45 geregistreerde leraressen.

Het is nog wel nodig om meer inzicht te verkrijgen in de redenen waarom meisjes wel of niet naar school gaan. Veiligheid, afstand, vrouwelijk personeel, sanitaire voorzieningen en omheining van de school spelen een rol. Als je deze factoren kent, kun je ze aanpakken en ervoor zorgen dat steeds meer meisjes wel naar school gaan.

PRT; Waarom is er geen vrouwen shura in TK?

M; de district chief in DW was een voorstander van de vrouwen shura waardoor het mogelijk werd.

H; mensen die open staan voor dit soort initiatieven moeten zich gesteund voelen door jullie. Luister en probeer hen te helpen.

Het beloningssysteem in Zuid Uruzgan voor het naar school sturen van dochters werkt niet aangezien de beloningen blijven hangen bij de overheid door corruptie. Het is dus van belang om te blijven monitoren en door te vragen. Blijf ook met elkaar in gesprek en bespreek dit soort praktijken.

PRT: Hoe kan je het proces versnellen om de positie van de vrouw te verbeteren?

M; Houd veel contact met Afghaanse vrouwen dmv de vrouwelijke PRT members. Het wordt afgeraden om grote groepen bij elkaar te halen ivm de veiligheid en omdat je dan een target wordt. Je kan natuurlijk altijd contact houden via NGO's en andere intermediairs. Contact hen voor informatie en als schakel om informatie over te brengen.

H; radio NAWA heeft goedbeluisterde programma's. ze peilen ook wat mensen willen horen, hieruit bleek dat 70% van de luisteraars voor het bespreken van vrouwen onderwerpen was.

Besef dat er altijd een verschil is tussen wat men denkt en men zegt ivm veiligheid.

Wordt gesponsord door de ambassade.

M; radio TK is ook een zender die beluisterd word en gebruikt zou kunnen worden.

F; Vrouwen zijn ook vaak ondergronds actief. Bijv in Mazar I Sharif waren tijdens de Taliban talloze geheime scholen bij mensen thuis. Nu worden deze gebruikt voor technische opleidingen.

De Asia foundation doet geregeld onderzoek naar de meningen van Afghanen. Hier komen vaak verrassende dingen uit. Ze zijn veel progressiever dan je denkt.

M; De shuras zijn ook bronnen van informatie, ook als het over vrouwen gaat.

Tips

- Win de steun van de lokale leiders. Het duurt wel langer voor je iets voor elkaar krijgt maar local ownership zorgt wel voor een duurzamer resultaat.
- Radio is een belangrijk communicatiemiddel en zorgt voor informatievoorziening.
- Werk samen met de tolken
- Vrouwen in de missieteamen maken makkelijker contact. Ze worden vaak ook spontaan uitgenodigd bij mensen thuis.
- Gebruik de netwerken van Afghaanse vrouwen
- Mannen moeten geen direct contact met Afghaanse vrouwen maken
- Stem initiatieven altijd af met lokale plannen
- Lokale leiders accepteren vrouwen als gesprekspartner. Toon respect en luister naar hen.
- Be aware (van je eigen normen, het thema)
- Houdt contact (met de lokale autoriteiten en overleg)
- Zoek vrouwen actief (niet alleen de vrouwen van de chief maar ook de vrouwen in publieke functies)

Afsluiting

PRT: 1 voor ons; we kunnen invloed hebben op gender en we hoeven niet alles op Elise te gooien. Wij kunnen het met z'n allen doen en we gaan het doen!

1 voor jullie (de sprekers en mij); heel veel dank voor de informatie en tips. De realiteit zal weerbarstiger zijn maar er waren veel handreikingen waar we wat mee kunnen.

APPENDIX 8 EMAIL BRIAN CRUZ

From: Cruz, Brian F LTJG USA USN PRT Khost S7

Sent: 13 October 2009 4:26 p.m.

To: Brenda Grinwis <brendagrinnis@gmail.com>

Cc: "Roberts, Audrey J USA CIV USA CTF Yukon"

<audrey.roberts@afghan.swa.army.mil>, "Cooley, Robert LTC USA USA PRT Khost CMOC" <robert.cooley@afghan.swa.army.mil>

Subject: more information on women's issues in Khost Afghanistan

Hello Brenda,

Below is a summary of an interview with a tribal elder from a pretty remote area of Khost near Pakistan.

Reporter: are there any girls school in Spira,

Elder: to be honest no, the government might send books and tents but there is no girls school

R: does the girl need to go to school

E: there is still some culture that is against islam, if girl gets education, girl will work in office and man will be in home and that is against culture, but people say female need medical education to help with birth, but most tribal elder and mullah reject girl going to school, islam cam from Saudi arabai, but daughter of mullahs go to school, when girls go to school in Saudi Arabia she is totally covered, but the government also escort the girls, but the girls who study here in city are not following islam, they don't have the coverings,

R: can girls study at home?

E: boys can bring home lessons from school for girls

R: what about marriage?

E: father has to arrange marriage for boy, boy has to pay girl's family, and then wedding party is planned

R: do people in spira like education

E: yes they are able to learn more things, all people like more education,

This issue came up once before where in normal Islam the females go to school much longer than in Afghanistan and all of the blame is placed on culture. And in arranged marriages here the males family pays the female's family.

R/,

LTJG Brian Cruz

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APPENDIX 9 EMAIL NICOLE MAES

from **Maes, Ncj** <ncj.maes@minbuza.nl>

to Brenda Grinwis<brendagrinnis@gmail.com>

Date 19 January 2010 08:15

subject RE: Scriptie PRT's in Afghanistan en Gender

Beste Brenda,

Nog zes weken inderdaad en dan zit mijn tijd in Uruzgan erop. Op zich een goed moment om je vragen te beantwoorden, want ik ben nu een stuk meer ervaren dan toen je het voor de eerste keer vroeg. Bij deze de antwoorden.

- Wat houdt de functie van Gender Focal Point precies in?

Gender focal point betekent in de praktijk van Uruzgan dat je het eerste aanspreekpunt bent voor alle zaken die met gender te maken hebben: dat varieert van aanspreekpunt voor missieteams en schrijver van allerlei stukjes voor militaire planningscycli tot gesprekken voor met Afghaanse vrouwen en genderprojecten identificeren.

- Is het een full time functie?

Nee, het is geen full time functie. Ik ben er zoiets van 25% van mijn tijd aan kwijt.

- Hoeveel vrouwen zitten er in de PRT's in Uruzgan? En in de mission teams?

Er is één PRT in Uruzgan en daarin zitten in totaal 5 vrouwen. 1 OSAD (dat ben ik zelf), 1 kapitein (MT Deh Rawood), 1 tweede luitenant (MT Sorgh Morghab en omgeving) en 2 meewerkend chauffeurs (beide rang soldaat)

- Gaat er wel eens ander vrouwelijk personeel mee buiten de poort als er geen vrouwen in de PRT's zitten?

ja. Er wordt gebruik gemaakt van alle beschikbare vrouwen. Zwaartepunt ligt bij vrouwen van Battlegroup en TFU staf, omdat die vrouwen ook gewend zijn de poort uit te gaan. Maar er worden ook wel vrouwen van bijvoorbeeld de logistieke dienst ingezet. Indien nodig kunnen we ook gebruik maken van vrouwelijke tolken van de Amerikanen, maar over het algemeen kunnen we ook met mannelijke tolken uit de voeten (in Tarin Kowt en Deh Rawood dan; in Chora kan dat niet)

- Zijn er speciale projecten voor vrouwen zoals bijvoorbeeld het stimuleren van vrouwelijk ondernemerschap?

Ja. Er wordt op dit moment in Uruzgan een project uitgerold dat wordt uitgevoerd door AWBF (Afghan Women Business Federation) en gericht is op het verkopen van zelf gemaakte handwerkproducten. **NIET DOOR PRT ZELF DUS**

- Worden er Afghaanse vrouwen of vrouwen organisaties betrokken tijdens het plannen en uitvoeren van projecten?

Wat we zouden willen is dat NGO's die in Uruzgan werken zelf vrouwen betrekken bij de uitwerking van hun plannen voor projecten, maar dat is op dit moment nog heel ingewikkeld. Twee belangrijke redenen daarvoor zijn dat er vrijwel geen hoogopgeleide vrouwen in Uruzgan zijn (ik ken er twee) en dat er geen vrouwen voor NGO's werken noch voor UNAMA. Het aantal vrouwen dat werkt voor NGO's zouden we graag willen uitbreiden en de NGO's willen dat inmiddels ook.

- Hoe verloopt contact met Afghaanse vrouwen of vrouwen organisaties?

Vrouwenorganisaties zijn er niet in Uruzgan. Er is alleen het Department of Women Affairs, maar dat is een provinciaal lijnministerie van de overheid waar 5 vrouwen werken (o.a. de directeur). DoWA heeft een bijzonder slechte, corrupte reputatie hier in Uruzgan. Dat komt voor een belangrijk deel door de directeur van DOWA (Mw. Ferishta). Zij is ondanks haar reputatie wel een belangrijk contact voor het PRT. Daarnaast hebben we contact met een vrouwelijk lid van de provinciale raad van Uruzgan, Hilla. Ook zij heeft een corrupte reputatie, maar is een belangrijk contact. Ons netwerk van vrouwen proberen we op dit moment nog uit te breiden.

In algemene zin zijn de vrouwen in Tarin Kowt best bereid met ons te praten. In Chora is dat aanmerkelijk minder en in Deh Rawood ligt het er tussenin (daar is een wekelijkse vrouwen bijeenkomst waar het PRT missieteam voor Deh Rawood bij aanwezig is.

- Wat voor een nieuwe initiatieven worden er ondernomen om Afghaanse vrouwen te betrekken bij projecten van het PRT?

We proberen met vrouwen in gesprek te komen op plekken waar dat helemaal niet vanzelfsprekend is, zoals Sorgh Morghab en Chora. Een goede ingang is vaak het ziekenhuis waar de vrouwelijke leden van de missieteam dan naartoe gaan.

- Hoe reageert de lokale bevolking op uw aanpak?

De vrouwen staan open voor contact met vrouwelijke leden van het PRT (zowel civiel als militair), maar de mannen hebben liever niet dat er contact is met Afghaanse vrouwen. Dus dat is erg schipperen en manoeuvreren. Als er gesprekken zijn met een groep vrouwen is er in Chora en Deh Rawood altijd wel een mannelijke voorzitter bij die het gesprek controleert. In TK heeft in oktober een shura plaatsgevonden zonder dat daarbij Afghaanse mannen aanwezig waren (met uitzondering van de tolk) en dat levert dan duidelijk meer informatie op. In de andere drie districten van Uruzgan werkt het PRT niet en daar zijn dus geen contacten met vrouwen.

- Hoe kijkt u terug op de afgelopen periode? Heeft uw functie een duidelijk verschil gemaakt?

Het is heel ingewikkeld om in een half jaar tijd op dit dossier echt vooruitgang te zien, omdat de positie van vrouwen zo zwak is in deze provincie. Wat we nu wel hebben is contact met vrouwen dat verder gaat dan het contact met de usual suspects Ferishta en Hilla. Om echt een verschil te kunnen maken als PRT heb je meer vrouwen nodig en ook van een hogere rang. Wat ook helpt is als mannen zich actief betrokken voelen bij dit dossier. Voor sommige

missieteams geldt dit al en daar zie je dan ook betere resultaten dan in de missieteams die gender geheel aan de vrouwelijke militairen overlaten.

- Is het nuttig om een meer vrouwgerichte focus te hebben voor het doel van CIMIC?

Dat is zeker nuttig, omdat je met de huidige werkwijze toch ongeveer 50% van de bevolking nauwelijks weet te bereiken.

- Draagt uw aanpak duidelijk bij aan de verbetering van de positie en situatie van vrouwen in Uruzgan?

Een substantiële verbetering van de positie van vrouwen in Uruzgan is nog ver weg. We zetten dus met onze aanpak hele kleine stapjes voorwaarts. Onze aanpak is vooral gericht op het bereiken van vrouwen en het achterhalen van hun belangrijkste noden, zodat we daar in nationale programma's op in kunnen spelen. Want naast de aanpak die we in Uruzgan hebben, wordt er ook vanuit de ambassade gewerkt aan het verbeteren van de positie van vrouwen. Dat gebeurt via nationale programma's voor bijvoorbeeld onderwijs en gezondheidszorg, die ook in Uruzgan worden uitgerold en zo zorgen voor meer meisjes die onderwijs volgen, een groter aantal vroedvrouwen en betere toegang van vrouwen tot gezondheidszorg.

- Wat zijn uw meest bijzondere ervaringen in uw positie gerelateerd aan de vrouwen in Uruzgan en CIMIC?

Mijn meest bijzondere ervaring is toch wel de vrouwenpatrouille in Chora waarmee we beoogden in contact te komen met vrouwen. Tijdens die patrouille hebben we zo'n twintig vrouwen kunnen spreken, die overduidelijk nieuwsgierig waren naar ons, maar die werden tegengewerkt door de mannen die toevallig voorbij kwamen (sommige vrouwen werden zelfs uitgescholden). Die patrouille heeft ons een allereerste beeld gegeven over de noden van de vrouwen in dat gebied en die zijn fors. Er is in Chora geen meisjesschool en vrouwen gaan nauwelijks naar de dokter of het ziekenhuis.

Hopelijk helpt je dit verder. Succes met het schrijven van je scriptie en laat me weten als je meer informatie nodig hebt.

Vriendelijke groet,

Nicole Maes