

The comprehensive approach and NGOs: coherence and its effects on dealing with dilemmas and differences

The cases of Denmark, UK and the Netherlands in Afghanistan

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Master's thesis

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Masterthesis, January 2012

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SUMMARY

The comprehensive approach (CA) is the result of the changes in the international security environment. It became clear that most conflicts are complex and that a one-dimensional military approach does not suffice. Civil wars like the one in Afghanistan have led governments and organisations, such as the EU and UN, to realise that a new approach is needed. This became known as the CA. The approach is based on the thought that there should also be a political, civilian and socio-economic component besides the traditionally military component in post-conflict and counterinsurgency operations.

This research study takes a closer look at the British and Danish missions in Helmand and the Dutch mission in Uruzgan, to find out how NGOs are dealt with in the CA and to what extent this affects the different approaches to the dilemmas and differences. For the purpose of this research study the CA is defined as “greater coherence in the different approaches of different organisations”. In addition, the study makes use of a list of dilemmas and differences that play a role within a CA.

The research study attempts to map the type and degree of coherence that can be pursued between local, national and international NGOs and the different government departments for the three cases. It finds that there have been many different forms of interaction between the three approaches. Each approach has had its own level of coherence between NGOs and the mission. Moreover, it appears that the level of coherence has differed according to the level at which it has taken place, the strategic or the operational level, and whether it has concerned cooperation with local, national or international NGOs.

Moreover, it shows that the difference in the level of coherence has contributed to the way in which the three approaches have dealt with the dilemmas and differences between the actors involved in the CA. It finds that the greater the level of coherence between NGOs and the different government departments within the mission, the more effort exists to include NGOs in the approach to the dilemmas. Moreover, when non-government and government measures are combined, most officials and military personnel view the differences as complementary rather than negative. Finally, the report shows that when there is a tremendous military authority within the mission, dilemmas and differences are dealt with from a military perspective, in which NGOs are not so much included.

ABBREVIATIONS

3D	Defence, diplomacy and development
ACBAR	Afghan Coordination Body for Afghan Relief
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
ARTF	Afghan Reconstruction Fund
BAAG	British and Irish Agencies Afghanistan Group
BG	Battle Group
CA	Comprehensive approach
CIMIC	Civil-military cooperation
CivRep	Civil representative
COIN	Counterinsurgency
CPA	Concerted Planning and Action
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DANIDA	Danish International Development Assistance
DCU	Dutch consortium Uruzgan
DFID	UK aid from the Department for International Development
DHCG	Danish Humanitarian Contact Group
ECHO	European Community
ENNA	European Network of National Civil Society Organisations
EU	European Union Humanitarian Office
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
FCO	British Foreign Commonwealth Office
IO	International Organisation
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NMCG	NGO-Military Contact Group
NGO	Operation Enduring Freedom
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
QIP	Quick Impact Project
RC South	Regional Command South
SU	Stabilisation Unit
TFH	Task Force Helmand
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UN OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the involvement of the international community – in a variety of post-conflict programs and missions aimed at improving the security situation and promoting sustainable development – has increased. Civil wars like the one in Afghanistan and Burundi have led governments and organisations – such as the UN and the EU – to realise that a new approach is needed. On both the theoretical and practical level, theorists, the military, diplomats and development workers have tried to deal with the complexity of contemporary crisis management systems. One conceptual response to this complexity is the comprehensive approach (CA), also called ‘3D approach’, ‘integrated approach’ or ‘whole-of-government approach’. All terms include the notion that multidimensional operations face problems that are intertwined and cannot be approached separately. Hence, the CA is based on the thought that there should also be a political, civilian and economic component besides the traditionally military component in post conflict and counterinsurgency operations (Thruelsen 2011, 3). In today’s operations the tasks are therefore multiplied; not just the provision of security is needed, but also development and administrative activities. These operations include the establishment of infrastructure and employment, providing economic assistance, setting up good governance, the establishment of civil administration, building up the security sector, the establishment of Rule of Law, etc.

For the purpose of this research the CA is defined as “greater coherence in the different approaches of different organisations” (Van der Lijn 2011, 28). In the case of Afghanistan, greater coherence in the policies is perceived to have been positive. However, although a CA has its opportunities and benefits, there are still many problems with the effective implementation of a comprehensive effort. For example, there seems to be a gap in cohesion between the strategic (headquarters) and the operational (field operations) level. Also the degree to which Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and military personnel can be coherent to each other is limited. Another problem is that the multitude of objectives, strategies and approaches are often perceived as contradicting each other, causing tension between the actors involved (De Coning and Friis 2011, 13). This would mean that the degree of integration might influence the approach to the dilemmas and differences for the various actors involved. Dilemmas and differences are tensions between strengths and

weaknesses (Van der Ark 2010, 63). This means that there are contradictions between certain stakeholders of the CA that are perceived to be both positive and negative, and appear to be a dilemma.

Coherence is a concept that is applicable to these questions, just as the dilemmas and differences that play a role within the CA. Van der Lijn (2011) elaborates on this concept by providing a coherence framework, based on the matrix of De Coning and Friis (2011). In this framework six types of organisational interaction and four levels of coherence within an integrated mission are distinguished. The central levels of coherence in this research study are the internal-external level and inter-agency level, which encompass the consistency between and among the policies of the national governments and local, national and international NGOs. In this research study those are the British, Danish and Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Ministry of Defence (MoD), Development Cooperation, and several Afghan, British, Danish and International NGOs that have also played an important role during the different ISAF missions. Within an integrated approach, these different actors strive for more coherence between their separate activities. However, De Coning and Friis argue that there are limits to how much coherence can be achieved, as a result of the contradicting objectives, strategies and approaches. Namely, these contradicting interests may result in dilemmas and differences among the actors involved. Research has identified several dilemmas for the various actors involved in an integrated approach. This research study will make use of the dilemmas and differences as set out in the report about the Dutch 3D approach in Uruzgan by Van der Lijn (2011).

To address the concept of coherence and the dilemmas and differences that play a role within the CA, this research study examines the British and Danish ISAF missions in Helmand and the Dutch ISAF mission in Uruzgan. The British have been the lead nation in the Afghan province of Helmand since 2006. The Danish contribution in Afghanistan has been also towards Helmand, through the British-led PRT. The Netherlands was the lead nation in the Afghan province of Uruzgan from 2006 to 2010. All three countries have made a contribution to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), that aims to promote stability and security in Afghanistan by increasing the support of the local population for the Afghan authorities, to support the capacity and capability building of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), to facilitate improvements in governance and socio-

economic development and to reduce the capability and the will of insurgency (Dutch Government 2011, 16). The three countries have made it a high priority to respond to the urgent need of humanitarian, rehabilitation and development aid and for assistance in the creation of a new, re-unified democratic governance. To achieve these goals they have made use of an approach that encompasses military, diplomatic, development, and economic elements. However, coherence between NGOs and the three different governments has differed in degree and they seem to have had a different way for dealing with the dilemmas and differences in their approaches. The purpose of this study therefore is twofold. First, it tries to map the different levels of coherence between NGOs and government departments in the three missions. Second, it looks if the British and Danish approaches result in a different way for dealing with the dilemmas and differences in the CA compared to the Dutch approach.

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question of this study is:

What are the differences between the British, Danish and Dutch missions for dealing with NGOs in the comprehensive approach in Afghanistan, and to what extent does this affect the different approaches to the dilemmas and differences?

The main question is divided into the following sub-questions:

- What is a comprehensive approach and what dilemmas and differences play a role in such a strategy?
- How are NGOs integrated in the British, Danish and Dutch missions in southern Afghanistan?
- How are the dilemmas and differences dealt with in the British, Danish and Dutch approaches?
- Do the differences of the British, Danish and Dutch approaches explain the different way for dealing with the dilemmas and differences?

1.2 SCIENTIFIC AND SOCIAL RELEVANCE

1.2.1 **Scientific relevance**

This study is both scientific and socially relevant. Scientifically, an important reason why there is special attention to the internal-external and inter-agency levels of coherence in a CA is that little research exists into the effects of cooperation between NGOs and government strategies on dilemmas and differences within the CA. It has appeared that the effect of integration within the CA is an issue that is often not dealt with. Questions about the involvement of NGOs in relation to the dilemmas and differences in the CA often remain unanswered. A lot of academic studies relating to the ISAF strategy in Afghanistan that have been published deal with the role of NGOs in the CA in general (Olson 2006; Hofman 2007 and BAAG & ENNA 2011). Moreover, studies on dilemmas and differences in the CA in general have been published (Friis & Jamyr 2011; Friis & De Coning 2011; Wendling 2011 and Van der Lijn 2011). This study will link up with this literature, extending its empirical base and adding an important element, namely, the effects of cooperation between NGOs and the state actors on dilemmas and differences within the CA.

The research project contributes in another way as well to the existing literature on this topic. In general, a lot has been written about the Dutch mission in Uruzgan and the British and Danish missions in Helmand. Most studies into the ISAF strategy in Afghanistan deal with single case studies, in which the CA of only one particular nation is examined and analysed. Some of these academic publications do address other cases, for example, to invigorate argumentation with respect to the examined case study. However, these references often remain in the background. Meanwhile, not much structural research has been done yet to compare the British, Danish and Dutch coalition partners in this area. For this reason, it is not yet possible to look whether one form of CA differs from the other. As far as known, only a few comparative studies, concerning the CA, are published in which different nations are subjected to a comparison. These concern a DIIS report by Peter Viggo Jakobsen (2005) that compares the British, German and US PRTs in Afghanistan, a book by Hynek and Marton (2011) that empirically maps and theorises ISAF's contribution to state building in Afghanistan through a series of case studies, and a DIIS sub-report by Finn Stepputat (2009:14) that looks at the CAs of the Netherlands, the UK and Denmark to international operations, including the operation in southern Afghanistan.

Again, these comparative studies are relatively broad studies and do not address the topics that will be discussed in this research project to a large extent. On the one hand, the scarcity of an extensive collection of literature on the NGO involvement in the comprehensive approach makes a comparative study on this topic difficult, on the other hand it is of relevance to carry out this research

1.2.2 Societal relevance

There are three reasons why it is relevant to analyse the internal-external cooperation and dilemmas and differences within a CA. First of all, the dilemmas and differences for the various actors involved play an important role in the transition of the ISAF mission in 2014. During this transition, ISAF will leave and transfers the mission to the Afghan government (GIRoA). Already a lot of international attention has been in the run towards the transition in 2014. For example, questions are raised like: How can the Afghans assume responsibility for the security situation across the whole country by the end of 2014? How should the international combat effort be adjusted and reduced? And is it possible for the Afghan authorities to achieve the capacity necessary to provide responsible governance and to continue the development process? This study will expand the international attention by focusing on the dilemmas and differences that play a role in the transition.

In addition, by looking to the CA from a comparative perspective, it might be possible to understand why different levels of coherence result in a different approach to the dilemmas and differences. Do the internal-external and inter-agency levels of coherence differ for the three cases involved? If yes, does this difference degree of integration result in different outcomes with regard to the dilemmas and differences? Moreover, the focus on the cooperation with NGOs within the CA will help those NGOs and government representatives – who are involved in integrated approaches – to improve their interaction. There still is an ideological gap between political and military actors on the one side and NGOs on the other. This gap potentially blocks NGO partners to get involved into integrated peace building efforts (Rintakoski and Autti 2008, 17). If the research can contribute to improved understanding of the different forms of cooperation with NGOs, and to improved practice, then the benefits for the ways in which the dilemmas within the CA can be dealt will be clear as well.

More specifically, the research project is relevant to international organisations such as the UN, the EU and the NATO, which advocate an integrated approach in

operations in which different actors strive for greater coherence. When applied at the national level, the research project links to the foreign policy of the Dutch, British and Danish government on international operations through an integrated approach. Last but not least, the research project is also relevant for NGOs who play a role in post-conflict and counterinsurgency (COIN) situations.

1.3 RESEARCH STRATEGY

This research is a comparative study of three cases. The study looks at the national approaches of Denmark and the UK in Helmand, which are compared to the Dutch approach in Uruzgan. The way in which the British and Danes deal with NGOs is mapped and their approaches are compared to the Dutch approach with regard to how they deal with the dilemmas and overcome the differences between organisations in the context of the CA. The British and Danish cases were selected since they share a number of similarities and significant differences. Both are deployed in the Helmand province and the attempts to integrate civil and military actors seem to be meeting the same obstacles for the two cases. However, their contribution to the province differs in size and they seem to have a different way in dealing with the obstacles. The Dutch case was chosen because of the establishment of the Dutch Consortium Uruzgan (DCU), an umbrella organisation for five Dutch NGOs in order to see if and how they could contribute to the mission. Both the British and Danish approaches do not have such a consortium in Helmand. However, this does not mean that without a consortium, like the DCU, less integration exists between the government and NGOs. The importance of a case study on these three nations is also stressed by the work of various academics such as Stepputat (2009:14). He argues that the three governments are trying to adapt to the challenges and changing conditions of operation in southern Afghanistan, where all three have implemented their integrated strategies. All three cases followed to a certain extent some form of CA in southern Afghanistan. Furthermore, European countries such as The Netherlands and Denmark are to be considered as genuinely ‘civilian powers’ – measured by money spent, civilians deployed and the facilitation of cross-government cooperation (House of Commons Defence Committee 2009-10).

The comparative case study can be distinguished from the “single” case study by the fact that different interrelated cases are compared with each other instead of just one (Doorewaard and Verschuren 2010). The comparison of case studies is significant for the development of theory. The comparative case study can be divided into several sub-variants, of which the hierarchic method is applicable to this research project. The hierarchic method consists of two stages (Ibid). First, for this study, the British, Danish and Dutch cases were, independently from each other, examined as single case studies. The same main research questions and set of sub-questions have been applied to the different cases. For example, during the interviews, the representatives of the three cases were asked the same focused questions in a semi-structured manner. Second, the three cases were analysed in order to look for differences and similarities. During this analyse, the differences among the cases were used to identify a variation, a different pattern, with regard to the different approaches to the dilemmas and differences in a CA. Thus, in this stage the results from the first stage were used as input for a comparison of the key variables that are involved in the research project. This method provides a profound insight of NGO involvement in the CA together with the dilemmas and differences that might appear.

1.4 DATA COLLECTION

Two research methods are addressed in this study in order to answer the main research question. The following research methods have been used in this study: literature study and semi-structured interviews. Since there was no possibility to conduct a field research in southern Afghanistan, most of the literature study was done in the Netherlands, while the semi-structured interviews were conducted in the Netherlands, Denmark and the UK. Next, the two different methods will be discussed.

1.4.1 Literature study and secondary data

Literature study was conducted to obtain information on the examining topic and serves as background to this research project. During the literature study, use was made of research articles from different fields of study, reports and evaluations of think tanks and NGOs/IOs, and policy documents. All were carefully read and compared to for the gathering of information and arguments.

First, literature study for this research was into the CA in general and consisted of an analysis based on existing literature and theory on the different forms of coherence within missions. This information was structured along the internal-external and inter-agency degrees of organisational interaction and different levels of coherence provided in the framework developed by Van der Lijn, based on the matrix of Coning and Friis (2011, 29). In this framework, six types of organisational interaction and four level of coherence are distinguished. It provided the background necessary to investigate the level of coherence between NGOs and the government within the three missions at the strategic and operational level. The report about the Dutch CA in Uruzgan by Van der Lijn (2011) was also used to research which dilemmas and differences play a role in a CA in general. This provided the background necessary for analysing which dilemmas and differences play a role in the different approaches in Afghanistan. After the literature study on the CA in general, literature study was conducted with regard to the British and Danish approaches in Helmand and the Dutch approach in Uruzgan. This literature study was into the context of the three integrated ISAF missions in southern Afghanistan. For this research study, use was made of literature that deals with the British, Danish and Dutch missions from a governmental, military and academic perspective. Literature study was also into NGOs and consisted of an elaboration based on existing literature and theory on what NGOs exactly are. This information was structured along the different types of NGOs, of which the international NGOs (INGOs), national NGOs and local NGOs are most focused on in this research study. Moreover, literature on the humanitarian space for NGOs in a conflict situation like Afghanistan has been studied. However, literature on NGO involvement in Helmand and Uruzgan, relating to the three above-mentioned types of NGOs, is scarce and lacks practical experiences from the field.

1.4.2 Semi-structured interviews

In order to generate further information on the different levels of coherence within the different approaches and the dilemmas and differences that have arisen within these, literature study was not enough. For this study, 39 semi-structured interviews were held to link the main research question to the secondary data. Furthermore, the interviews were conducted to verify secondary data collected during the literature study.

Semi-structured interviewing is a form of guided interviewing where only some of the questions are predetermined (Doorewaard and Verschuren 2010, 221). Whilst I had a list of questions to ask the interviewees, questions could be asked in a different order, there was room for adding new questions if relevant to the topic, and, in some cases, questions could be omitted if, for example, they were not applicable to the organisation of the interviewees. This has led to interviews that varied in time, but also in the type of information that was focused on.

The interviews were conducted with representatives working for different kind of organisations to avoid biases and verify arguments and opinions. For the research, representatives from Afghan, British, Danish and Dutch NGOs, International Organisations (IO), British and Danish academics, British and Danish Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT), British, Danish and Dutch Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and Defence (MoD), British Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO) and UN-organisation OCHA were spoken with. For the government representatives and NGOs, different interview questions were made, which can be found in appendix 2 and 3. Key persons of the British and Danish government were selected because they have been involved in the mission in Afghanistan either at the strategic or operational level. Afghan NGO representatives were sampled because of their work in Helmand. British and Danish NGO representatives and IOs were sampled either because of their participation and relation to the mission or their distance towards the CA. Their role in discussions on the CA is a variation to discover further differences between the different cases. The British and Danish academics were selected because of their expertise with regard to the British and Danish CA's, but also to verify opinions and arguments mentioned in earlier interviews. Interviews with Dutch NGOs, the Dutch MFA and the Dutch MoD were used as an external reflection on the British and Danish approaches. Even though it was a very busy period for the representatives of the different organisations in the run up to the Tokyo conference on Afghanistan in July, all were very cooperative and more than willing to have a conversation with me.

The sampling of the interviewees was done through existing contacts with governmental and NGO representatives. Persons to be interviewed were selected on the basis of recommendations and suggestions by other persons with a similar trait of interest. This type of sampling is called snowballing and has its advantage to allow the researcher to identify individuals who feature the necessary attributes for the research. Government representatives put me in contact with colleagues who were

involved in the CA, at the strategic level or at operational level, as well as with NGOs who were active in Afghanistan. The Danish Embassy in Kabul and DANIDA provided me with a list of the main Danish NGOs working in Afghanistan. Next, NGO member-organisations, such as the Afghan Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR) and the British and Irish Agencies Afghanistan Group (BAAG), provided me with contact details of their member NGOs. ACBAR gave its NGO members, who worked in Helmand or Uruzgan, the opportunity to approach me themselves. BAAG put me in contact with the British NGOs I wished to talk to. Various NGOs again put me in touch with NGOs I didn't approach yet but that were very active in the field of civil-military relations. Finally, some governmental representatives and NGOs put me in touch with British and Danish academics in the field of development and governance programs, peacekeeping and peace building.

Finally, it needs to be stressed here that I have tried to keep the participants in the interviews as anonymous as possible. This means that it was agreed beforehand that none of the statements would be able to trace back to the participants. People were willing to share a lot of sensitive information and personal opinions that ought to be respected. For example, in this study I have referred to representatives of a Danish NGO or a British official instead of using their full names and organisations. For the list of interviewees and the interview guides used in this research study, see appendix 1, 2 and 3.

1.5 METHODOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATION AND VALIDITY

The data for this study were gathered using qualitative research methods. Qualitative research is especially useful when the researcher is interested in contextual and detailed data. Contextual and detailed data seem important for this research study, as the role of NGOs in the CA, the level of coherence, and dilemmas and differences within it are complex subjects. The complexity lays in the fact that the level of coherence and the dilemmas and differences are difficult to measure. Namely, both may have different meanings to the interviewees. Therefore, a qualitative research method seems to suit this research study the best. By using a categorisation for both the level of coherence and the dilemmas and differences, mapping and analysing these complex subjects seemed possible after all. I have chosen for literature study and semi-structured interviews as part of this qualitative in-depth research method. A lot

has been published on the CA in general and the role of NGOs in operations. Literature study was carried out to map out the latest theories pertaining to the subjects that are central in this research study. Literature study seems very useful for determining the theoretical framework, which is needed for analysing the collected data. Besides, literature on the British and Danish approaches in Helmand and the Dutch approach in Uruzgan provides the background for further analysis of the three approaches. Semi-structured interviews were conducted because this research method can provide reliable, comparable and qualitative data. The interviewees were asked for their underlying thoughts and motives about the subjects, which are central in this research study. Because the encouragement of two-way communication between the interviewee and interviewer, it is possible to get an answer to quite sensitive questions (Doorewaard and Verschuren 2010, 222). Moreover, the explorative character of semi-structure interviews seems to be very useful for comparing the different cases used in this research study.

1.6 STRUCTURE

In the following chapters the theoretical background and the findings of this study will be discussed. In chapter 2 – *Perceptions on the CA and the role of NGOs* – the theoretical framework of this study, which has been used to analyse the data, is introduced. These theoretical debates form the theoretical guidelines and base for this research study. Theories with references to the concept of integrated approaches, the ISAF mission, coherence, dilemmas and differences within the CA, and NGOs are discussed. Moreover, this chapter covers the first sub-question: What is a comprehensive approach and what dilemmas and differences play a role in such a strategy? It aims to answer the question from a historical and theoretical perspective. Chapters 3 and 4 present the British and Danish integrated ISAF missions in Helmand, southern Afghanistan. As such, both chapters aim to answer the second and third sub-questions: How are NGOs integrated in the British and Danish missions in southern Afghanistan? And how are the dilemmas and differences dealt with in the British and Danish approaches? Chapter 3 – *The British case in Afghanistan* – first gives a general outline of the British approach in Helmand from a theoretical perspective. This is followed by a mapping of the level of coherence between NGOs and the British government, both at the strategic and operational level. Finally, an

overview of the extent to which dilemmas and differences play a role within the British CA is given. In chapter 4 – *The Danish case in Afghanistan* – the Danish CA in Helmand is introduced, in the same structured manner as chapter 3. Chapter 5 – *A comparison of the different cases* – answers the fourth sub-question as it compares the British and Danish approaches measured against the Dutch approach. By comparing the different approaches, the research study looks at the different outcomes with regard to the dilemmas and differences between the actors involved. Last, Chapter 6 – *Conclusions and recommendations* – draws conclusions on the main research question of this study. Furthermore, it deals with recommendations for future research.

2. PERCEPTIONS ON THE CA AND THE ROLE OF NGOS

This chapter will conceptualise the CA and the role of NGOs within it. It first gives a short overview of the CA and its emergence. This is followed by a conceptual framework for the analysis of coherence. The dilemmas and differences within a CA in general are then looked at. Finally, this chapter takes a look at the role of NGOs within the CA. An elaboration of the concept is given, in order to know what exactly NGOs are and what types there exist, followed by a discussion on the humanitarian space for NGOs in Afghanistan.

2.1 THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

The CA concept can best be understood by looking to its history. Historically, the origins of the CA may be traced back to the end of the Cold War. Until the end of the Cold War, conflicts could be won in the traditional sense, in which the UN, security coalitions and the military were the main actors. Peace operations today see local populations and the military in the same space as international peacekeeping forces and NGOs. More than ever direct relationships are important between the military, local population and humanitarian agencies (Van der Lijn 2011, 24). As such, humanitarian and development aid is seen as key component in today's operations and the military have become increasingly involved in the delivery and provision of aid. In this new crisis management framework, governments and the international community such as the EU, UN, and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) sought to establish a conflict resolution strategy that reflected the multi-faceted nature of complex conflicts (Bragg 2010, 5). Based on the premise that most conflicts are complex and require a comprehensive or integrated response, the perceived demand for a multi-dimensional peacekeeping approach began to appear. As a result, today's missions include a wide range of political, civilian, military, governmental and non-governmental actors.

The UN is seen as the first organisation that brought the importance of coherence onto the global agenda when in the 1990s it became involved in large-scale multi-dimensional peacekeeping operations like in Bosnia and Kosovo (Van der Lijn 2011, 24). Such operations not only dealt with the military aspects of a conflict, but also with the establishment of infrastructure and employment, the provision of

economic assistance, good governance, the establishment of civil administration and the establishment of Rule of Law. In these operations soldiers escorted humanitarian relief supplies and were involved in civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) operations. In addition, the amount of NGOs independently working in conflict areas increased. Consequently, contact between the military and NGOs became more common. This resulted in the concept of integrated approaches to conflict resolution as reflected in the '*Report of the Panel of United Nations Peace Operations – the Brahimi Report*'. This influential report provided a thorough review of UN peace and security activities aimed at presenting a set of recommendations to improve the UN's efforts in the future (A/55/306-S/2000/809). Among other things, the Brahimi report called for greater coherence of response to complex conflicts, with realistic and clear peacekeeping mandates by stressing the importance of an integrated approach (Bragg 2010, 5). It suggested that political, humanitarian and military instruments should come under a unified leadership (Ibid). The report was criticised by many in the NGO community, because of the merging of humanitarian aid and political agendas and the fear for their independence.

An approach in which different actors strive for different levels of coherence has been applied by other organisations as well. Both the EU and NATO have adopted an integrated approach to describe their initiatives to pursue coherence and generally have labelled it as the CA concept. The EU has adopted the CA in its European Security Strategy of 2003 stressing that the Union must '*pursue coherent policies – bring together the different tools and capabilities of EU policy, such as European assistance programs, the European Development Fund and the Member States' military and civilian capabilities*'. It also stresses the importance of '*working with powers*' (European Security strategy 2003). A similar trend is under way in NATO, which has made explicit reference to the importance of a CA in its 2006 Riga Summit Declaration. The CA arose out of the belief that the challenges that NATO faces in implementing a sustainable peace in conflict countries cannot be overcome by a one-dimensional military approach, and that a combination of civil and political elements is necessary to achieve security, stability and development (Metcalf, Haysom and Gordon 2012, 7). For the first time NGOs and NATO were operating on the same battlegrounds (Wendling 2012, 19). NATO declared that the CA is supposed to foster '*cooperation and coordination between organisations, individual states, agencies and NGOs, the private sector and the host government, and effective*

implementation requires the cooperation and contribution of all major actors' (NATO 2007). By doing this, NATO emphasises that the independence of the organisations involved should not be compromised.

At national level, many countries have also started exploring ways in which to improve the coherence across government departments and developed a whole-of-government approach to their international engagements. The 3D concept – in which defence, diplomacy and development work together with different instruments on the same goal – is originally a Canadian concept. In general, defence relates to the Ministry of Defence (MoD), diplomacy to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and development to the ministry or agency involved in development cooperation (Van der Lijn 2011, 24). However, in recent years most countries in which the whole-of-government concept is applied engage not only the three ministries mentioned, but also other ministries such as justice, police and economic affairs.

Most Western countries that have adopted a whole-of-government approach such as Canada, The Netherlands and the UK, have promoted and practiced this development by their engagement in Afghanistan. Many are responsible for, or participate in, a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan. The PRT's were a concept developed by the U.S in 2002 to spread the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) and consist of military and civilian agencies (Woodward 2010, 20). The Afghanistan PRT model is an attempt to apply the whole-of-government approach to a nationally deployed entity, including a military component responsible for security-related tasks, development actors responsible for development projects, diplomacy responsible for engagement with local authorities and political analysis, and police and judicial advisors responsible for Rule of Law assistance (Ibid). Nonetheless, there is no commonly agreed PRT model in Afghanistan. There are differences between the countries that are applying the CA and each lead nation has developed its own model in Afghanistan. Although most Western countries regard fragile states as both a development and security challenges, they differ in the weight they give these challenges, and the degree of whole-of-government integration differs significantly (Grandia 2009, 13; de Coning and Friis 2011, 6).

The international engagement in Afghanistan has been led by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), deployed under the authority of the UN Security Council in December 2001, to assist the Afghan interim authority. The ISAF mandate

was initially limited to the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas. However, by October 2003, the UN extended ISAF's mandate to cover the whole of Afghanistan. The long-term aim of the ISAF mission in Afghanistan is to promote stability and security in Afghanistan by increasing the support of the local population for the Afghan authorities, to support the capacity and capability building of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), to facilitate improvements in governance and socio-economic development and to reduce the capability and the will of insurgency (Dutch Government 2011, 16).

2.2 DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COHERENCE

When implementing an integrated approach it requires a wide range of actors including defence, diplomacy, development, NGOs, local and international actors to work together in a coherent and coordinating effort (Rintakoski and Autti 2008, 11). There are several ways to define coherence. The Poverty Guidelines of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) defines coherence as follow: '*the systematic promotion of mutually reinforcing policies across government departments and agencies creating synergies towards achieving the defined objective*'. In general, it is believed that peace and stability operations will be more effective and efficient when increased coherence among the different actors is present. There is thus an assumed cause-effect relationship between coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability (De Coning and Friis 2011, 250). The greater coherence is achieved among the different actors involved, the more meaningful, effective and sustainable the impact is likely to be (Ibid. 249). The level of coherence can be pursued among a wide range of actors and differs for each actor involved. It can also be pursued across various dimensions and at various levels (Ibid. 250). This means that the level of coherence may be different at the operational level than at strategic level. The levels, dimensions and actors often get mixed up and cause confusion (Ibid). To eliminate this confusion, different attempts have been made to analyse coherence in the CA. In order to be able to map and analyse the level of coherence within the three approaches, this research study uses a framework developed by Van der Lijn (2011), based on the matrix of De Coning and Friis (2011). In this framework six levels of coherence along with the many factors that may influence the degree of coherence are distinguished. This framework is useful because it allows a more precise

categorisation and mapping of the different forms of coherence within comprehensive missions, making it more measurable and comparable. Furthermore, the framework embraces the fact that for the different factors, different degrees of coherence are possible. Namely, today's comprehensive missions have a multilevel and multi-actor character of interaction (Van der Lijn 2011, 28).

The six levels of coherence are ranging from unity, integration, cooperation, coordination, and coexistence to competition (Van der Lijn 2011, 28). Actors are united when they voluntarily agree to establish a unified structure and undertake joint action directed by a unified leadership and command arrangement. This level of coherence requires an agreed strategic vision and a unified organisational structure. However, in practice, such a high level of coherence between independent actors is rare. Actors are integrated when they seek ways to integrate their approaches and activities without giving up their autonomous independent character. Thus, individual agencies undertake joint assessments, joint planning and some degree of joint implementation and monitoring, but they use their own resources and organisational means. When actors cooperate, they have complementary and/or overlapping mandates that allow them to choose to cooperate, including joint or collaborative action. When actors coordinate, they are aimed at sharing information with a view to avoid conflict, duplication or overlap. In doing so, they try to reach greater overall coherence between the independent actors. The difference between coordination and cooperation is that coordination results in independent separate action, while cooperation results in joint action. Coexistence describes the relationship between actors that are forced to interact but that have minimal interests concerning coordination with other actors. When actors compete they have competing values, visions and strategies. In addition, the framework provides for a range of factors, such as actions, planning, identities and information sharing, that may influence the degree of coherence. For example, when information is shared, the level of coherence lies between united and coordination, while at the same time, when actions are implemented separated, the level of coherence lies between coexistence and compete.

The degree of coherence that can be achieved can vary for the type of organisational interaction. The four different types of organisational interaction are: intra-agency, whole-of-government, inter-agency and internal-external (De Coning and Friis 2011, 253). Intra-agency coherence is consistency among policies and actions of a single agency. Whole-of-government coherence is consistency among

policies and actions of different departments within the same government. Coherence is regarded as inter-agency when it deals with the policies and actions of various international actors in a given country context. The fourth level of coherence is the internal-external, which encompasses the consistency between and among the policies of the various international and local actors in a give country (Ibid). As this research study focuses on the cooperation between NGOs and the government, the potential differences are situated in the internal-external of coherence. However, because Afghan NGOs are local organisations, the inter-agency element seems to be relevant as well. The coherence framework developed by Van der Lijn, based on the matrix of Coning and Friis is presented in Figure 1. It needs to be stressed here that coherence never fits solely at one or another level.

Figure 1: Coherence framework

	United	Integrated	Cooperate	Coordinate	Coexist	Compete	levels
Organisational structure	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Strat Oper
Actions	Joint	Joint or collaborative	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Ad hoc pragmatic	Competing	Oper
Interests, visions, aims and objectives	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Some similarity	Separate	Competing	Strat Oper
Mandate	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Different	Different	Competing	Strat.
Campaign plan	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Different	Different	Competing	Oper.
Leadership and command	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Different	Different	Different	Different	Strat Oper
Planning	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Strat Oper
Assessments	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Oper
Implementation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Competing	Strat. Oper
Monitoring and evaluation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Separate	Stra Oper
Identities	Joint	Individual	Individual	Individual	Separate	Competing	Strat Oper
Decisions on resources and organisation means	Joint	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Strat Oper
Information	Joint gathering	Sharing	Sharing	Sharing	Certain amount sh.	No sharing/spreading	Strat Oper

2.3 DILEMMAS AND DIFFERENCES

One of the purposes of this research study is to examine whether the three approaches result in a different outcome for dealing with the dilemmas and differences in the CA. A dilemma is a tension between strengths and weaknesses (Van der Ark 2010, 63). When an organisation experiences tension, it reports both advantages and disadvantages on a given situation. A difference is described as a tension between two or more entities. For example, two actors differ from each other when they have distinguishing characteristics or distinctive qualities. However, a difference does not necessarily lead into a dilemma. When it comes to the implementation of a comprehensive effort, the multitude of objectives, strategies and approaches are often perceived as contradicting each other, causing tension between the actors involved. To make progress towards a CA, it is, therefore, important to be aware of the challenges that may result from these dilemmas and differences.

In their research, Friis and Jarmyr (2008, 8-9) provide for a whole range of potential obstacles. Security, funding and local ownership are all three examples of potential obstacles elaborated in their research study. Security may be an obstacle in a CA as humanitarian actors are very concerned with keeping their humanitarian space. The freedom to work in a neutral and impartial way is very important for these organisations, which may require distance to the other actors in the field. Funding is another obstacle in a CA. Many development and humanitarian organisations are competing for funding from the same donors. In this way, funding may create tension between the organisations and donors. Local ownership may also be an obstacle in a CA. It is the question whether local ownership can be accomplished if the purpose of the CA is to achieve the mission objectives as effectively and fast as possible. However, these three obstacles are just a few examples of the list provided in the research, which is according to the authors by no means exhaustive.

Especially the first and third example of obstacles, security and local ownership, appear to be frequently cited dilemmas in literature concerning the CA. A study conducted for IRSEM (Institut de Recherche Stratégique de l'Ecole Militaire), found that the neutrality and independence dilemma and the empowerment dilemma, are among others, important obstacles in a CA that need to be better identified. For example, development and humanitarian actors need to work in a neutral way, whereas the political and security challenges of a CA are often linked to commitments

during the conflict, which are outside of strict neutrality (Wendling 2010, 91). The objectives of the different actors are, therefore, not always to reconcile. If development becomes a political or security instrument, this goes beyond the humanitarian principles, which creates difficulties for the foundation of their actions (Ibid).

Next to the dilemmas, differences between the different actors involved may also make a high degree of coherence difficult. There are some distinguished characteristics between the different actors that define the limits in pursuing coherence. Friis and De Coning (2011) took a closer look at some of the limitations of coherence. Two examples of these limitations are the difference in long-term impact vs. short-term impact and the conflicting values, principles and mandates (Friis and De Coning 2011, 16).

A lot of research has been conducted into all the challenges involved in a CA. In order to be able to examine how the three approaches have dealt with the dilemmas and differences in a CA, this research study has used the report about the Dutch 3D approach in Uruzgan by Van der Lijn (2011). This report is useful because it sets out already a list of both dilemmas and differences that may occur in a CA from a Dutch perspective. This makes it interesting to look at these dilemmas and differences in a comparative way. Moreover, it allows for a more detailed description of the identity of these dilemmas and differences, which makes it easier to look how the different approaches have dealt with it. The dilemmas and differences, provided by Van der Lijn (2011), are elaborated below.

2.3.1 DILEMMAS

1) The CA is directed towards local ownership, while on the other hand the initial military focus in a CA decreases responsibility and ownership of the Afghans.

The first dilemma is that, while on the one hand a CA is directed towards local ownership, on the other hand the initial military focus in a CA decreases responsibility and local ownership (Van der Lijn 2011, 70) With regard to conflict transformation, the importance of local actors has been increasingly acknowledged. Development cooperation recognises the importance of local ownership and tries to involve the whole society in peacebuilding activities. However, because the military are dominant during the first stages of deployment, the CA is initiated from a military

perspective (Ibid. 58). When a peace process is led by a military intervention from outside, responsibility and local ownership is not as much included (Ibid.).

2) The CA is driven nationally which allows countries to focus effectively, while on the other hand: the more integration takes place at a national level in the countries providing troops, the more difficult integration and coordination at the regional level in the host nation becomes.

The second dilemma that has arisen within the CA concerns the proportions of integration at national and international level. Namely, the more integration at national level in the countries providing troops, the less integration at international level (Van der Lijn 2011, 71). Despite of the general ISAF mission in Afghanistan, and the integration at the Kabul and Regional Command South level, integration at the operational level remains difficult. Within the ISAF mission, the provinces of Afghanistan are divided among different lead nations, each with their own goals, strengths and weaknesses. Each lead nation has its own CA, each different and unique (Van der Lijn 2011, 57). This makes implementation of a combined strategy more difficult (Ibid. 71). Moreover, the clustering of Afghan provinces allows tunnel vision. To a certain extent, lead nations look at Afghanistan through a straw and the main focus is on their own province (Ibid. 57).

3) The comprehensive approach strives for greater coherence, while on the other hand: the more coherence, the more coordination is needed, and therefore effort, time and funds.

The third dilemma is that, the more coherence is strived for between different actors in an approach, the more effort, time and funds are required for its coordination (Van der Lijn 2011, 55). Actors that are involved in an integrated approach always have different opinions and ideas as well as different interests and aims that have to be satisfied (Ibid.). These different ideas and interests among the actors, together with the cultural differences, make that a high degree of coordination is needed. Additionally, within an organisation, not all people can get along and have the ability to work well together (Ibid.). As a result, in order to keep all integrated actors on board, some actors need to be convinced of certain parts of a strategy, whilst other parts need to be sacrificed. To coordinate these different actors within an integrated approach, effort, time and funds is needed, which sometimes are not available.

4) The sustainability of the comprehensive approach, which is supposed to have a long time horizon, is dependent on short-term political will for the deployment of military forces.

The fourth and last dilemma that is relevant for this research is about the sustainability of the CA. In conflict situations, a CA requires a long-term perspective in terms of sustained military deployment and development activities for at least ten years (Van der Lijn 2011, 71). The time-horizon of development goes up to 20 to 50 years, whilst the presence of the military is much shorter. This short presence of the military depends partly on the short-term political will. When the military mission comes to an end, after the transition of 2014, further development of Afghanistan will be dependent on the work of local and international organisations such as NGOs, trainers and Afghan ownership. However, if a CA depends too heavily on the military presence and the political dimension of that particular country, the whole approach, including development, is endangered once the military are withdrawn (Van der Lijn 2011, 60). This means that if the parliaments of the countries providing the troops decide to end the military mission, the whole mission is at risk. As result, in a CA the political dimension has an influential position regarding development assistance, which becomes more vulnerable to political fads (Ibid).

2.3.2 Differences

1) Different actors have different time horizons.

The different actors in the CA have various time horizons, that is the military have a shorter time horizon than the development approach. Although military personnel is aware of the long-term needs within the comprehensive approach, their tasks, organisational structure and the political decisions with regard to them are limited to short-term planning (Van der Lijn 2011, 54). This means that, when in 2014 the transition of the ISAF mission is completed and international military personal have left, the role of NGOs increases. Different issues and perspectives result as a consequence of the different time horizons. From a military perspective, sometimes short-time activities are needed for long-term development (Ibid). Sometimes the military must clear the area before the development actor can do its work safely (Ibid). From a development perspective, conflicts are the result of underlying

problems concerning development issues (Ibid). It is therefore that long-term development activities are necessary to resolve the conflict

2) The different actors have different capacities and speeds.

The different actors involved have different capacities and speeds. They are limited in their capacity, both at the strategic and operational level. For example, the military has more difficulties with providing security in places outside their ink spot, while development actors are less capable of doing heavy work. Moreover, the speed of the actors involved is different as well (Van der Lijn 2011, 54). They have difficulties with follow each other's time framework. For example, the diplomacy and development fields cannot follow a military planning framework since they depend on local capacity and therefore according to many military personnel operate too slow (Ibid). Namely, a lot of time would be needed for agreement with local stakeholders.

3) The development and defence approaches have different directions.

The development and defence approaches have different directions. From both a diplomacy and development perspective, the comprehensive approach is a top-down process (Van der Lijn 2011, 54). National programmes are implemented at the local level. In contrast, the military, starting from the concept of 'shape, clear, hold, build'. have a bottom-up approach with the aim to clear the area and provide security and build on the more local stabilisation needs (Ibid). However, differences in the direction of the approaches do not necessarily have to be negative since they can be complementary.

4) The development and defence approaches have different strategies.

The above-mentioned issues are an example for other differences between the different actors involved. The presence of these differences is a continuous process within the comprehensive approach. For example, the military tend to think in terms of effects that have to be reached, whilst diplomats and development workers tend to think in terms of processes that have to be started and continued (Van der Lijn 2011, 71). Additionally, the military tend to be directed at counterinsurgency, security and stability, whilst the development actor is more directed at development (Ibid). However, in practice, the line between the different 'Ds' is blurred. The figure below,

developed by Van der Lijn (2011), gives an overview of the different strategies between the development and defence approach.

Figure 2: Tendencies among military personnel and development workers

Military personnel	Development workers
Main focus on counterinsurgency, security and stability (consequences)	Main focus on development (causes)
Attention on insecure areas and the bad guys	Attention on less insecure areas and the good guys
Shorter term (6 months to 2 years)	Longer term (20 to 50 years)
Detailed planning	Embracing uncertainty
Bottom up (shape, clear, hold, build)	Top down (national programmes)
Aiming for effects	Aiming for processes
Greater belief in a 'makeable' society	Aiming for improving chaotic situations
Projects	Programmes
Initial ownership with intervening actor	Ownership with local population
Dependent on short-term political will	Long-term commitments

2.4 WHAT ARE NGOS?

In the past few decades, the impact and role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have increased significantly. Moreover, they have become an important player in peace and stabilisation operations. This has led to a wide diversity of Western and Non-Western NGOs that operate on various levels such as local, national or international, each with its own field of orientation. In order to understand the definition of NGOs, we first need to understand civil society because NGOs are an

element of this concept. Gramsci defines civil society as being located between “coercive relations of the state and the economic sphere of production” (Bebbington, Collison and Gray 2005, 322). Thus, according to this definition, civil society is the arena that lies between other elements of our social life. Civil society includes all kinds of associations and networks between the family and the state, except firms, which in turn are often called NGOs. To speak of a typical civil society organisation is next to impossible (Ibid. 323).

The term NGO was introduced to distinguish between the participation of (international) private organisations and the government of any particular country. There is no generally accepted definition of NGO's and many inconsistent descriptions of the concept exist. The definition of NGOs that seems to be most general and which is used for this research is devised by the United Nations. They describe a NGO as: “*Any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organised on a local, national or international level*” (Ibid. 324). Furthermore, NGOs are characterised as autonomous, non-profit making, self-governing and campaigning organisations with a focus on the well-being of others (Ibid. 325). But, the boundaries can be blurred. For example, some NGOs may in practice be identified with a political party; many NGOs generate their income from commercial activities or sometimes are even associated with political protest (Willetts 2002). Other NGOs, who have closer relations with the market, may be identified with a commercial enterprise. This identification with the business sector is applicable to the case of Afghanistan, in which many of the NGOs are very similar to business related organisations. As mentioned already, boundaries of NGOs can be blurred. Therefore, all NGOs that are applicable to the UN definition are included in the research.

There are different ways in which NGOs are structured. Various terms are used to refer to NGOs with a local character, including grass-roots organisations (GROs), community based organisations (CBOs), self-help organisations (SHOs) and self-help support organisations (SHPOs). In general, however, a NGO is a membership organisation, co-ordinated in a geographically defined hierarchy (Willetts 2002). In this model, individual people work in local groups, which coordinate in provinces often with headquarters in the capital of a country (Ibid.). These NGOs are national in character. NGOs with an international character (INGOs), are, as well as NGOs, defined as self-governing non-profit organisations. However, they operate on an international level to advance human rights, environmental protection,

humanitarian response and other public goods (Heyse, Nijhof and Ossewaarde 2008, 28). It is believed that particularly INGOs are in the position to put internationally concerned themes like AIDS, child labour and refugees on the global agenda (Ibid. 43). Examples of INGOs are Amnesty International, International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) and Médecins sans Frontières (MSF). For these INGOs, the human interest, rather than the nation-state, is the legitimating principle in a global order (Ibid. 43). This is based on a collective account of responsibility for the fate of victims. However, the legitimacy of INGOs depends not only on normative claims as mentioned above, but it is also expected that INGOs comply with international law, are cognitively capable of acting on behalf of the stated mission and are able to show the effectuation of their missions to their stakeholders (Ibid. 43). However, the term INGO is not used often and NGO generally covers both national and international NGOs. The use of the term NGO implies that its character can be, national or international, whilst references to the specific character of NGOs are used when the meaning is restricted to that level (Willetts 2002). For this research study, distinguish is made between local (Afghan), national (British, Danish and Dutch) and international NGOs (ICRC, Save the Children, BRAC, etc.).

2.4.1 NGOs in Afghanistan

“Two more aid workers were found murdered in Afghanistan, threatening the delivery of relief to the people in the war-torn country (...) The rising number of attacks targeted on humanitarian organisations in Afghanistan not only represents the poor security situation, it has also threatens the delivery of relief from aid agencies to people in need” (Or 2012).

More than 800 international and local NGOs work in Afghanistan on humanitarian reconstruction, development and peace building programs. However, in Afghanistan the two international military coalitions present, the U.S-led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and the NATO-led ISAF, have made relief and reconstruction a central part of their mission as well (Olson, 2006, 1). The fact that both are present in Afghanistan, working on recovery efforts after decades of war, let the question arise whether it is possible for an international peace enforcement operation and neutral humanitarian and development NGOs to work alongside each other.

The deep involvement of the international military present is associated with many challenges to NGO operations as well as challenges to their identity and self-

perceptions as independent and neutral providers of assistance to populations in crisis (Hofman 2007, 65). Security of staff is the number one challenge for all NGOs working in Afghanistan. Afghanistan has become the most dangerous country in the world for aid agencies. The Aid Worker Security Report 2011 shows that the major attacks against aid workers has taken place in Afghanistan (OCHA 2011). Moreover, the Afghan NGO Security Office documented 170 attacks on NGO workers in 2011, a rise of 20 percent compared to 2010. The above quote of Christian Aid emphasises the security situation in Afghanistan. However, Christian Aid is not the only NGO that has been victimised of attacks. In the last couple of years, many international NGOs pulled out of Afghanistan because of the security incidents. Many of them believe that the attacks on aid workers are due to the blurring of the lines between civilian and military actors. They argue that the use of 'hearts and minds' reconstruction projects and the PRTs have compromised the perceptions of humanitarian assistance as politically neutral and have led the population to see NGOs as part of the mission (Olson 2006, 13). For example, because PRTs undertake many of the same reconstruction activities as NGOs, NGO projects in the same areas can be perceived as political. However, some NGO personnel see the presence of the international military via PRTs as a pragmatic security umbrella that enables them to work in the area (Hofman 2007, 65). The second challenge is that most NGOs are concerned about the effectiveness of reconstruction and development projects undertaken by the military. According to NGOs, military reconstruction assistance is neither cost-effective, nor sustainable (BAAG & ENNA policy briefing 2011, 10). They argue that the allocation of aid is driven by political goals, rather than the needs of the population. When aid is viewed as an instrument in the larger political and military goal of stabilisation, these goals might guide the criteria used to decide aid beneficiaries and the models through which aid is delivered (Olson 2006, 16).

Given the above challenges, networks have emerged to coordinate policies and advocacy efforts on issues between civilian and military actors. ACBAR is the most active Afghan-based coordinating agency. It provides civil-military guidance with the intention of reducing risk of potentially compromising attitude that may further blur the line. In addition, it organises civil-military relations working groups, which are attended by donors, UN, NATO ISAF and Coalition representatives (BAAG & ENNA policy brief 2011, 5). BAAG is also very active on civil-military issues in Afghanistan. BAAG is an advocacy and networking organisation that compromises

27 major British and Irish aid agencies operating or supporting projects in Afghanistan. The UN has played a humanitarian coordinating role in Afghanistan as well. OCHA supports humanitarian and military actors through training and advocacy. It facilitates dialogues, interaction, information exchange, liaison structures and collaborative planning between both actors.

To conclude this chapter, one can say that the connection between the level of coherence and the CA has become of high importance in both theoretical and policy discourse. The CA should be understood in terms of increasingly complex international crisis management systems. In response, greater coherence between a wide range of actors involved in a CA has been tried to achieve in several ways. However, there are limits to how much coherence can be achieved, as a result of the multitude of objectives, strategies and approaches. These contradicting interests, in turn, may result in dilemmas and differences among the actors involved. The potential dilemmas and differences are situated especially in the internal-external level of coherence, between NGOs and the government.

3. THE BRITISH CASE IN AFGHANISTAN

This chapter will introduce the case of the British in Helmand. First, a general outline of the British approach is given, including an overview of the British Afghanistan strategy at the London level and the British approach in Helmand. Next, the way in which the British deal with NGOs in their CA is mapped, both at the strategic and operational level. Finally, an elaboration of how the British deal with the dilemmas and differences in their CA is given.

3.1 THE BRITISH APPROACH

After its efforts in the northern town of Mazar-e-Sjarif, in April 2006 the UK took over the U.S. PRT in Lashkargar and a number of other bases and assumed actual control of the Helmand province in southern Afghanistan as part of the plan to expand NATO's footprint in the country. The campaign in Afghanistan has received a lot of criticism as result of the British failure in Basra, Iraq. Critics has argued that just as the lack of political will, resources and strategy had undercut the military operation in Iraq, so it is held that the same dysfunctional dynamic has been at play in Afghanistan (Farrell and Gordon 2009, 666). Also, bringing security and development in Helmand has been a challenge because of the rejection of the state, tribal complexity, deficits in governance and major influence of the Taliban in this province (Gordon 2010, 372). It was, therefore, that before 2006 this area was a no-go for both ISAF and the Afghan government. The declared aim of the British government to contribute to the ISAF mission in Helmand is a stable, secure, democratic and self-sustaining Afghanistan, free from terrorism (Hague 2012).

3.1.1 From UK Joint Plan for Helmand to Helmand Roadmap

The planning of the British engagement in Afghanistan had begun in 2005 with the Cabinet Office establishing, following pressure from the Ministry of Defence (MOD), the Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit (renamed the Stabilisation Unit in 2007) (PCRU) to lead inter-departmental planning for a strategic framework which resulted in the 'UK Joint Plan for Helmand'. The plan was the original UK strategy in Afghanistan and covered the period from 2006 until 2007. It focused on bringing

security and development to the capital of Helmand, Lashkargar, and was intended to reflect the complex Afghan policy space, working on security, governance, counter-narcotics and development (Gordon 2010, 372). In addition, the UK Joint Plan for Helmand was also intended to bring together the Department for International Development (DFID), the Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the MOD to strive for greater coherence. DFID's contribution to the British approach in Helmand was shaped by the assumption that Afghanistan was initially a post-conflict state with an emerging government that required international support in developing a viable state (Woodward 2010, 20). The role MOD has played in Helmand is twofold: providing military input as well as training and monitoring the Afghan National Army (ANA). The FCO has dealt with the delivery of the civilian aspects of stabilisation as well as with the responsibility for aspects such as governance and the rule of law (Gordon 2010, 373).

Planning the British strategy for Afghanistan was more complex than expected. The planning phase was derailed almost from the outset (British official 1, June 2012). In addition, there was little time allocated for this phase and the planners had little knowledge of the situation in Helmand. The fact that there was so little knowledge and understanding of the Afghanistan situation in the south was compounded by three factors. The first factor was the lack of significant ISAF presence in Helmand, which led to little overt military action by the Taliban at the time (Farrell 2010, 9). Due to the lack of ISAF presence in Helmand, the British planning team underestimated the threat facing the British troops (task force). The second factor was the absence of Afghan and international NGOs, and other CSOs in Helmand, organisations that would otherwise have been expected to be a major source of information (British official 1, June 2012). The third factor was Whitehall's focus on Iraq that deflected the available resources for the planning phase in Helmand (British official 1, June 2012). This, in turn, further reduced the possibility for local engagement and the information that was necessary to develop more detailed assessment planning. All together, the situation on the ground was far worse than expected with a lot of resistance from the Taliban and little military capacity to establish security in the whole of Helmand. Because of the lack of recourses available at the Embassy in Kabul and the dangerous situation in the Helmand PRT, most of the planning was compelled done in London (British official 1, June 2012). Due to the

fact that planning happened more or less at the high level in London, learning the local context happened in a later stage.

From 2006-2007, the British military adjusted from a peacekeeping role to a counterinsurgency role (COIN), resulting in the military taken the lead in development and reconstruction projects with the aim to defeat insurgency (Woodward 2010, 12). British commanders began to focus on more effectively developing the capabilities and techniques for COIN (Farrell and Gordon 2009, 672). At the same time, the British had come to the conclusion that their strategy was not likely to work. Namely, military actions were too activist and often had too narrow military objectives (Schmidt 2009:15, 29). In addition, it did not include a plan for the implementation of civilian activities. The Stabilisation Unit (SU) was, therefore, asked to undertake an analysis of the situation and come up with recommendations. It was on this basis that the new Helmand Roadmap was developed. The new bottom-up strategy coincided with a change of the UK Prime Minister and renewed emphasis Whitehall on Afghanistan, creating space for a policy refresh (Farrell and Gordon 2009, 672). The basic assumption behind the Helmand Roadmap is that the insurgency is less problematic than the absence of an effective government (Schmidt 2009:15, 29). This means that building governance takes precedence over anything else, and that military actions and civilian activities are seen as means to the end of building governance, and not as ends in themselves (Ibid). The Roadmap sets out a broad range of security, counternarcotics, development and governance objectives and has resulted in a more joint civil-military plan. Following the publication of the Helmand Road Map, what you see is a merger of military COIN operations and a longer-term CA reconstruction and development plan (Woodward 2010, 21).

3.1.3 The UK approach at operational level

In the UK approach, cross government efforts are linked in what the MOD has labeled as a comprehensive or integrated approach. This means that the work of different agencies, departments and units is combined in order to reach a common goal. However, since it has been initially an offshoot of the “joined up government” agenda, it always has been more a government approach in which integrating government departments such as MOD, FCO and DFID comes before integrating local and international organisations, such as NGOs (British official 2, June 2012). In the beginning, the British NGOs were furious of this concept. They argued that the

CA would be a too military approach due to the autonomous character of MOD (Academic 1, June 2012). In fact, any CA or integrated mission (the UN equivalent) would risk their neutral and independent status, what is key to maintaining humanitarian space (Ibid). This, in turn, would eventually lead to the militarisation of aid making it difficult to access all communities that are affected by conflict. The UK experience of operationalizing the CA in Helmand has been testimony to the difficulties involved in the negative attitude of British NGOs against the CA concept and developing a common idea about what the mission means and what its goals are among the actors involved.

The British engagement in Helmand has been organised with the Task Force Helmand (TFH). Two of the primary components of the TFH have been the British battle group (BG) and the PRT, responsible for initiating reconstruction and development in the province. The TFH has been led by the military and has consisted of a large amount of British troops along with a smaller amount of Danish and Estonian troops (Gordon 2010, 373). Initially, the TFH was ordered to establish a British center of operations at Camp Bastion and to secure a triangle of territory between Lashkargar and Gereshk (King 2012, 315). Within this so-called 'ink-spot' strategy, territory under control is to be enlarged step by step and authorities to be transferred to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). However, the British troops were almost immediately upon deploying to Helmand in 2006 deflected from their officially designated task of securing Lashkargar. President Karzai placed pressure on General Richards to re-establish control, making British commanders aware that he could lose the Presidency if northern districts of Helmand were to fall, and wanted him to bring a footprint in the whole of Helmand (Dutch official 1 and 2, July 2012). Despite having little more than a battle group available, the UK had to deploy its troops into Sangin, Now Zad and Musa Oaleh (Dutch official 2, July 2012). By the end of 2007 the presence of the British forces in Afghanistan almost doubled. This resulted in a lot of small units that did not have the power and capacity to control the area, which made them an easier target for the Taliban. With insufficient troops to deter Taliban attacks, British weakness encouraged direct Taliban assaults (Farrel and Gordon 2009, 671). Whilst always having in mind of being effective at COIN, the resulting collateral damage made the British presence unpopular with the civilian population.

The British tactics adapted slowly over the next years. A steadily number of British troops has enabled commanders to hold more territory in the different district centers while also retaining a greater element of maneuver (Gordon 2011, 37). The PRT's civilian staff also grew. Towards the end of 2008, the Helmand PRT has been merged into a combined Civilian-Military Mission in Helmand (CMHM), which has been led by a civilian advisor with staff from the FCO, DFID and the Stabilisation Unit (SU). The SU is an interdepartmental agency jointly owned by DFID, FCO and MOD with the aim to provide a broader forum for the coordination between the government departments. However, at the same time, the military have had a chunk of responsibility and authority within the PRT. This imbalance between the civilian and military actors has resulted in tension between the DFID and MOD departments on the ground.

In the British approach, coherence has been sought between the MOD, the FCO and to a lesser extent DFID. However, within the context of the British mission in Helmand, involvement has been broader. The demands for cooperation with other institutions in the Helmand province have been high. International organisations and partner countries, such as Denmark and the US, also have played a role within the British approach for Helmand. CSOs in Helmand, such as British NGOs have been limited in number due to the dangerous security situation there. Only one British NGO, Mercy Corps, has been capable of working in the Helmand province. Contact has taken place between the British NGO and the British mission. In addition, international NGOs in the province have been limited as well. Only few international NGOs have operated in Helmand and, with the exception of the Bangladesh Rehabilitation Committee (BRAC), most have been uncomfortable collaborating with the PRT. Most engagement of international NGOs with the military has been only in a way that does not blur the lines between them. The absence of NGOs suggests that if humanitarian space had contracted, it had done so in Helmand prior to the British deployment (Gordon 2010, 377). The lack of NGOs in Helmand has led the British approach to rely on the collaboration with other partner organisations, mainly within the Afghan environment. The British have collaborated with Afghan CSOs and local contractors. Likewise, the British have collaborated with the Afghan National Security forces (ANSF) and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA). All have been, to a certain degree, part of this broader British CA.

3.2 COHERENCE AT STRATEGIC LEVEL

Prior to the actual British deployment in Helmand, MOD, FCO and DFID started to meet with and talk to each other in London, in which, to a certain amount, NGOs also were invited for. These consultations have been held under the umbrella of the SU at least a few times a year. However, since MOD, FCO and DFID personnel within the SU have been physically located in the same building (DFID), SU personnel do see each other every day. Moreover, coherence has been sought between NGOs and the military by means of an organisational structure called the NGO-Military Contact Group (NMCG). This contact group aims to improve and strengthen the communication and coordination between the British military, the British government and NGOs. It has facilitated education and training opportunities between the military and humanitarian actors (Schmidt 2009:15, 40). The weakness of this setup is its ad hoc nature. It has been initiated by the British Red Cross and composed of representatives from several British NGOs, the International Red Cross Committee (IRCC) and Red Cross Movement, British military, MOD, DFID and FCO. Finally, NGO members of the British and Irish Agencies Afghanistan Group (BAAG) have met occasionally to discuss and exchange experiences from involvement in Afghanistan. BAAG has had substantial contact with the MOD and other government departments on the British CA. At the strategic level, two main phases of the British government strategy to approach NGOs can be distinguished.

3.2.1 First phase

During the first phase, the planning phase, DFID initially attempted to organise sensitive, discreet consultations with British NGOs (and others) who were operational in Helmand. During these consultations, DFID asked questions like: what are you doing in Helmand? Is there any way that DFID can support your organisation? And how can we seek to de-conflict what NGOs are doing and what the military and PRT will do (NGO representative 14, July 2012). This was much appreciated and according to many British NGOs a good approach. Namely, British NGOs did not want to be confronted with “being part of the combat team” as they, in general, do not see themselves as integrated in the British CA. Nevertheless, the number of British NGOs operational in Helmand was limited to Mercy Corps, and according to BAAG, Action Aid and Mercy Corps, British NGOs were not given sufficient

opportunity to be involved in the planning of the British CA. There was little engagement with NGOs in the planning phase of the CA outside the MOD's Defence Academy (British NGO representative 1, June 2012). At the same time, DFID bilaterally sought to attract NGOs to come in and participate in Helmand, as it was perceived during the planning that there was a lack of both Afghan and international NGOs working there (NGO representative 14, July 2012). This was done by providing DFID funding for NGOs who were already implementing or willing to implement projects in Helmand. The increasing funds of DFID on Helmand reduced the amount of British funding available for NGOs working elsewhere in Afghanistan (NGO representative 12, June 2012). It was difficult to receive DFID funding for the British NGOs that decided to not come to Helmand. Still, many British NGO members of BAAG decided not to go and work in Helmand, since they had no local partners in the province and no capacity or intentions to establish themselves there. Security was an important issue in this choice, just as the fear of blurring lines between the military and civilian actors. At the same time there were doubts about the extent to which the need for development is the highest in Helmand (NGO representative 9, June 2012).

Not long after the British deployment in Helmand, the military started to get pulled into combat operations to "shape, clear, hold, build", a bottom-up approach in which the starting point is the area to be cleared and providing security to the community. At this point both the military and MOD officials, started to complain about DFID and NGOs failing to come in after the military operations to assist the "build" stage (NGO representative 14, June 2012). But DFID lacked ability to send staff to Helmand due to the inherent security threat and the sense that the environment was not conducive to development work (Farrell and Gordon 2009, 671-672). This same reason, together with the different mandates and objectives between NGOs and the British mission, made it for most British NGO members of BAAG difficult to go and work in Helmand. As a result, some within the military perceived a need for quick impact (QIP) projects that could win the "hearts and minds" of the local community by providing security and service delivery in a short term. Various people within the military started to brief journalists and get coverage of this view in the UK, which generated a lot of political pressure at Whitehall level (NGO representative 14, July 2012). This, in turn, worsened tension at the strategic level, in London, between the different involved government departments, especially between DFID and MOD.

3.2.2 Second phase

The second phase involved a second attempt to develop a cross-departmental plan in Whitehall, which de-emphasised the QIP approach and promoted governance-led stabilisation (NGO representative 14, July 2012). It reflected an attempt to shift away from the short-time approach towards capacity building of Afghan authorities at sub-national level to provide the necessary services for the local community in the province linked to central government national development strategies. Most important for this cross-development plan was to seek coherence between the different government departments. Integrating MOD, FCO and DFID at Whitehall level has been always more a priority than organising meetings with non-governmental organisations. In the view of Whitehall, notably in the view of MOD, the British CA reflects a whole-of-government approach in which NGOs only are contributing at the operational level, to cover the development part (Military 1 & British official 1 June 2012). Within the British approach, the NGO (local, national and international) involvement has been more towards the operational level than towards the strategic level. NGOs have been treated by the British government as 'contractors' rather than organisations to be involved in decision-making (British NGO representative 2, May 2012). Namely, British NGOs have not been included in important decision-making in London, such as determining the framework within which the tasks for Helmand are carried out. All assessment work has been done by the different government departments separately. Moreover, according to the British government, it neither has worked together with British NGOs on the monitoring and evaluation with regard to the mission in Helmand (British official 1, June 2012). In the case of the British CA, a lot of monitoring, evaluation and development of lessons learned has been done by the SU. It has facilitated a systematic and joined-up approach to analysis, monitoring, evaluation, lessons learned and feedback (Schmidt 2009:15, 63). In addition, monitors from outside have been hired at moments when the security situation was too dangerous (British officer 2, June 2012).

DFID has arranged consultations in London between the British government and British NGOs every three months regarding exchange information, discussions and feedback on the situation in Helmand (NGO representative 10, June 2012). Because of the autonomous character of the MOD, these consultations have consisted mainly of DFID staff, NGOs and to lesser extent civil servants of MFA and FCO. The MOD has felt to a certain extent that it could cover reconstruction and development as

well and therefore it has been mainly DFID that has tried to get the British NGOs on board. However, despite of the effort made by DFID to arrange these consultations, it has had much smaller input within the British approach than the MOD (British NGO representative 4, June 2012). Namely, instead that DFID's political and development objectives have shaped the work of the military, it has been the other way around (Academic 1, June 2012). In addition, according a British NGO member of BAAG, the British CA has placed too much emphasis on defence, with diplomacy and development being subordinated (British NGO representative 1, May 2012).

British NGO members of BAAG argue that the British government has not been effective in including NGOs in meetings and consultations at the strategic level. Many of the "smaller" British NGOs argue that there has not been any formal communication from the British government setting out the adoption of this approach. In addition, they have never been invited for consultations in London with regard to the mission in Helmand. Most of the contact between the British government and British NGOs has been through the main NGOs, such as Mercy Corps, and through the membership of various coalition groups, such as the NMCG and BAAG. Their understanding of the British CA has been based simply on being aware of policy developments due to their membership of these coalitions groups. The British NGOs that have been invited for the consultations also have argued that the British government has not effectively communicated what it understands by the term CA. The absence of this communication may reflect the lack of shared understanding between the different government departments on the CA (British NGO representatives 3 and 4, June 2012) Both the invited and non-invited British NGOs demonstrate that they want more involvement in consultations, dialogues and coordination with the British government.¹ The British government has been familiar with the need of British NGOs for more involvement at the strategic level, but has not shared it (British official 1, June 2012). Action Aid argues that there should be regular meetings with the British government at strategic level so that NGOs could share their local knowledge and provide feedback. Namely, NGOs have a good understanding of the Afghan people as most of these NGOs work in Afghanistan already for a long time. According to Care International, the British government should invest in NGO capacities and mechanisms to enable effective and appropriate NGO engagement in

¹ Action Aid, AfghanAid, Tearfund, Muslimhands, Mercy Corps, Care International UK, and BAAG.

policy dialogues on issues relating the CA and programmatic learning on effective NGO approaches to civil-military interaction at the operational level. It should not, however, seek to integrate NGOs into its CA framework, but rather respect the independent character of CSOs.

In figure 3, the different levels of coherence between the British mission and British NGOs at the strategic level are presented. In order to map this level of coherence, eight interviews with British NGOs (all member organisations of BAAG) were conducted, four interviews with British officials and two with British military personnel. The framework describes the level of coherence as follows. The level of coherence depends on a range of factors such as the mandate, planning, assessments, identities, and information sharing. For example, in the above paragraph it became clear that monitoring and evaluation has been done by the British mission and British NGOs separately. This means that the level of coherence for monitoring and evaluation lies between *coexistence* and *compete*. At the same time, approaches and identities have remained different. This means that the level of coherence for identities lies between *integrated* and *coordination*. By taking all the given answers together, one is able to estimate the level of coherence for each factor. This means that the overall level of coherence between British NGOs and the British mission at the strategic level varies between *cooperation* and *compete*. Within these levels of coherence, the interviewees scored most at the *coexistence* level of coherence. This means that at the strategic level coherence between British NGOs and the British mission can be described as mainly *coexistence*.

Figure 3: Different levels of coherence between the British mission and British NGOs at the strategic level

	United	Integrated	Cooperate	Coordinate	Coexist	Compete	levels
Organisational structure	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Strat.
Interests, visions, aims and objectives	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Some similarity	Separate	Competing	Strat
Mandate	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Different	different	Competing	Strat
Leadership and command	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Different	Different	Different	Different	Strat
Planning	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Strat
Assessments	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Strat
Implementation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Competing	Strat.
Monitoring and evaluation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Separate	Strat.
Identities	Joint	Individual	Individual	Individual	Separate	Competing	Strat
Decisions on resources and organisation means	Joint	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Strat
Information	Joint gathering	Sharing	Sharing	Sharing	Certain amount sh.	No sharing/spreading	Strat

3.3 COHERENCE AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL

At the operational level cooperation between the British mission and NGOs has taken a different form. Initially contact between the mission and NGOs in the field has been limited because of the risk of losing their independence and neutrality and becoming a target for insurgents. However, this does not mean that contact between them has been impossible. Direct contacts and coordination has existed between the few NGOs that have been present in Helmand and the British mission. In fact, British state actors and NGOs, local, national and international, have had a more close relationship at the operational level rather than at the strategic level. For example, the British government had only little knowledge and understanding of the Afghan situation in the south. It therefore had to learn the local context before deployment of the mission.

However, during the planning phase it became clear that there was a lack of NGOs working in Helmand, organisations that would otherwise have been expected to be a major source of information. Only Mercy Corps, some small Afghan NGOs and a few international NGOs were present at that time. This meant that the British government had to make use of resources available in other southern provinces as well. CSOs working in Helmand, but also outside Helmand, were approached and invited for meetings with British state actors in Kabul. During this phase, interviews were conducted and consultations were held in which Afghan, national and international NGOs were very helpful (UK official 1, June 2012). They could tell what was important to address and what not.

Most Afghan, national and international NGOs have preferred that regular information exchanges and civil-military coordination in the field be done under the auspices of a coordination body like ACBAR or UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA). The nature, complexity and intensity of the ongoing conflict, the large variety of actors present, and the extensive presence of armed forces across the country, has made Afghanistan a challenging place to work for the NGO community (Afghan NGO representative 4, May 2012). In this context, interaction between the military and NGOs has been unavoidable. For this reason, ACBAR has tried to provide civil-military guidance with the intention of reducing risk of potentially compromising attitude that may further blur the line. ACBAR used to be the main point of interface between the NGO community and the international military. However, since the establishment of OCHA in Afghanistan in 2009, ACBAR does no longer play a role on regular bases. It still has facilitated with the military if it is on policy of advocacy issues that are not covered by OCHA. In addition, ACBAR has focused on information to its members and coordination of activities at the national and regional levels. OCHA has supported humanitarian and military actors through training and advocacy. It has facilitated dialogues, interaction, information exchange, liaison structures and collaborative planning between both actors. These meetings have taken place at the operational level in Kabul. However, in the context of Afghanistan, most of these humanitarian actors have tended to distance themselves from military and political actors. All of the function areas of OCHA (dialogue, interaction, training and advocacy) are minimised to the minimum in Afghanistan (OCHA, July 2012). For example, joint training with civilian and military actors has not been possible because of the perception of the local

community. In Afghanistan, the local community perceives the international forces as occupant instead of protector (Ibid). Research has found that there were negative impacts of single province selection on British reputation and community confidence and support (Thompson 2012, 20). However, OCHA has claimed to be very effective. Even in a conflict context as Afghanistan, OCHA tries to seek a minimum relationship of coexistence between military and civilian actors. In this case, both actors are not fully integrated but not doing on another harm either.

3.3.1 British NGOs

Most British NGOs decided not to go and work in Helmand, since they had no local partners in the province and no capacity or intentions to establish themselves there. Security was an important issue in this choice, just as the fear of blurring lines between the military and civilian actors. Afghan Connection, a small British NGO, decided not to implement programs in Helmand for this same reason. Because Afghan Connection has not been funded by DFID, it has depended on the capacity of other donors, such as SCA (Swedish Committee for Afghanistan) and private funding. Nevertheless, the British NGO has felt affiliation with the Helmand province and thus has tried to keep contact with the British PRT in several ways. For example, the British PRT helped Afghan Connection with transporting their equipment from England to Afghanistan. Furthermore, Afghan Connection has sent cricket kits to the Helmand PRT so that the military could share it with the Afghan children there. Namely, the British NGO claims that cricket provides a vital tool for peace. Finally, Afghan Connection and the PRT have had contact by mail to discuss the situation in Afghanistan. The British NGO has received letters about the experiences of British soldiers so that it could read the letters to English children at schools, to share the experiences of the British presence in Helmand.

Save the Children UK and Care International UK did have a local partner in Helmand in the past, but still decided not to implement programs directly in the province. According to Care International UK, the CA has appeared to remain a military-dominated agenda. At the operational level, experience of military operations in Afghanistan has suggested that the British forces will continue to assert a military pre-eminence in hostile environments in which they conduct combat operations. This partly reflects the imbalanced spread of resources between military and civilian actors involved. Such an approach threatens the space for NGOs to deliver independent,

neutral and impartial humanitarian assistance. At the same time, the discussion between NGOs and the mission on the security issue was another important criterion in the choice not to implement programs in Helmand. Namely, while the military thought that the aim of these discussions was to look to the possibilities of working together in the field, the NGOs thought it was to make sure they were independent from the military and politics (Academic 1, June 2012). Military personnel often argue that they have to clear the area before it is possible for NGOs to come in for implementing projects (Military 1, June 2012). Besides, they argue that NGOs are not very sustainable, because they do not have the right capacity for large-scale delivery and as soon as the situation gets too dangerous they will leave (Military 1, June 2012). On the other hand, NGOs argue that conflict has its origins in underdevelopment and thus providing development addresses the root causes of conflict (NGO representative 5, June 2012). In order to assist, they do not need military protection, because their access is dependent on the acceptance of the local communities (NGO representative 4, May 2012). Some NGOs claim that the security sector has not improved and that the presence of the international forces makes the situation more dangerous (NGO representative 9, June 2012).

Mercy Corps has worked in Helmand already a long time before the British deployment. Therefore, its presence in the province cannot be directly related to the British mission. However, contact has taken place between Mercy Corps and the mission. The organisation has attended meetings in the field, organised by DFID, to exchange information about security and/or development activities, discuss concerns and provide feedback (British official 2, June 2012). However, no information has been discussed that could be perceived as alignment or intelligence sharing. Moreover, Mercy Corps has encouraged that military organisations, as part of seeking to develop and apply the CA, have entered into greater dialogue with NGOs. It therefore has done advocacy work with the military concerning the British CA. But because close cooperation with the military is dangerous for NGOs in Helmand, meetings with the military have taken place at a neutral site, like Kabul. Only when necessary, the NGO can engage in a dialogue with the military in the field. Yet, according to the British NGO, combining the mandates and objectives of military and humanitarian and development actors may have severe consequences, and considerably dangerous for the local community. For example, the use of PRTs in Afghanistan to provide development assistance has blurred the lines between military

and humanitarian and development actors, increasing risks to NGO personnel operating in the field. The British NGO therefore has provided for a protocol in terms of security. This protocol outlines how Mercy Corps engages with the military and donor personnel based at military facilities in Afghanistan. Mercy Corps does not accept direct funding from ISAF or the PRT, including MOD and SU funding. It does, however, accept direct DFID funding. Mercy Corps does not work directly with ISAF, the PRT or the Afghan National Security forces (ANSF) to implement or jointly implement relief and development activities. However, Mercy Corps may work indirectly with the PRT when it does accept assignments for tasks and activities that involve any PRT activity. It also considers requests and suggestions from the PRT for the implementation of projects. These requests must be subjected to the application of community and project selection criteria as outlined in the program proposal. According to a British military, Mercy Corps has taken a pragmatic position and has accepted funds related to the context of the mission (British military 2, June 2012). Mercy Corps has evaluated its projects in the Helmand province. However, according to the British NGO, evaluation and monitoring has been practiced independently from the British mission and only to show progress to its donor.

In figure 4, the level of coherence between the British mission and Mercy Corps at the operational level is presented. In order to map this level of coherence, one interview with Mercy Corps was conducted, four interviews with British officials and two with British military personnel. By taking all the given answers together, one is able to estimate the level of coherence for each factor, ranging from organisational structure to information sharing. This means that the level of coherence between Mercy Corps and the British mission at the operational level varies between *integrated* and *compete*. However, for the range of factors, the interviewees scored most at the *coordinated* level of coherence. This means that at the operational level coherence between Mercy Corps and the British mission can be described as mainly *coordination*. Namely, in a pragmatic way, Mercy Corps has worked indirectly with the PRT when it has accepted assignments for tasks that involve any PRT activity. At the same time, there have been limits on the amount of information that has been exchanged.

Figure 4: Different levels of coherence between the British mission and Mercy Corps at the operational level

	United	Integrated	Cooperate	Coordinate	Coexist	Compete	levels
Organisational structure	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Oper
Actions	Joint	Joint or collaborative	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Ad hoc pragmatic	Competing	Oper.
Interests, visions, aims and objectives	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Some similarity	Separate	Competing	Oper
Campaign plan	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Different	Different	Competing	Oper.
Leadership and command	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Different	Different	Different	Different	Oper
Planning	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Oper
Assessments	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Oper
Implementation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Competing	Oper
Monitoring and evaluation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Separate	Oper
Identities	Joint	Individual	Individual	Individual	Separate	Competing	Oper
Decisions on resources and organisation means	Joint	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Oper
Information	Joint gathering	Sharing	Sharing	Sharing	Certain amount sh.	No sharing/spreading	Oper

3.3.2 International NGOs

According to the British government, a CA means that all the government organisations and players, and to some extent NGOs, are working towards a common idea of what has to be achieved (British official 2, June 2012). Given the fact that only one British NGO, Mercy Corps, has worked in Helmand, the British mission has relied on the work of other development organisations, such as international NGOs. There have been a number of engagements with international NGOs to talk about the overall plan or the overall sense of progress in Afghanistan (British official 2, June 2012). However, the Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee (BRAC) has been the only international NGO that is considered by the British government as a principally involved organisation (British military 1, June 2012). Most of the international organisations such as Save the Children and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have been uncomfortable collaborating with the PRT. These international NGOs have a clear humanitarian position and do not share the same

goals and objectives with the mission. If such a humanitarian organisation would contribute to the CA in order to work on the same goals, then its objective would not be 100% humanitarian anymore (International NGO representative, July 2012).

Meanwhile, BRAC sees itself as implemented in the overall CA. The international NGO has been present in the microfinance sector and has been a facilitating partner of the National Solidarity Program (NSP), which is a development initiative (Gordon, 2011, 26). Although BRAC argues not to be directly related to the PRT, its character can be described as pragmatic. The international NGO argues to share the peacebuilding objectives of the mission. Namely, within the CA, development automatically ensures peacebuilding (International NGO representative 7, July 2012). In addition, according to BRAC, it has been engaged in the implementation of activities, as well as in information sharing concerning the situation in Helmand. BRAC has attended meetings with the PRT, in which the military and international governmental actors have attended as well. It also has fulfilled a liaison role together with the PRT on security issues. Moreover, it attends once a month meetings that are organised by the Afghan government. During these meetings all stakeholders are involved, discussing important issues concerning whole of Afghanistan. With regard to the implementation of activities, BRAC receives projects from the PRT that need to be implemented. After finishing the implementation, the international NGO will report individually the results to the PRT. Thus, monitoring, along with other important decisions have been taken separately

In figure 5, the level of coherence between the British mission and international NGOs at the operational level is presented. In order to map this level of coherence, six interviews with INGOs were conducted, four with British officials and two with British military personnel. By taking all the given answers together, one is able to estimate the level of coherence for each factor in the framework, ranging from organisational structure to information sharing. This means that the level of coherence between international NGOs and the British mission at the operational level varies between *integrated* and *compete*. Most international NGOs, with the exception of BRAC, scored most at the *coexistence* level of coherence. This means that at the operational level coherence between international NGOs in general and the British mission can be described as mainly *coexistence*, because identities and action have been separated. At the same time, BRAC scored more towards the *cooperate* level of

coherence for the different factors within the framework. This means that at the operational level coherence between BRAC and the British mission can be described as mainly *cooperation*. Namely, information has been shared and some of the goals have been partly the same. In addition, it has been directly engaged in the implementation of activities.

Figure 5: Different levels of coherence between the British mission and INGOs at the operational level

	United	Integrated	Cooperate	Coordinate	Coexist	Compete	levels
Organisational structure	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Oper
Actions	Joint	Joint or collaborative	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Ad hoc pragmatic	Competing	Oper
Interests, visions, aims and objectives	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Some similarity	Separate	Competing	Oper
Campaign plan	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Different	Different	Competing	Oper
Leadership and command	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Different	Different	Different	Different	Oper
Planning	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Oper
Assessments	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Oper
Implementation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Competing	Oper
Monitoring and evaluation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Separate	Oper
Identities	Joint	Individual	Individual	Individual	Separate	Competing	Oper
Decisions on resources and organisation means	Joint	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Oper
Information	Joint gathering	Sharing	Sharing	Sharing	Certain amount sh.	No sharing/spreading	Oper

3.3.3 Afghan environment

The British government has made use of several channels through which development is implemented in Helmand. The biggest channel has been the Afghan government. Support for the Afghan government has gone through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) (UK official 2, June 2012). This Trust Fund is administered by the World Bank and provides support to Afghanistan in two areas: 1) providing for the recurrent costs of the government, and 2) supporting investment projects, capacity building and technical assistance (USAID 2012).

3.3.3.1 private sector

Another “development actor” of which the British government has relied on in Helmand is the private sector. Private sector contractors, local and international, which are often in consortium with each other, have played an important role in implementing projects for the British mission. For example, local and international contractors have been involved in contracting on infrastructure development, such as road building, commissioned by the military (British official 3, June 2012). These contractors often have had rather direct linkages with the military that have been involved in some of the violence in certain areas as well (British NGO representative 14, July 2012). Thus the challenge in the use of private contractors has been that the level of war economy which prevails in Afghanistan is such that local contractors, able to operate at the large-scale and speedy fast delivery expected of donors working to stabilisation timelines, are likely to be implicated in the power dynamics, corruption and even war economy itself (NGO representative 14, July 2012). The for-profit nature of these contractors can also result in a focus on what in the NGO sector is called as “upwards accountability”, to the donors holding the contracting power, at the expense of “downwards accountability” to the supposed beneficiary communities (Ibid). This means that the whole direction of donor funding in Afghanistan has been towards tenders, rather than towards proposals (Ibid). Namely, private contractors may be hired to work to deliver a project to meet a short-term objective set by the military or a political actor at the international level. A research conducted for BAAG and sponsored by Afghan Aid, Care International UK, CAFOD, Mercy Corps and Oxfam, has supported this argumentation. It has found a strong sense among the Afghan population that British aid distribution in Helmand has been largely based on politics rather than needs (Thompson 2012, 20). This has required implementing partners to run through a screening phase and then take on projects defined in terms of donor priorities on demand, often formed by political priorities, and a reduction in the funding available for projects designed on the basis of community-level consultations (NGO representative 14, July 2012).

3.3.3.2 Afghan NGOs

Afghan NGOs have participated in the British mission partly because of the funding. Taking part in the mission means funds are opened up that otherwise would not have been available. According to three Afghan NGOs, the Afghan government has not

had the capacity and recourses to provide funding for the many Afghan NGOs (Afghan NGO representatives 1,3 & 6, May 2012). As alternative, Afghan NGOs have relied on international donors such as the different nations contributing to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan (Ibid). Several Afghan NGOs that have implemented programs in Helmand mentioned funding as one of the reasons for being willing to work with the British mission (Afghan NGO representatives 1 & 3, May 2012).

Not every Afghan NGO operating in Helmand has cooperated with the mission. Most Afghan NGOs, just as international NGOs, have been uncomfortable collaborating with the British PRT in Helmand (Gordon 2011, 39). Afghan NGOs that have been willing to cooperate with the mission, such as Helping Afghan Farmers Organisation (HAFO), have been most of the time indirectly approached by the PRT. In the case of HAFO, it was introduced to the PRT by the head of a district. On request of the PRT, HAFO has written proposals and conducted surveys with the local population so that the PRT knew what kind of development was needed. Together with the PRT it has jointly implemented these development projects. Moreover, it has attended consultations organised by DFID (British official 2, June 2012). However, according to HAFO, the chance always exists that it will not be approached for the next project. Therefore, in relation to the PRT, it only has seen itself as implementing partner, rather than integrated. In general, the PRT has seen Afghan NGOs as an implementing partner as well, and no more than an instrument for public service delivery (Academic 1, June 2012). In the case of HRDA, another Afghan NGO, it was introduced to the British PRT during *shuras*. During these meetings the PRT announced several projects for which Afghan NGOs could apply. HRDA wrote a proposal and based on their cost effectiveness and capacity it was approached by the PRT to implement the projects. According to HDRA, the British PRT has been fully cooperative during implementing the projects. In any case, it is almost impossible for the Afghan NGO itself to approach the military or to enter the PRT (NGO representative 1,2 & 6, May 2012).

In figure 6, the different levels of coherence between the British mission and Afghan NGOs at the operational level are presented. In order to map this level of coherence, seven interviews with Afghan NGOs were conducted, four with British officials and two with British military personnel. By taking all the given answers together, one is able to estimate the level of coherence for each factor in the framework, raging from

organisational structure to information sharing. This means that the level of coherence between Afghan NGOs and the British mission at the operational level varies between *integrated* and *compete*. However, for the range of factors in the framework, the interviewees scored most at the *cooperated* level of *coherence*. This means that at the operational level coherence between Afghan NGOs and the British mission can be described as mainly *cooperated*, because the assessments and implementation of projects has taken place in a collaborative way and information has been shared. At the same time, the campaign plan for the projects to be implemented has been prepared most of the time by the Afghan NGOs and British mission separately.

Figure 6: Different levels of coherence between the British mission and Afghan NGOs at the operational level

	United	Integrated	Cooperate	Coordinate	Coexist	Compete	levels
Organisational structure	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Oper
Actions	Joint	Joint or collaborative	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Ad hoc pragmatic	Competing	Oper
Interests, visions, aims and objectives	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Some similarity	Separate	Competing	Oper
Campaign plan	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Different	Different	Competing	Oper
Leadership and command	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Different	Different	Different	Different	Oper
Planning	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Oper
Assessments	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Oper
Implementation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Competing	Oper
Monitoring and evaluation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Separate	Oper
Identities	Joint	Individual	Individual	Individual	Separate	Competing	Oper
Decisions on resources and organisation means	Joint	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Oper
Information	Joint gathering	Sharing	Sharing	Sharing	Certain amount sh.	No sharing/spreading	Oper

Figure 7 gives an overview of the level of coherence between governmental actors and non-governmental actors in the British CA, both at the strategic and operational level.

Figure 7: overview of coherence between NGOs and the British mission in Afghanistan

Six types of relationships	Four levels of coherence							
	Internal-external		Inter-agency		Whole-of-government		Intra-agency	
	Strategic	Operational	Strategic	Operational	Strategic	Operational	Strategic	Operational
United								
Integrated					SU – MOD, MFA, DFID	Different British actors involved in the Helmand PRT		
Cooperating		Afghan NGOs- British state actors Local contractors/ private sector – British state actors		BRAC – British state actors	Involved British government departments			
Coordinating			BAAG – its members (British NGOs)	Mercy Corps – British state actors				
Coexisting			British NGOs – British government	International NGOs- British state actors				
Competing								

3.4 DILEMMAS

The British approach has shown that, despite the strive for greater coherence between MOD, FCO and DFID, a limited level of interaction between the British NGOs and the British mission at the strategic level has existed. Especially the relationship between military personnel and NGOs has caused tension within the British CA. This limited degree of coherence, together with the military character of the mission and the autonomous culture of the different government departments, has created the way in which the British approach has dealt with the dilemmas that play a role in a CA. In this paragraph an elaboration of how the British have dealt with these dilemmas is given.

3.4.1 Local ownership

In the theoretical chapter, it became clear that the first contradiction used for this research study concerns local ownership. During the planning phase, there was little understanding of the expectations and needs of the local community and insufficient knowledge of the culture and situation in Helmand. According to a British official, this late understanding of the culture and its community, resulted in difficulties how to engage the local population (British official 3, June 2012). Because the situation in Helmand was so complex, the British did not know which tribe could be approached and which not (Ibid). During this stage, therefore, lessons were learned too late in order to approach the local population to ask them what exactly they would need (British NGO representatives 3 and 4, June 2012). Notwithstanding, along the British present in Helmand, it has tried to reach a degree of local ownership in the province. For example, the British mission in Helmand has provided capacity to the Afghan government through Afghan local structures, such as the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) (British military 1, June 2012). Namely, in the view of the British government, helping build up fragile local capacity is much more necessary rather than always getting contractors and NGOs in to build things on behalf of Western donors (British official 2, June 2012). However, the challenge is that most funding has been directed towards the top of Afghanistan, which has led into a top-down approach with programs at the government level (NGO representative 4, May 2012 and Academic 1, June 2012).

Next to building support and capacity of the Afghan government, the British mission has focused on the local engagement as well. British military actors in Helmand have looked at how they could better target stabilisation and development activities to meet the requirements of the local population (House of Commons Defence Committee 2010). They have responded to the needs of the local population by means of close cooperation. For example, PRT staff has approached local heads of districts regarding PRT projects. During meetings, PRT staff has asked recommendations for Afghan NGOs to do the implementation. These Afghan NGOs, in turn, have been asked by the PRT to conduct quick surveys with the local people in order to learn their needs and concerns (Afghan NGO representative 7, May 2012). In addition, they have written a proposal so that the PRT knows what and how to address (Ibid). Moreover, Task Force commanders have designed a methodology called the Tactical Conflict Assessment Framework (TCAF), which conceptually has been developed by USAID (House of Commons Defence Committee 2010). The methodology includes a set of four questions that can be ask to the local population, which is about the kinds of services that they really would require and who should deliver them (Ibid). This way of involving the local actors, however, has led to a situation in which the initial military focus only has increased.

From the perspective of British NGOs, the British government needs to engage with the real representatives of the Afghan people, and not just with those in positions of power (British NGO representative 3, June 2012). Engagement with the local community can be difficult to achieve, but early involvement in decisions and along the process would help to increase it. Furthermore, the British mission should gain the acceptance of the local community (British NGO representative 4, June 2012). Local acceptance is only likely if the CA addresses the concerns and needs that are important to the local people (Ibid). In addition, better communication is needed regarding the purpose and benefits of the British approach in Afghanistan at local government level, district level and civil society level, for example through *shuras* (British NGO representative 7, July 2012). If the local community has a better understanding of the British approach in Afghanistan then local ownership is much more likely.

3.4.2 Tunnel vision

The second dilemma addressed in this research study is about the tunnel vision. To a certain extent, especially within Whitehall, the British have looked at Afghanistan through its own province, Helmand (British military representative 1, June 2012). The bulk of the British troops have been based in Helmand, which has made the British media and citizens only focusing on this province (British NGO representative 2, May 2012). In addition, in recognising the importance of Afghanistan to the UK, DFID has given Afghanistan ten times more aid than it would normally do in other countries (House of Commons Defence Committee 2010). When looking to Helmand, Helmand only constitutes about five per cent of the population of Afghanistan. The British strategy has given about a quarter of its Afghan aid program to Helmand, which seems disproportionality large. By physically moving the SU from DFID location to a more neutral location (Whitehall), the British government has tried to redistribute the power relations between the three departments. This change in location proved to be necessary since DFID had a too much leading position. Unfortunately, it still has been difficult to change the organisational culture in DFID into a new culture so that the distribution of aid is more in proportion (Ibid). Until now, development approaches and funding has been limited to the Helmand province. This has made it difficult for British NGOs to find funding for projects in provinces other than Helmand. Especially the British NGOs who decided not to go and work in Helmand have perceived this as a real dilemma (British NGO representative 3, June 2012). They have been forced to find support from other donors for projects outside Helmand. All the British NGOs, which were spoken to for this research, claim to rely on other international donors besides the British government. Additionally, Afghan NGOs argue that the preference of the lead nations has been for their own national NGOs, rather than Afghan NGOs (Afghan NGO representative 4, May 2012).

3.4.3 Coordination

The third dilemma used for this research study is about the required degree of coordination. The main purpose of the British CA is to link the different government departments. Coordination in the UK Afghanistan strategy has thus been sought mainly between MOD, DFID and FCO (British official 1, June 2012). However, a lot of coordination challenges have existed between these three departments. One challenge has been the communication between the different government

departments. MOD, DFID and FCO have had different objectives, different ideas of the end situation and different ways of operation (British official 2 and Academic 1, June 2012). Moreover, the different government departments have wanted to maintain their authority (Academic 1, June 2012). It therefore has been difficult to get information passed to the different departments involved (Ibid). To share information, one must be careful about the differences in language, culture, attitude and capacity. There has been dealt with this dilemma by means of the SU. Although inter-departmental structures are no magic bullets, it is seen as key organisation in arranging coordination across the different departments. It is an interdepartmental agency jointly owned by DFID, FCO and MOD. In general, inter-departmental structures seem to facilitate more systematic cooperation, filling an operational gap between development efforts, military campaigns and national-level political initiatives (Schmidt 2009:15, 63). It is argued that since the establishment of the SU in 2007 coordination between the different departments has increased (British NGO representative 3, May 2012). However, the costs of coordinating the different government departments have been high, and it was not until the reformation of the British government that spending more money and effort into the SU has been encouraged (British NGO representative 3 and 4, June 2012).

At the same time, at the strategic level the British have not been efficient in coordinating the different government departments together with the non-governmental organisations (Academic 3, July 2012). The reason for the quite poorly coordination at the strategic level is that the different government and non-governmental actors have not been well cooperated, which has resulted less efficient outcomes. The British government has had difficulties with seeing the differences between the civilian actors (British official 1, June 2012). It has preferred having meetings only with BAAG rather than with a plurality of different NGOs. However, BAAG argues that it cannot reflect the objectives and ideas of all its members since they are all different. Moreover, during civil-military trainings in London, British state actors have seen non-governmental organisations as a problem (British official 3, June 2012). Especially the military has not understood the role of civilian actors. It has not understood how civilian actors could contribute to the British approach in Afghanistan (Ibid). Nevertheless, in order to become more efficient, the NMCG has tried to improve and strengthen the coordination at the strategic level between the British government, the military and the British NGOs.

3.4.4 Sustainability

The last dilemma addressed in this research study, the sustainability of the CA, has appeared especially to be a dilemma with regard to the transition of 2014. The transition is one of the main issues of discussion among the NGO community in Afghanistan. Two challenges lay at the heart of this discussion. The first challenge is about the available funding for Afghanistan. For the NGO community in Afghanistan it has been questionable whether the international community has still enough willingness to invest in Afghanistan after the transition. Afghan, national and international NGOs are afraid that development funding is attached to the military mission in Afghanistan. Namely, in a situation like Afghanistan it is impossible to disconnect the development sector from the military sector (British NGO representative 3, June 2012). Besides, now with the EU crisis, especially for the smaller EU countries, it is the question what will happen with the development money (British NGO representative 4, June 2012). BAAG has given the British government several reasons why a long-term approach is necessary in the case of Afghanistan. For example, they have argued that the British government needs to spend smaller amounts of money through different provinces. This has led the British government making a very detailed Helmand plan regarding leaving in 2014 (International NGO representative 5, July 2012). However, the main concern of this plan has been the transition of the security sector, rather than development (British NGO representative 3, June 2012). For example, in the plan it has been written how the British mission will contribute to and how much funding there will be available for the training of the ANSF in the run up to 2014 and beyond (United Kingdom Parliament 2012, 14).

The second challenge among the NGO community in Afghanistan is about the security situation. Although only a small number of NGOs have been prepared to work with PRTs and international forces, most agree that the international presence has ensured a safer Afghanistan. The general perception among NGOs is that the security might deteriorate when the ISAF mission pulls out. Two reasons can be given for this concern (NGO representative 6, July 2012). First, as soon as the international forces are gone, old warlords will have the opportunity to fight over power again. Especially in the begin stage of the transition, these power structures are extremely important. This, in turn, put NGOs at risk to do their job. Secondly, the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) will not have enough capacity at that time. Training is too short and they lack the equipment to protect themselves and the community

against insurgents. A lot of Afghan and international NGOs are prepared that, in the run towards the transition, they have to leave the Helmand province for more secure provinces (NGO representative 2, 24, 26 and 27).

3.5 DIFFERENCES

Next to the above-mentioned dilemmas, the theoretical chapter of this study has also revealed the differences that play a role in a CA. These differences are, as well as the dilemmas, relevant to the British approach, but do not necessarily lead to a dilemma. Besides, to experience these differences one not necessarily has to be integrated. For example, differences in characteristics become already visible when military actors and civilian actors only are present in the same conflict area.

3.5.1 Time horizons

The first difference used for this research study concerns the various time horizons. In the case of the British, the CA has been more directed towards the MOD. Also in the field, the British military has had a tremendous authority within decision-making and planning of the CA. The British military character, together with the autonomous culture between the government departments, has influenced the way in which the British deal with the different time horizons between the actors involved in the CA. The British government recognises that civilian and military actors have had different time horizons (British official 2, June 2012). It argues that the short-time horizon of the military has been due to the many officer rotations during the mission (British military 4, August 2012). To deal with these rotations, collected information by the military has been recorded and documented in many different ways so that the successors do not have to start from scratch again (Ibid). In addition, some of the military personnel voluntarily have stayed longer as advisor to the new military personnel to bridge the many rotations (Ibid).

The British government realises that the work of the military in Helmand is not an end in itself, but rather a means to an end (British official 2, June 2012). At some point the longer-term activities, such as development and diplomatic activities, will take over the military activities (British military 1, June 2012). With this strong chronological attitude, every “D” is appointed to implement its own tasks. Thus, dealing with the different time horizons has been done by focusing on each actor

separately than see it as something complementary. Also the NGOs working in Helmand have perceived the differences in time horizons as contracting, because it has resulted in a clash between the military actors and development actors. In order to avoid such clashes, each actor should have its own focus (British NGO representative 3, June 2012).

3.5.2 Capacities

The second difference addressed in this research study concerns the different capacities and speeds between the different actors involved. The British government has experienced the differences in capacity as a problem between the British mission and the Afghan government, rather than between the different actors within their approach (British officials 2 and 3; British military 1, June 2012). For example, during the planning phase, the Embassy in Kabul did not have enough recourse to support the British state actors and therefore the planning needed to be done in London (British official 3, June 2012). Also, the British government sees the CA as western solution that has been implemented in a non-western culture (British official 1, June 2012). This in turn has resulted in a lot of capacity problems between the different cultures (Ibid).

At the same time, the British military has had difficulties with providing security in places outside their ink spot. Despite having little more than a battle group available, the UK had to expand its ink spot and deploy its troops into Sangin, Now Zad and Musa Oaleh (Dutch official 2, July 2012). This resulted in a lot of small units that does not have the power and capacity to control the area. As part of the solution, British troop numbers have more then doubled to hold territory in the different districts. In addition, most British military personnel have been appointed to provide physical security divided over two districts rather than one (British military 4, August 2012). In this case, the provision of security has been aimed to be equal in all districts (Ibid). The NGOs working in Helmand have perceived differences in capacities as complementary rather than contradictory. According to these NGOs, in some cases it has been useful to have the military around you to help (British NGO representative 3, June 2012). They can deliver the men and sources for heavy work such as building a road. Namely, civilian workers do not have the capacity to do such kind of work (Ibid).

3.5.3 Directions

The third difference addressed in this research study concerns the direction of approaches. In the British case, this difference has appeared especially to be a concern among the NGO community in Afghanistan. From a development perspective, programs are implemented at the local level. In the case of Afghanistan, development has a long engagement to reach sustainability and is Afghan driven (British NGO representative 3, June 2012). In contrast, the military start from a 'shape, clear, hold, build' perspective, in which the focus lays on clearing the area and providing security (Afghan NGO representative 4, May 2012). According to most NGOs, the military have had quick-fixed programs, constantly aware of the different strategies. Moreover, they claim that the military has been driven by an over-rule strategy, which has not included the local needs. The British government has tried to find a better balance between the different directions by supporting bottom-up projects in Helmand. For example, it has scattered more projects of a small size when in 2008 it changed its policy by cancelling the QIPs (Academic 2, July 2012). Moreover, with the Tawanmandi project, the British government has tried to work more from the local level. In this project selected civil society organisations have been strengthened to improve the government's accountability (British official 6, August 2012). According to most Afghan NGOs, sometimes they have to support each other's approach in order to carry out their own approach (Afghan NGO representative 3, May 2012). They agree with the fact that the mission can provide for a bridge between civil society and the military to overcome the difference in directions (Afghan NGO representative 4, May 2012).

3.5.5 Other tendencies

The fourth and last tendency used for this research study includes a combination of all kind of differences between the different actors involved. Within the British mission, British military personnel have been aware of the different strategies compared to development workers (British military 1, June 2012). Most military personnel have realised that their work is not an end in itself, but rather a means to an end (British military 1, June 2012). Some British NGOs in BAAG have perceived also differences in character between the different actors. For example, military personnel have had initial ownership with the intervening actor, whilst development workers (and NGOs) have been Afghan driven and have seek for ownership with the local population

(British NGO representative 3, June 2012). Moreover, because there have been difficulties with finding a balance between the three main government departments in the British CA, each actor has focused on its own characteristics rather than looking to the differences from a complementary perspective (Academic 1, June 2012). In addition, because of the little degree of coherence between British NGOs and the British government at the strategic level, NGOs have not been involved in finding a solution to these differences between the actors involved in the CA (British officials 1 and 2, June 2012).

To conclude, the British contribution in Helmand has been deployed with its own PRT. Looking at the coherence, the British mission has been more a government approach in which seeking greater coherence between MOD, FCO and DFID has been more important than integrating organisations such as NGOs. However, there has existed a certain degree of interaction between some British NGOs in BAAG and the British government. The amount of this interaction has differed according to the level at which it has taken place, the strategic level versus the operational level. At the strategic level coherence between most British NGOs in BAAG and the British mission can be described as mainly *coexistence*. At the operational level coherence between Mercy Corps, the only British NGO in Helmand, and the British mission can be described as mainly *coordination*. At the same time, at the operational level coherence between international NGOs, with the exception of BRAC, and the British mission has been mainly *coexistence*. Coherence between Afghan NGOs and the British mission has been more *cooperation*. The little degree of coherence between most British NGOs in BAAG and the British mission, next to military character of the mission and the lack of balance between MOD, FCO and DFID, has influenced the way in which the British approach has dealt with the dilemmas and differences in the CA. Most dilemmas and differences have been looked at from each department separately rather than from a complementary perspective. As a result, dilemmas and differences between the different actors involved in the British CA have become even bigger. In addition, because of the limit interaction between British NGOs and the British mission at the strategic level, NGOs have not often been involved in finding a solution to the dilemmas and differences between the different actors involved in a CA.

4. THE DANISH CASE IN AFGHANISTAN

Having addressed the British case, this chapter will introduce the case of the Danes in Helmand. This is done by means of the same structured way as in chapter 3. First, a brief history of the Denmark's overall engagement in Afghanistan is given, including an overview of the Danish Afghanistan strategy at the Copenhagen level and the Danish approach in Helmand. This is followed by a mapping of the way in which the Danes have dealt with NGOs in their CA, both at the strategic and operational level. Finally, an elaboration of how the Danes have dealt with the dilemmas and differences in their CA is given.

4.1 THE DANISH APPROACH

Directly after the fall of the Taliban regime in November 2001, the Danish Parliament decided to support the UN-authorized ISAF mandate in Afghanistan. During the years, the Danish engagement in Afghanistan increased considerably. The first Danish contribution to the ISAF mandate in Afghanistan was through the German-led PRT in Fayzabad, in the northern province of Badakhshan, with the deployment of forty soldiers (Steputtat 2009). The soldiers were later to be reduced to twenty and in 2008 the Danish deployment in Fayzabad terminated (Ibid). From 2006, the main Danish contribution has been in Helmand province, deployed with a British-led PRT. With around 750 soldiers, the Danish military deployment in Helmand has been of much larger size than it was in Fayzabad. This was due the active and growing insurgency in the Helmand province. The overall objective of Denmark's contribution to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan is to contribute to national, regional and global security by preventing the country from becoming a safe haven for terrorists (MFA and MOD Report 2010, 7). It also aims at contributing to a more stable and developed Afghanistan (Ibid). Given the fact that the Danish contribution in Helmand is through the British-led PRT, there is no need to address again the Joint Plan for Helmand and the Helmand Roadmap in detail.

4.1.1 The Danish framework of the Afghanistan strategy

At the strategic level, the Danish government has been concerned with issues of armed conflict and their links to problems of development since the 1990s. It argues that it has had the capacity and the experience to play an international role in the field of conflict and development, carrying out development activities, humanitarian interventions, peacekeeping operations and initiatives through diplomacy channels (Stepputat 2009:14). After 9/11 this concern became even more manifest, as expressed in the development strategy for 2005-2009, 'Security, Growth and Development' (Ibid). The aim of this policy was to integrate the fields of security and development.

Cooperation between civilian and military actors has evolved during the Danish engagement in Helmand, under the label of Concerted Planning and Action (CPA) (or in Danish 'samtækningsprojekter'). The strategy was jointly issued by MFA and MOD from 2004-2009. In the Danish MFA, both foreign affairs and the Danish International Department for International Development (DANIDA) are included. All (non- military) development actions in Helmand have been funded either under the control of the MFA or DANIDA (Stepputat 2009:14). Initially, the CPA was aimed at four key points: 1) coordinating military and reconstruction tasks at the strategic and operational levels; 2) preparing the armed forces to facilitate small-scale reconstruction activities in the absence of civilian agencies; 3) funding; and 4) developing a Humanitarian Contact Group between MOD, MFA and key humanitarian organisations in Denmark (Friis and Rehman 2010, 20). Operationalization of the CPA was characterised by ad hoc as it was adapted to the evolving contexts in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan (Ibid). The CPA was aimed at facilitating cooperation between MFA advisers and Danish armed forces, rather than civil-military relations in general. Besides it emphasized the need for coordination with the Steering Unit, a coordination entity, and other actors. On the other hand, the CPA emphasized the need for quick results and minimal dependence on continued maintenance or external resources by the means of Quick Impact Projects (Stepputat 2009:14, 19). Related to the CPA, various issues of inter-agency cooperation emerged at both the strategic and operational. For example, strategic planning lacked political guidance and leadership within an overall strategy of political stabilisation (Friis and Rehman 2010, 22). Therefore in 2010, The Danish government developed and re-conceptualised a new organisational set-up, mainly under the influence of the specific

demands and expertise of the operation in Afghanistan. The initial CPA approach changed in a more integrated approach with the aim of strengthening the Whole-of-Government approach to reconstruction, stabilisation and capacity-building in areas of conflict (Friis and Rehman 2010, 23). This eventually resulted in the Danish comprehensive approach (CA).

Since the British have been the lead-nation of the Helmand PRT, the Danes have followed the British Joint Helmand Plan and Helmand Roadmap, which have been the main strategies for the PRT. However, even though they have been part of the British PRT, the Danish government also has had its own strategies, as part of their CPA and later CA. These strategies have been established to provide their own strategic objectives for the Danish engagement in Afghanistan. The Danish involvement in Helmand has been managed and directed by a Danish five-year Afghanistan Strategy and a Danish one-year Helmand Plan (Thruelsen 2010, 22). The Danish Afghanistan strategy deals with the strategic level of the whole of Afghanistan. The Helmand plan has been reviewed annually and lists criteria for its implementation. The development of the Danish Helmand Plan and the Danish Afghanistan Strategy has been based primarily on the cooperation between the Danish Embassy in Kabul and the MFA in Copenhagen (Ibid). The focus of the strategy papers has been identified and approved together with Afghan government officials and in coordination with the larger donors in Kabul, including the British Embassy and DFID.

In 2008, a five-year Danish Afghanistan strategy was published with regard to the activities in whole Afghanistan. It has dealt with all Danish activities in Afghanistan, of which activities in Helmand only have formed a part (Schmidt 2009:15, 32). The strategy includes a traditional COIN framework and aims for a fully integrated diplomacy, development and defence effort. It calls for a strengthening of Denmark's activities in Helmand through shared planning and implementation of military and civilian activities (Schmidt 2009:15, 33). The Danish strategy for Afghanistan has been the context for the smaller provincial plans. Namely, the benchmarks for the two Danish Helmand Plans have been consistent with the Danish strategy for Afghanistan. The first Danish strategy paper with regard to activities in Helmand was established in April 2007 under the CPA concept. It covered the first official Danish analysis of the situation in Afghanistan, with special focus on the Helmand province (Schmidt 2009:15, 31). In this strategic framework it

was put forward that Denmark is operating as partner to the UK in the Helmand province. Furthermore, the strategy was based on the understanding that military and development activities need to be apart from each other. At the same time, it did not describe how Denmark might contribute to develop, adjust and monitor the overall PRT strategy for Helmand (Ibid). A second Danish Helmand Plan was established in December 2007. While the first strategy paper was more a reference to the framework of the PRT and the fact that Denmark has been operating as partner to the UK, the second strategy dealt with the balance between military and development activities. The goal of the second strategy was to provide the strategic objectives for the long-term Danish engagement in Helmand (Ibid). The strategy was presented as a development strategy, as it promoted civilian activities with the focus on long-term and sustainable development in Helmand. Besides, it emphasised linking national programs with local activities in the province (Ibid). Three specific civilian activities were proposed in this strategy paper for Helmand: CPA projects, support for education and the fight against the opium economy (Ibid. 32). For the Danish government, the education sector has been a priority (Danish official 2, June 2012). Most of Danish development funding for Afghanistan has gone, therefore, to this sector. Building schools and support for education may weaken the Taliban by mobilising the local population to defend schools against intimidation from them (Schmidt 2009:15, 32). The following two Danish Helmand Plans (2009 and 2010) presented the Danish efforts to create the framework and conditions necessary to facilitate an adjustment and reduction of the Danish troops. The Danish Helmand Plan for 2011-2012 has been established under the CA concept and is the first Helmand strategy that covers two years. It has been prepared in close coordination with the United Kingdom. The aim of this strategy is also to adjust and reduce the Danish military presence in Helmand in order to move the focus away from combat and towards increased training, education and advising (MFA and MOD Report 2010, 3).

4.1.2 The Danish approach at operational level

Implementing the Danish CA at operational level has been characterised by ad hoc and experimental arrangements, as it has been adapted to the context in Afghanistan (Friis and Rehman 2012, 20). In the British-led PRT, the Danish contribution has been seen as alternative model with its own district level “mini-PRT”. Although the Danish armed forces have not had their own area of operation in Helmand, they have

placed their political and strategic footprint in Gereshk, a town in the Helmand province along the Helmand River. Their contribution has been organised in the form of a battle group (BG) and placed under the overall executive command of the British commander of TFH. The Danish BG has been placed in Gereshk, especially to hold and protect the area and to make sure that it is safe. They have been deployed with a ground holding role (Dutch military 2, June 2012). On the civilian side, the contribution has developed at a slower pace. In the previous chapter it became clear that the Helmand PRT has been run by a British civilian chief with staff from the FCO, DFID and the SU. In addition, the Danish government has deployed one senior Danish Representative and two civilian educational advisers in the Helmand PRT, sponsored by DANIDA (Thruelsen 2008, 23). Having a Danish civilian representative presence in the PRT, is argued as being crucial for the coordination between the different Danish government departments involved at the operational level, as well as for relations back to the strategic level in Copenhagen. At the same time, having only a hand full of civil advisers, the Danish capacity in the Helmand PRT has been very limited (Academic 3, August 2012). Their civilian capacity has been limited to civilian rebuilding and planning of the Helmand Roadmap; it has been difficult to implement civilian projects separate from the British (Academic 3, August 2012). Four types of Danish civilian assistance have been provided to Helmand: CIMIC activities, CA (or CPA) activities, support for education through the Afghan Ministry of Education, and activities implemented through multi-donor programs (Schmidt 2009:15, 33-34). CA activities have included a variety reconstruction projects such as building bridges and school buildings. CIMIC activities are linked to civilian activities, but are part of the military budget and aim to protect the military forces. CIMIC projects are implemented only in areas where civilian personnel are not able to work (Danish official 2, June 2012). Support for education is a key priority for the Danish government and has included reconstruction work with regard to schools as well as enhancing the capacity of the Department of Education in Lashkargar (Schmidt 2009:15, 34).

In the Danish approach coherence has been sought between the MFA (including DANIDA) and the MOD. However, within the context of the Danish mission in Helmand, involvement has been broader. The demands for cooperation between the Danish and the British civilian and military personnel at the operational level have been high. Just as the cooperation between the British and Danish

ministries at the strategic level, cooperation with British civilian and military agencies at the operational level would appear to be functioning rather well (Friis and Rehman 2010, 20). The Helmand PRT was set up to coordinate military and civilian activities especially between these two partner countries. However, other partner countries, such as Estonia, and international organisations also have played a role within the Danish approach for Helmand. Today, there are no Danish NGOs present or capable of working in the Helmand province due to the dangerous security situation there. Danish NGOs, therefore, have not been part of the Danish approach for Helmand. In addition, international NGOs in the province are limited as well, and the majority of these try to distance themselves from the military (Danish official 5, May 2012). This is a situation that is not expected to change within the nearest future. This fact has illustrated the urgent need for the Danish approach to focus on cooperation with other partner organisations, mainly within the Afghan environment. Just as the UK, Denmark has collaborated with local Afghan CSOs, local contractors, the ANSF and the Afghan government. All have been to a certain degree part of this broader Danish CA. Given the fact that the education sector is a priority sector for the Danish government, they have especially cooperated with the Afghan Ministry of Education. Likewise, private security contractors have been to a certain degree part of the broader Danish CA as well. In general, security profit-making organisations are a no go within the Danish approach and thus Denmark did not want these to be part of the Danish policy (Academic 2, July 2012). As an alternative, Denmark has made use of the private security organisations contracted by the British (Academic 2, July 2012). In this way, for Denmark, it was politically not an issue anymore, whilst still making use of the private security contractors.

4.2 COHERENCE AT STRATEGIC LEVEL

Since 2004, at the executive level, the ministers of development, defence and foreign affairs (plus others on an ad hoc basis) have started to meet annually in Copenhagen to determine the Danish contribution to Afghanistan. At the next level, high-level representatives from MFA, in which diplomacy and DANIDA are included, and MOD also have started to meet with and talk to each other in Copenhagen at least four times a year. However, since the Afghanistan team within MFA and MOD is

very small, personnel in Copenhagen do see each other every day in a very informal way (Danish official 2, June 2012). Finally, a broad reference group with representatives of NGOs, relevant state entities, private companies, etc. have met occasionally to discuss and exchange experiences from involvement in Afghanistan. During the high-level meetings, Danish NGOs have been invited as well. As a result, the MOD began to take an interest in having a relationship with NGOs, which strengthened the coherence between both actors (Academic 2, July 2012). One Danish NGO argues that it has had a close coordination with regard to the Danish military in Copenhagen. It has provided the Danish military with training and joint exercises so that they could learn to understand what NGOs exactly are and what they are capable of in a conflict situation like Afghanistan (Danish NGO representative 2, June 2012). Together with the military it has simulated missions in Copenhagen to reflect on civil-military issues. Another Danish NGO has given guest lectures for military education. It has given lectures about civil-military coordination and the perspective of humanitarian and development NGOs on this (Danish NGO representative 1, June 2012).

The Danish government has felt that, to a certain extent, Danish NGOs have agreed on and cooperated for an overall common goal at the strategic level. Namely, the Danish objectives have contributed to the long-term development of Afghanistan, which has been a similar objective to the Danish NGOs (Danish Official 3, June 2012). On the other hand, one of the most important aims of the Danish contribution to Helmand has been providing national, regional and global security by preventing the country from becoming a safe haven for terrorists. Although development and humanitarian organisations do not see security as diametrically opposed to their aims, neither is it included. Namely, their main objective has been to provide humanitarian and developmental assistance and respond to crisis in an impartial and neutral manner. Most Danish NGOs argue that this has been the reason why they have had a different mandate in comparing to the Danish mission in Helmand. The mandate of the Danish government has been to pursue its objectives: diplomacy, political constitutions and development (Danish Official 3, June 2012). Overall, these are political objectives, whilst NGOs claim to have a humanitarian mandate. By creating a distinctive identity from the Danish mission, Danish NGOs have made an attempt to ensure that their different mandates are well known for the local community (Danish NGO representative 2, June 2012).

During the planning phase, Danish NGOs who were already operational in Afghanistan were strongly urged by the Danish ministries to come in and programme in Helmand.² This was done by providing DANIDA funding for Danish NGOs who were willing to implement projects in Helmand. However, there was still direct bilateral development funding available for Danish NGOs elsewhere in Afghanistan (Danish NGO representative 4, June 2012). In fact, most of Danish NGOs have been funded by DANIDA for more than 80% (Academic 2, July 2012). Along with the shared experiences in the Balkan and Badahksan, this donorship relation has strengthened the level of coherence between DANIDA and the Danish NGOs. However, despite of the effort made by DANIDA to attract Danish NGOs, none of them decided to go and implement projects in Helmand. The dangerous security situation was an important issue in this choice, just as the fear to be linked to the military. The fact that they would need military protection in Helmand 24/7, was and still is an unacceptable condition for the Danish NGOs (Danish NGO representative 1, July 2012).

Even though the Danish NGOs decided not to go and work in Helmand, they have been contributed to the Danish overall Afghanistan planning at the strategic level (Danish official 2, June 2012). They have been provided with information on and drafts of the Danish Helmand Plan and the Afghanistan strategy by the Danish government. At the same time, DANIDA has attempted to organise consultations with the Danish NGOs who were operational in Afghanistan. During these consultations, Danish NGOs have been asked to give their opinion, input and feedback with regard to the mission in Helmand (Danish NGO representatives 2, 3 and 5, June 2012). In 1995, the Danish MFA established a reference group with regard to conflict situations like Afghanistan. The aim of this humanitarian contact group is to strengthen the coherence between humanitarian NGOs, such as DanChurchAid and Danish Red Cross, and humanitarian governmental organisations, such as DANIDA (Danish Government 2012). Extensive use has been made of this forum to exchange information on the mission in Helmand. In addition, it has been used to improve the cooperation and coordination between both humanitarian actors. For Denmark it has been of great use for determining the framework within which the tasks for Helmand

² Danish Afghanistan Committee (DAC), Mission East, Danish Assistance to Afghan Rehabilitation and Technical Training (DAART), Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR), Danish Demining Group (DDG), Danish Refugee Council, and Mini Mobile Circus for Children

are carried out. Even though most of the assessment work has been done by the military, on an ad hoc level NGOs also have assisted in deciding how Denmark could contribute development wise and to the mission in Afghanistan in general and Helmand in particular (Danish official 2 and Danish NGO representative 2, June 2012). But despite of the available space for NGOs to provide input and feedback at the strategic level, important decisions with regard to activities in Helmand have been taken by the Danish government departments. The only way for Danish NGOs to be involved in this decision-making process has been by helping the draft makers understand whether a decision is realistic or not through the provision of their local knowledge (Danish NGO representative 1, July 2012). The same holds for the implementation of these activities in Helmand. Danish NGOs have not been involved in implementing the activities in Helmand, because they are not active in Helmand, not even by the means of local partners. They have been, however, involved in the implementation of activities in Afghanistan at the overall level. Thus, the Danish NGOs have been considered as being essential at the strategic level, only more in a consulted way.

Systematic and shared monitoring to see if operations are achieving their objectives is necessary for democratic oversight of operations, as well as the feedback into the analysis and adjustment of strategies and planning (Stepputat 2009:16, 62). In Denmark, challenges have consisted in systematic joined-up monitoring, reporting, evaluation and lessons learned with regard to the mission in Helmand. Sophisticated but separate systems of monitoring have existed in humanitarian and development aid, administrative systems and military operations (Ibid. 63). In addition, monitoring of the actual impact (rather than the output) has lacked civil-military cooperation. Danish NGOs have been involved only in discussing the output regarding the strategic goals. Besides, the MOD has not been able to monitor or evaluate activities carried out in Helmand. They have been only able to say how they think about certain outputs. At the same time, the MFA itself has not monitored or evaluated the operations in Helmand either. Instead, it has worked with external organisations that monitor and evaluate the activities (Danish official 2 and Danish NGO representative 2, June 2012). Their tasks include interviewing stakeholders, visiting activities, visiting meetings and providing recommendations. It is, therefore, hard to define whether monitoring the activities in Helmand is justified (Danish NGO representative 1, July 2012).

In figure 8, the different levels of coherence between the Danish mission and Danish NGOs at the strategic level are presented. In order to map this level of coherence, five interviews with Danish NGOs and four with Danish officials were conducted. The framework describes the level of coherence as follows. For example, in the above paragraph it became clear that Danish NGOs have been contributed to the Danish overall Afghanistan planning at the strategic level. This means that the level of coherence for the planning factor in the framework can be described as mainly *cooperation*. At the same time, separate systems of monitoring have existed. This means that the level of coherence for monitoring and evaluation lies between *coordination* and *compete*. By taking all the given answers together, one is able to estimate the level of coherence for each factor. This means that the overall level of coherence between Danish NGOs and the Danish mission at the strategic level varies between *integrated* and *compete*. Within these levels of coherence, the Danish government representatives scored more towards *integration*, whilst the Danish NGOs scored more towards *coordination*. Given the fact that mandates have been different and important decisions have been taken separately by the Danish government, at the strategic level coherence between Danish NGOs and the Danish mission can be described as mainly *coordination*.

Figure 8: Different levels of coherence between the Danish mission and Danish NGOs at the strategic level

	United	Integrated	Cooperate	Coordinate	Coexist	Compete	levels
Organisational structure	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Strat.
Interests, visions, aims and objectives	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Some similarity	Separate	Competing	Strat
Mandate	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Different	Different	Competing	Strat
Leadership and command	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Different	Different	Different	Different	Strat
Planning	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Strat
Assessments	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Strat
Implementation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Competing	Strat.
Monitoring and evaluation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Separate	Strat.
Identities	Joint	Individual	Individual	Individual	Separate	Competing	Strat
Decisions on resources and organisation means	Joint	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Strat
Information	Joint gathering	Sharing	Sharing	Sharing	Certain amount sh.	No sharing/spreading	Strat

4.3 COHERENCE AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL

At the operational level, cooperation between the Danish state actors and NGOs has taken a slightly different form than at the strategic level. At the strategic level, both the Danish government and Danish NGOs have experienced a good relationship with each other. Although none of the Danish NGOs have felt that they have become an integral part of the governmental CA, there has been a certain degree of coherence in Copenhagen. In Helmand, on the other hand, there has been no cooperation between Danish NGOs and the mission since none of them have worked there. As alternative, the Danish state actors have worked with international and Afghan NGOs in the province.

4.3.1 Danish NGOs

There has been limited practical experience of field-level cooperation between Danish humanitarian and development NGOs and the mission in Afghanistan, since only a

few Danish NGOs have been present in the areas of operation. In Helmand, cooperation between Danish NGOs and the mission has not existed because during the Danish deployment none of the Danish NGOs have been active there. Contact has taken place occasionally at the Kabul level, with the Danish Embassy. However, these meetings have included only issues concerning the Afghan provinces in which the Danish NGOs have operated. In addition, problems between Afghan authorities and NGOs also have been discussed, as well as coordination tasks between civil and military actors (Danish official 1, May 2012). There also have been meetings held at the Danish Embassy with regard to the mission in Helmand. These meetings have consisted of MOD and MFA representatives, along with relevant representatives of other headquarters (Danish official 2, June 2012). NGOs, however, have not been included in these meetings. Given the fact that there has been a lack of Danish NGOs working in Helmand, no contacts have taken place at the PRT level between them and the mission.

Only one Danish NGO, Danish Demining Group (DDG), considered going to and implementing projects in Helmand. DDG is an operational section within the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), a Danish humanitarian NGO. The NGO was, like all the other Danish NGOs operating in Afghanistan, approached by the Danish government to come in and practice in Helmand. It was asked to recreate a safe environment in Helmand by clearing landmines, small arms and light weapons. The choice of DDG to consider whether to come to Helmand was based on the question of what is possible under which conditions. On request of DANIDA, DDG did an assessment in Helmand to learn these possibilities and conditions. Eventually, DDG decided that their work could be very effective in Helmand. However, because of the security situation, they only wanted to work there under the protection of private security organisations. Military protection was not an option for DDG since it could make them a target for the insurgents. Unfortunately, their criteria for private protection would have cost too much money, money that was not available within the Danish Afghanistan framework (Danish official 2, June 2012). DANIDA and DDG could not come to an agreement, whereby DDG decided not to go to Helmand. Another Danish NGO, Danish Assistance to Afghan Rehabilitation and Training (DAARTT), decided from the start not to go to Helmand, but seconded an Afghan organisation that had worked for the Danish NGO in the past. The Afghan organisation has been hired and funded directly by DANIDA. So, more than a local

partner of DAARTT, it is more a direct (local) contractor hired via civilian advisors (Danish NGO representative 1, July 2012).

In the end, none of the Danish NGOs decided to work in Helmand. According to most Danish NGOs, criticism of the Helmand PRT hinges partly on the difficulty that the military have in extending security in the province so that NGOs are able to operate safely. The military and MOD officials have always thought that the Danish NGOs and civilian advisers would come in after the military operations to assist the 'build' stage (Academic 3, August 2012). However, NGOs have lacked the ability to send personnel to Helmand due to the dangerous security environment. In addition, MFA, notably DANIDA, has not been able to create an effective system to deploy civilian personnel in the field (Academic 3, August 2012). Criticism has been also due to a concern about the blurring of lines between the military and civilian actors and the effect that this may have on the safety of NGO personnel and the local population, who become both associated with the military and then targeted. The Danish government has perceived the lack of Danish NGOs in Helmand as a major problem (Academic 3, August 2012). Ideally, within the Danish perspective, the civilian work within a CA is done by NGOs. This model is preferred by the Danish ministries, notably by the MFA, and is derived from their present in the Balkans.

4.3.2 International NGOs

For the Danish government, a well-coordinated cooperation between the military and development actors is necessary for having an effective CA. Given the fact that none of the Danish NGOs have worked in Helmand, the Danish government has relied on the work of other development organisations, such as international NGOs. To a certain extent, contacts have existed between the few international NGOs that have been present in Helmand and the Danish mission. According to the Danish government, a degree of coordination has occurred between the mission and international NGOs such as International Rescue Committee (IRC) and International Media Support (IMS) (Danish official 3, June 2012).

IMS is an international NGO with its headquarter based in Copenhagen. It is an international NGO, rather than a Danish NGO, since it is directed by a board which consists of different international members. IMS supports Afghan journalists operating in Taliban territory in Helmand. IRC, on the other hand, is an international humanitarian organisation with its headquarter in London. It responds to humanitarian

crisis in Helmand and helps the local community to survive and rebuild their lives. From the perception of the Danish MFA, particularly DANIDA, there has been a clear relationship between the Danish mission in Helmand and both IMS and IRC (Danish official 3, June 2012). In the case of IRC, contact has taken place at the Kabul level, with the Danish Embassy, with regard to the education sector. However, IRC has felt that it has not had any position within the Danish (or any other) CA due to its humanitarian principles. Several dialogues were held between IRC and DANIDA. But despite of the attempts of DANIDA to attract IRC for their education program, IRC could not accept its criteria since it did not wanted to work under military protection in the province. IRC argues that these dialogues with DANIDA have been the only form of communication regarding the Danish mission in Helmand and that its relationship with DANIDA has been based purely on funding. In the case of IMS, the MFA has perceived the international NGO as having a post-planning contribution to the mission in the field (Danish official 3, June 2012). They have been engaged in the implementation of activities, as well as in information sharing concerning the needs of the Afghan community (Danish official 3, June 2012). IMS sees itself as pragmatic as they have operated with the mission on an ad hoc basis. IMS argues that it has tried to take the military in Helmand into account in order to see how any form of cooperation between them would be possible. Namely, ad hoc engagement with the international military would be beneficial to the Afghan journalists (International NGO representative 4, June 2012). In addition, international NGOs, such as IMS, could provide the military with information regarding safety issues (International NGO representative 4, June 2012). According to IMS, a lot of safety issues exist between the military and Afghan journalist. By arranging dialogues with both actors, IMS hopes to let them understand that both play a role in the conflict. However, even though there has been a certain degree of coordination between IMS and the Danish mission, it has remained informal and on an ad hoc basis. Moreover, effective dialogue on the mission in Helmand, other than on the Afghan media, has been missing (International NGO representative 4, June 2012). According to IMS, one of the reasons for this lacking dialogue has been that both have had different mandates and objectives. Whilst the priority of the Danish mission is security, the main objective of IMS is the local media.

In figure 9, the different levels of coherence between international NGOs and the Danish mission at the operational level are presented. In order to map this level of coherence, six interviews with INGOs and four with Danish officials were conducted. The framework describes the level of coherence as follows. By taking all the given answers together, one is able to estimate the level of coherence for each factor in the framework, ranging from organisational structure to information sharing. This means that the level of coherence between international NGOs and the Danish mission at the operational level varies between *integrated* and *compete*. Within the different levels of coherence, most international NGOs scored most at the *coexistence* level of coherence. At the same time, Danish government representatives scored more towards *coordination*, especially with regard to IMS and IRC. However, because information has been shared only to a certain extent and actions have been implemented on an ad hoc basis, at the operational level coherence between international NGOs and the Danish mission can be described as mainly *coexistence*.

Figure 9: Different levels of coherence between the Danish mission and INGOs at the operational level

	United	Integrated	Cooperate	Coordinate	Coexist	Compete	levels
Organisational structure	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Oper
Actions	Joint	Joint or collaborative	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Ad hoc pragmatic	Competing	Oper.
Interests, visions, aims and objectives	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Some similarity	Separate	Competing	Oper
Leadership and command	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Different	Different	Different	Different	Oper
Planning	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Oper
Assessments	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Oper
Implementation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Competing	Oper
Monitoring and evaluation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Separate	Oper
Identities	Joint	Individual	Individual	Individual	Separate	Competing	Oper
Decisions on resources and organisation means	Joint	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Oper
Information	Joint gathering	Sharing	Sharing	Sharing	Certain amount sh.	No sharing/spreading	Oper

4.3.3 Afghan NGOs

Denmark has channelled most of its funding through the Afghan government and national programmes. Part of this support has been provided for Afghan NGOs as well. In Helmand, the Danish mission has been able to work with Afghan NGOs because of their pragmatic character. In the perspective of the Danish MFA, they are more pragmatic than Danish NGOs and less concerned with the risk of blurring civil-military distinctions (Stepputat 2009:16, 17). Moreover, the fact that the British mission already has had its contacts within the Afghan NGO community has made it easier for the Danes to work with them. However, according to the Afghan NGOs, Danish government representatives in Helmand have not communicated effectively or approached the Afghan organisations with regard to the CA (Afghan NGO representative 7, July 2012). They argue that most of the communication, funding, meetings and implementation has been done through the British mission in Helmand. For Afghan NGOs, the mission in Helmand is a British one instead of a combination of different nations led by the British. The amount of funding available in both

countries for projects in Helmand explains the difference in perception. Namely, DFID's annual budget for Afghanistan in 2012 has been around 265 million USD, of which 20 per cent, 53 million USD, has been for Helmand (DFID). At the same time, Denmark's development support for Afghanistan in 2012 has been around 90 million USD, of which 15 per cent, 13,5 million USD, has been for Helmand (MFA evaluation department 2012, 17).

In figure 10, the different levels of coherence between the Danish state actors and Afghan NGOs are presented. In order to map this level of coherence, seven interviews with Afghan NGOs and four interviews with Danish officials were conducted. By taking all the given answers together, one is able to estimate the level of coherence for each factor in the framework, ranging from organisational structure to information sharing. This means that the level of coherence between Afghan NGOs and the Danish mission at the operational level varies between *integrated* and *compete*. For the range of factors, however, Danish government representatives scored most at *cooperation* because it has channelled most of its support through Afghan NGOs. At the same time, Afghan NGOs scored more towards *coordination* because they argue that most funding, communication and implementation has been done through the British mission rather than the Danish mission. This means that at the operational level coherence between Afghan NGOs and the Danish mission can be described as mainly *coordination*.

Figure 10: Different levels of coherence between the Danish mission and Afghan NGOs at the operational level

	United	Integrated	Cooperate	Coordinate	Coexist	Compete	levels
Organisational structure	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Oper
Actions	Joint	Joint or collaborative	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Ad hoc pragmatic	Competing	Oper.
Interests, visions, aims and objectives	Agreed	Some degree of agreement	Complement and overlap	Some similarity	Separate	Competing	Oper
Leadership and command	Unified	Joint or collaborative	Different	Different	Different	Different	Oper
Planning	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Oper
Assessments	Joint	Joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Independent or separate	Separate	Separate	Oper
Implementation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Competing	Oper
Monitoring and evaluation	Joint	Some degree of joint	Ad hoc joint or collaborative	Individual	Separate	Separate	Oper
Identities	Joint	Individual	Individual	Individual	Separate	Competing	Oper
Decisions on resources and organisation means	Joint	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Independent	Oper
Information	Joint gathering	Sharing	Sharing	Sharing	Certain amount sh.	No sharing/spreading	Oper

Figure 11 gives an overview of the level of coherence between governmental actors and non-governmental actors in the Danish CA, both at the strategic and operational level.

Figure 11: Overview of coherence in the Danish CA

Six types of relationships	Four levels of coherence							
	Internal-external		Inter-agency		Whole-of-government		Intra-agency	
	Strategic	Operational	Strategic	Operational	Strategic	Operational	Strategic	Operational
United								
Integrated					MFA- Foreign Affairs and DANIDA			
Cooperating		Local contractors/ private sector – Danish state actors			Involved Danish government Departments	Different Danish actors involved in the Helmand PRT		
Coordinating		Afghan NGOs- Danish state actors	Danish NGOs – Danish government Danish NGOs- private companies, relevant state entities etc.					
Coexisting				International NGOs – Danish state actors				
Competing								

4.4 DILEMMAS

The Danish approach has shown that, despite of the level of coherence between Danish NGOs and the Danish mission at the strategic level, limited practical experience of field-level cooperation has existed between Danish NGOs and the mission. This limited experience has created the way in which the Danish approach has dealt with the dilemmas that play a role in a CA. The way the Danish mission has dealt with the dilemmas is elaborated below.

4.4.1 Local ownership

In the theoretical chapter of this study, it is revealed that the first contradiction, used for this research study, concerns local ownership. In the case of Denmark, it has started late with establishing local ownership in Helmand, because of the lack of Danish civilian advisers in the beginning of the mission. Moreover, it is perceived as difficult for the Danish military to hand over responsibility to the local community, since they have felt that they could do a much better job (Danish official 3, June 2012). Notwithstanding, with the increasing of Danish civilian personnel in the PRT, more balance between civilian and military personnel has existed which has created the space that is needed for reaching local ownership (Danish official 2, June 2012). For example the Danish mission has tried to support local ownership by providing capacity to the Afghan government, notably the Afghan Ministry of Education. In line with keeping the preparations for the Afghan take-over of the responsibility in 2014, Denmark has increased its focus on capacity building in the Afghan civil administration (MOD and MFA Report 2010, 5). According the Danish government, the goal of handing over responsibility and ownership to the Afghan authorities demands that the Afghan government can gradually take over responsibility for the provision of basic public services. Next to providing better assistance to the Afghan government, the presence of the Danish actors and resources in Helmand have enabled local needs to be addressed. Danish civilian actors in the Helmand PRT have closely worked with the Afghan community. They have responded to the needs of the local population by means of close cooperation and meetings (*shuras*) with local elders (Danish officials 2 and 3, June 2012). For example, when local people complained about the difficult access of good services, they provided assistance in

how to approach the local government authorities and how to apply for the right services (Danish official 4, June 2012). In other cases, Denmark has been able to work for local communities to become more involved in the education infrastructure in Helmand (MOD and MFA Report 2010, 49). Although the Danish government has claimed that it has created space for Afghan ownership in order to ensure long-term sustainability, Danish NGOs have argued that local ownership has not been a great success yet for as to the Danish mission in Helmand. According to them, anything about the CA is short-term, whilst local ownership requires a long-term presence in order to establish a trustful relationship with the local community (Danish NGO representatives 1, 2 and 6, June 2012).

4.1.2 Tunnel vision

The second dilemma addressed in this research study is about the tunnel vision and is applicable to any nation that has contributed to the mission in Afghanistan. To a certain extent, Denmark, notably MOD, has looked at Afghanistan through a straw and has seen its own province as priority. As a result of this approach, the development strategy has been connected to the military deployment, which in turn has been based on Denmark's political criteria rather than the needs of the local population (Danish NGO representative 2, June and Academic 3, August 2012). But even though Denmark's main contribution to Afghanistan has gone to Helmand and most of Danish funds have sourced down to this province, Denmark has seen the CA in a broader perspective. Until now, Denmark has been a minor actor in international operations and therefore has had to fit in flexibility internationally and with other nations' civil and military contributions. In this sense, the CA has been defined as overall Afghanistan strategy, in which sustainable security and development has been also provided in provinces other than Helmand (Danish official 2, June 2012). It took time for the MFA to convince the MOD that Danish assistance should be distributed to all provinces of Afghanistan, especially in the more secure areas. However, despite the efforts of the MFA, priorities have remained different. Namely, according to the MFA, Danish NGOs have also contributed to this overall CA perspective with the work that they have accomplished in Afghanistan. Funding for Danish NGOs has, therefore, not been limited to Helmand. In fact, most of Danish NGOs have been funded by DANIDA for more than 80% (Academic 2 July 2012). However, the confusion of which is part of what agenda has made it more fragmented. Although

DANIDA funding has been available for all Danish NGOs in Afghanistan, it has had four main priority areas that need to be fulfilled: education, humanitarian assistance, good governance, and livelihood (Danish MFA 2012) According to a Danish NGO, these four priority points are both political and strategic points and fall under the stabilisation agenda (Danish NGO representative 3, June 2012). When not fitting in at least one of these priority areas, DANIDA funding is difficult to receive. For example, according to a Danish NGO, it has not received much DANIDA funding because their mandate, improving the health system, has not fallen under the four Danish priority areas (Danish NGO representative 3, June 2012). In this sense, Danish development cooperation has had fewer funds available to support projects outside their four main priority areas rather than outside the Helmand province. This is why most of the Danish NGOs has not received only funding from the Danish government, but from other governments, international organisations and private organisations as well.

4.4.3 Coordination

The third dilemma addressed in this study concerns the degree of coordination. Coordination should ensure that the civilian and military activities serve the overall strategic aims under changing conditions of operation (Stepputat 2009:16, 60). In the case of Denmark, coordinating the different actors involved in the CA has been more difficult at the operational level rather than at the strategic level. At the strategic level the relation between the different actors involved have been informal. In this case effective cooperation has been possible without inter-departmental structures. The reason for the quite poorly coordination at the operational level is that the Danes have not been well integrated in the field. They only have had a small battalion and a couple of civilian advisers in the Helmand PRT (Academic 3, August 2012). This has led the Danish government to arrange some of their activities, such as the planning and the assessments, in a different way than they initially would have done. In a sense, Denmark has tried to deal with this dilemma by reforming their civilian sector in the field, as well as making the different actors work together in an overlapping manner with respect to the CA (Academic 3, August 2012). However, despite of the efforts made by Denmark, MOD, MFA and DANIDA have been still the only three Danish organisations involved in the field, and coordination has remained a dilemma. According to a Danish official, when integrating different actors there is a variety of

opinions and interests (Danish official 2, June 2012). Especially during the planning phase coordination among the different government departments was a dilemma. According to DANIDA, it was difficult for the different government departments to decide to which Afghan province Denmark should contribute (Danish official 1, June 2012). Different ideas existed among DANIDA, the MFA and the MOD about which Afghan province needed the most help. Since not everyone agreed with the Danish deployment in Helmand, a compromise was needed where to assist security and development. In general, in order to keep all the different actors on board, one has to sacrifice some of the effects of the effort. At the strategic level this has been tried by dialogues with representatives of all actors involved, such as MFA, MOD and Danish NGOs. Although it is argued that coordination is usually easier when more limited actors are involved, in the case of Denmark it has appeared that dealing with coordination has been easier when all different actors are contributed.

4.4.4 Sustainability

The last dilemma, the sustainability of the CA, has appeared to be a real challenge within the Danish mission in Helmand, notably in line with the transition of 2014. This dilemma has been an issue especially among the NGO community in Afghanistan. According to most Danish NGOs, there are two main challenges that the NGO community in Afghanistan might face by the end of 2014. The first challenge concerns the available funding for Afghanistan. NGOs are afraid that the international funding for development in Afghanistan will deteriorate by the end of 2014, as result of the change in needs and political will when the mission comes to an end (Danish NGO representative 4, June 2012). The second challenge is about the security situation. According to two Danish NGO representatives, most development and humanitarian organisations have misunderstood the role of ISAF and the international military in Afghanistan (Danish NGO representative 1, July and 2, June 2012). The role of the military is to protect the work of NGOs so that they are able to deliver their projects. Indirectly, most Danish NGOs have agreed with this argumentation since the general perception among them is that the security situation might deteriorate when the ISAF mission pulls out. Given the fact that none of the Danish NGOs have been present in Helmand, the sustainability of the CA appears to have been more a strategic dilemma. Regardless the level of coherence at the operational level, the transition of Afghanistan has remained a concern for both Danish NGOs and the Danish mission.

For the Danish government, the challenge in the run to the transition of 2014 has been how to sustain the achieved projects and apply it to the government and ANSF (Danish official 2 and 4, June 2012). Therefore, a provincial plan (the Helmand Plan) covering the period of 2011-2014 has been established for a joint perspective on future planning for the alliance and Afghan government (MOD and MFA Report 2010, 9). This planning points out that Denmark maintains a military presence in the lead-up to the full transition in 2014. In addition, the planning concludes an agreement on a long-term partnership with Afghanistan. Furthermore, the Danish military role will shift from the current role of combat to a phase of training, education and efforts to support for Afghan forces. In order to let Denmark understand that Afghanistan should not be forgotten beyond 2014, IMS has tried to communicate with the Danish government about the necessity of a long-term development approach. However, Denmark has claimed to understand the need for long-term cooperation on development, even beyond 2014 (MOD and MFA Report 2010, 9). It has argued that Afghanistan is one of the world's poorest countries, and that there is a great need for a long-term development engagement; an engagement that will increase and continue beyond 2014 (Danish official 2, June 2012).

4.5 DIFFERENCES

4.5.1 Time horizons

Next to the above-mentioned dilemmas, the theoretical chapter of this study has also revealed the differences used for this research study. The first contradiction between the different actors involved concerns the various time horizons, which in the case of Denmark has appeared to be a respectable contradiction. In the Danish mission, three different time horizons can be distinguished (Danish NGO representative 3, June 2012). First, NGOs and development organisations work with a time horizon of 20 to 50 years. Second, military personnel have time horizons that are more limited towards a period of six months to two years. Finally, civilian personnel of DANIDA are in between the NGO and military time horizons. According to a Danish NGO, the Danish development agenda has been part of the stabilisation agenda, which makes that their time horizon is shorter than NGOs and longer than the military (Danish NGO representative 3, June 2012). At the operational level, according to most Danish NGOs, the role of the military has been to protect the work of NGOs so that they are

able to deliver their activities. In this situation, the different time horizons do not need to be necessarily negative. However, some Danish NGOs and MFA personnel have argued that after the military have cleared the area, they often leave without asking NGOs to come in for assisting the 'build' phase (Danish official 1, May 2012). Moreover, a lot of the military initiatives have been materialised and quantitative rather than qualitative. In a very short time, the military try to accomplish as much heavy stabilisation and reconstruction work as possible. As a result, development work has been undermined and one is not able to see the impact on the long term (Danish NGO representative 1, August 2012). Although in the Danish mission it has been recognised fully that civilian and military actors have different time horizons, at the strategic level Denmark has experienced this not as a problem. According to a Danish official, the fact that there has been a clear-cut understanding of the different time horizons has made it easier for the actors involved to deal with it (Danish official 4, June 2012). For example, DANIDA has had several dialogues with MFA on the transition of Afghanistan in 2014. They have negotiated whether it is possible for DANIDA to stay in Afghanistan despite of the departure of MFA in 2014 as result of the political decision to end the mission. Moreover, aware of the structural problems that the transition may cause, a four-year Helmand Plan has been established, covering the period of 2011-2014. Although from a MOD and MFA perspective four years is long term, the Danish involvement in Helmand used to be managed and directed by a one-year Helmand Plan, from a NGO perspective this is still short term. In order to find the right balance between government departments and non-government departments, Danish NGOs with a pragmatic character have tried to communicate their knowledge to the decision makers in Denmark (Danish NGO representative 7, June 2012). At the strategic level, they have shared their experiences of different time horizons gained in the Afghan provinces in which they have worked, hoping that the Danish mission could learn something from this in order to apply it to the Helmand province.

4.5.2 Capacities

The second difference, the different actors have had different capacities and speeds, has appeared to be complementary rather than a challenge within the Danish mission. The Danish government has agreed with the fact that all actors involved in the Danish CA have had different capacities and abilities (Danish official 2, June 2012). The

MFA has had a limited capacity to deploy civilian personnel and Danish NGOs in the field, while the MOD has had a limited capacity to provide physical security outside Gereshk. But, instead of seeing these differences as something contradictory, Denmark has tried to use them as a platform in order to move forward. Because Denmark has had only a small battalion and a handful of civilian advisers in the Helmand PRT, whereas the British have had representatives from DFID, FCO and MOD, the demands for cooperation with the British at operational level have been high. Along with CIMIC personnel, in this way, Denmark has tried to fill this vacuum. In addition, to deal with the capacity issue concerning the lack of Danish NGOs in Helmand, the MFA has made use of other development organisations, such as international and Afghan NGOs, and local contractors that have been present in the province. According to the Danish government, each actor can use its capability in a complementary way when working for the same objective (Danish official 4, June 2014). However, these objectives have not been always the same for every actor involved, which has led to a gap between the military, government and development approaches. To deal with this gap, the different actors have tried to appreciate each other's abilities as much as possible, and to make use of them where they can. For example, development actors have been less capable of doing heavy work. Some NGOs, therefore, have argued that, to a certain extent, it has been useful to have the military around to contribute. Under extreme circumstances, such as winter times, they can deliver sources that are necessary to move oneself from one place to the other (Danish NGO representative 3, June 2012). Furthermore, they can provide the men for implementing certain activities that are too heavy for development actors, such as building a road or a bridge (Danish NGO representative 7, June 2012).

4.5.3 Directions

The third tendency used for this research study is about the different directions. In the case of Denmark, this difference has appeared especially to be a concern among the Danish NGOs. In their perspective, development and military approaches have different strategies, which implement their programmes in a different way (Danish NGO representative 2, June 2012). However, since none of the Danish NGOs have been present in Helmand, this difference has been noticed especially at the strategic level. A pragmatic Danish NGO argues that any CA is a top-down approach, in which effects and impacts are not verifiable by NGOs (Danish NGO representative 1, July

2012). According to the NGO, most Danish NGOs have felt that they are too small to deal with the different directions between the different actors involved. In addition, most Danish NGOs have argued that while the Danish strategy tend to focus more on a top-down strategy, NGOs tend to work via the local community (Danish NGO representative 1, July, 2 & 7, June 2012). However, the MFA has tried to shift the differences in direction from a negative tendency to a complementary. During dialogues it has tried to reach a common understanding among the different actors involved. Moreover, DANIDA has tried to find a better balance between the different directions by supporting bottom-up projects in Helmand. An example of such a bottom-up project is the establishment of schools, by direct funding and through cooperation with an international NGO (Danish official 2, June 2012). Moreover, when the British in 2008 changed their policy by cancelling the Quick Impact Projects (QIP), the Danes followed this strategy by scattering more projects of a small size (Academic 2, July 2012).

4.5.4 Other tendencies

The fourth and last tendency addressed in this research study includes a combination of all kind of differences between the different actors involved. During the Danish mission, relations between the Danish civilian and military entities have been, as in most other countries involved in the operation in Afghanistan, characterised by different types of planning and different expectations as to available civilian resources and reach-back capacity. From a military perspective, the follow-up to operations of ‘shape, clear, hold’ in terms of civilian capacities for the ‘build’ phase has been slow, weak, and with little operational back-up from Copenhagen and the Danish Embassy in Kabul (Rehman and Friis 2010, 21). From a development perspective, the military personnel have showed little understanding for how development cooperation has channelled to Helmand, since they tend to aim for effects rather than processes (Afghan NGO representative 3, May 2012). In addition, according to the MFA, the military have had reluctant support and protection for civilian advisers (Danish official 1, June 2012). According to DANIDA, these differences have affected the operation of Danish representatives in Helmand, notably the development workers. To compromise these differences between military personnel and development actors, NGOs argue that both should support each other in their differences. For example, military strategies should provide opportunities for civilian actors so that they are able

to implement their activities (Danish NGO representative 3, June 2012). In general, the Danish MFA perceives these differences as something ad hoc, rather than a continuous process. It did, therefore, not accomplished to ask itself how the overall capacity and knowledge could be improved. What would result in an increased awareness among the different actors involved, which eventually would led to a better cooperation.

To conclude, the Danish contribution in Helmand has been deployed with a British-led PRT. Looking at the level of coherence between Danish NGOs that work in Afghanistan and the Danish mission, differences has existed with regard to the level at which it has taken place, the strategic level versus the operational level. At the strategic level coherence between most Danish NGOs and the Danish mission can be described as mainly *coordination*. At the operational level coherence between Danish NGOs and Danish state actors has *not existed* because none of the Danish NGOs have been active there. At the same time, at the operational level, coherence between international NGOs and the Danish mission has been mainly *coexistence*. Coherence between Afghan NGOs and the Danish mission can be described as mainly *coordination*. The high degree of coherence at the strategic level between most Danish NGOs and the Danish mission has contributed to the way in which the Danish approach has dealt with the dilemmas and differences between the actors involved in the CA. Most dilemmas and differences have been perceived as a complementary rather than contradictory. In addition, because of the good relationship between most Danish NGOs and the Danish mission at the strategic level, consultations have existed in which jointly has been looked to a solution for some of these dilemmas and differences. Notwithstanding, because of the informal relation between the different government departments at the strategic level as well as the somewhat credulous character of the MFA, dilemmas and differences have been perceived as something contemporary, rather than a continuous process.

5. A COMPARISON OF THE DIFFERENT CASES

After having introduced the British and Danish cases in Helmand, this chapter will compare both approaches by using the Dutch approach in Uruzgan. First, a short introduction of the Dutch case in Uruzgan is given, in order to be able to compare it to the British and Danish approaches (See Van der Lijn 2011, for a more detailed overview of the Dutch 3D mission in Uruzgan). This is followed by the differences between the different approaches. By comparing the different approaches, the research study looks at the different outcomes with regard to the dilemmas and differences between the actors involved.

5.1 THE DUTCH CASE IN AFGHANISTAN

The Netherlands actively contributed to the ISAF mission from its start in 2001. From 2004 to 2006, the Dutch were deployed in the northern province of Baghlan. On August 1st 2006, after its deployment in Baghlan ended, the Netherlands became lead nation of the ISAF mission in the southern province of Uruzgan. In Uruzgan, the Dutch followed the ‘ink-spot strategy’, focusing on the central districts of Tarin Kowt, Deh Rawod and Chora (Van der Lijn 2011, 34). The Dutch mission was initially planned to last two years, but was extended to August 1st 2010.

The goal of the mission was, in accordance with the ISAF-mandate, to support the Afghan authorities in Uruzgan to accomplish that they could eventually guarantee security and stability in the province on their own, as well as reducing support for the Taliban and related groups (Dutch Government 2005). This was done by promoting good governance, setting up efficient police and armed forces, assisting in the building of a constitutional state and carrying out CIMIC and reconstruction activities (Dimitriu and De Graaf 2010, 431). To achieve these goals, the Netherlands made use of an approach in which political, military, development and socio-economic elements were combined. The approach of the mission, originally known as the CA, became in the Netherlands publicly known as the 3D approach (defence, diplomacy and development). The Dutch Ministry of Defence cooperated with other government departments, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and also with Dutch and local Afghan NGOs and a broad range of other partners. The Dutch military approach in

Uruzgan was carried out under the motto ‘as civilian as possible and as military where necessary’ (Gabrielse 2007, 68). It had a dual character, which maintained both socio-economic means and an overall conservative use of force. The civil assessment, to estimate the social context of the mission, was to be seen as the guiding framework for all civil and military activities. Because these activities often could not be carried out independently, civil and military efforts were closely intertwined during the mission. The emphasis of the Dutch approach was on making the Taliban and related groups irrelevant by ‘winning the hearts and minds of the local population’, as a result of which the Taliban eventually would lose its constituency (Van der Lijn 2011, 32). This was done by creating a safe and secure environment, short-time small-scale CIMIC projects, such as water pumps, and more long-term larger projects, such as building capacity for the government.

The implementation of the Dutch mission in Uruzgan contained both top-down and bottom-up efforts. The larger part of the annual development aid was spent through trust funds, such as the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) and the Law and Order Trust Fund, and multilateral programs (top-down). In addition, Dutch NGOs became also increasingly involved in Uruzgan. The ministries involved NGOs within consultations in preparation for its engagement in Uruzgan, as well as training and exercising with military personnel. Within the Dutch strategy, preconditions for national programs were created, to be rolled out by actively involving NGOs and by directly funding projects in the sectors of education, infrastructure, health and alternative livelihoods (bottom-up) (Gabrielse 2007, 69).

During the mission in Uruzgan, NGOs played an increasingly important role in the bottom-up development projects. In 2006, the Dutch Consortium for Uruzgan (DCU) was established as an umbrella organisation for five Dutch NGOs; Save the Children, Cordaid, Healthnet-TPO, The Dutch Committee for Afghanistan and ZOA Refugee Care. In addition to the Dutch NGOs, 12 Afghan partner NGOs that implemented projects in the field joined the DCU as well (Van der Lijn 2011, 34). The activities of the Dutch NGOs covered almost every development sector the PRT was involved in such as education, infrastructure, health, agriculture and gender. Whilst there were only five NGOs in 2006, their number increased further once defence started to portray the area as secure. Moreover, the fact that the image that the ministries had of NGOs seemed to change during the process and that funding was available further increased their numbers. Looking at the interaction between NGOs

and the state actors, great improvement had been made during the course of the mission (Van der Lijn 2011, 34).

5.2 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE THREE APPROACHES

While the three cases have contributed to tackle security, governance and development in Afghanistan, and have shared some common approaches, the focus of this research study is on the significant differences. One of the main distinctions between the different approaches regards the relationship between development workers and military personnel (Stepputat 2009:14, 58). In Afghanistan, despite of an overall tendency of PRTs to become more civilian with increased numbers of civilian personnel, PRTs have generally been subjected to military dominance. The problem of civil capacity has been applicable to all three approaches and the international organisations they have relied on. Their attempts at civil integration have seemed to meet the same obstacles. However, the magnitude of this issue and the initiatives that have been taken to rapidly deploy civil capacity has differed for the three approaches. Both the UK and the Netherlands have led multinational PRTs, which continuously have been developed and adapted to their context. In this sense, the lead nations' governments have been pushed towards more integrated approaches in the PRT. It was not until early 2009 that the Dutch PRT came under a dual-headed leadership of a civil representative (CivRep), and military representative (Grandia 2009, 43). As well as requiring much greater capacity of the MFA, the increased civilian emphasis also called for a more Afghan involvement (Van der Lijn 2011, 36). During 2009, almost all operations were conducted together with Afghan partners, and at the end of the mission, many operations were Afghan led (Ibid). Since 2009, the British in Helmand have practiced a approach with a high-level diplomat directing the PRT (Stepputat 2009:14, 58). Nevertheless, the British military still has had a chunk of responsibility and authority within the Helmand PRT. For Denmark, who has contributed to the British PRT in Helmand, accommodating operational integration in the context of multinational operations has been an issue. Only a handful of Danish civilian advisers have been deployed in the British Helmand PRT. Since the presence of these actors is argued as being crucial for the coordination between the different government

departments, the Danish capacity in the Helmand PRT has been limited (Academic 3, August 2012).

5.2.1 Differences in coherence

5.2.1.1 Strategic level

For the three approaches, the level of coherence between NGOs and the mission has been paired by considerable differences between the strategic and the operational level. At the strategic level coherence between the NGOs in the DCU and the Dutch mission was mainly *coordination*, coherence between most Danish NGOs that work in Afghanistan and the Danish mission can be described as *coordination* as well, coherence between most British NGOs in BAAG and the British mission has been mainly *coexistence*.

At the strategic level the different degree of coherence depends partly on the approach that has been used by the three governments to involve their national NGOs in the mission. The Dutch and the Danish missions both have achieved a much better relationship with their NGOs than the British mission. In the case of the Netherlands, for some Dutch officials, NGOs in the DCU were rather seen as a partner, not so much as an element or extension of the comprehensive strategy (Dutch official 1, July 2012). This was based on the idea that, during the mission, the governmental actors lay the foundations for development, on the basis of which NGOs continue to build (Van der Lijn 2011, 46). Also in the Danish case, there has been no mention of integration, but rather a high degree of coordination between the Danish mission and most Danish NGOs that work in Afghanistan (Academic 3, August 2012). Moreover, Danish NGOs have appreciated the way they have been approached by the Danish government. According to most Danish NGOs, the government always have showed respect towards them and have made them feel part of the Danish overall Afghanistan strategy, even though none of them have been able to work in Helmand.

In contrast, the British approach has been more about integrating the different government departments than involving British NGOs in their Helmand strategy. In the view of Whitehall, the British CA reflects a whole-of-government approach in which NGOs only are contributing at the operational level, to cover the development part (British official 1, June 2012). The British government departments and British NGOs that have been invited for consultations in London both have talked a different

language (Academic 1, June 2012). For Whitehall, notably for the MOD, NGOs are an instrument to reach security (Academic 1, June 2012 and Dutch official 1 July 2012). However, the British NGOs have wanted to make sure that they could keep their independent and impartial status with respect to the different government departments and politics (Academic 1, June 2012). British NGO members of BAAG, therefore, argue that the British government has not been effective in including NGOs in meetings at the strategic level. Furthermore, the culture of the British military differs from the Danish and Dutch military. Namely, the Danish and Dutch military have been less experienced with counter-insurgency operations and more with peacebuilding operations (Academic 1, June 2012; Dutch official 1 and Dutch military 2, July 2012). Both nations have had more experience with interventions designed to prevent the start of a violent conflict rather than armed interventions with a lot of violence. In general, peacebuilding efforts are undertaken both by civilian and military actors to create a sustainable peace. As a result, both are much more used to have civilian direction. Therefore, the civil and military relations have worked better for the Danish and Dutch approaches.

5.2.1.2 Operational level

At the operational level coherence between Mercy Corps and the British mission can be described as mainly *coordination*, coherence with INGOs, with the exception of BRAC, can be described as mainly *coexistence* and coherence with Afghan NGOs has been more *cooperating*. Coherence between Danish NGOs and the Danish mission has *not existed* because none of the Danish NGOs have been active in Helmand, coherence with INGOs has been mainly *coexistence* and coherence with Afghan NGOs can be described as mainly *coordination*. Coherence between the NGOs in DCU and the Dutch mission was more *coexistence* and coherence with Afghan NGOs was mainly *cooperating*.

At the operational level, the difference in the level of coherence depends partly on the security situation in both provinces. Helmand has been the centre of the Taliban and related groups, which have caused a lot of tensions within the province (Dutch military 2, July 2012). Because of the weakness of the Afghan provincial- and district-level government and the hostile security situation, the Helmand PRT's implementing partners have been limited in type and number (Gordon 2011, 39). A lot of NGOs left the province from the beginning of the mission due to the

deterioration of the security situation. At the same time, it has led some of the few Afghan, national and international NGOs that have been able to stay and work in Helmand being more reliant on the state actors, notably on the military. A lot of the contacts between actively involved NGOs, such as BRAC and HAFO, and the British and Danish missions have gone via the PRT and the military (Ibid). Some of these NGOs even have worked under the protection of the British and Danish military (Dutch official 1, July 2012). This, in turn, has led to a more increased level of coherence between these involved NGOs and the British and Danish missions in the Helmand province. However, not all NGOs that operate in Helmand have been comfortable collaborating with the PRT, and those have tried to distance themselves as much as possible. In a sense, the difference in the level of coherence has depended also on the character of the NGOs. This, for example, has been the case for most international NGOs and their strict international guidelines, such as Oxfam Novib, Save the Children and ICRC.

The dangerous security situation in Helmand has also limited access to the province for development organisations. This has been the case for the Danish NGOs. At the operational level coherence between the Danish NGOs and the Danish mission has not existed, because none of the Danish NGOs have been able to work in Helmand. In the case of the British mission, a certain degree of coherence has existed between the state actors and Mercy Corps in the field, more than at the strategic level between most British NGOs and the British government. In contrast to the Danish NGOs and most British NGOs, Mercy Corps has worked in Helmand already a long time before the British deployment. Therefore, its presence in the province cannot be directly related to the British mission. Besides, the position of its local partners has been very important as well. If a local partner chooses to cooperate with the mission, the Danish or British NGO generally follows.

Meanwhile, in Uruzgan the situation was different. According to the Afghan NGOs that have worked both in the Helmand and Uruzgan province, Uruzgan is a much smaller province than Helmand, and a better security environment to work in (Afghan NGO representatives 1 and 3, May 2012, and 6, July 2012). Uruzgan has not needed the amount of military protection as in Helmand. This situation has made it easier for development organisations to go to Uruzgan and implement projects, while at the same time it has enabled them to distance themselves from the mission. In the case of the Dutch mission, therefore, initially contact between the Dutch state actors

and NGOs in the field was limited. In contrast to the good coordination between the Dutch NGOs in the DCU and the Dutch government at the strategic level, coherence at the operational level was more coexistence, because of the separate mandates, identities and actions (Dutch official 1, July 2012). Also for many Dutch NGOs, important was the position of their local partners. If a local partner chose to cooperate with the mission, the Dutch NGO generally followed. According to Dutch NGOs in the DCU, there was no direct cooperation between them and the military except for the exchange of information needed to implement the projects in an effective way (Van der Lijn 2011, 45).

5.2.2 Approaches to dilemmas

The Dutch case in Uruzgan had a dual character, in which political means, socio-economic measures and the use of force were combined. During the Dutch deployment in Uruzgan, the Dutch integrated approach became more coherent. This created a situation in which most of the time all three government departments together tried to deal with the dilemmas in the CA. The presence of both Dutch civilian and military personnel in Uruzgan would afford better assistance to the local government and enable local needs to be addressed (Dutch official 1, July 2012). Officials were able to address the concerns of the local population, whilst some military projects offered temporary jobs and opportunities for many of the population (Dutch military 2, July 2012). However, according to many military and some officials, coordinating different interests and agendas of the many organisations involved was difficult (Van der Lijn 2011, 55). Depending on the conditions of the mission, a single D approach would have been more cost effective and faster. The mission in Uruzgan did strengthen the coherence between Dutch NGOs in the DCU and Dutch state actors (Dutch official 1, July 2012). As a result, the relationship between the Dutch mission and the Dutch NGOs in the DCU was relatively good. Moreover, the effort was there to include NGOs as much as possible in the approach to the dilemmas. For example, according to some Dutch NGOs, to a certain extent the development strategy was connected to the military deployment. However, the Dutch government established a long-term development strategy for Afghanistan that is not only national, but in part also directed at Uruzgan (Van der Lijn 2011, 60). Moreover, after the Netherlands left Uruzgan in 2012, a number of development projects

remained under the guidance of the Dutch embassy and projects of the DCU are funded until the end of 2013. This means, that the end of the military mission did not mean the end of development assistance to Uruzgan. In addition, the MFA argues that the Uruzgan development programme included activities in other districts and provinces as well (Van der Lijn 2012, 58). As such, funding was available for development cooperation to support the vulnerable population outside Uruzgan. However, because of the high degree of coherence in the Netherlands, the Dutch mission was perceived as too fragmented by partner coalitions, such as the UK, which eventually led to a number of international frictions (Ibid).

The Danish case in Helmand seems to have had, to a certain extent, a similar approach when it comes to dealing with the dilemmas in the CA. Also in this approach, the different government departments together have tried to deal with the dilemmas. For example, certain dilemmas, such as local ownership and coordination, have been dealt with by sending more civilian personnel to Helmand in order to make up a better balance between the different government departments in the field. However, coordinating civilian and military actors at the operational level has been a weak point since inter-department efforts have remained on the backburner. Because of the good relationship between most Danish NGOs and the Danish mission at the strategic level, consultations have existed in which jointly has been looked how to deal with some of these dilemmas. As result of these consultations, the Danish government has established a Helmand Plan covering the period 2011-2014 in which the great need for long-term development engagement, even beyond 2014, has been pointed out. Moreover, sustainable security and development has been also provided for provinces other than Helmand (Danish official 2, June 2012). Until now, Denmark has been a minor actor in international operations and therefore has had to fit in flexibility internationally and with other nations' civil and military contributions. In the view of MFA, Danish NGOs working in Afghanistan have contributed to this overall Afghanistan strategy as well. Funding for these Danish NGOs, therefore, has not been limited to Helmand. Next to the Danish NGOs, in the view of most officials and military personnel, Afghan and international NGOs have played a role in dealing with the dilemmas as well. According to them, responding to the needs of the local population has been possible especially by the means of Afghan and international NGOs.

The British mission in Helmand has been quite different from both the Danish and Dutch missions. Two features have been the underlying reason for this. Firstly, the British military has had a tremendous authority within decision-making and the planning of the British CA. From the start the MOD has seen itself as autonomous, much more than within the Danish and Dutch approaches. Dilemmas in the CA, therefore, have been often dealt with from a military perspective. In fact, some officials and British NGOs in BAAG argue that too much military focus has been on the approach to some of the dilemmas. For example, British military have looked at how they could better target stabilisation and development activities to meet the requirements of the local population (British military 1, June 2012). In addition, Task Force Commanders have designed a methodology, called TCAF, to learn the needs and concerns of the local population (House of Commons Defence Committee 2009). Also, according to some British NGOs in BAAG, too much military focus has been on the period in the run towards the transition in 2014 (British NGO representatives 3 and 4, June 2012). The British government has written a very detailed Helmand Plan regarding leaving in 2014 (United Kingdom Parliament 2012, 14). However, the main concern of the Plan has been the transition of the security sector, rather than long-term development. Second, at the strategic level a limited degree of interaction between the British NGOs in BAAG and the British mission has existed. As a result, NGOs have not been involved in dealing with the dilemmas. Many NGO members of BAAG argue that there has not been any formal communication from the British government setting out the adoption of the mission. In addition, NGOs have not been invited to communicate about the dilemmas in the CA (British NGO representatives 3 and 4, June 2012). Besides, the effort to coordinate the different actors involved by using structures has been applied only to the government departments rather than including NGOs.

5.2.3 Approaches to differences

In the Dutch mission in Uruzgan, at the start the military were often perceived as to be in the lead (Van der Lijn 2011, 72). However, as the mission proceeded, increasingly it became a common effort of both MFA and MOD (Ibid). In addition, direct contacts and coordination between Dutch NGOs in the DCU and the mission grew. This created a situation in which most of the time differences between the actors involved were perceived as complementary rather than something negative. Both the military

and officials were aware of the differences between the different actors involved, and to a certain extent together tried to deal with these. For example, according to many officials and military personnel, one should not focus on one approach, but do both at the same time (Ibid. 54). Because the “shape, clear, hold, build” phases often could not be carried out consecutively, civil and military efforts were closely intertwined during the mission (Dutch military 2, July 2012). This further increased coherence between civil and military actors, instead of making the differences between them bigger. In addition, some military personnel tried to plan long-term processes, whilst some development workers actively looked for advice. Moreover, to a certain extent the military approach attempted to establish preconditions that were needed for effective top-down development policy. At the same time, Dutch development cooperation also supported bottom-up projects such as establishing schools and enhancing the health sector (Van der Lijn 2011, 54). It was believed that both approaches affected each other positively.

Within the Danish approach, most officials and military personnel have viewed the differences between the actors involved as complementary as well. According to some officials, the fact that there has been a clear-cut understanding of these differences has made it easier for the different actors involved to deal with it. In addition, because of the good relationship at the strategic level between some Danish NGOs and the Danish mission, dialogues have existed in which lessons learned have been shared with regard to these differences. For example, some Danish NGOs have exchanged information with regard to the different time horizons in the Afghan provinces they have worked in, hoping that the Danish mission could learn from it (Danish NGO representative 7, June 2012). Moreover, according to some Danish NGOs, military strategies have created opportunities for civilian actors, in a sense that they were able to implement their activities. On the other hand, however, some Danish NGOs argue that while NGOs have worked via the local community, the Danish strategy has focused more on a top-down strategy (Danish NGO representatives 1, July, 2 and 7, June 2012). During consultations, the MFA has tried to reach a common understanding with regard to these different approaches. In addition, DANIDA has tried to find a better balance between the different directions by supporting bottom-up projects in Helmand. However, because Denmark has been a minor actor in Afghanistan, with little civilian and military personnel in the field, it has relied on the capacity of partner coalitions, such as the UK, as well as Afghan and

international NGOs. Notwithstanding, because of the informal relation between the government departments at the strategic level as well as the somewhat credulous character of MFA, differences have been perceived as something contemporary, rather than a continuous process. It has, therefore, not been accomplished to ask itself how these differences in strategies could be improved.

In contrast to the other two approaches, within the British approach differences have been perceived as contradictory. Because of its broad vision and responsibilities towards the international community, the UK has been integrated more internationally in Afghanistan. This might have influenced the degree of coherence in London. In addition, there has been a lack of shared identities and cultures between the different government departments at the strategic level (British official 1, June 2012). Moreover, the different government departments have wanted to maintain their authority (Academic 1, June 2012). As result, it has been difficult for the actors involved to respect each other's abilities and inabilities. For example, the British mission has had a real chronological attitude, in which every actor has been appointed to implement its own tasks in order to avoid a clash between the different strategies (British official 2, June 2012). Also in the view of Mercy Corps, each actor should have its own focus since in the past different time horizons have resulted in a clash between military personnel and development actors. In addition, development cooperation has had a long-term engagement to reach sustainability and has been Afghan driven (British NGO representative 3, June 2012). However, in the absence of a grand strategy in the UK, the military have been dominant, which has influenced the long-term outcomes of the mission. In a sense, the British government has tried to find a better balance between the development and military strategies. It has scattered, for example, more development projects of a small size and longer-term (Gordon 2011, 4). Nevertheless, by sending more military personnel to Helmand as answer to many dilemmas and differences, the British mission has become even more military in character.

This chapter has showed the differences between the three approaches. The difference in the level of coherence between NGOs and the mission has contributed to the way in which the three approaches have dealt with the dilemmas and differences between the actors involved. With regard to the Dutch mission in Uruzgan, a situation was created in which most of the time all actors jointly tried to address the dilemmas and

differences. Moreover, the effort was there to include NGOs in consultations as much as possible, especially at the strategic level. The Danish mission in Helmand seems to have had, to a certain extent, a similar approach. Also in this approach the different government departments together have tried to deal with the dilemmas and differences. In addition, at the strategic level, consultations with Danish NGOs have existed in which jointly has been looked to a solution for some of these dilemmas and differences. The British mission in Helmand has been different from both the Danish and Dutch missions. The limited level of coherence between most British NGOs and the British mission at the strategic level, the military character of the mission and the lack of balance between MOD, FCO and DFID have been the underlying reasons for this. As a result, most dilemmas have been dealt with from a military perspective. In addition, differences have been looked at from each government department separately rather than from a complementary perspective. Moreover, NGOs have not been involved in the approach to the dilemmas and differences between the different actors involved in a CA.

Figure 12 gives an overview of the level of coherence between governmental actors and non-governmental actors in the British, Danish and Dutch approaches, both at the strategic and operational level.

Figure 12: Overview of coherence between NGOs and the British, Danish and Dutch mission

Six types of relationships	Four levels of coherence							
	Internal-external		Inter-agency		Whole-of-government		Intra-agency	
	Strategic	Operational	Strategic	Operational	Strategic	Operational	Strategic	Operational
United								
Integrated								
Cooperating		Afghan NGOs- British and Dutch state actors Dutch NGOs (DCU)	DCU – its members (Dutch NGOs)	BRAC – British state actors				
Coordinating		Afghan NGOs- Danish state actors	Dutch NGOs (DCU) – Dutch government Danish NGOs – Danish government BAAG – its members (British NGOs)	Mercy Corps – British state actors Dutch government – Dutch NGOs (DCU)				
Coexisting			British NGOs – British government	International NGOs- British and Danish state actors Dutch NGOs (DCU) – Dutch state actors				
Competing								

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the previous chapters I have tried to map the level of coherence between NGOs and the British, Danish and Dutch missions in southern Afghanistan, and how this has influenced the approach to the dilemmas and differences in a CA. Therefore, the central research question was: What are the differences between the British, Danish and Dutch missions for dealing with NGOs in the comprehensive approach in Afghanistan, and to what extent does this affect the different approaches to the dilemmas and differences? Firstly, this concluding chapter draws conclusions on the central research question of this research study. Secondly, it reflects on the research study and proposes a number of recommendations for future research.

6.1 CONCLUSION

The comprehensive approach (CA) is the result of the changes in the international security environment. It became clear that most conflicts are complex and that a one-dimensional military approach does not suffice. Civil wars like the one in Afghanistan have led governments and organisations, such as the EU and UN, to realise that a new approach is needed. This became known as the CA. The approach is based on the thought that there should also be a political, civilian and socio-economic component besides the traditionally military component in post-conflict and counterinsurgency operations.

This research study has taken a closer look at the British, Danish and Dutch integrated approaches, to find out how NGOs are dealt with and to what extent this affects the different approaches to the dilemmas and differences. For the purpose of this research study the CA has been defined as “greater coherence in the different approaches of different organisations”. In addition, the study has made use of a list of dilemmas and differences that play a role within a CA.

The level of coherence between NGOs and the missions has differed according to the level at which it has taken place, the strategic or the operational level, and whether it has concerned cooperation with local, national or international NGOs. At the strategic level the degree of coherence depends on the approach that is used by the different governments to involve NGOs in the mission. In addition, the image that

the different government departments have of NGOs is crucial as well. The level of coherence obviously differs for NGOs that are seen as partners and NGOs that are seen as subcontractors. At the operational level the degree of coherence depends partly on the security situation of the province, the position of local partner NGOs, and the character of NGOs. A dangerous situation can limit access to the province for development organisations, but at the same time it can also lead to a more close relation between NGOs, mostly Afghan, and the mission since they are more reliant on each other. However, if NGOs have a strict international (humanitarian) guideline, such as many international NGOs, then a high level of coherence between them and the governmental mission is unlikely.

There are significant differences between the three cases when it comes to the integration of NGOs in the CA. The Dutch and Danish missions both have achieved a much better relationship with their NGOs than the British mission. In the case of the Netherlands, for some officials, NGOs in the DCU were rather seen as a partner, not so much as an extension of the mission. Besides, during the deployment in Uruzgan, the Dutch integrated approach became more coherent. As a result, the relationship between the Dutch NGOs in the DCU and the Dutch mission was relatively good. Direct contacts and coordination between them, but also with Afghan NGOs, grew in order to implement the projects in an effective way. Also in the Danish case, the government departments have made the Danish NGOs feel part of the overall Afghanistan strategy. At the strategic level there have been a lot of consultations and a high degree of coordination between the Danish mission and most Danish NGOs that work in Afghanistan. Besides, at the operational level coherence between Afghan and international NGOs and the Danish mission has grown because of the lack of Danish NGOs in Helmand. In contrast, the British approach has been more about integrating the different government departments than involving British NGOs in their Helmand strategy. For Whitehall, notably for the MOD, NGOs are an instrument to reach security. Moreover, the different government departments have not been effective in including British NGOs in BAAG in consultations at the strategic level. As result, there has been a limited degree of interaction between those NGOs and the British mission. Since NGOs have been perceived as “contractors”, involvement has been more towards the operational level. Some Afghan NGOs, such as HAFO, and international NGOs, such as BRAC, have been therefore viewed as principally involved organisations.

The differences in the three approaches explain the different way for dealing with the dilemmas and differences. Firstly, the greater the level of coherence between NGOs and the different government departments in the mission, the more effort is there to include NGOs in the approach to the dilemmas. For example, in the Danish and Dutch cases consultations have existed in which jointly has been looked how to deal with some of these dilemmas. Moreover, approaches have been developed in which development cooperation has not been left out. Secondly, when there is a tremendous military authority within the mission, dilemmas are dealt with from a military perspective, in which NGOs are not so much included. This has been the case for the UK in which too much military focus has been on the approach to the dilemmas. For example, a lot of attention has gone to the security sector, more than to development cooperation. In addition, it is the military personnel that have looked at how they could better target stabilisation and development activities. Finally, when non-government and government measures are combined, most officials and military personnel view the differences as complementary rather than negative. Because the Danish and Dutch cases have been a common effort of both MFA and MOD, different strategies between the actors involved have been perceived as intertwined. The fact that there is understanding for each other's approaches makes it easier for the different actors involved to deal with it. In the British case, on the other hand, the lack of shared identities, agendas and cultures between the different government departments at the strategic level has created a situation in which it has been difficult for the actors involved to respect each other's abilities and inabilities.

6.2 REFLECTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are several reasons why it was not possible to answer the main research question with perfect accuracy. First, most subjects in this research study were complex, such as the role of NGOs in the CA, the level of coherence and the dilemmas and differences. As a result, it is possible that some of the interviewees answered some of the research questions using so-called politically desirable answers, which are answers given in order to gain a certain degree of political acceptance. Especially with regard to the dilemmas and differences, it might have been the case that some officials by-passed the questions.

Furthermore, this research study was perhaps too ambitious. A comparison of three different approaches in Afghanistan was too much of a good thing. Sequential, the research took much longer time than expected and the size of the project has become a little too big. When, for example, only two different cases would have been compared more extensively, this problem would have been to prevent. Besides, it would have been easier to answer the main research question in a more critical and substantive way, which could have optimised the results. Moreover, the Helmand and Uruzgan provinces were maybe not the best choice for comparison since the security situation is very different. The different level of violence in both provinces might have influenced the approaches to the dilemmas and differences.

With regard to the method, too much interviews were conducted. The interviews were very useful in getting a better insight in the three approaches, the level of coherence between NGOs and the different government departments and the dilemmas and differences among the actors involved in a CA. However, because the large amount of interviews, too much diverse information was received which made data analysis difficult. With fewer interviews, perhaps a more critical and better-founded research study could have been written. In addition, it would have provided more depth and useful insights in the different approaches to the dilemmas and differences. Also, not so much literature was found that gave exactly the information that was needed. Most sources on this topic were general articles about the CA, which did not elaborate on the effect of coherence between NGOs and government departments on dilemmas and differences within the CA.

Finally, I propose some recommendations for future research on integrated missions. Further research is necessary to look at the many issues not dealt within this research study. It appears there is still much to be researched into relating to the CA. First of all, further research into other dilemmas and differences would be useful. For this research a fixed list of only a few dilemmas and differences was used. It would be interesting, however, to look whether other dilemmas and differences play a role as well in the three approaches. Second, the three approaches have not been radically different from each other. They have contributed to tackle security, governance a development in Afghanistan, and have shared some common approaches. Therefore, a further comparison with other countries, such as the United States, would be useful to look if and how these approaches differ more from each other. Finally, research on the transition in Afghanistan would be useful. The upcoming transition in 2014 might

be a very good test case for a further application of the CA. The transition has to take comprehensively, and development parties have to take on tasks to reduce the burden. The transition would be a whole new comprehensive operation in itself, and therefore an interesting topic to study.

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APPENDIX 1

LIST OF INTERVIEES

Afghan NGOs

Fariba Mohammadi
Mohammed Jebran
Mohammed Saeed
Ibrahim Weal
Walter Bresseleers
Atta
Jaweed

WFPO
HUDA
HRDA
ACBAR
Tawanmandi
ANCC
HAFO

British NGOs

Sudarshan Reddy Kodoory
P.V. Krishnan
Valerie Ceccherini
Liz Cameron
Irfan Kan
Sarah Fane
Howard Mollet
Nick Hutchings

Tearfund
Action Aid
Mercy Corps
BAAG
Muslim Hands
Afghan connection
Care International UK
Afghanaid

Danish NGOs

Allan Vokstrup
Rasmus Stuhr Jakobsen
Mingo Heiduk
Vibeke Valkenberg
Andrea Karner
Kim Hartz
Filip Buff Pedersen

DAARTT (Danish People Aid)
DRC/DDG
DAC
DACAAR
DACAAR
Mission East
Mision East

International NGOs

Daoud Ghaznawi
Nerys Bannister
Finn Rasmussen
Susanne Inkinen
Louise Hancock
Sarah Cotton
Amanual Chowdhury

Save the Children
IRC
IMS
IMS
Oxfam
ICRC
BRAC

Government representatives

Cherry Roberts
Andrew Hill
Babu Rahman
Karen Jackson
Tamim Bedar
Pernille Dueholm
Casper Klynge
Ivan Nielsen

DFID
DFID
FCO
House of Commons
Danish Embassy Kabul
DANIDA
DANIDA
DANIDA

Marten de Boer

Buza

International organisations

Denis Killian

OCHA

Military

Maj. Kaine Price

Lt Col Henk Ouwehand

Lt Col Nico Tak

Lt Lee Ebsworth

Academics

Stuart Gordon

Finn Stepputat

Peter Viggo Jakobsen

Robert Egnell

London School of Economics

Senior researcher DiiS

University of Copenhagen

Georgetown University Washington

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW GUIDE NGOS

Comprehensive approach in general and role NGOs

1. What does your organisation understand by the term Comprehensive Approach?
 - meaning
 - goals
 - actors
 - manner integration
2. In the Comprehensive Approach defence, diplomacy and development are integrated. In what ways NGOs could contribute to the Comprehensive Approach in general?

Role NGOs in different cases

3. The mission in Afghanistan shows progress in the implementation of the Comprehensive Approach. Has the (British/Danish) government effectively communicated with your organisation what it understands by the Comprehensive Approach?
4. In relation to the mission in Helmand, Afghanistan, does your organisation see the Comprehensive Approach as an effective way of improving security, stabilization and development?
5. The information that your organisation provides, says that you are active in Afghanistan. Does your organisation work in the Helmand province?
 - If yes, for how long does your organisation already work in Helmand?
 - If yes, does your organisation work with local actors in Helmand, which and why?
 - If no, has your organisation worked in Helmand in former times?
 - If no, why your organisation does not work in Helmand?
 - If no, if the province would be safer, do you think your organisation would work in Helmand during the mission?
6. For the research it is interesting to know if and how the (British/Danish) government attempted to engage NGOs in the implementation of the Comprehensive Approach in Helmand, Afghanistan. By a number of points I will try to map the answer.
 - Has your organisation been involved in the Comprehensive Approach? ☐ if no, what challenges your organisation might face when working in an environment in which a Comprehensive Approach is implemented?
 - Do you know other international organisations who have been involved in the Comprehensive Approach?
 - Within the Comprehensive Approach, do you think that the (British/Danish) government achieved the right balance between the three Ds?
 - How was the cooperation within and between the three Ds?
 - Did the (British/Danish) government make use of the local knowledge of your organisation? (informal) sharing of information?
 - Where there differences in interests, aims, objectives and identities between military personnel and development workers?

- Has the (British/Danish) government effectively involved your organisation in the assessment of issues?
- Has the (British/Danish) government engaged your organisation in the planning of the Comprehensive Approach in Afghanistan?
- Has the (British/Danish) government engaged your organisation in decision making?
- Has the (British/Danish) government effectively involved your organisation in the implementation of activities?
- Has the (British/Danish) government engaged your organisation in the evaluation of activities?

Dilemmas

Despite the strive for greater coherence within the comprehensive approach, different levels of interaction led to a number of dilemmas within the Comprehensive Approach. There are four contradictions between certain characteristics of a Comprehensive Approach that appear to be a dilemma and I want to ask you about.

7. A development and peace process does require local ownership. Looking at the (British/Danish) Comprehensive Approach, do you think that it generates enough local ownership, why yes or why not?
8. The more integration takes place at a national level in the countries providing troops, the more difficult integration and coordination at the regional level in the host nation becomes. Did your organisation had difficulties because of the tunnel-vision of ISAF?
 - Was it hard to find funding for projects in different provinces other than Helmand? (British/Danish government, population, other organisations because of national adoption Helmand)
 - Has the military tunnel-vision led (in)directly to tunnel-vision of your own work?
9. The more coherence, the more coordination is needed, and therefore effort, time and funds. Earlier in this conversation you told me that your organisation has (not) been involved in the Comprehensive Approach.
 - If involved, can you tell me anything about the required effort, time and funds?
 - If not involved, would it not have been more efficient for your organisation to be involved in the Comprehensive Approach?
10. The ISAF mission and the Comprehensive Approach, with or without positive result, have produced a lot of attention and funds for development in Afghanistan. What is the impact of both on your work?
 - What are the challenges faced by your organisation when in 2014 the (British/Danish) military mission in Afghanistan comes to an end?

Differences

Besides the dilemmas I have just mentioned, there are also fundamental differences between the approaches of defense, diplomacy and development, that make a high degree of coherence within a Comprehensive Approach difficult. However, these differences are stereotypes and do not always count. I would like to know your opinion on each of these differences. (even though involved or not)

11. The different approaches of defence, diplomacy and development have various time horizons, that is the military have a shorter time horizon than the development approach.
 - Did your organisation experienced this difference in time-horizon?
 - If yes, how your organisation has dealt with this?
12. Defence, diplomacy and development have different capacities and speeds.
 - Did your organisation experienced this difference
 - If yes, how your organisation has dealt with this?
13. The development and defence have different directions. From a development perspective, programs are implemented at the local level. In contrast, the military start from a 'shape, clear, hold, build' perspective.
 - Did your organisation experienced this difference in direction?
 - If yes, how your organisation has dealt with this
14. The development and defence approaches have different strategies. The presence of these differences is a continuous process within the Comprehensive Approach. Differences between the two strategies are, focus, attention, planning, directions, duration, ownership, time-horizons and aims.
 - Did your organisation experienced this differences in strategies?
 - If yes, how your organisation has dealt with this?

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW GUIDE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

Comprehensive Approach in general and role NGOs

1. What does the your government understand by the term Comprehensive Approach?
 - meaning
 - goals
 - actors
 - manner integration
2. In the Comprehensive Approach defence, diplomacy and development are integrated. In what ways NGOs could contribute to the Comprehensive Approach in general?

Role NGOs in different cases

3. The ISAF mission in Afghanistan shows progress in the implementation of the Comprehensive Approach. In relation to the mission in Helmand, Afghanistan, would you perceive it as positive for NGOs to be part of the Comprehensive Approach?
 - If yes, why?
 - If no, why not?
4. With regard to Development Assistance en Reconstruction as part of the Comprehensive Approach, in your Comprehensive Approach through which channels/actors was this provided in Helmand?
 - Are these channels/actors (partly) funded by your government?
5. For the research it is interesting to know if your government attempted to engage NGOs in the implementation of the Comprehensive Approach in Helmand, Afghanistan. By a number of points I will try to map the answer.
 - Has your government ask international organisations like NGOs to participate within the Comprehensive Approach?
 - How was the balance between the three Ds in your Comprehensive Approach?
 - How was the cooperation between the three Ds and within each actor?
 - Did your government make use of the local knowledge of international organisations like NGOs → Shared information?
 - Where there differences in interests, aims, objectives and identities between military personnel and development workers?
 - Has your government involved international organisations like NGOs in the assessments of issues?
 - Has your government engaged international organisations like NGOs in the planning of the Comprehensive Approach?
 - Has your government engaged international organisations like NGOs in decision making?
 - Has your government involved international organisations like NGOs in the implementation of activities?
- Has the government engaged international organisations in the evaluation of activities?

Dilemmas

Despite the strive for greater coherence within the comprehensive approach, different levels of interaction led to a number of dilemmas within the Comprehensive Approach. There are four contradictions between certain characteristics of a Comprehensive Approach that appear to be a dilemma and that I want to ask you about.

6. A development and peace process does require local ownership. Looking at your Comprehensive Approach, do you think that it have generate enough local ownership, why yes or why not?
7. The more integration takes place at a national level in the countries providing troops, the more difficult integration and coordination at the regional level in the host nation becomes. How does your government think about the tunnel-vision of ISAF?
 - Was it hard to implement a combined strategy in Afghanistan?
 - Did your government involved other provinces of Afghanistan besides Helmand?
8. The more coherence, the more coordination is needed, and therefore effort, time and funds. Can you tell me anything about the required effort, time and funds?
 - Has your government experienced difficulties with the coordination of the different actors?
9. The ISAF mission and the Comprehensive Approach, with or without positive result, have produced a lot of attention and funds for development in Afghanistan. What is the impact of both on your work?
 - What are the challenges faced by your government when in 2014 the (British/Danish) military mission in Afghanistan comes to an end?

Differences

Besides the dilemmas I have just mentioned, there are also fundamental differences between the approaches of defense, diplomacy and development, that make a high degree of coherence within a Comprehensive Approach difficult. However, these differences are stereotypes and do not always count.

I would like to know your opinion on each of these differences.

10. The different approaches of defence, diplomacy and development have various time horizons, that is the military have a shorter time horizon than the development approach.
 - Has your government experienced this difference in time-horizon?
 - If yes, how your government has dealt with this?
11. Defence, diplomacy and development have different capacities and speeds.
 - Has your government experienced this difference
 - If yes, how your government has dealt with this?

12. The development and defence have different directions. From a development perspective, programs are implemented at the local level. In contrast, the military start from a 'shape, clear, hold, build' perspective.
 - Has your government experienced this difference in direction?
 - If yes, how your government has dealt with this
13. The development and defence approaches have different strategies. The presence of these differences is a continuous process within the Comprehensive Approach. Differences between the two strategies are, focus, attention, planning, directions, duration, ownership, time-horizons and aims.
 - Did your government experienced this differences in strategies?
 - If yes, how your government has dealt with thi

