


Afghanistan




 Norwegian development cooperation with Afghanistan has increased each year since 2002, and the country is highly dependent on the assistance provided. There is a wide array of donors and programmes, and better coordination is needed. The Afghan authorities' overall development plan rests on three main pillars: economic and social development, security and good governance/human rights. Norwegian development assistance supports this plan.

Governance and anti-corruption activities

 Public administration in Afghanistan is short of capacity at both central and local level. The multi-donor Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) – a key channel for Norwegian assistance – enabled Norway to contribute to strengthening the capacity of the central administration, local governance, anti-corruption efforts and census preparations. The Norwegian Refugee Council worked on a pilot project to build up legal capacity among authorities and traditional leaders. Norway signed an agreement with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on combating corruption, with a special focus on the Finance and Justice Ministry. The local NGO, Integrity Watch

Afghanistan (IWA), published a study, supported by Norway, of Afghanis' perception of the level of corruption. The report raised the level of awareness and knowledge in the population and the media, and this has, in turn, strengthened the latter's role as agents of influence vis-à-vis the authorities.


Education

 Norway's support for the National Education Programme means that there are now 5.7 million children attending school nationwide, of which 34.9% are girls. Norway has much ongoing activity in the northern province of Faryab, and started work on providing school places for all children there. A total of 82 schools are to be built, of which 40 were started in 2007. The Norwegian Refugee Council, the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee, Norwegian Church Aid and the Aga Khan Foundation were all engaged in building schools and training teachers in various parts of the country. 16 schools were completed and more than 2,000 teachers attended courses. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) worked to improve women's literacy rates and set up small village schools to ease girls' access to education.


Rural development

Through its support for the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) and the National Area Based Development Programme (NABDP), Norway has assisted in drawing up plans for the development of local communities with local participation. As a result, local development plans have been brought to completion, local conflict levels have been dampened and local communities' influence vis-à-vis the central authorities has been strengthened. Rural development activities lend legitimacy to the central authorities.

Petroleum

 The Oil for Development initiative got under way in 2007 in response to a request from the Ministry of Mines. In the first instance, a plan was drawn up to build up capacity at the ministry. Experts on petroleum legislation reviewed the Petroleum Act and recommended changes, and produced a bid package for three blocks in the north of the country for use once the amended Petroleum Act is approved.

Women and gender equality

 It will take time for the support given to strengthening women's status in Afghanistan to produce concrete results. This effort is imperative if a basis is to be laid for boosting Afghani women's position in society. Support for the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) was continued through the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). Much effort was put into incorporating the female dimension into the national strategy for poverty reduction, improving women's knowledge of the law and access to legal aid, and to strengthening their participation in political processes. A fund addressing violence against women was set up. Further, work was done on increasing the proportion of girls attending school, increasing the number of female teachers and providing rural women with an income base.

Bilateral assistance¹ for Afghanistan, by partner, 2007

Development cooperation partners	NOK 1000	Per cent
Government-to-government, etc. ²	55 776	10,1
International NGOs	33 739	6,1
Local NGOs	2 445	0,4
Norwegian NGOs	154 711	28,0
Regional NGOs	6 000	1,1
Nordic research institutions/foundations	5 098	0,9
Multilateral organisations ³	295 353	53,4
Total	553 122	100,0

1) Includes multi-bilateral assistance

2) Including public institutions, ministries, consultants, the private sector, etc.

3) Earmarked assistance channelled through multilateral organisations (multi-bilateral)

Bilateral assistance¹ for Afghanistan, by sector, 2007

Sectors	NOK 1000	Per cent
Economic development and trade	260 674	47,1
Emergency relief and other unspecified assistance	144 891	26,2
Environment and energy	11 577	2,1
Good governance	96 006	17,4
Health, education and other social sector areas	39 974	7,2
Total	553 122	100,0

1) Includes multi-bilateral assistance



Between 2004 and 2007, the Norwegian Church Aid in cooperation with Barefoot College in India provided electricity, using solar energy, to 58 villages in Afghanistan. 55 ordinary men and women were trained in the use of this new technology and are called "Barefoot solar engineers". They have the responsibility of installing, operating, maintaining and repairing the solar cell system. People in the village pay a monthly fee to cover the maintenance and repair of the system. Thus ownership to the solar cell system is created. Photo: Ken Opprann

Humanitarian assistance, peace and reconciliation



2007 saw a steep increase in the number of refugees returning from Pakistan and Iran. Closure of refugee camps in Pakistan led to about 200,000 refugees having to return to Afghanistan in the course of a few months. This prompted sizeable contributions to the Norwegian Refugee Council and the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR). Speedy measures improved the situation of the returned refugees.

Norway granted funding and political support to the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA) course programme and supported OCHAs' role as custodian of the UN's civil-military guidelines. Norway also supported Afghanistan's National Human Rights Commission, enabling the Commission to expand its activities across a wider geographical area and handle a greater number of cases. Further, support was provided to the disarmament and demobilisation process. The Norwegian police effort was stepped

up and the offer to make Norway's crisis response pool (Styrkebrønnen) available was reiterated.

The humanitarian effort otherwise focused on demining, health and human rights and democracy building.

Energy



Between 2004 and 2007, Norwegian Church Aid in cooperation with the Barefoot College in India provided electricity to 58 villages in Afghanistan by means of solar cells. 55 men and women trained in use of the technology and known as 'barefoot engineers' are responsible for installing, operating and maintaining the solar cell system. The female 'engineers' are accorded much respect and have raised women's overall status in village communities. The electricity supply enables activities such as carpet making and home work to be carried out after dark.

Facts

Estimated population: 29.9 million

Gross national income per capita (2005):

Unavailable (LDC)

Average annual economic growth (GDP)

(2003-2005): Unavailable

Economic structure: percentage of GDP by sector

(2005): agriculture 36%, industry 24%, services 39%

Malnutrition among children under 5 years of age

(2004): 39%. Figures over 30% are considered to be extremely high and are a strong indicator of poverty

Human Development Index (HDI) Level (2004):

Unavailable

Child mortality rate per 1000 (2005): 165.

Change 1990-2005: -3

Maternal mortality rate per 1000 births (2005): 18

HIV infection rate, 15-49 age group (2005): 0.1%

Children in primary education: Unavailable

Illiteracy rate 15-24 age group (2004): 65.7%

Ratio of girls to 100 boys in primary/secondary/

tertiary education (2005): 59/33/28

Percentage of women in parliament (2008): 27.7%

Estimated pay for women as percentage of men's

pay in the formal sector: Unavailable

Forested area (change (1990-2005), negative

numbers indicate deforestation as a percentage): -35%

Area protected to conserve biological diversity

(2005): 0.3%

Percentage of population with access to safe

drinking water (2006): 22%

Percentage of urban population living in slums

(2001): 98.5%

Corruption Perception Index (TI) (2006): 1.8

overflødig 2007 i den norske teksten

The index ranges from 10 to 0, where 10 is totally clean and 0 is totally corrupt.

Fragile state, according to OECD/DAC (2007): Yes

Defence spending as a percentage of GDP:

Unavailable

Aid per capita (2005): Unavailable

Aid as a percentage of GDP: 37.8%