



PROVINCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES (PDC)

INTRODUCTION

1. The PDC was developed as a result of a tasking from the PRT Executive Steering Committee to examine the alignment of PRTs with the National Priority Programmes (NPP). The requirement was to establish a method of provincial coordination for the delivery of the NPP.
2. The result was a concept developed in conjunction with the Ministry of Finance that has adopted the structure, improved upon the original design, and intends to implement the model in 2005.

AIM

3. The aim of this short paper is to examine the PDC and establish the role of the military within the structure.

NATIONAL PRIORITY PROGRAMMES (NPP)

4. The GOA's National Priority Programmes (NPPs) are the cornerstone of the reconstruction of Afghanistan and are an integral part of the National Development Framework. The eight existing NPPs¹, and the six new NPPs² announced at the Afghanistan Development Forum (ADF) in April 2004 are currently being advanced by inter-ministerial Steering Committees. The 2005 National Budget, approved by Cabinet at the end of June 2004, made specific provision through the creation of a \$200m NPP Reserve Fund, for their financing. The government is placing a premium on the success of the NPPs, and intends to monitor their effectiveness closely.
5. Currently the NPPs are being developed to ensure that their strategies are relevant to meet the short, medium and long-term requirements of the country, and are capable of being efficiently implemented and sustained. Adapting the NPPs to address specific provincial needs and conditions, and ensuring regional co-ordination is a vital next step. A variety of critical actors and agents of change will be involved in enabling that investments of funds and efforts are not dissipated or dislocated. Maximum use of existing resources, flowing from different sources must be channelled into agreed priorities at the provincial level.
6. The structures for national level coordination of the NPPs are already in place and are illustrated in diagram 1. What was missing in this structure was a means of provincial coordination and therefore a method of delivering the NPPs into the rural areas that they are most needed



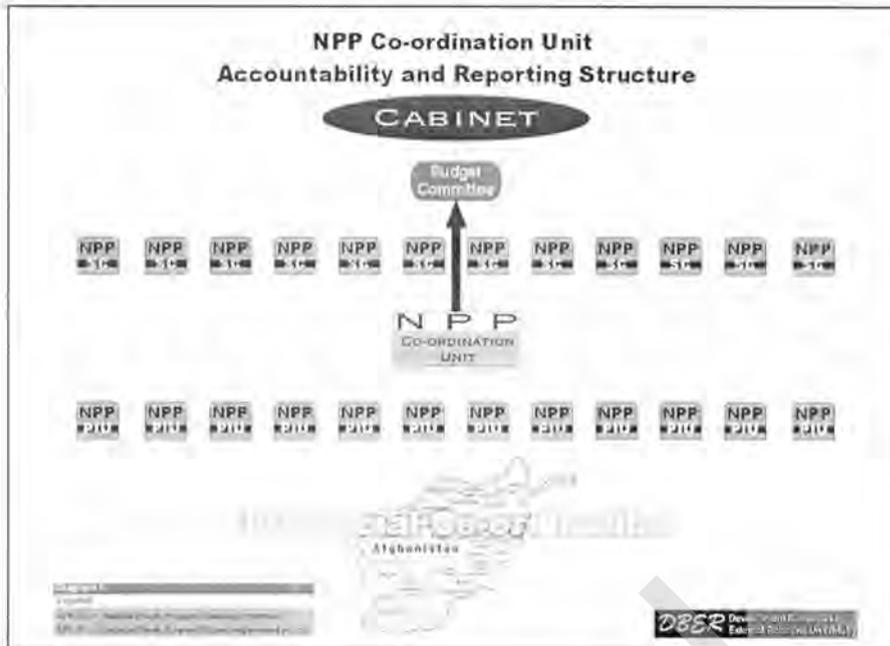


Diagram 1

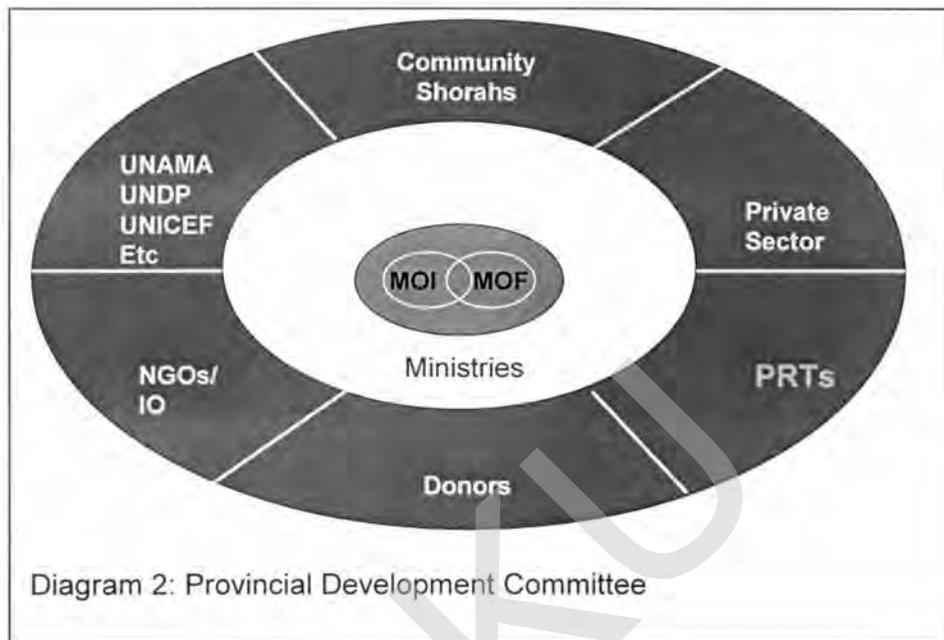
PROVINCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (PDC) CONCEPT

7. The working group set up by the PRT ESC examined the issue of provincial coordination and established that there was a requirement to acknowledge that Afghanistan was moving from a disaster relief situation into a medium term development phase. In addition it was acknowledged by the WG that considerable progress has been made over the last two years in establishing government structures and strategy and that this needed to be acknowledged by both the military and the wider international community (IC).

8. This in itself requires a shift in the way the military interacts with Afghan ministries both at national and local levels and the way in which the IC donates and channels resources into the country. During the last 3 years the IC has concentrated on satisfying the immediate requirements at the local and provincial levels, which has clearly made significant achievements in some areas. Despite these achievements, the majority of development expenditure has nonetheless been focussed in and around Kabul and the major cities and has not been so forthcoming for the provinces and rural areas. As a result the implementation of the NPPs has been thwarted to an extent by not necessarily being integrated into local provincial structures. It was apparent to the WG that this imbalance needed to be corrected. A mechanism was required to join up the local and provincial requirements with the developing national strategies and the NPP in particular. What was missing was a two-way system that acknowledged both national priorities and provincial requirements.

9. The PDC was designed to address these issues and therefore requires representation of all the interested parties that will be involved in reconstruction and development at the provincial level. This is focussed on the Governor's office (and therefore the MOI) but requires an equal partnership with the Ministry of Finance, through the local Mustafiat. Local ministries involved in reconstruction and development

need to be included, as well as other ministries and the wider IC donors, NGOs and the PRT. This is illustrated in diagram 2. There are examples of such coordination taking place informally in some areas of the country, most notably through the Regional Development Zone (RDZ) concept in Kandahar. However these structures lack central endorsement and recognition and are not necessarily Afghan led. It is because of this that they lack the critical two-way mechanism and central government direction.



10. Essentially the PDC serves as a governor-led representative body that facilitates the implementation of not only NPPs but also other government strategies¹ at the provincial level. It provides a two-way communication mechanism between the provinces and central government and it is envisaged to have the following responsibilities:

- a. Articulating provincial strategies that represent the development requirements of the province in a sequenced and prioritised timeframe that can be represented to central government.
- b. Providing a dynamic communication mechanism between central government and the provinces.
- c. Implementing national budgets through the NPPs.
- d. Advising donor nations on suitable reconstruction and development projects in accordance with their provincial plan.
- e. Providing security assessments of the local environment to enable reconstruction and development.

¹ Public Investment Programmes (PIP), Poverty Reduction/Wealth Creation Strategy (PRSP), CN Strategy.

- f. Maintain a database that gives visibility of all provincial expenditure plans, and future aspirations.
11. The immediate benefits of the PDC are seen as follows:
- a. It is an Afghan owned and led structure.
 - b. It strengthens and reinforces the position of the Governor.
 - c. It facilitates provincial coordination for all security and reconstruction issues.
 - d. As a result of establishing a two-way mechanism it has the potential to facilitate a governance structure at the local level.
 - e. It provides transparency of provincial activity.
 - f. It will give donors a focal point for channelling resources through the central government and ensure alignment with national priorities as well as meeting provincial requirements.
12. In order for the PDC to realise the real benefits there are a number of potential difficulties that will need to be addressed during the initial implementation phase. This will include
- a. Ensuring consistency with the Priority Reform and Restructuring process being run by the Independent Administrative Reform & Civil Service Commission on behalf of the GOA.:
 - b. Implementing PDCs into provinces that have strong governors and Mustafiats.
 - c. Short-term capacity may be required to be parachuted in to the province – but provision needs to be made for medium/long term local capacity.
 - d. PDCs should not be seen as a template solution. They will inevitably be run in different ways depending on the governor, however they are guided by a common set of principles that are trying to achieve common objectives.
 - e. The introduction of PDCs need to be supported by a vigorous national and provincial information campaign.
 - e. The relationship with donors and NGOs will also determine the success of the PDC. There needs to be a shift by donors towards the provision of resources into central government accepting that projects will in future be realised through the PDC mechanism.

PROVINCIAL STRATEGIES

13. This paper does not intend to determine how provinces will articulate their own strategies, as this will be for the Ministry of Finance to establish. It is worth noting that these strategies will articulate the whole scope of reconstruction and redevelopment requirements for the province. As such it will impact on the current PRT activities for both ISAF and CFC-A to a greater or lesser degree.

PRT ROLE

14. The most significant impact of the PDC for the military is to acknowledge this is a significant step for the Afghan government in taking greater ownership of reconstruction and redevelopment in the provinces, and will therefore impact on PRT activity. This has already been broadly acknowledged in the revision of the ISAF CIMIC lines of operation².

15. It is strongly recommended that the military role in the PDC should be through the PRT. The role is a supporting one that will hopefully diminish over time as the security concerns are addressed, and/or handed over to the Afghan security forces.

16. The military needs to acknowledge the Afghan-lead in this organisation, but should offer to assist in capacity building and management wherever possible. The military have innate organisational and mediation skills which should be utilised to assist the governor, where required, to energise the PDC concept. In the early stages of implementation this consultative role will be important to assist in legitimising and establishing the PDC as a credible entity in the provinces. Clearly the level of PRT involvement and assistance will be dependant on provincial capability and capacity.

17. Once established, the military should adopt a back seat role and become a silent partner concerned with promoting the authority of the governor through provision of security and building security structures. It is critical that the military are focussed on a common end state represented in the PRT ESC Strategic Guidance that is consistent with the CFC-A Campaign plan and ISAF Road Map end states.

18. Equally the military must be wary of not developing or maintaining parallel structures that could be duplicating or worse challenging the PDC. This is perhaps the main concern of the GOA in the early stages of the PDC implementation, which could constitute a risk to the successful introduction of the concept.

19. The PDC is the conduit for articulating and facilitating reconstruction. As such it needs to have visibility of all expenditure and projects that are planned and current. Both CFC-A and ISAF need to acknowledge this and cooperate accordingly. This will require the military to ensure the MOF has visibility of their expenditure and project plans in the early stages. Work is ongoing between ISAF / Coalition and the MOF to use a common database for this purpose.

² Annex W of OPLAN 30302 states: *The CIMIC priorities will be aligned with the GOA priorities through the National Priority Programs.*

20. The PDC represents a significant step in the military's move towards an exit strategy from Afghanistan, and demonstrates a real desire by the Afghan government to take ownership of the redevelopment and reconstruction strategy for their country. In time and with the appropriate encouragement and support the PDC should be capable of coordinating and implementing all reconstruction projects in the provinces through NGOs or local construction companies.

21. The military can also assist in encouraging the IC to support PDCs and channel more of the donor resources through central government. These issues can be discussed and examined through existing structures such as the PRT ESC and the Consultative Group Standing Committee.

PILOT PROJECTS

22. At the time of writing, the official pilot projects are as yet to be determined. Those provinces that are identified as pilots will need to be agreed by both the Ministries of Finance and Interior as well as endorsed by the Cabinet. There will be a number of criteria to be met to establish the most appropriate provinces for the PDC before a wider implementation plan can be undertaken.

23. These pilots will require support by the military in general and the PRTs in particular and it is therefore suggested that pilot projects are undertaken in provinces that have well established PRTs.

24. The PDC does provide a potentially potent mechanism for provincial coordination for implementation of the NPPs. In addition such a coordination mechanism could be used as an appropriate vehicle for other provincial projects. It has been suggested at the PRT Executive Steering Committee³ that the PDC could be used as a vehicle for coordinating the alternative livelihood strand of the GOA's counter narcotic campaign at the provincial level. This will be particularly relevant to implementing alternative livelihood programmes that clearly have reconstruction and redevelopment implications. The adoption of the PDC for such schemes will effectively avoid the risk of introducing parallel structures and further strengthen the position of the provincial governor.

¹

• National Emergency Employment Program (NEEP)	• Irrigation and Power Program
• National Solidarity Program (NSP)	• Afghanistan Stabilization Program (ASP)
• Transportation Program	• Feasibility Studies Program
• Education & Vocational Training	• Health & Nutrition

²

• National Skills Development Priority Program	• National Justice & the Rule of Law Priority Program
• National Vulnerability Priority Program	• National Urban Priority Program
• National Agriculture Priority Program	• National Private Sector Priority Program

³ PRT ESC 30 Oct 04.

