

Basic Services: Acceleration of Poverty Reduction

How can the Afghan Government deliver effective basic services to the poorest of the poorest areas?

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Long term poverty reduction leads to long term peace and in Afghanistan this directly depends upon creating sustainable jobs and micro-credit. Logically, this has to be the foremost national priority for Afghanistan, given the unavoidable arrival of massive numbers of secondary school leavers. Today there are 80,000 school leavers, at least 20,000 will be unemployed, the rest employed or in higher education. By 2013 there will be 600,000 school leavers, of which 100,000 will be in higher education, leaving half a million for an economy that at present experiences 40% unemployment.

'Sustainability' from a scientific perspective, is related directly to 'risk.' The lower the risks of doing business, the better the sustainability. Where basic services are non-existent, and/or the government is corrupt, the risks get higher, the sustainability lower and jobs much harder to 'plant and grow'. Yet sustainable jobs can still be 'planted and grown' even in the hardest parts of Afghanistan, where if they are 'embedded' in 'Promises and Consents for Peace' from Local Leaders, they offer great alternatives to guns.

Rupert Douglas-Bate is the author of a concise book entitled 'The Competition for Hope (Why sustainable jobs for men aged 18 to 29 years are critical to global security)'.

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WHAT? → Clinics, Boys schools and Girls schools, potable water, sanitation, roads, markets, irrigation -----> 80% of economy is agriculture-based

WHO? → Afghan population is at least 28 million, median age is 17.5 years, one in eight women die in labour (80% preventable), 53% of the population are below the poverty line, and at least 40% unemployed, 257 out of 1000 children below the age of 5 die.

ANDS 2nd Goal
 2. Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights: Strengthen democratic processes and institutions, human rights, the rule of law, delivery of public services and government accountability.
 A further vital and cross-cutting area of work is eliminating the narcotics industry, which remains a formidable threat to the people and state of Afghanistan, the region and beyond.

WHY? → Afghan National Development Strategy
 Areas of greatest need tend to experience most unrest

WHERE? → Safe areas
 Areas with permission → Community Development Councils
 Mullahs Village Elders Family Effective Local govt.
 Standards

HOW? → NGOs
 Provincial Recon Teams
 Institutions: Upskilling Government, more equitable pay, better anti-corruption commission

WHEN? → Soon, by 2013, 600,000 school leavers per year (in 2010 just 80,000 with overall Afghan unemployment at least 40%). For whom will the unemployed school leavers and college graduates, (being mostly young men), work or fight for ?

