

**Analysis of International
Intervention to Train, Advise and
Assist Afghan National Police: a
Four Year Case Study in Kunduz**

Cooperation for Peace and Unity (CPAU)

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An analysis of the Police and Justice System in Kunduz in light of the Dutch Integrated Police Training Mission (IPM); Establishing four years of research findings in reference to the fall of Kunduz province in September 2015 (28.09.2015-13.10.2015).

Cooperation for Peace and Unity (CPAU)

All research presented in this paper was conducted by CPAU; an Afghan-led, research and peacebuilding organization. CPAU's mission is to facilitate the process of peace-building and sustainable social development by mobilizing and building capacities through a participatory approach that builds cooperation, trust, and the transformation of conflict. More information on CPAU's work can be found under cpau.org.af.

Introduction

Commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, CPAU evaluated the state of the police and justice system in Kunduz province, Afghanistan during the time period from 2011 to 2014/2015. The aim of this assessment was to generate knowledge about the rule of law and access to justice in Kunduz with a special emphasis on the capacity of the Afghan Uniform Police (AUP) and other state and non-state actors in providing and securing these services. The evaluation was oriented at the Dutch Integrated Police Training Mission (IPM) which was launched in January 2011 and prematurely ended in December 2012.¹

The above mentioned research consists of four reports, each of which identifies and presents positive as well as negative changes, measured against the 2011 baseline study, in community and key stakeholder perceptions of the police and justice system in all seven districts of Kunduz province. In accordance with the IPM's objectives, the research was structured around four thematic areas:

1. The Afghan civilian police,
2. Police-prosecutor cooperation,
3. State and non-state justice institutions, and finally
4. Accessibility and civic awareness of police and justice institutions.

¹ Even though Dutch training personnel left Kunduz already in December 2012 and training responsibilities were delegated to the Afghan authorities, Dutch support in regards to the Law and Order Program persisted until 2014. In addition, it should be noted that other multi-lateral training support initiatives such as EUPOL, CSTC-A and the LOTFA with their various impacts on the capacity development of the Afghan police forces must be considered when analyzing the presented assessment.

The research methodology employed both perception surveys and structured interviews with police management, police recruits, Huquq² officials, community shuras³, local citizens, and prisoners in its data gathering. This research series represents the most comprehensive study in Afghanistan's security sector over a four-year period.

The purpose of the synthesis paper is to complement the introduced case study through establishing the last four years of findings up until the breaking point of Kunduz, i.e. when Kunduz city fell under the control of Taliban forces for two weeks in September 2015. When looking at the research reports, specifically the final assessment of 2014/15, contextual explanations can be found for failures of the security forces— in particular the AUP— which ultimately led to the brief fall of the province. These underlying causes, in light of the degenerating law and order situation in Kunduz since 2011, shall be identified and analyzed in this paper.

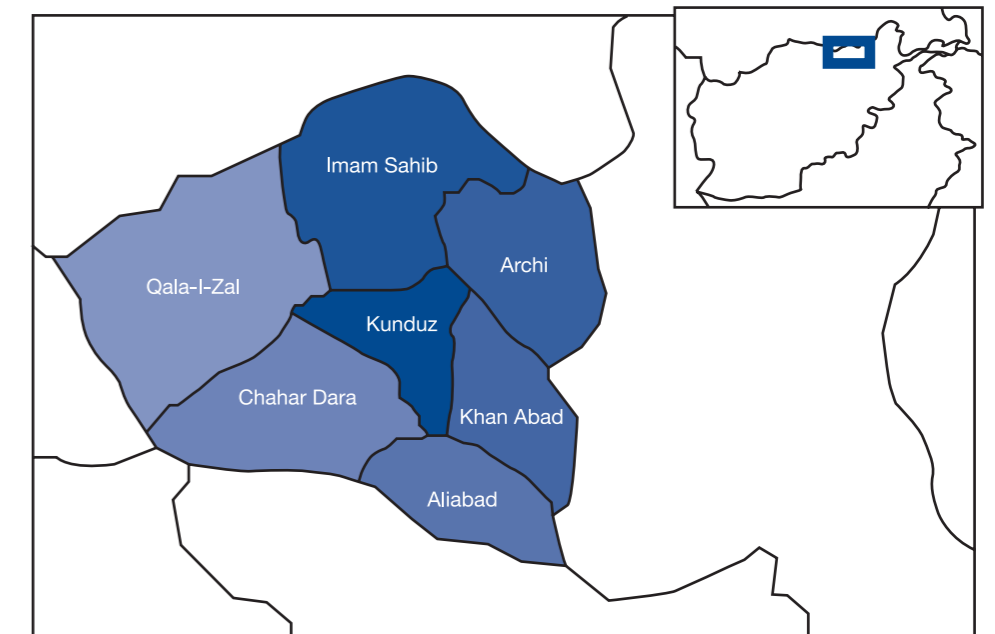


Figure 1: Districts of Kunduz Province

Key Factors leading to the Fall of Kunduz Province

After reported attempts of the Taliban to gain control over Kunduz throughout 2014, the insurgent forces stormed Kunduz City in September 2015. They launched attacks from three different directions: Char Dara in the west, Qarya-e-Yatem in the northwest

² The Huquq (Rights) Department has existed as part of the MoJ since 1921. Huquq offices provide an opportunity for citizens to settle civil cases within the formal system before being brought into the court system. Cases are typically resolved at the district or provincial level based on the evidence presented by the parties to the dispute.

³ A group of local elders or recognized leaders who convene regularly to make community decisions.

of Char Dara, and Khanabad in the east of the province. These areas had long since been vulnerable and the districts of Char Dara and Dasht-e-Archi had already been under Taliban control since June 2015. What is of concern is the city’s rapid fall and its slow recapture—fierce fighting lasted for 15 days—by Afghan government forces. Hence, when looking at the findings resulting from the four year case study of the police and justice system in Kunduz province, answers for the failure of the Afghan security forces, especially the police, can be found. It has become clear that the fall was due to long prevailing and unaddressed grievances and security as well as justice shortcomings. The main aspects can be identified as follows:

- Perceived feelings of insecurity due to an insufficient number of police forces and a lack of police visibility
- The failed establishment of community-police trust and the prevailing corruption, bribery, and unfair treatment by the police as well as decreased community respect for the AUP
- Decreased quality of police training and feeling of abandonment among Afghan police forces by their international counterparts

		Year			Total	
		2012	2013	2014		
Is the number of police in this district enough to provide security, law and order?	Yes more than enough	Count	84	94	67	245
		% Within	9,4%	11,0%	7,3%	9,2%
	Year					
	Yes, the right amount of police	Count	213	280	249	742
		% Within	23,8%	32,8%	27,2%	27,9%
	Year					
	No, we need some more police	Count	332	340	287	959
		% Within	37,1%	39,9%	31,4%	36,0%
	Year					
	No we need many more police	Count	247	139	236	622
		% Within	27,6%	16,3%	25,8%	23,3%
	Year					
No but more police wont be able to uphold security law and order anyways	Count	20	0	76	96	
	% Within	2,2%	,0%	8,3%	3,6%	
Year						
Total	Count	896	853	915	2664	
	% Within	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	
Year						

Figure 2: Community surveys 2012-2014: Opinion on Police Presence

- Ineffectiveness of and little access to the formal justice sector in combination with the corruption and ineffectiveness of formal courts
- Non-governmental and insurgent forces in control of Kunduz territory

These aspects shall subsequently be individually examined in detail:

Perceived Feelings of Insecurity

During 2014, an insufficient number of police forces and a lack of police visibility was recognized and documented in almost all districts in Kunduz. This led to an undeniable perceived feeling of insecurity by the community as is shown in Figure 2. A significant increase in the number of Kunduz residents who believe that more police is needed was marked from 2013 to 2014. The majority of residents (63% in 2013) as well as civil police forces (86% in 2013) interviewed, believed there is a need for ‘some’ or ‘many’ more police personnel. This feeling can be explained by the deteriorated security situation within the province and the residents need for a higher police presence. The 2014/15 report also showed that the lack of police visibility was highest in those districts which were used as launchpads for the attacks by the insurgents in 2015, namely Char Dara and Khanabad. The majority of the community (58%) in Char Dara said they categorically never saw the police while in Khanabad the police was seen only rarely. The lack of visibility can be understood due to increased attacks on Afghan police forces and accordingly higher numbers of casualties. Alarming, as Figure 2 shows, even though it was perceived that many more police would be needed, a significant number of respondents did not view the AUP as capable of upholding security and law and order. The situation can thus be viewed as a self-reinforcing cycle: underrepresented Afghan police forces showed little presence due to heightened insecurity which ultimately led to an even higher feeling of insecurity among the population of Kunduz playing into the hands of the insurgents who took hold of the provincial center.

Failed Establishment of Community-Police Trust

Resulting from the described feeling of insecurity in liaison with the AUP as well as from a decreased community respect for the police due to prevailing corruption, bribery, and unfair treatment, the findings of the 2014 report showed - compared to the baseline assessment - a breakdown of the community-police relationship in Kunduz province. 81% of surveyed AUP in 2014 believed that communities do not value their services. There was a significantly higher deterioration in women’s perception in the effectiveness of the police and their trust in them. The breakdown of community-police relations can be seen as due to a prioritization of counter-

insurgency as opposed to more general acts associated with community policing. This imperative alienated the AUP from the public and eventually fueled into the strengthening of the Taliban and the overall weakening of the province.

Decreased Quality of Police Training

The fact that even though the police forces were focusing on fighting violent insurgents instead of on the ‘softer side’ of policing work, the Afghan police forces were unable to prevent the seizure of Kunduz territory which lead to a short takeover of Kunduz Center in 2015 by the Taliban can be explained by the decreased overall quality of the police training. While the training was voted as effective and sufficient from 2011 to 2013, the lack of adequate equipment was noted already in 2013 and a feeling of abandonment among Afghan police forces by their international counterparts, specifically in the north of the country, increased throughout the assessment period and peaked in 2014. The impact of the transitional phase and international troop drawdown may have contributed to this perception.

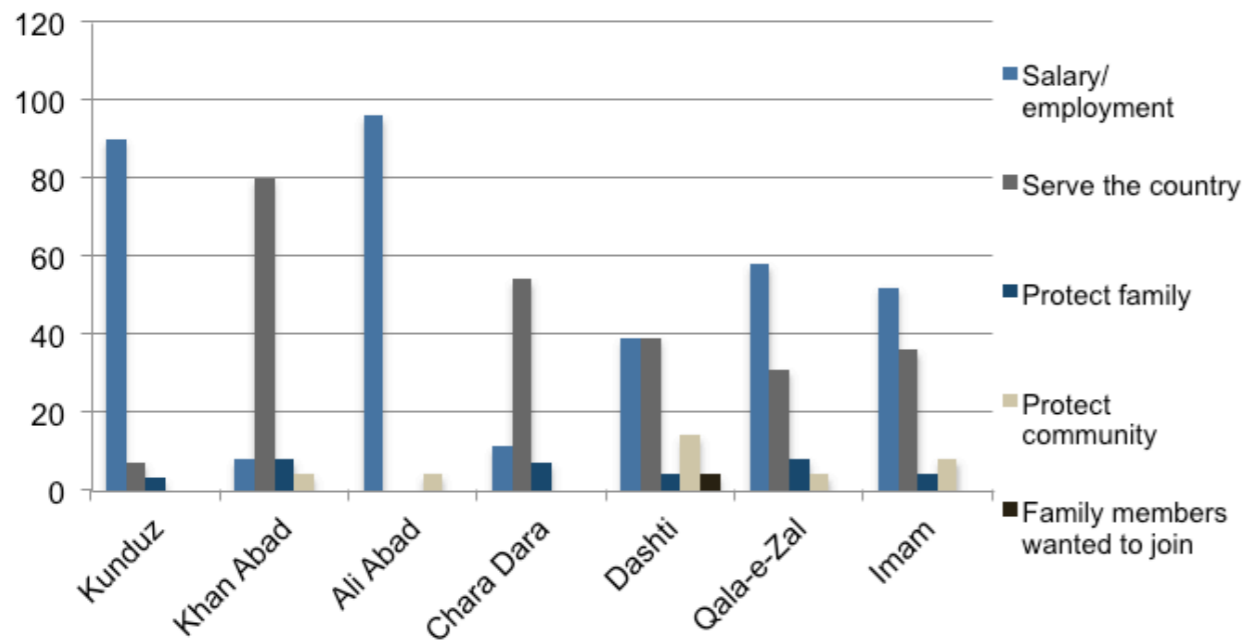


Figure 3: Police Survey 2014: Why join AUP?

The perceived feeling of not being trained and equipped well enough to stand up to insurgent attacks might have facilitated the rapid fall of the province in September 2015. This was further enhanced by a noted motivational change from idealism to pragmatism as reason stated for joining the AUP during 2014 shifted. From 2011 to 2013 the main motivation was to serve the country. In 2014 the primary motivation changed to gaining a salary and full-time employment

as Figure 3 exemplifies. This decreased motivation to uphold security paired with high rates of desertion and attrition due to low salaries and heightened attacks by armed opposition groups led to a decreased effectiveness of the AUP, facilitating the strengthening of insurgency groups and their control over Kunduz territory.

Grievances within the Formal Justice Sector

Another reason that led to the brief fall of Kunduz in 2015 was the reduced access to and limited trust in the formal justice sector for community members. In particular, high levels of corruption and unfair treatment such as bribery, influence by powerful external actors, and a failure to take cases seriously by the formal court induced people to rather consult informal justice systems. Additionally, in the 2014 report it has been noted that despite previous findings and significant international investment in judicial hardware and training, there has been a significant decline of 18% over the entire assessment period in people reporting easy access to a court. 25% in 2014 even claimed to have no access to the courts. This problematic ultimately facilitated the establishment of Taliban courts in some districts such as Aliabad where 44% of the respondents quoted that the Taliban was most capable of dealing with criminal cases. This disconcerting trend is also reflected in the fact that the Taliban justice system had replaced the Huquq as the third most ranked institution for dealing with criminal cases after the formal court and the shura in 2014.

	Government control		Taliban control		Warlord control		Arbeki control	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Most control	20%	8%	8%	57%	11%	33%	66%	24%
Some control	80%	53%	5%	15%	3%		16%	22%
Less control		8%	26%	9%	58%	34%	9%	13%
Least control		31%	61%	19%	28%	33%	9%	41%

Figure 4: Community Survey 2014: Groups with Control in Char Dara (N=128)

Non-Governmental Forces in Control of Kunduz Territory

Throughout the assessment, it became evident that long before the fall of the provincial center, non-governmental forces, including the Taliban, were in de facto control of Kunduz territory. Char Dara for example, which was the springboard for one of the attacks, had the lowest perceived level of government control in the 2014 report. Khanabad saw an increased control of warlords and Arbeki⁴ who vied for control with government forces, illegal armed groups, and the Taliban, to the detriment of the local civilians. In Aliabad,

⁴ Community militias

where the Arbeki gained increased control during 2014, excessive extortion of the local populace performed by the Arbeki had the effect of increasing the support for the Taliban. This further benefited their increased control and territorial as well as administrative strengthening throughout Kunduz.

Concluding Remarks

In summary, the fall of Kunduz province did not occur without warning. However, the signs and developments, resulting from long standing and unaddressed grievances were not detected and tackled appropriately by government security forces. Kunduz's weaknesses have also been reflected in the growing space occupied by the Taliban shadow government –including their justice system –in Kunduz province. The main causes which have facilitated the seizure of Kunduz territory by insurgent forces are an underrepresented, mistrusted, and poorly trained and equipped Afghan police forces in conjunction with a corrupt and ineffective formal justice sector which has affected both the community's and the police's perception of control and security adversely. Most causes have to be seen as interrelated and mutually reinforcing. For example the lack of police visibility was due to a deteriorated security situation. However, the absence of government police forces increased the public's feeling of insecurity and consequently contributed to a de facto decrease of security throughout the province.

Recommendations

Based on the above assessment the following recommendations can be drawn which would be beneficial for the reestablishment of community-police trust and the police's capacity to ensure peace and security within the Kunduz police and justice system:

- Improvement of the quality of training the AUP in 1). Management of checkpoints, 2). Patrolling and identification of suspects, 3). Further education to enhance the professionalism of the police and 4). De-politicization of the police
- Providing the Afghan police forces with greater incentives in regards to salaries and personal safety in order to steer their motivation back towards a sense of camaraderie, patriotism, and the duty to protect their country
- Improvement of quality and work effectiveness of formal courts, which tackles corruption, delays and unfair treatment such as bribery and influence exerted by external actors
- Acknowledgement that traditional Shura/Jirga structures remain important avenues for conflict resolution and should be supported and carefully linked with actors within the formal justice system such as the AUP and the courts.