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FAR FROM THE CENTER

A Study of Jawzjan Development Planning

J- ELBAG

**Economic Literacy and Budget Analysis Group
2008**



ACTIONAID INTERNATIONAL

ActionAid, International founded in 1972, works in 45 countries to fight against poverty and injustice. We work with local partners to fight poverty and injustice worldwide, reaching over 13 million of the poorest and most vulnerable people over the last year alone, helping them fight for and gain their rights to food, shelter, work, education, healthcare and a voice in the decisions that affect their lives.

In recent years, ActionAid International has incorporated emergency work and rights based work as a result of the increase in armed conflicts and natural disasters in different countries in Asia and Africa. The agency is also actively involved in gender mainstreaming, research and advocacy as a strategy to achieve wider impact on the causes of poverty, which include injustice and inequality.

Many people we work with face not only poverty, but also exclusion and discrimination. They include widows and orphans, former child soldiers, ethnic minorities, tribal peoples and those fighting landlessness, natural disasters, modern slavery and HIV/AIDS.

Our partners range from small community support groups to national alliances and international networks seeking education for all, trade justice and action against HIV/AIDS. Our work with these national and international campaign networks highlights the issues that affect poor people and influences the way governments and international institutions think.

ActionAid Afghanistan is a member of ActionAid International and works in the provinces of Jawzjan, Balkh, Kabul and Kandahar.

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ACRONYMS

Economic Literacy and Budget Literacy Group	ELBAG
Economic Literacy and Budget Analysis	ELBA
European Commission	EC
Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief	ACBAR
Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit	AREU
Afghan Civil Society Forum	ACSF
International Rescue Committee	IRC
United Nations Development Programme	UNDP
Rural Rehabilitation and Development	RRD
Basic Package of Health Services	BPHS
Maternal Mortality Rate	MMR
US Agency for International Development	USAID
Internally-displaced persons	IDPs
Department of Returnees and Repatriation	DoRR
Provincial Development Committee	PDC
Provincial Development Planning	PDP
Provincial Council	PC
Community Development Councils	CDCs
Provincial Reconstruction Teams	PRT
United Nations Security Council	UNSC
Ministry of Finance	MoF
Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy	I-ANDS
United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan	UNAMA
Independent Directorate of Local Governance	IDLG
United Nation's International Children's Emergency Fund	UNICEF
National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment	NRVA
United Nation's Office on Drugs and Crime	UNODC
United Nation's High Commissioner for Refugees	UNHCR
Department of Public Health	DoPH
Provincial Development Committee	PDC
Provincial Council	PC
Civil Society Organization	CSO

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ECONOMIC LITERACY AND BUDGET ANALYSIS GROUP (ELBAG) IN JAWZJAN

In an effort to reestablish the state's structure and functions, the provincial councils of Afghanistan were elected three years ago apparently to provide a representation for the poor and excluded people. However, most activities and decisions of the Government of Afghanistan since then are being made with little or no participation of the people or their elected representatives. The people particularly in the provinces are not aware of many of the measures their government is taking, especially regarding the development of their country. Billions of dollars are being pledged to Afghanistan by bilateral and multilateral donors, but trickling down effects has not been felt in majority of provinces. Further there has not been proper mechanism to ensure downward accountability and transparency.

The concept of accountability and transparency in the democratic process is still in its infancy in Afghanistan context. Although active participation of citizens in society management and development has been encouraged with people having access for a bottom-up and democratic planning and budgetary process as well as in holding their government accountable for fund management and expenditures; there are no mechanisms in place to ensure civil society's and people's participation in evaluating if the current governance structure works as to be effective for the benefits of poor and marginalized people. Participation by the poor and women in understanding, implementing and monitoring accountability of the development processes is totally limited. This limitation prevents active agency and ownership of the national programmes by the Afghan people and institutions. Hence, it is imperative that people and civil society take initiative to promote accountability and transparency in the area of governance and public finances.

When reviewing the situation, ActionAid and other civil society organizations (CSO) who are members of the National and Jawzjan Provincial ELBAG networks feel that it is imperative for people and CSOs to take initiatives to promote a pro-poor planning and budgeting process for development in the country. That they should play an important role in broader advocacy work to hold the government and development actors in the country accountable for planning and spending money on behalf of the poor for development.

In this regard, ActionAid Afghanistan with financial support of the European Commission (EC) and in partnership with Afghanistan parliament (upper and lower houses), Jawzjan Provincial Council, All Afghan Women Union, Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR), Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Counterpart International, different provincial departments such as: education, women affairs, economy, rural rehabilitation and development (RRD), martyrs and disabled, and individual media correspondents has taken the initiative of Economic Literacy and Budget Analysis (ELBA) work in Afghanistan since February 2007 at national and provincial level.

Development would be unrealistic without resources. More than often, budget is usually a mystery for many people, including government officers, people's representatives, CSOs and media. Economic Literacy and Budget Analysis (ELBA) is a tool enabling people to understand planning and budgeting processes at all levels. It mobilizes people to act on the findings and understanding they have after analyzing the budget. With ELBA, in different countries in Asia and over the world, citizens are mobilized to question the planning and budget allocation processes, as well as to monitor the implementation through spending processes for development of their own villages, their own cities or countries. ELBA allows us to understand

and track both revenues and expenditures sides of the budget. It focuses to see how planners allocate and spend the money meant for welfares of the poor and the excluded.

The ActionAid Afghanistan's programme on promoting Economic Literacy and Budget Analysis Group (ELBAG) at three levels (national, provincial and district levels) in the country receives funding supports from EC. Key cluster of activities in accordance to the project plan are designed in a flow to support the understanding and taking actions of group members.

In March 2007, ELBA experts from ActionAid International conducted a five-day training workshop for 30 participants, comprised of parliamentarians, government officials, journalists, civil society activists and academia. Topics such as rights based approach, economic literacy issues, Afghanistan's political economy, globalization, role of civil society and community people in economic literacy and budget analysis, characteristics of a national budget, budget loss, and other issues regarding the economy and budgets were discussed in the workshop. As a result, a national platform for committed people on taking ELBAG forward in Afghanistan was formed out of the participants from the training. ELBAG Afghanistan aims at promoting a higher level of transparency and accountability in Afghanistan budget. A chairperson and secretary have been elected to connect group members, to structure the work and consequently, to bring transparency and accountability to a jumpstart.

More importantly, ELBAG has also started working at the provincial level. There was four-day training in Sheberghan city, centre of Jawzjan province from 20th to 23rd May 2007. The training participants were from different groups of society such as: provincial council members, NGO workers, government officials, media, academicians and interested individuals. At the end of the training, the ELBAG Sheberghan was also formed with the members coming from the participants of the training. A total number of 19 people from provincial council, NGOs, government officials and academicians are part of this group.

Both ELBAG groups have prepared a term of reference for their working mechanisms and chosen development programs to undertake transparency and accountability activities at the national and provincial levels.

The report that you are reading now is a result of a process whereby members of both ELBAG groups with support from international expert and ActionAid Afghanistan have been working on.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After the Bonn conference, Afghanistan moved towards having a new political and government system and to form new governance structures and frame works at national, provincial and district levels. The political structures and systems to ensure people's participation and the institutionalization of people-centered governance through empowering local and community based governance structures and organizations, have been a topic of discussion among development actors to organize proper mechanisms of reaching the poorest and marginalized communities in remotest areas of Afghanistan.

Poor governance and limited development efforts, particularly at the provincial and district level, continue to result in political alienation that both directly and indirectly sustains anti-government elements. United Nations secretary general's report to United Nations Security Council (UNSC) shows that 36 out of 376 districts, including most districts in the east, south-east and south, remain largely inaccessible to Afghan officials and aid workers. Meanwhile, the central government still suffers from lack of capacity and the slow expansion of its writ in outlying regions of most provinces. Currently, domestic revenues cover less than half of all expenditures in the country. A recent report by ActionAid Afghanistan and its partners in ELBAG national network shows that only 28 percent of national budget is consisted of domestic revenues and it is 72 percent depended on external support.

The Afghan government fails to have a proper provincial governance framework with clarity of roles for each player. There is no clear monitoring mechanism in place. There is lack of overall vision in sub-national governance. This situation again leads to blind centralization system of governance with little attention on people's issues at the sub-national level. Provincial Council (PC) which is the only elected body at the provincial level has had very little role in provincial affairs. They suffer low capacity and professional knowledge to fulfill their role in planning, monitoring, conflict resolution, and other related issues.

This report is trying to analyze the issues of sub-national governance in Afghanistan and the Provincial Development Planning (PDP) processes in particular from a civil society perspective.

For 1386¹, Jawzjan Provincial Development Council (PDC) planned about 314 projects with an estimated budget of 54 million USD. This PDP was prepared according to the development sectors outlined by Afghanistan government. Out of these planned 314 projects, only 15 projects have been implemented (with only 4.7% implementation rate). This is mainly because:

- 1) Annual planning process in Jawzjan has only been a symbolic affair.
- 2) Provincial authorities have very limited understanding of the country budget. There is no systematic pre-budget discussion at the province and budget plans are not shared during the annual budgeting as to include province's exact budget requirements. At the same time, some occasional planning also takes place in the province if only Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) offer some bulk of funds rather than they are being provided with a unreal '*shopping list*' by the provincial authorities only to attain the funding opportunities provided.
- 3) Jawzjan province like many other provinces of Afghanistan does not have sufficient capacity and professional staff to undertake sound planning process.

People at provincial and at national level talk about the contrast between requirements and actual revenues to make provincial planning and implementation a viable process. In case of

¹ 1386 is equivalent to 2007-08 Georgian year

Jawzjan the gap between their projected budgets and domestic revenues is very sharp. The province has rich stocks of gas and oil. Before the civil war the income of only exporting gas from Jawzjan to erstwhile Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) contributed a lot to the national revenue as a whole. Unfortunately, this industry is completely dull at the moment and the authorities have so far not paid adequate attention towards rehabilitating this industry. This has a very negative impact on revenue generation schemes at the national level.

Decentralized planning and increase in revenues at provincial level are very much needed to ensure bottom-up, people-centric planning and overall growth and development of the nation. Current circumstances where the revenues both at provincial and at central level are low contribute to government's dependency on external resources and donors contributions. For example, in 1386 the total commitments of donors to Afghanistan budget were 72 % with only 28% coming from domestic revenues.

Every province has to prepare their annual plans in accordance to identified sectors. In 1386 PDP for Jawzjan province, different projects have been lined up under each sector with estimated funding allocations. For instance, in an industrial area with rich stocks of gas and oil, allocation of 0.91% from the total budget to mine and energy sector means that the planners have completely ignored the role of extraction, usage, value and export of gas and oil considering there is about 30 billion m³ gas capacity in only Jarqadoq mine². It is a total negligence of the lives and livelihoods of about 2500 poor workers in both Sheberghan gas enterprise and Mazar's Kod-o- barq fertilizer and power plant. Further, the privatization policies of the central government also hinder them to think about any well being effort for the future of this sector. People of Afghanistan in general, and in this case people of Jawzjan in particular, have not been consulted with their views taken for granted about the privatization of gas and oil industries.

In Jawzjan development plan for 1386 most of the projects under different sectors are highly dominated by construction prototypes. As an example, in the sector of justice and security there are 41 planned projects, and with no exception, all of them are construction activities such as construction of a building for provincial guest house, construction of a building for Haj department, and others. There is no or limited allocation towards capacity building, improving skills and recruitment of provincial judiciary personnel and other necessary activities to improve the law and order situation in the province.

From July 2007, the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) process started some consultation at the provincial level to prepare the 3 to 5 years plan according to the ANDS structure. The process of consultation lasted for months and resulted in the development of a 3-year plan with 80 projects. Yet during 1386, two different plans were prepared for Jawzjan province - one by the PDC and the other by ANDS. These two planning processes had no linkage and relationship among each other to coordinate the planning of development activities in the province. On the contrary, this whole exercise has increased confusion among different development actors. The ANDS has reached to a conclusion of planning for 8 priority sectors at the national level under the influence of the donors, central government and line ministries. This sector prioritization neither has been based on a broad-based consultation with the people at the provincial level nor on a need assessment to reflect the actual needs of the people in provinces.

² The figures belong only to survey in 1971 conducted by the Russian experts, there are no recent data available to show the current capacity but based on technical engineers estimations the capacity of both Jarqadoq and Kwaja gogerdak mines are much more than the existing figures, provided by Russians in 1971. (personal communication with Jarqadoq technical engineers, February 2008)

Besides, there is no budget planning and real budgeting assessment in the process as to contribute for real implementation, because the budgets will be incorporated by line ministries at the national level, again with no consultation with provincial plan makers³.

Democratic governance will be possible only after the implementation of democratic decentralization process all over the country. Currently, all planning and budgetary processes are centralized, only the line ministries in Kabul with the official forms and procedures are responsible for preparation of development plans and budgets, which has left the provincial authorities completely out of the loop.

There has been less coordination and cooperation among different development actors during the development planning at the Jawzjan level which caused poor planning and implementation. The provincial planning mechanisms need much consideration and the provincial authorities together with the provincial council need to be involved by bearing more responsibilities during the development planning.

Key Recommendations

General:

1. Basic administration and sub-national reforms focusing on democratic decentralization process should be undertaken by Afghanistan government.
2. More trainings and capacity building opportunities should be provided to the provincial authorities and provincial councils on the issues of participatory development programming and implementation.
3. People's awareness on political scenarios and ensuring their active role and participation in social, political and economic processes of development should be increased in order to avoid leadership gap and poor governance structures.
4. There should be development and awareness-raising initiatives parallel to military operations in insecure and unstable parts of the country.
5. The elected governance bodies such as PCs at the provincial level and CDCs at the village should be supported by Afghanistan government, donors, Afghan parliament and all other actors.
6. The civil society organization should establish forums and networks to collectively support the community-based organizations and councils.

Provincial Development Planning

1. Development of capacities of provincial governmental authorities should be undertaken to increase their knowledge and skills on issues of planning and program implementation.
2. The provincial development planning process should be undertaken by the provincial authorities under the supervision of elected representatives in the form of provincial councils.
3. Centralized line-ministry planning and budgeting should be linked directly with the provincial planning.
4. Government and donor community should give special considerations and attention to the plans and development objectives outlined at the provincial level to fund exact need-based projects for sustainability of the development process in Afghanistan.

³ Personal communication, Provincial council, February 24, 2008

5. The entities such as PDC should gain serious support and empowerment efforts through different development stakeholders in the province so that they take the lead in development planning and conduct systematic monitoring of implementation at the provincial level.
6. The budgetary information including resource allocation for development activities at the provinces should be shared with the provinces.
7. Significant efforts should be undertaken by the central/ provincial government to increase the provincial revenues.
8. The plans and development strategies should be based on exact need assessments.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General profile of Jawzjan province

Jawzjan known as “Gozganan” city of “Khurasan” (ancient name of Afghanistan), is one of the provinces in north of Afghanistan.

The total area of Jawzjan is approximately 14,660 sq. km. and its population 426,987 including all prominent ethnicities of Afghanistan such as Uzbeks, Turkmen, Tajiks, Arabs and Pashtoons. There are 10 districts and 304 villages in Jawzjan. Sheberghan city is the center of the province where most of political, economic and other social activities are happening.

Jawzjan province⁴ is strategically located bordering central Asian countries such as Turkmenistan. Within Afghanistan Jawzjan borders provinces of Balkh in East, Saripul in South and Faryab in South east.

1.1.1 Health

Government of Afghanistan is implementing Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) that is funded by various donors such as U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Despite of this, access to health services remains very low as shown in the annual statistical report indicating that maternal mortality rate (MMR) of Jawzjan is about 339/100,000, child mortality under 5 is 4,707 person per year, and only 13.3% of the population has access to clean drinking water⁵. Local people suffer from illness and health care gaps. The issues are more serious and require services beyond the existing services infrastructure capacity.



Figure 3: Vaccination process in Jawzjan, AAA photo - 2006

1.1.2 Economy

Jawzjan's economy is based on agriculture and live stock production with a small proportion of trade and industrial activities. Sixty seven percent (67%) of people are occupied in agriculture whereas 16% of their income is based on livestock in the rural areas. In the urban areas, 74% of income is based on trade while services and daily wages are about 32%. The households owning agriculture lands and gardens are about 30% and about 54% of land owners have rain-fed lands and wheat is the basic product of rain-fed cultivation. Major irrigated harvests are: wheat, vegetables, melon, water melon and barley.⁶

⁴ Jawzjan consists of 10 districts⁴: Aqcha, Faizabad, Murdian, Khanaqa, Mengajik, Qarqin, Khamab, Qoshtepa, Darzab and Khwaja Dokoh.

⁵ Source: UNICEF, Jawzjan profile by ANDS, 2008

⁶ Jawzjan Profile by ANDS, 2008

Sesame is produced in 180 respectively. These three products are mainly grown in Qoshtepa and Darzab districts.

Handicraft products are consists of Qaraqol wool produced in Darzab, Mengajik, Qushtepa and Khwaja do koh districts. Silk is produced mostly in Mengajik district with rug and carpets being woven in Murdian, Mengajik and Darzab districts.

Jawzjan province has stocks of gas and oil. The Kwajagogerdak gas field started functioning under the Afghan-Gaz department in 1967 with a capacity of 48.64 billion m³. Jarqadooq gas field is located 15 km south-west of Sheberghan city. This gas field was activated for extraction in 1971 and the annual extraction rate is 7.2 billion m³. It has been estimated that the gas field still has about 24 billion m³ of gas capacity which serves a valuable asset for Afghanistan economy⁷.

1.1.3 Education:

Education status of population in Jawzjan is much better than the other provinces. The average literacy rate is about 31%⁸. In total, there are about 208 primary and secondary schools in Jawzjan serving around 132,560 students. The University of Jawzjan currently has about 959 students of which 402 are girls. Vocational and technical high school in Jawzjan covers 242 students. A teacher training institute is also active in the province with 444 students, of which 62% are female and 38% are male.⁹



Figure 4: Sheberghan city center, square - AAA photo, 2006

⁷ Personal communication with Jarqadooq engineers, 22 February 2008

⁸ National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment- NRVA, Jawzjan profile by ANDS, March 2008

⁹ Jawzjan profile by ANDS, March 2008

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Rationale of the study

Democratic processes and procedures in Afghanistan started with boosting different electoral institutions that have changed the political structure and started to build strong fundamentals for people-centered and democratic governance at national and provincial levels. The international community together with Afghanistan government invested a lot to re-establish the newly introduced governance structure from the national to provincial and to the district level. Notwithstanding all these significant efforts and resources spent, the impact has been less visible.

After the high profiled and publicized election, political scenarios have changed. It was hoped that emergence of the Parliaments, the Executives and the Courts, a democratic power relationship would have been established. However, there were challenges hindering the political development and formalization of a democratic leadership to include the issues of poor and marginalized especially at sub-national level when planning and implementing rehabilitation and development programmes in Afghanistan. Meanwhile the development plans, budgets and strategies are centralized, prepared in Kabul by the line ministries with close consultation and observation of the donors. The provincial government authorities together with elected representatives of the people such as provincial councils are kept aside and they have very little role during the planning processes. There is a significant gap between the policy development and plan makers and the implementers of such plans.

Despite a large number of NGOs, there is still a long way for civil society organizations in Afghanistan to play a significant role in bridging the gap between the power holders and power bearers and take sides with the poor. For the first time, CSOs and individuals in the country have come together to analyze the issues of participatory planning for development at provincial level. It is to mend the distance between governing bodies and development process and the course it would take to strengthen the lives and livelihoods of the people in the province. It is a process that will expand to other provinces through civil society institutions such as ELBAG.

ELBA has been recognized as an effective tool to stimulate and promote people's participation in planning and budget accountability through democratization of budget knowledge and mobilization of communities around budget actions. To improve the active role of Afghan civil society in budget process for advocating the rights of poor, ELBAG has been supported and initiated in Afghanistan. After a lot of discussions, the Jawzjan ELBAG network decided to start picking up provincial development plan for analyzing the sub-national governance issues as (i) it has direct impact on the rehabilitation and development of the people of Jawzjan province; and (ii) it involves wide range of stakeholders in the poverty reduction, growth and development of the province. This study of provincial planning will help promote accountability and transparency in provincial planning process. It will also help ActionAid Afghanistan provincial and national ELBAG networks, elected representatives, civil society actors and the general public to understand the issues related to sub-national governance especially development planning from a pro-poor perspective.

Provincial planning is a process that has been taking place in all provinces on annual, three years and five years bases. In Jawzjan, the provincial development committee has been

responsible to prepare such plans together with all governmental departments, provincial council, NGOs, PRT, UN, and others.

This study will focus its attention and analysis on processes of provincial level planning in Jawzjan such as different planning activities to include financial planning, financial implementation and financial status to determine the main obstacles and challenges towards a participatory and pro-poor development planning process at provincial level.

Jawzjan's annual provincial development plan for 1386 is prepared by PDC through Department of Economics in Jawzjan with a total estimated budget of about 54 million USD. This plan has gone to Ministry of Finance in Kabul to be approved or be added in development budget as to get funded by the central government for implementation.

Objectives of the study include:

- Identifying the structures of local governance in Jawzjan and their relation with national level governance structures in relation to decision making on development plans and budgets.
- Understanding the process of planning and budgeting for development at sub-national level including finances of those plans and accountability of stakeholders.
- Recommendations on overcoming obstacles with participation of people and civil society.

Box 1: Main research indicators:

(i) What are the roles of every player - Provincial Development Committee (PDC), Provincial Council, NGOs, Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), donors, and the government in development planning and how do they play their role in all of the aforementioned processes?

(ii) What is the value of this provincial planning through the eyes of the central government, implementers and how does it benefit the communities?

(iii) What is the status of budgeting and financial security for the plans made?

Recommendations are provided based on the findings from analysis for improvement of democratic governance by making realistic and efficient development plans. Some initial solutions for stronger ownership and management of development by the elected people's representatives will be presented too.

Based on the analysis of Afghanistan provincial and national ELBAG (having members as representatives from all the sectors) they came up with plans to use the findings for a broader advocacy for democratic governance, targeting the scenarios of planning, donation and financial management of the PDPs. The Provincial Council, Afghan Parliamentarians, government officials, civil society organizations and media, have been engaged in the analysis process. The main objective of the exercise is to enforce the concept of democratic governance for better development paradigm at sub-national level.

During the advocacy campaign, the main audience would be: government ministries, government auditors, the donor community, Jawzjan Provincial Council, Parliamentarians (both the houses), media, civil society representatives, academicians, individual national personalities, communities and the CDCs.

2.2 Information gathering

Key methodologies used for collecting information include literature review, interviews, focused group discussion, consultation and critical review by national and international experts.

Based on the study objectives, the analysis started with primary study of the Jawzjan planning processes, by using experienced resource persons from the Jawzjan ELBAG. The overall understanding about the planning and its procedures were discussed during two primary planning study workshops in February 2008. Finally, the Jawzjan



Figure 5: J-ELBAG are discussing their findings during the data analysis – AAA photo, 2008

ELBAG decided about the main indicators for analysis and their relations to the key observations and recommendations. Data and information about governance mechanism and planning process in Jawzjan were mainly collected and extracted from the primary and secondary sources. Interviews with related staff in the different governmental departments in Jawzjan and provincial council members, were also conducted to ensure the qualitative contents of the study. Issues of communities and poor were discussed through ActionAid NSP local staff in Jawzjan and some case studies were also collected.

2.3 Data analysis

The ELBA Project Coordinator in ActionAid Afghanistan (AAA) supported Jawzjan ELBAG unpack the secondary data and information available. The same analyst together with ELBA Project Officer conducted direct studies through open ended interviews with all provincial governance stakeholders.

Comparison with other planning processes in other/neighboring provinces was also been used for deeper analysis.

The report writing was facilitated with support and review from AAA.

A framework for the analysis was prepared and five major areas of the analysis were pointed out such as:

1. Mapping the actors/stakeholders participating in developing Jawzjan Provincial Development Plan (J-PDP).

2. Preparation in mapping the J-PDP procedures and processes.
3. Understanding the need assessment processes during the Jawzjan PDP.
4. Studying the budgetary planning done for the Jawzjan PDP.
5. Major obstacles and problems of Jawzjan PDP process: formulation, implementation and monitoring.

Throughout the process, PDP has been analyzed as an integral part of the sub-national planning and budgets, in light of development strategies for democratic governance adopted by Afghanistan.

The primary findings were analyzed by the ELBAG members in a workshop and through different working groups. They added new values to the primary analysis.

2.4 Report preparation

Structure of report framework was discussed and agreed during the analysis process by ELBAG network members. Analyzed data, findings and arguments were enclosed into the agreed report framework. After the report was fully developed, it was shared with all ELBAG networks at provincial and national levels as well as with colleagues involved within the ActionAid both locally and internationally, internally and externally. Then the report with inputs and suggestions were revised and final draft was sent for language editing.

The Afghanistan ELBAG members at provincial and national level take pride in owning this report and in being able of sharing it.

2.5 Challenges and limitations

- Due to lack of enough data and information there have been a lot of difficulties in obtaining information for analysis, both primary and secondary. Related data especially information on financing development plans at provincial level are not easily available for access and organization. And when it is available, it was really hard to compile and synchronize as they are not in a consistent or coherent form and format.
- It was very unclear on whom to approach for particular information due to lack of clarity of role among the PDP stakeholders.
- Due to unstable security situation and limited facilities during the harsh winter the analysis team was not able to interact deeply with the communities to understand more about their problems with regard to PDP implementation and obstacles of the financial management.
- The entire analysis process has been delayed due to the commitment and dedication to get consistent and up to date information from different sources.

3. Analysis and Preliminary Findings

The overall governance structure and development issues in Jawzjan province are critically analyzed in this section, focusing more on PDP processes, their efficiency and effectiveness.

3.1 Overview of Provincial Governance

After the Bonn conference, Afghanistan moved towards having a new political and government system and in forming new governance structures and frame works at national, provincial and district levels. There have always been criticisms and recommendations about the centralized and semi- presidential system of government in the country. The political structures and systems to ensure people's participation and the institutionalization of people-centered governance through empowering local and community based governance structures and organizations, have been a topic of discussion among development actors to organize proper mechanisms of reaching the poorest and marginalized communities in remotest areas of Afghanistan. Nonetheless, during this whole period, Afghanistan moved towards a unitary state with a highly centralized government structure. However, despite some improvements since 2002, weak central control and chaotic administration and lack of control in some provinces have made all the policies and administration difficult¹⁰. Hence if the government loses its authority and control over its territory and population, the space for the enemies of democracy and good governance will be more clear and they will have better chances to change the situation according to their will.

After the presidential and parliamentary elections and the establishment of new government, people's participation in the strengthening of democratic governance was limited only to election and voting of already known political figures to establish the government. There is a high level of illiteracy amongst different rural groups and this greatly limits grassroot people to exercise their selection freely and meaningfully during the whole political changes. Government's presence beyond Kabul showed a serious lack of grip and control. The current Afghan administration is challenged by international supporters with difficult and politically-valid questions on the central government's real level of authority beyond certain locations. Recently, the concerns have been raised with showing how symbolic is the control of territory by the government. UN secretary general's report to UNSC shows that 36 out of 376 districts, including most districts in the east, south-east and south, remain largely inaccessible to Afghan officials and aid workers. This hinders the delivery of humanitarian assistance to vulnerable people, a situation exacerbated by the harsh weather conditions of the past few months. Meanwhile, poor governance and limited development efforts, particularly at the provincial and district level, continue to result in political alienation that both directly and indirectly sustains anti-government elements.¹¹

Government's authority had been greatly challenged by surging insurgency and proliferation of narcotics. The central government still suffers from lack of capacity and the slow expansion of its writ in outlying regions of most provinces. A Washington Post report of November 25, 2007 said that the failure to build capacity, as well as government corruption and compromises with local factions, are major contributors to a sense of limited U.S. success in Afghanistan. That same

¹⁰ <http://web.worldbank.org/> (March 2008)

¹¹ The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security, Report of the Secretary-General for General Assembly, Security Council, 6 March 2008

report echoed the concerns that Taliban militants are able to infiltrate “un-governed space” contributing to the persistence and in some areas the expansion of the Taliban insurgency.¹²

Despite all weaknesses of the centralized government system and failure by the entire political structure in governing most parts of the country as stated by UN and top U.S officials, there has not been any lesson learnt from this strict centralization policies. A key part of the U.S strategy to strengthen the central government is to support efforts of Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai to curb key regional strongmen and local militias¹³. Although this policy have had some impact in areas that have been relatively safe and stable already, it had no positive impact on most insecure provinces in the South and East, as the Taliban control increases day by day. It is witnessed that rather than exchanging and curbing the figures to improve the situation, more democratic space should be created at the sub-national level to increase people’s active participation in to the political scenarios.

It is identified that electoral mechanisms should not only ensure true representation. The election process should also be transparent and participation be encouraging, so that future leaders of regions will be willing to fight and able to protect the poor people’s rights and entitlements - therefore a strong sub-national and local governance system will contribute in building and rebuilding a stable and prosperous Afghanistan. It is not the lack of democratic governance which is the solution to putting an end to the vicious circle of illegal activities that breed violence and corruption which, in turn, generate the law of silence and, finally, feed into a culture of impunity.

The consolidation of networks of local power brokers and the perseverance of illegal armed groups in parts of the country are cause for instability.¹⁴ Poverty, lack of livelihood and employment opportunities are also main contributors in the deteriorating and increasingly unstable situation. Opium and heroin production, trafficking and in some cases the involvement of local authorities in such affairs are major threats for the centralized governance structure. As the drug economy remains as an important concern for Afghanistan overall stability and political empowerment it offends the local governance and government’s control over the local powers and factors of security improvement. Hence it is imperative that the sub-national and local democratic governance structures supported to become powerful enough to overcome these threats and violating factors.

During interviews with the PC members and Jawzjan government authorities, it was found that the overall macro-economic strategies and planning are centralized; beyond the approach and consultation of the provincial governance structures. The elected representatives and other local authorities including Mustofiets which is representing the Ministry of Finance at the provincial level have no idea of budgets and expenditure at the provincial level. The whole process of planning for development needs to be done at the provinces by PCs, PDCs and other provincial authorities, taking into account the priorities and perspectives of the traditional village councils, CDCs and other grassroots community based organizations.

Currently domestic revenues cover less than half of all expenditures in the country. A recent report by ActionAid Afghanistan and its partners in ELBAG national network shows that only 28 percent of national budget is consisted of domestic revenues and it is 72 percent dependent on external support. The report also points out that increasing domestic revenue will be the key for

¹² CRS report for congress, Afghanistan: post war governance, Security and U.S Policy, 28th January 2008

¹³ CRS report for congress, Afghanistan: post war governance, Security and U.S Policy, 28th January 2008

¹⁴ CRS report for congress, Afghanistan: post war governance, Security and U.S Policy, 28th January 2008

Afghanistan to have a fiscally sustainable and independent budget. Taxing is obviously the best choice at this stage. Assessing and collecting taxes throughout the country will require strong administrative capacity. According to the World Bank (WB), it will mean building enforcement capacity, information systems, and skills.¹⁵ We see that it is more important to ensure the support by local people who understand their responsibilities and entitlements when paying taxes.

The Afghan government fails to have a proper provincial governance framework with clarity of roles from each player. Government departments, provincial councils, PRTs, and others are either doing everything or they are doing nothing as no clear monitoring mechanism is in place. There is lack of overall vision in sub-national governance, including what “decentralization” might mean¹⁶. This situation again leads to blind centralization system of governance with little attention on people’s issues at the sub-national level.

3.2 Jawzjan province’s governance structure

In all 34 provinces, provincial governors are appointed by the president, and most government staff in the provinces is directly subject to the line authority of the central government ministry for whom they work. Each province is sub-divided into districts, which are governed under the same basic structure.¹⁷

Like any other province in Afghanistan, there are government departments (representatives of central line ministries), provincial councils elected in 2005 and PRT. Every actor is busy in their day to day business but the roles, powers, resources and relationships are not clear. This at times creates problems of task duplications, redundancy and lack of coordination at the provincial level.

In Jawzjan, like other provinces, there is a Provincial Development Committee (PDC) which is a coordination body between all mentioned actors including the NGOs and UN agencies, but since the NGOs, PRT and UN agencies are much concerned about their own businesses they pay less attention to the PDC and most of them even do not participate in the meetings and gatherings of the committee.¹⁸

Provincial Council (PC) which is the only elected body at the provincial level has had very little role in provincial affairs. They suffer low capacity and professional knowledge to fulfill their role in planning, monitoring, conflict resolution, and other related issues.

Meanwhile, actual government agreements differ considerably from the formal structure described in the constitution¹⁹ as to delegate certain authorities to the provinces for the purpose of expediting and promoting economic, social, and cultural affairs, and increasing the participation of people in the development of the nation²⁰. Hence, in practice, many of the provinces do not have considerable autonomy to prepare their own development strategies and plans.

¹⁵ <http://web.worldbank.org/> (March 2008)

¹⁶ Provincial Governance Structure in Afghanistan: From confusion to Vision? AREU, May 2006

¹⁷ Afghanistan National Development Strategy, First draft, February 2008

¹⁸ Information based on personal interview with MoF, April 2008

¹⁹ Afghanistan National Development Strategy, First draft, February 2008

²⁰ Article One Hundred and thirty seven Ch. 8. Art. 2, Afghanistan Constitution

Box 2: ANDS views on Provincial Government

There is considerable dissatisfaction with the quality of governance delivered by many provincial administrations. There is general dissatisfaction with the standard of provincial governance and the operation of the rule of law. In the detailed provincial survey that was conducted as part of the background work for ANDS reducing corruption in public administration, it is identified as a priority in 80% of provinces. None of the provinces made any reference to a decrease in corruption in the last 2 years; however 4 provinces reported progress in the establishment of anticorruption departments since 2005. A recent innovation designed to institute a more effective process for selecting capable governors was to take process of selecting Governors away from the Interior Ministry and place it in the new Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG). The Afghan government, with the support of donors, is attempting to build democratic traditions at the local level.

Source: Afghanistan National Development Strategy, First draft, February 2008

3.3 Development Planning Process in Jawzjan Province

Participatory development processes especially planning for development purposes at the provincial level is a new concept in Afghanistan. Experiencing centuries of central, despotic and totalitarian governments, where all the plans, policies and strategies are made and dictated by the central government, has compromised the capacity of provincial on the issues of planning and development in their working areas.

There is no procedural structure of development planning in Jawzjan province. All actors such as governmental departments, Provincial Council, NGOs, donors, UN agencies, PRT, and others that ideally should come under the umbrella of PDC have failed to come and sit together for making realistic and useful plans. As PDC is responsible to draft the provincial development plan

There are plans made for 5 years, 3 years and 1 year but all of these plans have remained on paper and have had no efficiency in actual implementation mainly because these plans were made just to fulfill the demand of some central and provincial authorities not based on needs of the poor and excluded people of the province.

and budget. Nevertheless the budgets are planned by line ministries at the central level and the PDC at Jawzjan has no clue of the budgets and government finances.

There have been plans made in Jawzjan province but they have no efficiency in implementation because the provincial authorities asked the economic department to call emergency meetings of PDC and make some plans, no matter how unrealistic and inappropriate they are, to fulfill the demand of the central government and in anticipation of some funding opportunities offered by the PRT.²¹

²¹ Personal communication, provincial council and ANDS, February – April 2008

There have been no precise need assessment procedures before planning at the provincial level. Some ministerial departments such as the RRD have taken the initiative of need assessment and consultation through CDCs at the community level, but other ministerial departments have not done any need assessments to be reflected in the PDP for the year 1386.

3.4 1386 PDP and implementation in Jawzjan

For 1386, Jawzjan PDC planned about 314 projects with an estimated budget of 54 million USD. This PDP was prepared according to the development sectors outlined by Afghanistan government.

Out of these planned 314 projects, only 15 projects have been implemented (with only 4.7% implementation rate). This is mainly because:

1) Annual planning process in Jawzjan has only been a symbolic affair. There is a widely shared perception that provincial authorities in general are not capable to make good development plans. These plans are considered to be a 'wish list' by the donors and the central government. Hence, the line ministries at Kabul do not pay much attention to these annual provincial plans while developing their own plans to be submitted to Ministry of Finance (MoF).

2) The budget of Afghanistan (central government) is made according to the plans submitted by different ministries to the MoF. Consultations are also organized by the MoF with donors to take into consideration their demands and preference. On the other hand, provincial authorities have very limited understanding of the country budget and processes involved in forming them. There is no systematic pre-budget discussion at the province and budget plans are not shared during the annual budgeting as to include province's exact budget requirements.

3) Some occasional planning also takes place in the province if only PRT offer some bulk of funds than they are provided with an unreal '*shopping list*' by the provincial authorities to attain the funding opportunities provided. Therefore, unprofessional and unrealistic planning and budget estimations are obvious in all plans.²²

4) It is well acknowledged that Jawzjan province like many other provinces of Afghanistan does not have capacity and professional staff to undertake sound planning process. NGO community and other civil society actors who may have some capacity to plan and implement projects, are busy with their own work and are not able to support the PDC to make a people-centric and realistic plan for the province.²³ Jawzjan province will be included in 'provincial budgeting'²⁴ a

²² Information based on personal interview with MoF, April 2008

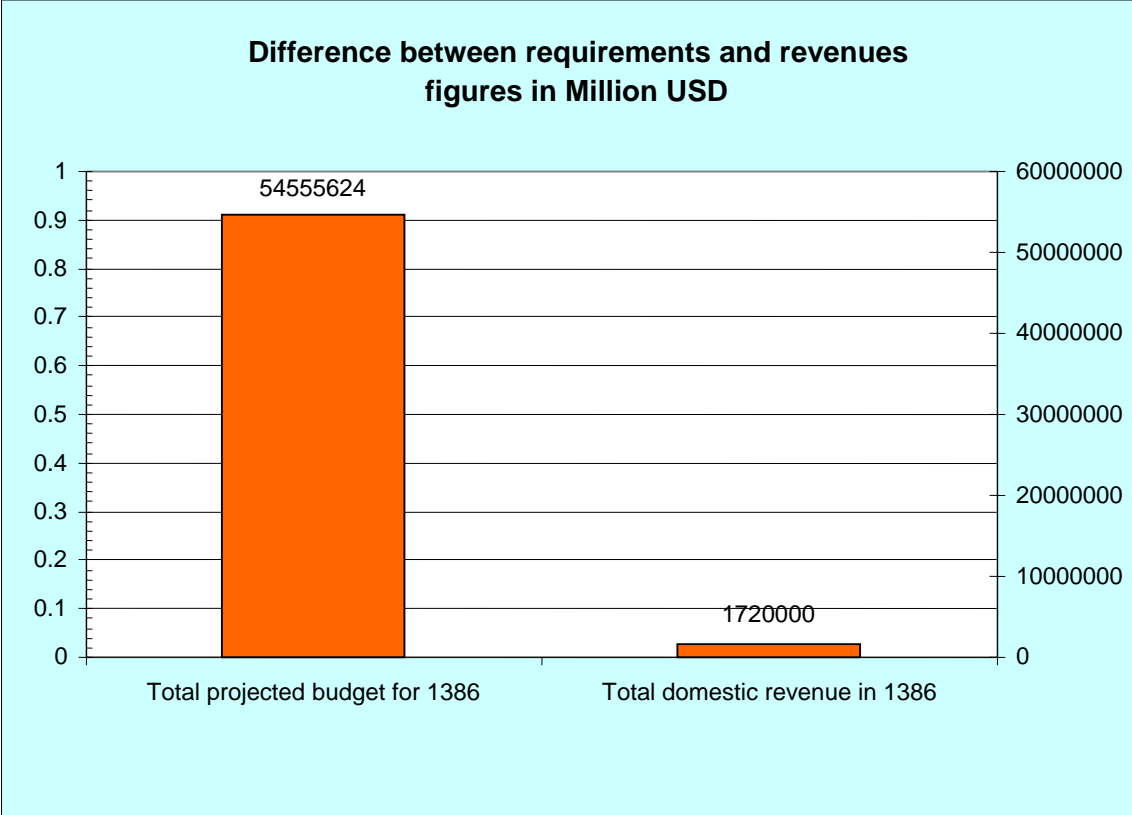
²³ Personal communication, Economic department, 23 February 2008

²⁴ "Provincial budgeting approach refers to the resource allocation process by provinces based on interim Afghanistan Development Strategy (I-ANDS) reflected in the ministries' organizational/ sector strategies. It is an important instrument to address economic, social, political and geographic concerns and priorities of the provinces. It helps to allocate resources to the programs on the basis of local people's needs and governmental priorities; operate and deliver public services more efficiently; ensure that the budget reflects citizens' preferences; and make the spending units empowered and accountable for their actions. Since August 1385, the Ministry of Finance initiated piloting of provincial budgeting during the preparation of the 1386 budget in order to improve the budget formulation, execution, and reporting of the service delivery arms (the provinces) of the central government... The piloting started in 1385 with three ministries (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture, and Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development) and three provinces (Balkh, Panjshir, and Kandahar)... From 1386 seven more provinces (Logar, Nangarhar, Ghazni, Bamyán, Faryab, Hirat and Badakhshan) have been added. Four more ministries (Finance, Water

program designed by MoF only two years later, which means it will be left out without any proper development planning and budgeting process until then.

People at provincial and at national level talk about the contrast between requirements and actual revenues to make provincial planning and implementation a viable process. Some also talk about provinces gradually becoming independent and self-sufficient in future, which is very idealistic considering the current situation of the country. In case of Jawzjan the gap between their projected budgets and domestic revenues is very sharp. As shown in Figure 6. The total domestic revenue expected for 1386 has been less than 2 million USD in contrary the total projected budget for the same year which has been more than 50 million.

Figure 6: Difference between requirements and revenues



Source: *Jawzjan Mustofiet*

But this argument does not mean that Jawzjan has no potential to improve its domestic revenues. The province has rich stocks of gas and oil. Before the civil war the income of only exporting gas from Jawzjan to erstwhile USSR contributed a lot to the national revenue as a whole. Further, gas fields and processing plants in the province were providing gainful employment to over 4000 people.

and Energy, Public works) and ten more provinces would be undertaken in 1387 so as to cover all the ministries and provinces within next two-three years.” *MoF, National budget, 1387*

Unfortunately, this industry is completely dull at the moment and the authorities have so far not paid adequate attention towards rehabilitating this industry. This has a very negative impact on revenue generation schemes at the national level.

Table1: Contrast between Jawzjan revenues and expenditure (figures in Afs)

Year	Revenues	Expenses	%of contrast
1381	75704148	54514198	72.00
1382	74552278	40681410	54.56
1383	186104361	494720749	265.82
1384	42237231	42237231	100
1385	67843996	617781342	910.59
1386	52556591	315185151	599.70
Total	498998605	1565120081	313.652

Table source: Jawzjan Province Mustofiet

As can be seen in table above the provincial income and revenues in Jawzjan are not comparable with its expenditures. There is about 599% difference between the province revenues and expenditure in 1386. This huge gap between income and expenditure makes the whole idea of self-reliance and development very utopian.

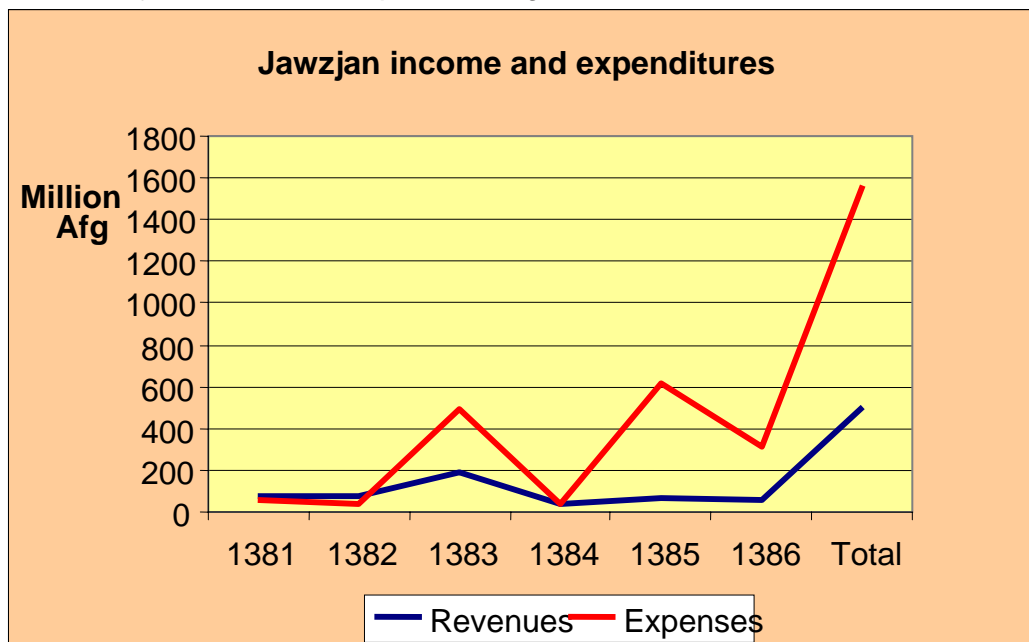
In 1386 the figures show that the total available revenues in 1385 have been about 52 million Afs in contrast with a total expected expenditure of about 300 million Afs for 1386. The remaining balance is about -262 million Afs which leads to the questions as to how the province is managing to fill this gap and take care of the needs of the people. Where is the money coming from?

This balance money comes from the central government in various forms and therefore, shows that the provincial authorities have to depend on the central government to meet their expenses thereby limiting their control over development work taking place in the province.

It is the central line ministries who decide about such budgeting interventions, which again increase the dependency of the province over the central government ministries who may not always be motivated to increase the revenue of the provinces.

But decentralized planning and increase in revenues at provincial level are very much needed to ensure bottom-up, people-centric planning and overall growth and development of the nation. Current circumstances where the revenues both at provincial and at central level are low contribute to government's dependency on external resources and donors contributions. For example, in 1386 the total commitments of donors to Afghanistan budget was 72% with only 28% coming from domestic revenues.

Figure 7: Jawzjan income and expenditures growth



Source: Jawzjan Mustofiet

3.5 Sector wise planning and budget allocations:

Based on the Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (I-ANDS), development sectors, every province had to prepare their plans in accordance to identified sectors stipulated in the table below. In 1386 PDP of Jawzjan province, different projects have been lined up under each sector with estimated funding allocations.

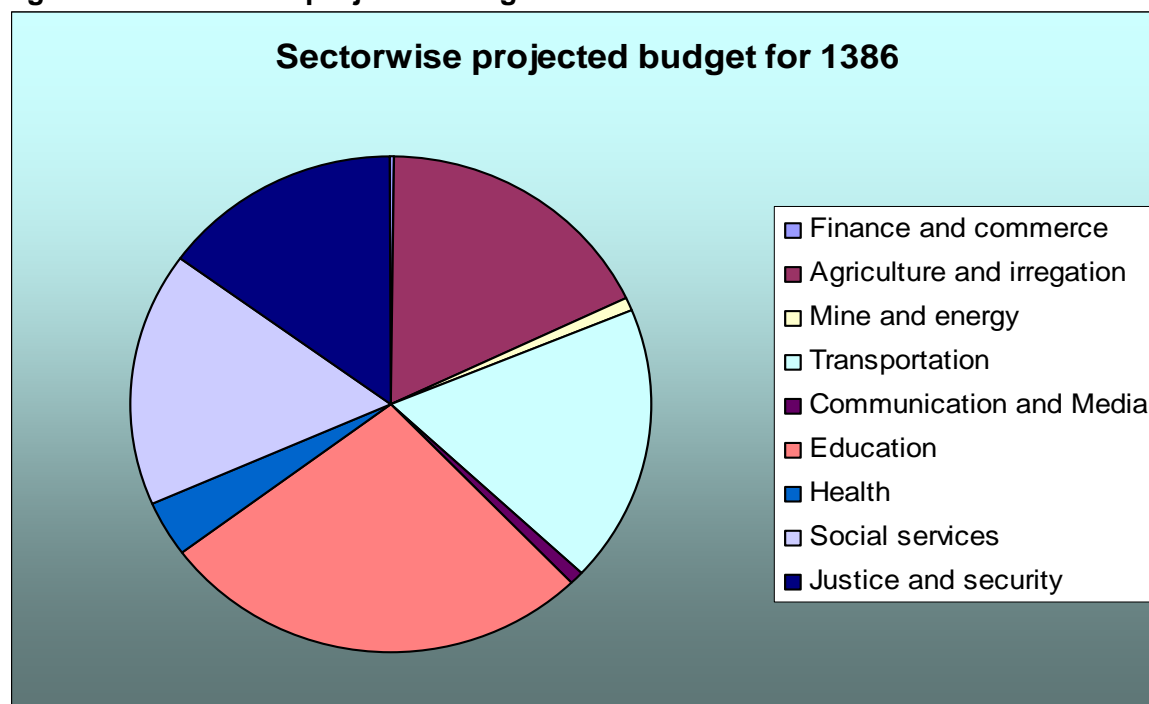
Table 2: Sector wise allocation in Jawzjan PDP (figures in USD)

No	Sector	Projected Budget	% of allocation
1	Finance and commerce	108550	0.2
2	Agriculture and irrigation	9444326	17.79
3	Mine and energy	488000	0.91
4	Transportation	9637691	18.15
5	Communication and Media	386447	0.72
6	Education	14282710	26.9
7	Health	1880000	3.54
8	Social services	8868544	16.7
9	Justice and security	7984845	15.04
	Total	53,081,113	100

Table source: 1386 plan for Jawzjan province, prepared by PDC

In an industrial area with rich stocks of gas and oil, allocation of 0.91% to mine and energy sector means that the planners have completely ignored the role of extraction, usage, value and export of gas and oil considering there is about 30 billion m³ gas capacity in only Jarqadoq mine²⁵. It is a total negligence of the lives and livelihoods of about 2500 poor workers in both Sheberghan gas enterprise and Mazar's Kod-o- barq fertilizer and power plant. The planners have not considered the short and long term economic impact of such sources of energy or they have been too realistic in thinking about the obstacles and problems hindering them to have any practical project planning for repairing and rehabilitating the industry.

Figure 8: Sector-wise projected budget for 1386



Further, the privatization policies of the central government also hinder them to think about any well being effort for the future of this sector. The authorities at the central government have no plans for Jawzjan Gas enterprise till 1388; hence, even the privatization process is unclear about any immediate plan for upholding the enterprise or formulating a destiny for its future.

On the other hand, the central government also has not paid serious attention to mines and energy sources of the Jawzjan province and since 1367(1988) when the Russians left Afghanistan, the industry had not been repaired at all, and unprofessional ways of gas extraction caused lots of damages to the mine. Recently, the Afghanistan government claimed that they will privatize the gas and oil industry like other public- owned industries such as Ghorri cement and sugar mill in Baghlan. But people of Afghanistan in general, and in this case people of Jawzjan in particular, have not been consulted with their views taken for granted. Knowing the intention of

²⁵ The figures belong only to survey in 1971 conducted by the Russian experts, there are no recent data available to show the current capacity but based on technical engineers estimations the capacity of both Jarqadoq and Kwaja gogerdak mines are much more then the existing figures, provided by Russians in 1971. (personal communication with Jarqadoq technical engineers, February 2008)

the policy makers behind such decisions, whereby their national assets and source of livelihood are being transferred into the hands of private corporations, remains unclear.

Finance and commerce sector has taken only 0.2% of budget allocation in spite of the fact that Jawzjan is located at the transit route of different provinces in the north and borders with central Asian countries, that connect north east to north west with great commercial opportunities of horticultural and woolen products such as Qaraqol and Afghani rug. Moreover, as the taxation system is drastically weak like other provinces of Afghanistan, this limited allocation of budgets will discourage the improvement of modern taxation and domestic revenue generation systems.

The limited irrigation and water availability have hindered agricultural development and progress in the province. There are thousand hectares of lands that is ready for cultivation as Jawzjan is located in an agricultural zone with plain lands and less mountains. Although 17.79% is the estimated allocation but if long term agricultural and irrigation programs are implemented in this province, it will make surplus food production at the provincial level that may fulfill the food requirements of the country.

Most of the projects under different sectors are highly dominated by construction prototypes. As an example, at the sector of justice and security there are 41 planned projects, and with no exception, all of them are construction activities such as construction of a building for provincial guest house, construction of a building for Haj department etc. There is no or limited allocation towards capacity building, improving skills and recruitment of provincial judiciary personnel and other necessary activities to improve the law and order situation in the province.



Figure 9: The stained machine and ruined factory of gas enterprise in Jarqadoq, Jawzjan province – AAA photo, 2008

Box 3: What kind of plans?

Due to lack of coordination and information sharing among the different governmental departments who are representatives of their line ministries in Jawzjan province, negative impacts are reflected during the planning and implementation of the development projects. There are examples of confusions between the MRRD and Ministry of Education that create problems among the CDCs and NSP implementers during the implementation, and these confusions raise a lot of concern and questions among the people on the planning and implementation processes as can be observed in the following case studies:

Re – construction of same school buildings?!

There are two school building construction projects in 1386 plan of Jawzjan which have already been constructed by NSP previous year. One of these schools is in Murdian district centre and the other is in Fateh Abad village of Murdian district. These projects were completed in 1385 by NSP funds through ActionAid, but these school buildings were planned again in 1386 PDP under the educational sector to be constructed.

Who should build Chakana School?

In 1386 the CDCs of Chakana-e-bala and Chakana-e-paien villages proposed a school building construction which was approved by NSP of MRRD and the first installment fund transferred to Jawzjan bank on 05/12/007 but with a letter the CDCs of these villages asked ActionAid who is the implementing facilitator of NSP in the district, that the education department has taken the responsibility for construction of this school as per their 1386 development plan, so we want to utilize the NSP budget allocated for this school in other projects.

Two projects under the same title!

The CDCs from Qazal ghach, Qarghan, Kotal osti and Moghol villages of Darzab district proposed *Abuzar Ghafari* school building project, under the NSP of MRRD on 19/03/07. The project was approved on 03/05/07 and the first installment received from Jawzjan bank account of CDC on 12/08/07. Meanwhile, another school project with the same title was found to be implemented by Education Department. Both projects got approved and were ready to be implemented on the ground however CDCs were proactive enough to take up the issue with Education Dept. to avoid duplication. Subsequently, Education department agreed to implement both projects while in the form of two separate buildings benefiting boys and girls each.

Source: ActionAid, NSP department, Jawzjan province

3.6 The I-ANDS Planning

The Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (I-ANDS) represents the government's strategy to address contingent concerns with the aim of placing Afghanistan to the path of stability, good governance, with sustained and high-level economic growth and reduced poverty. The ANDS is derived through substantial consultations to constitute a comprehensive and increasingly provincial-based plan for public investment. In developing this strategy, the government cast its net wide in developing a strategy that ought to be truly representing the breadth and diversity of Afghanistan, essential for broad-based ownership leading to equally broad-based growth. Consultation was held not only at the level of central government, but also throughout all 34 provinces, during which people are supposed to come forward and identify their own development priorities.²⁶

From July 2007, I-ANDS was introduced to the planners in Jawzjan province through PDC, which was facilitated by government ANDS personnel. The ANDS process started some consultation at the provincial level to prepare the 3 to 5 years plan according to the ANDS structure. The process of consultation lasted for months and resulted to the development of a 3-year plan with 80 projects.

Yet during 1386, two different plans were prepared for Jawzjan province - one by the PDC and the other by ANDS. These two planning processes had no linkage and relationship among each other to coordinate the planning of development activities in the province. On the contrary, this whole exercise has increased confusion among different development actors.

The main focus of the ANDS planning process has been on having an open and collaborative dialogue, which involved consultation with all sectors of society. The provincial development plan facilitated by the ANDS and presented according to the priority sectors, drags the participants in to a process of a preplanned strategy. The real demands and vision of people especially at the community level do not really match with the priority lines drawn in the strategy as every region and even every province has their own needs and priority sectors to be reflected in a plan such as this at the provincial level.

The ANDS has reached to a conclusion of planning for 8 priority sectors at the national level under the influence of the donors, central government and line ministries. This sector prioritization neither has been based on a broad-based consultation with the people at the provincial level nor on a need assessment to reflect the actual needs of the people in provinces. Besides, there is no budget planning and real budgeting assessment in the process as to contribute for real implementation because the budgets will be incorporated by line ministries at the national level, again with no consultation with provincial plan makers²⁷.

²⁶ Afghanistan National Development Strategy, First draft, February 2008

²⁷ Personal communication, Provincial council, February 24

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The democratic transition in Afghanistan started positively with immense support of international community through financial and technical assistance to establish new governance structures. Notwithstanding all developments at different aspects of people's lives in the recent years there is an increase in hopelessness and disparities among different layers of Afghan society, deterioration of peace and security situation and rise in violence, prejudice, instability and disorder.

There is growing uncertainty amongst the people about any improvement in their lives. Apart from various other reasons this uncertainty can be attributed to: 1) growing linkages between insurgency and drug business that is undermining the authority and prestige of the government.. 2) In the absence of a strong and effective government local power holders are returning to their former positions. 3) The growing perception of corruption amongst governing bodies has increased the suspicion and disparities among the people. 4) Unemployment, diseases, illiteracy, homelessness, lack of appropriate living standards and services increases the level of dissatisfaction and riot in different parts of the country.

The current strategies of empowering the central government to take over the control of all territory and population and to foster democratic values imposed by powerful centralized governance policies have not been successful. The anti democratic and anti government elements are gaining successful military and political battles rapidly, they are supported by all those powers and individuals who have lost trust on the government and their international supporters; they are going no where but joining the ranks of anti government elements. Nevertheless neither the Afghan government nor the international community has paid serious attention to the root causes of such circumstances that leads to poor governance structure at sub-national level.

The existing governance structure and system only serves the deterioration of current situation by losing necessary authority and control of the elected government of Afghanistan because the centralized development planning rarely reflects people's perceptions and aspirations in development process. Critics from political and civil society circles have always suggested that such highly-centralised form of governance is not suited for a diverse country like Afghanistan and that there is a need to explore alternate systems of governance to ensure people participation and control in decision making process such as development strategies and plans. The role of people's representatives from villages and communities in the form of traditional councils, CDCs to the provincial councils and national assembly should be empowered during the development planning processes.

Currently, all planning and budgetary processes are centralized, only the line ministries in Kabul with the official forms and procedures are responsible for preparation of development plans and budgets, which has left the provincial authorities completely out of the loop. Hence, if the decentralization of such process is not undertaken on priority basis then the planned objectives may not have much positive impact on the lives of the people.

The provincial planning mechanisms need much consideration and the provincial authorities' together with the provincial council needs to be involved by bearing more responsibilities during

the development planning. Although the ANDS has started a very basic and important initiation to consult development issues and plans at the provincial level, people's voice at the communities in terms of reflecting their own development issues still has not received much attention.

There has been less coordination and cooperation among different development actors during the development planning at the Jawzjan level which caused poor planning and implementation. Different governmental departments are just implementing the plans that are coming from their line ministries in Kabul without sharing and coordinating it with other provincial government units to avoid duplication.

4.2 Recommendations

4.2.1 Provincial Governance Structure

1. Basic administration and sub-national reforms focusing on democratic decentralization process should be undertaken by Afghanistan government with close cooperation of international community in consultation with the existing authorities and provincial councils to gradually decrease the extreme development and financial dependency on the central government and make the development center to the provincial issues and needs.

2. More trainings and capacity building opportunities should be provided to the provincial authorities and provincial councils on the issues of participatory development programming and implementation.

3. The political structure and electoral systems should be reformed and monitored constantly by national and international watch groups and people-centric institutions, with simultaneous public awareness processes before elections and after that to increase people's awareness on political scenarios and ensuring their active role and participation in social, political and economic processes of development in order to avoid leadership gap and poor governance structures.

4. There should be development and awareness-raising initiatives parallel to military operations in unrest and instable parts of the country as to improve people's living condition through provision of employment opportunities and income-generation programs so that people feel that their lives are improving and it become better everyday than before, hence they will refuse to be part of anti-government insurgencies and not revolt against the government.

5. The elected governance bodies such as PCs at the provincial level and CDCs at the village should be supported by Afghanistan government, donors, Afghan parliament and all other actors. More training and capacity building opportunities should be provided with necessary resources allocation and facilities for their strength and improvements. They should take more responsibilities on each and every affair of their province and communities.

٦. The future role of CDCs in sub-national governance should be clarified and efforts should be made to retain the progress and investment that has been made over the years through NSP implementation.

٧. The Civil society organization should establish forums and networks to collectively support the community based organizations and councils, by empowering them as to take an active and consistent role during the policy making processes

4.2.2 Provincial Development Planning

1. A comprehensive plan for development of capacities of provincial governmental authorities should be undertaken to increase their knowledge and skills on issues of planning and program implementation.

2. The provincial development planning process should be undertaken by the provincial authorities under the supervision of elected representatives in the form of provincial councils.

3. Centralized line-ministry planning and budgeting should be linked directly with the provincial planning based on priority sectors outlined by the people in the provinces so that the different line ministries make their development objectives based on the provincial planning on annual bases.

4. Coordination and information sharing initiatives among different development actors are basic for a conceptualized structure of planning. The entities such as PDC should gain serious support and empowerment efforts through different development stakeholders in the province so that they take the lead in development planning and conduct systematic monitoring of implementation at the provincial level.

5.

6. The budgetary information including resources allocation for development activities at the provinces should be shared with the provinces as to make budgetary planning based on actual revenues and expenditures of the provinces in future.

8. Significant efforts should be undertaken by the central/ provincial government to increase the provincial revenues. The investment on basic economic income-generation schemes and mineral extraction are crucial for financial and economic stabilization of the country that have to be established and administered by close contribution from the provincial level.

9. The plans and development strategies should be based on exact need assessments from all parts of the provinces including the remote and marginalized communities and villages.

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ANNEXURE-1: Schedule for Interviews

Group	Organization	Person to Meet & Contact Details	Date & Time
INGOs	ADRA		26 February 2008
	ZOA	M. Shah Babi	24 February 2008
	GAA	Eng. Zar Mohammad	24 February 2008
Central Government	MoF	Najimullah Qasimi	7 April 2008
	ANDS	M. Yousuf Ghaznavi	8 April 2008
	MoF/ LETERA project	Dr. Najibullah	9 April 2008
PDC and Provincial Government	J. Economic Department	Mr. Hamidullah	24 February 2008
	J. Economic Department	Dr. Behroz	24 February 2008
	J.MRRD	Deputy Eng Mahir and Enatullah	21 February 2008
	Social work Dept	Eng Hassiana Mokhlis	23 February 2008
	WoA Dapt	Zahra Areeb	23 February 2008
	Governor's office	Eng Abdul Rahman	23 February 2008
	Mustafit Dept	Mr. Rasuli	21 February 2008
Afghan Gas enterprises	Eng. Mohammad Hashim	22 February 2008	
PC		Alif Shah Khan	24 February 2008
		Mullah ABdual Hai	24 February 2008
Communities	Murdian	Murdian CDC	25 Feb 2008
	Murdian	Fatih Abad CDC	25 Feb 2008
	KDK	Changal bagh Joint P	26 Feb 2008
	KDK	Lab Jar Taghan	27 Feb 2008
	Darzab	Mughal CDCs	23 March 2008
ELBAG	Jawzjan ELBAG	Whole team members	20 Feb
	Jawzjan ELBAG	Whole team members	9 March 2008

ANNEXURE – 2: Jawzjan ELBAG
Framework for study - JPDP

Key Objectives of the study

Major areas of the Jawzjan Provincial Development Plan study:

- 1) Mapping the J.PDP preparation stakeholders and actors
- 2) Mapping the J.PDP procedures and processes
- 3) Understanding the need assessment processes during the J.PDP
- 4) Studying the budgetary planning during the J.PDP
- 5) Major obstacles and problems of J.DPD
- 6) Recommendations

Jawzjan PDP study frame work:

Mapping the J.PDP preparation stakeholders and actors

Understanding the role of each actor in the process of planning

Institutions:

- a. Provincial development council
- b. Provincial/ central government authorities
- c. NGOs/ INGOs
- d. CDCs
- e. UN agencies
- f. PRT
- g. Others

Mapping the J.PDP procedures and processes

- a. Studying the different steps of planning
- b. How is the planning approach (bottom up – top down)?
- c. General micro level planning process and inclusion of poor (in which ways happening?)
- d. Process for other Provinces (Mazar, Kundoz) Comparison and guidelines

Understanding the need assessment processes during the J.PDP

- a. Process of need assessment at the community level?
- b. Who, When, Where, and how is the need assessment taking place at the provincial level?
- c. Are there any norms and guidelines for need assessment?

Studying the budgetary planning during the J.PDP

- d. How is the budgetary planning process in J.PDP?
- e. How the plan is funded, who are the donors, financial supporters?
- f. Who is monitoring the expenditures and budget executions?
- g. Understanding the procedures of resource allocation and utilization for J.PDP

Major obstacles and problems of J.PDP

- h. What are major challenges and obstacles of the J.PDP?
- i. Is the plan being implemented? How is it included in ANDS
- j. What is the linkage of J.PDP with ANDS and other GoA plans?

- k. What are the main differences of Jawzjan and other provinces development plans?
- l. Are people's issues and demands reflected in the planning process? (Collecting different case studies from the field)

Recommendations:

- How to make the J.PDP:
 - 1) People centered
 - 2) Need based
 - 3) Realistic
 - 4) Action oriented
 - 5) Budget and financial aware
 - 6) Efficient and time bound

ANNEXURE-3: Jawzjan PDC New Structure (Approved September, 2007)

**Members of Provincial Development Committee PDC:
Directors of Economy, DoRR, DoA, DoPH, DoE, DRRD, UNAMA, PRT....**

Private Sector Development	Social Protection	Agriculture & Rural Development	Health & Nutrition	Education	Infrastructure & Natural Resources
Government Departments 1. Economy 2. Finance 3. National Bank 4. De Afghanistan Bank 5. Chamber of commerce 6. Culture& Youths 7. Private Sectors: ➤ MRC ➤ MWCC 8. Census 9. Petroleum 10. Provincial councils 11. PRT 12. UN/NGOs ➤ USAID ➤ UNAMA	Government Departments 1. Labor & Social Affairs 2. DoRRD 3. Disabled & Martyred 4. ARCS 5. Women Affairs 6. Religious department 7. Provincial councils 8. Fire department 9. PRT 10. UN /NGOs ➤ GP ➤ UNHCR ➤ UNAMA	Government Departments 1. Agriculture 2. DoRRD 3. Water management 4. Women Affairs 5. Environment 6. Water supply 7. PRT 8. UN /NGOs ➤ GAA ➤ ZOA ➤ GRAC ➤ COAR ➤ FAO	Government Departments 1. Public Health 2. Education 3. Women Affairs 4. DoRRD 5. ARCS 6. Food department 7. Provincial council 8. PRT 9. UN/NGOs ➤ SC/USA ➤ MOVE welfare ➤ WHO ➤ UNICEF	Government Departments 1. Education 2. Culture& Youths 3. Women Affairs 4. High education 5. Sport 6. Labor & Social Affairs 7. DoRRD 8. Provincial council 9. PRT 10. UN /NGOs ➤ SC/USA ➤ GP ➤ IACD ➤ UNICEF	Government Departments 1. Public Work 2. DoRRD 3. Department of coal and mine 4. Afghan Gas/Tafahosat 5. Water & Energy 6. Water Management 7. Communication 8. Municipality 9. Environment 10. Provincial council 11. PRT 9. UN /NGOs ➤ NAC ➤ GAA