



SIGAR | SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR
AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION

Lessons from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan

NATO'S SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP

DECEMBER 2018



SIGAR Overview

- Congress created the Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) in 2008 to provide independent and objective oversight of Afghanistan reconstruction projects and activities.
- SIGAR conducts audits, inspections, law enforcement investigations, special projects, and lessons learned studies.
- SIGAR is not housed within any one agency and has jurisdiction to examine all U.S. government reconstruction activities. This improves SIGAR's ability to be independent and to provide whole-of-government recommendations.

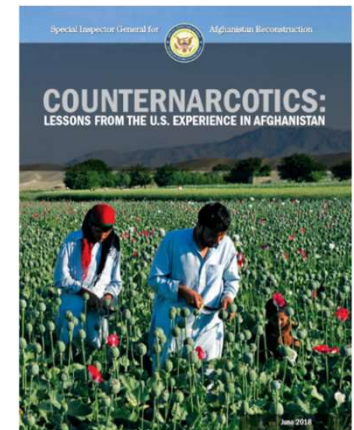
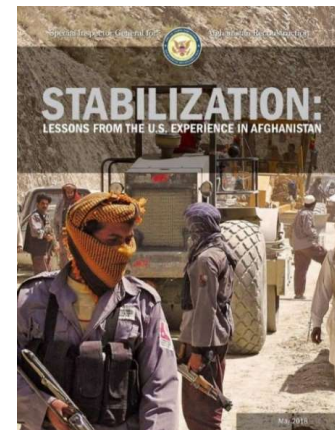
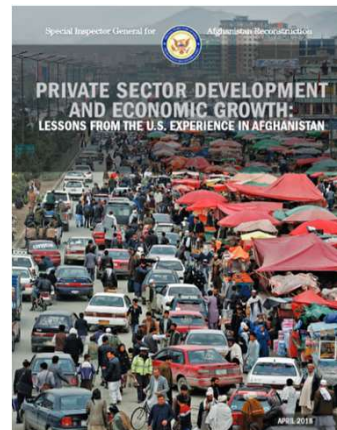
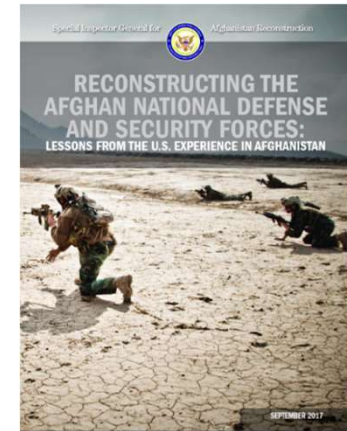
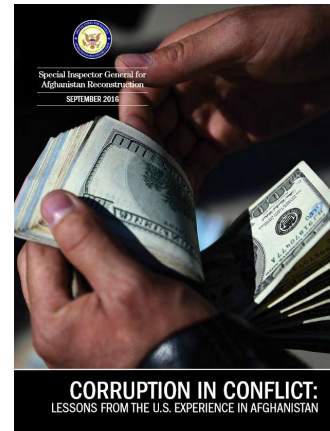


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SIGAR Lessons Learned Program

Mission Statement: Improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of current and future reconstruction efforts through comprehensive, evidence-based analysis of the U.S. engagement in Afghanistan since 2001.

- *Reconstructing the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces*, published September 2017
- *Divided Responsibility*, initiated March 2018, with a scheduled launch of April 2019
 - Examines how the U.S. selected, trained, and prepared advisors along multiple lines of effort: field advising, ministerial-level advising, and equipping.



Field Advising

- **Advisors were often selected without consideration of their background, experience, or training, which hindered the overall advisory effort. While the new U.S. Army Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFAB) are trying to resolve these issues, challenges remain in recruiting and retaining advisors with specialized skills (e.g., intelligence, medical, logistics).**
- **Advisory teams were not fully assembled prior to deployment and were often broken up once in Afghanistan, negatively impacting team cohesion.**
- **Pre-deployment training often did not expose advisors to ANDSF weapons, processes, doctrine, or history. Training was not standardized across military service providers and focused heavily on combat and lifesaving skills.**
- **Despite a requirement to do so, DOD still does not have a system in place across the military services to track individuals with SFA-related training, education, or experience.**
- **For those missions for which the U.S. lacks trained personnel or a core competency (e.g., police advising in a conflict zone), the U.S. failed to leverage NATO allies to meet mission requirements.**



Ministerial Advising

- Capacity building and institutional development of the MOD and MOI are recognized as essential to creating a self-sustaining fighting force.
- In 2009, the Ministry of Defense Advisors (MODA) program was created to address this deficiency. However, the program was only authorized for DOD civilian personnel. The U.S. National Defense Authorization Act of 2017 finally authorized military personnel to receive ministerial-level training prior to deployment. In 2018, the commander for Resolute Support provided some waivers for this requirement.
- As of July 2017, there were 577 ministerial advisors deployed in Afghanistan. Of those 577 advisors, 72 were from the MODA program, 29 were a part of the Afghan Hands program, 89 were uniformed personnel, and 387 were contractors serving as advisors in both the MOD and MOI.
- Advising Afghan security institutions requires unique skills. DOD and its military forces do not have depth in these areas, including human resources, medical, logistics, and payroll, to meet requirements.
- The role of a ministerial advisor is to build institutional capabilities and capacity; however, for years the U.S. structured the advisory mission as individualized assignments partnered with a single Afghan counterpart (e.g., advising the Deputy Minister of Defense for Policy versus assigned to build a policy formulation capability and capacity within the Ministry of Defense).



Equipping the ANDSF

- Equipment was supplied to the ANDSF without appropriate training or sustainment. The Total Package Approach (TPA) was not included in a number of Foreign Military Sales (FMS) cases initiated by CSTC-A.
- U.S. personnel at various organizations within the FMS system often lacked the relevant technical expertise and acquisition experience needed to ensure that equipping decisions were appropriate, cost-effective, and in accordance with procedures for providing equipment to partner nations.
- Equipping decisions did not fully account for the need for interoperability between the various elements of the ANDSF. Limited interoperability negatively affected operational capabilities, increased duplication, and hindered sustainability efforts.
- CSTC-A failed to adequately involve the Afghans in generating requirements and developing pseudo-FMS cases. As a result, Afghans today have limited ownership and understanding of this process.



Common Challenges and Best Practices



- The U.S. lacked a “Common Advisor Picture” for all U.S. personnel engaged in advising the ANDSF. Operational and tactical-level advising efforts were not synchronized across Afghanistan or between military services, and the structure of U.S. advisory missions often differed by region. Because of this, two U.S. advisors could provide contradictory guidance to ANDSF units, hindering standardization.
- The role of NATO in Afghanistan, combined with a large U.S. combat presence, forced the U.S. to operate outside of its traditional, embassy-led security sector assistance (SSA) command-and-control structures. U.S. and Coalition embassies initiated SSA related programs that were at times not synchronized with the larger NATO-led operation. Further, pre-deployment training often did not provide training on the role of the U.S. Embassy and NATO partners.
- Culture and language training were not tailored to the advisor’s mission in Afghanistan. Afghan expats at times did not have relevant or current experience in Afghanistan. Some units were trained in Dari, despite being assigned to train a Pashtun unit. Pre-deployment training centers did not provide advisors access to commonly used tools, forms, and information on Afghan military culture, history, and structure.
- **Best Practice:** Advisory missions that provide a sustained presence and implement a comprehensive program have been the most successful in developing ANDSF capabilities and understanding the needs of the force from ministerial to operational levels. Best examples from the Afghan mission are advising the Special Forces and Afghan Air Force’s A-29 capability.



Questions?

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