Security-Development Nexus in Post-conflict State-Building: Lessons Learned From the Case of Afghanistan

Juichi Inada

Senshu University, Tokyo, Japan

There has been widespread cooperation and intervention by the international community in the reconstruction of post-conflict countries, and maintaining security and stability and assistance for economic recovery and development have been positioned as two indispensable wheels (Security-Development Nexus) in the rebuilding process of unstable countries. One of the most typical examples of the international community's involvement in post-conflict state-building was its support for Afghanistan after 2002. However, despite its efforts over 20 years, the Taliban seized all of Afghanistan in 2021, resulting in the collapse of 20 years of international community support for the building of a democratic state. This paper attempts to recapitulate the international community's ambitious 20-year Security and Development efforts in Afghanistan, where the resulting failure lies and what lessons can be learned. The key points are: (1) the limitations of the UN's role and the fact that it had continued to provide assistance without a clear "exit strategy", (2) the security circle and the development circle had different objectives, and their collaboration was not effectively conducted, (3) the failure to include Taliban in the initial political process of the new state.

Keywords: Security-Development Nexus, State-Building, Afghanistan, UNAMA, NSP, PRT, Taliban, exit strategy

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War in the 1990s, there has been widespread cooperation and intervention by the international community in the reconstruction for the purpose of maintaining security and stability and assistance for economic recovery and development have been positioned as two wheels in the rebuilding process of post-conflict countries. In other words, "Security-Development Nexus" has come to be advocated loudly.

One of the most typical examples of the international community's involvement in post-conflict state-building was its support for Afghanistan after 2002.

Following the 9/11 attacks in 2001, the U.S. determined that al-Qaeda was responsible for the attacks and demanded that the then Taliban regime in Afghanistan immediately hand over members of al-Qaeda to the U.S. side. When the Taliban government responded that it could not agree to the handover, the U.S. launched a military offensive in October of the same year. The Taliban leaders fled the country, and in Afghanistan, following the December Bonn agreement, Hamid Karzai was inaugurated as interim president and the building of a new nation began.

However, the efforts to build a new regime that completely excludes the Taliban, which had previously controlled the country, and the growing criticism among the people to the corruption of the new regime led to the reorganization of the Taliban around 2005 and the rapid expansion of the areas they controlled, particularly in the southern and eastern regions of the country. Although peace negotiations subsequently began, after the official announcement of the withdrawal of U.S. forces in April 2021, the Taliban accelerated their military offensive throughout the country, and in early August of the same year, they launched simultaneous attacks on the provincial capitals of 34 provinces. In response, Afghan government forces resisted for several days, but soon surrendered. The day after President Ghani fled the country, the Taliban entered an unresisting Kabul and took control of all of Afghanistan.

In short, the Taliban seized all of Afghanistan in August 2021, resulting in the collapse of 20 years of international community support for the building of a democratic state.

This paper attempts to recapitulate the international community's ambitious 20-year effort of "Security-Development Nexus" in Afghanistan, and to examine the causes of the resulting failure and what lessons can be learned.

There has already been a great deal of literature and assessment of military intervention in Afghanistan, mainly by the U.S. military and NATO. Because the author is an expert of post-conflict reconstruction and development, this paper focusses on the role of the United Nations (UN) and collaborated efforts for socio-economic reconstruction/development in Afghanistan by international aid community. The key points are, (1) the limited role of the UN in Afghanistan, (2) lack of effective cooperation between the security and the development circle, and (3) the failure to include the Taliban in the initial political process, etc.

Limited Role of the United Nations in Peacebuilding in Afghanistan

Unlike UN interventions in many other post-Cold War regional conflicts, the deployment of UN peacekeeping forces, which had been widely implemented in post-Cold War peacebuilding, was not implemented in Afghanistan. The UN formed a "special political mission" called UNAMA (UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan) to focus on the political process and the UNAMA took on the role of coordinating the entire process.

International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) under the command of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) had been active in restoring and maintaining internal security in Afghanistan, but always in a coexisting manner with the U.S. military's operations. The U.S.-led multinational force (ISAF) units were stationed in Afghanistan and were responsible for maintaining security, and the U.S. played a dominant role in supporting the new-born Afghanistan police and military.

Peacebuilding Under the UN-Centered framework

To begin with, I'd like to summarize the UN-centered framework for peacebuilding.

The concept of "peacebuilding" was mentioned in the June 1992 report "An Agenda for Peace" of then UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali, as a role for the international community. It was defined as "actions to find and support structures that strengthen and consolidate peace in order to avoid recurrent conflict." Subsequently, international concern has broadened from peacebuilding in the sense of "dealing with conflict ex post" to identifying the causes of conflict and further "preventing it before it happens", and has focused on issues of poverty and inequality, social development, political institutions, and international cooperation (UN, 1992).

In response to this trend, the UN published the "Report of the Commission on UN Peace Operations (Brahimi Report)" in 2000. It focused on the interrelationships among conflict prevention, peacemaking,

peacekeeping, and integrated them under the concept of "peace operations." In the report, peace-operations were described as "activities undertaken on the far side of conflict to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war," and included "reintegrating former combatants into civilian society, strengthening the rule of law, improving respect for human rights through the monitoring, education and investigation of past and existing abuses, providing technical assistance for democratic development, and promoting conflict resolution and reconciliation techniques." (UN, 2000, p. 3)

In the area of humanitarian, reconstruction, and development assistance, the Resident Coordinator (RC) oversees UN functions in the field, but the role of the RC in the transition phase is somewhat ambiguous. There is a Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) for humanitarian assistance, and usually, UNOCHA (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) is in charge of the HC. For development assistance, field office representatives of UNDP often serve as RCs to coordinate UN agencies. However, the "cluster approach" advocated by UNOCHA calls for a division of labor in which UN agencies with strengths in each field take the lead role in their respective fields. In short, the reality is that organizational battles for its jurisdiction occur among UN agencies at the local level.

The aforementioned "Brahimi Report" was issued in 2000 to strengthen the linkage between PKO (stabilization) and humanitarian and development assistance. This report pointed out the importance of the non-military political and development sectors in creating a social basis for peace, and emphasized the inseparability of PKF (for military operations) and other peacebuilding operations. Furthermore, in December 2005, the Peacebuilding Commission was established as an advisory body and a new Peacebuilding Support Secretariat was established within the UN Secretariat.

The role of "special political missions" cannot be overlooked in the evolving trend of UN peace operations. Special political missions have been operated on a relatively small scale and flexibly, mainly by civilian personnel, to assist the UN Secretary-General in peacebuilding support during the prevention and peacemaking phase before a full-scale conflict crisis, or during the post-crisis recovery phase. In 2000s, this type of organization became mainstream as a form of organizational structure to support the UN in the post-conflict recovery period, with the emergence of large-scale missions such as UNAMA (UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan).

International Framework in Afghan Peacebuilding: Limited Role of UNAMA

The largest UN integrated political mission was the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), which since its establishment in 2002 had played a central role as a comprehensive coordinator of the political process, security sector, and reconstruction and development assistance in Afghanistan.

UNAMA was established by UN Security Council Resolution No. 1401 of March 28, 2002, adopted in response to the Report of the UN Secretary-General of March 20, 2002, based on the Bonn Accord of December 5, 2001, after the U.S.-led attack on Afghan Taliban forces following the September 11 attacks of 2001. UNAMA was established to play a major role in the subsequent reconstruction of the Afghan state. As the first Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) to UNAMA (from 2002 to January 2004), Brahimi worked to implement exactly that peacebuilding effort.

It should be noted that the UN often deploys PKOs in situations immediately following a conflict, but in Afghanistan, the UN avoided direct military involvement and limited its missions to political missions. This was

said to be because the then Special Representative Brahimi adopted a "light foot print" policy that left the reconstruction of the country in the hands of the Afghans, and the UN, mainly consisting of foreigners, kept its organization and activities to a minimum as much as possible. It was also said that the reason behind this was the judgment that the security role was difficult to accomplish in a UN PKO, given the very fragile military security situations in Afghanistan.

UNAMA was headed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) and had a wide range of mandates from electoral and constitutional support to humanitarian and reconstruction assistance, and non-military personnel were assigned to fulfill these mandates. There was a military mission in Afghanistan under a separate UN resolution, ISAF, and that UNAMA whose mission was limited to a political mission, in close cooperation with the involvement of the international community on the military side.

The UNAMA played a particularly important role in the political process of Afghanistan's national reconstruction. In particular, UNAMA assisted in the registration of voters, including women, throughout Afghanistan, and provided full support for election monitoring, voting, and tallying of votes in the elections.

In short, unlike most UN PKO missions, which direct both PKO forces (international military personnel) and UN civilians in support of peacebuilding, UNAMA's role has been very limited. UNAMA was also a coordinator of relevant UN agencies (UNHCR, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNHABITAT, etc.) and a lead donor (e.g., in the area of demining), each serves as focal points in their respective areas.

With UNAMA's role as a coordinator of the political process and humanitarian and reconstruction assistance, in close cooperation with ISAF remained constant, however, UNAMA's mandate has since changed in some respects in response to the worsening security situation.

The Security Council wanted to expand UNAMA's capacity, particularly in supporting the Afghan government's extension of political influence in the countryside. To this end, UNAMA's structure had been strengthened, a trend that has been reflected in increased staffing (particularly of field staff) and expanded budgets in the provinces. UNAMA's budget became prominently large among UN special political missions (as same as the UN special political missions in Iraq). Figure 1 shows the rapid increase of the annual budget of UNAMA between 2002 and 2010. Even after 2010, UNAMA's budget had been expanding in line with the increase in personnel and the expansion of operational expenditures, year by year.
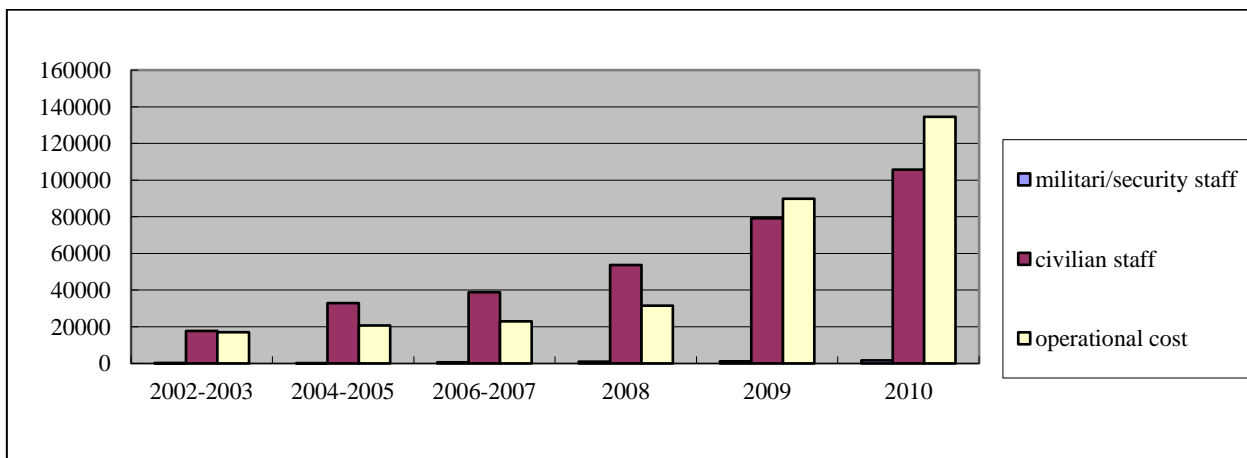

Figure 1. Increase of UNAMA's annual budget (unit: thousand US$).
Source: The figures of 2002-2007 are annual average, based on the *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations 2009* (p. 247). The amounts after 2008 were based on, A/64/349/ (p. 97); A/64/349/Add.3 (p. 102) (Inada, 2012).

In other words, UNAMA was a substitute for the Afghan government's administrative service delivery in rural areas with UNAMA's budget and staff, in a situation where the funding and staff of the Afghan government were limited to the capital Kabul and some northern cities. UNAMA's budget was expanded year by year using the UN budget, and the majority of the budget was used for the operational cost for service delivery in rural area and its local administrative expenses. On the other hand, UNAMA's staff (especially international staff) was always insufficient, as the number of open positions could not be filled due to concerns about the security situation in the region (Inada, 2012).

On the other hand, UNAMA's budget from the UN was disbursed by UN member countries in proportion to their budget share of UN contributions. As shown below, the Japanese government's budget share has gradually decreased from 20.6% in 2002-2003 to 8.6% in 2019-21, but it still contributed a significant amount of the budget. As Japan was a member of UN-ACABQ (Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) around the year of 2010, Japanese government engaged in reviewing the budget and effectiveness of UNAMA at that time,[1] and provided its report to the International Civil Service Commission of UN General Assembly.

In addition, as the security situation in Afghanistan became more chaotic, there were fewer suitable candidates for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) to the UNAMA, and the Japanese government nominated a Japanese national (diplomat) to the SRSG of the UNAMA, based on a diplomatic decision that demonstrated Japan's enthusiasm for supporting Afghanistan, then, Mr. Tadamichi Yamamoto served as the SRSG to the UNAMA for almost four years from 2016 to March 2020.

Table 1

Japan's Share of UN Budget

Year	2000-2003	2004-2006	2007-2009	2010-2012	2013-2015	2016-2018	2019-2021
Share (%)	20.6	19.5	16.6	12.5	10.8	9.7	8.6

Source: Formulated by the author based on UN Statistics.

Security-Development Nexus: International Assistance Framework for State-Building

As mentioned above, a framework was created for the UNAMA to coordinate the political process in Afghanistan, while donor's coordination framework was established for cooperation and support in the international division of roles regarding reconstruction and development.

International Assistance Framework in the Initial Stage

Since the end of 2001, the international community had been engaged in reconstruction and development assistance as well as the progression of the political process based on the Bonn Accord and its involvement in the security and security sector.

Following the Bonn Accord, an International Conference on Afghanistan Reconstruction Assistance was held in Tokyo in January 2002, co-chaired by Japan, the U.S., Saudi Arabia, and the European Union. In response, in February 2002, the Afghanistan Assistance Coordination Agency was created on the Afghan side to collectively accept assistance to Afghanistan and formulate the direction of assistance, and a comprehensive development plan, the National Development Framework (NDF), was put forward under the leadership of Director General Ashraf Ghani.

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[1] The author conducted his survey on this issue as a consultant requested by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan during 2011-2012.

Aid coordination was another focus of assistance in Afghanistan. Initially, the "Implementation Group (IG)" was established at the Reconstruction Assistance Conference in Tokyo, but the IG structure was later replaced by the "Consultative Group (CG)" structure, which was established for each of the 16 sectors under the NDF, hosted by the competent authorities in the relevant sector, with participation by relevant government agencies, donor countries and international organizations, and NGOs. A lead donor ("focal point") was selected from the donor side, and the donor took the lead in supporting the competent authorities' CG operations.

Table 2 shows the division of labor among donors in CG framework. The Afghanistan assistance framework was characterized by the fact that the Afghan government has taken ownership and that the international community as a whole had cooperated in order to avoid the strong influence of specific donors.

Table 2

The Division of Labor and Lead Donors in CG Framework

First pillar: human resources, social protection	Second pillar: infrastructure	Third pillar: investment environment and institutions
Refugees (M. of Refugees/UNHCR)	Transportation (M. of Public Works/Japan・ADB)	Trade/investment (M. of Commerce/Germany)
Education/Vocational training (M. of Education/US・UNICEF)	Energy/Mining/Communication (M. of Communication/World Bank)	Administration/economic management (Administration reform committee/World Bank・EC)
Health/Nutrition (M. of Health/EU・US)	Natural resource management (M. of Agriculture/ADB)	Security sector: Judicial (Judicial commission/Italy)、 Police (M. of Interior/Germany) Army (M. of Defense/US)
Living/Social protection (M. of RRD/EU・World Bank)	Urban management (M/ of Urban Development/UNHABITAT)	
Culture/Media/Sport (M. of Culture & Information/UNESCO)		Demining (M. of Foreign Affairs/Canada・UNAMA), DDR (DDR committee/Japan)

Source: Juichi (2005).

The "Afghanistan Compact" was adopted at the London meeting at the end of January 2006, and a new draft of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) was prepared. With this transition, the reconstruction assistance regime in Afghanistan shifted from the Bonn regime in 2002 to the London regime four years later, and the UNAMA also shifted its mandate from reconstruction assistance based on the Bonn Accord to overseeing and supporting the implementation of the ANDS, a more concrete reconstruction policy.

In short, the UNAMA's role was wide but very limited in reality. Individual donor countries assisting Afghanistan implemented a variety of bilateral assistance projects. Therefore, the UNAMA did not have a complete picture of the assistance and was not able to coordinate it well.

ANDS (Afghanistan National Development Strategy)

In the process of preparing the ANDS, which began in June 2005, it was decided to create the ANDS in the form of eight sectors, instead of the previous development framework of 16 sectors in three fields. The CG was then reorganized in a manner consistent with the new framework. There, the framework was changed from the previous sector-centered framework to a more ministry-centered framework. In other words, when considering sectors, they were set up in a way that avoided having one ministry involved in multiple sectors.

In other words, the ANDS has three new pillars: security; governance, legal system, and human rights; and economic and social development, with gender, counter-narcotics, regional cooperation, anti-corruption, and

environment as cross-cutting issues. Table 3 is a schematic of the overall framework of the restructured international assistance structure and policy agenda (challenges) raised under such ANDS.

Table 3

Pillars of ANDS and Policy Challenges Facing Afghanistan

Pillars	Policy agenda (challenges)
Pillar One (Security)	The State has a limited monopoly on the legitimate use of force Severe shortage of human and other resources Weak financial sustainability of security forces Porous borders Size of illicit economy Poverty and resource conflicts
Pillar Two (Good Governance, Rule of Law, and Human Rights)	Weak public sector (lack of governance, chronic budgetary deficit, lack of capable personnel, excessive centralization, lack of coordination within government, lack of accountability to citizens, illicit military groups) Non-effectiveness of foreign aid (sustainability problems, etc.)
Pillar Three (Economy and Social Development)	Incomplete institutional framework for economic growth Weak physical infrastructure and under-utilized potential Criminalization of the economy High real exchange rate Lack of rights of the poor Outcomes of destruction and under-investment in the licit agriculture sector Low human resource capacity Widespread prevalence of the informal sector Weakening of social capital

Source: I-ANDS (2006).

In this new framework, Afghan ownership became more consolidated, where the UNAMA's role continued to be that of overall coordination encompassing all issues with the Afghan government as a counterpart.

Each donor was requested to send advisors (consultants) to each ANDS sector to compensate for the lack of human resources and capacity of the Afghan government. In other words, the specific implementation of the ANDS was to be carried out by foreign experts from the donor countries.

The Japanese government (JICA: Japan International Cooperation Agency) was also requested to dispatch Japanese experts as part of the role-sharing among donors. JICA searched for experts and consultants in Japan who would be stationed in the field and could cooperate in the implementation of the ANDS, but eventually gave up dispatching Japanese experts because no applicants were found, because they had concerns about the security situation. (Although JICA employed JICA staff and development consultants as experts for individual JICA's own bilateral projects.)

Japanese Aid to Afghanistan

Japan and Afghanistan have a long history of interactions, but after the Taliban seized power in 1996, the Japanese government took a cautious stance toward aid, waiting to see what the local situation would be like, and continued to provide assistance mainly through international organizations. However, when the Taliban was ousted by the U.S. military offensive in late 2001 and the new Afghan government was established in 2002, the Japanese government began providing the second largest amount of economic assistance after the United States. The Japanese government emphasized its support for Afghanistan's new nation-building, focusing on economic and social reconstruction and development.

The Junichiro Koizumi administration at the time appointed madam Sadako Ogata, then retired head of UN

High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as Special Representative of the Prime Minister for Afghanistan, and embarked on a large-scale assistance program. In addition, Japanese government worked hard to coordinate efforts among donor countries and organized the Tokyo Conference for Afghanistan Reconstruction Assistance in January 2002. While unable to play a direct military role, Japan tried to play a leading role in reconstruction and development. Japan also hosted a meeting of Afghan donor countries in Tokyo in 2012.

Japan's assistance amounted to more than 700 billion yen (about US$7 billion) over the 20 years since 2001. Considering the size of Afghanistan, this is an exceptional large amount of assistance for a single country in Japanese aid history. In addition to traditional economic and social development assistance, emphasis has been also placed on police assistance to improve security capabilities. This was a new area for Japan, and it was the assistance to Afghanistan that triggered the expansion of Japanese assistance into the area of security sector reform (SSR). The main sector in which Japan engaged was the DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration) process, but the Japanese government also provided its budgetary support for the salary (almost half of its budget) of the new-born Afghan Police, which was also the first case in Japanese ODA history.

The following graph (Figure 2) shows the amount of Japan's ODA to Afghanistan over a 20-year period from 2001 to 2021.

The highest amount of aid was $874 million in 2012. The breakdown of aid in this year showed that $790 million was in grant aid, of which $646 million, or about 80%, was donated through international organizations. In addition, Japan's own technical cooperation amounted to $84 million[2]. The Democratic Party was a ruling party from September 2009 to November 2012 in Japanese politics, and Japanese ODA to Afghanistan increased during the period. However, the decrease of Japanese ODA to Afghanistan after 2014 was not because of the policy of the Liberal Democratic Party that was also very positive to Japan's aid to Afghanistan, but because of the worsening security situations in Afghanistan.
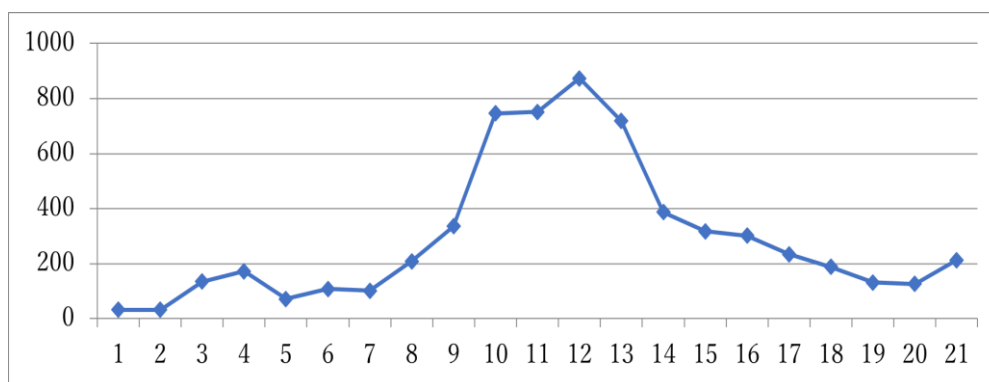

Figure 2. Japan's ODA to Afghanistan (2001-2021).
Note. Net disbursement, Unit: million US$. Formulated by the author based on ODA Statistics of OECD/DAC.

In the area of grant aid, Japan had provided assistance for the construction of schools, hospitals for infectious diseases, and social infrastructure such as airports, roads, and irrigation facilities. In the field of security sector, there were also items such as police radios, police vehicles, and budgetary support for salaries of the police. Technical assistance had been provided in a wide range of areas including education (teacher training, literacy training, etc.), healthcare (urban health system, tuberculosis control, etc.), water resources and disaster prevention,

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[2] Government yen loans were zero for the entire 20-year period.

transportation, and rural development.

As described in the next section, since 2002, the challenges in the security sector in Afghanistan had been divided into five categories: building a new national army, police reform, judicial reform, counter-narcotics, and DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration), with a lead country for each. Japan, along with the UNAMA, became the lead country for DDR.

Prime Minister Koizumi, who took office in April 2001, strongly expressed solidarity with the U.S. in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks and supported U.S. military action in Afghanistan, and it was in this context that the "Japan-U.S. alliance in the world" was formulated. As the U.S. advanced its "war on terror", Japan provided economic assistance in Afghanistan on a scale second only to that of the U.S. One of the typical projects for the US-Japan collaboration in Afghanistan was the construction (rehabilitation) of the Ring Road between Kabul and Kandahar. The U.S was responsible for its northern part, and Japan engaged in its southern part.

Besides, Japanese government sought military cooperation as well. Although the U.S. had requested Japan's Self-Defense Forces to deploy to Afghanistan, there was also a simultaneous request to deploy the Self-Defense Forces in Iraq. The Japanese government decided to implement the deployment of the Self-Defense Forces in Iraq and, with regard to Afghanistan, to focus on supply operations in the Indian Ocean. The Japanese government dispatched Maritime Self Defense Forces (MSDF) vessels to the Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO) over the Indian Ocean conducted under the umbrella of the U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) to supply oil to the vessels of the U.S. and other coalition of willing nations (Mattox & Grenier, 2015, pp. 214-224). This activity was implemented under the newly created Special Measures Law and continued until 2010.

Involvement in Security Sector Reform (SSR)

Since the London meeting at the end of January 2008, the UNAMA's mandate had emphasized the comprehensive coordination role of the UNAMA as well as the strengthening of the Afghan government's ownership, and the need for UNAMA-centered coordination became more important at the March 2009 international conference in Hague.

After the 2009 elections, UNAMA's basic mandate had not changed, but there had been changes in the situation, such as the deterioration of the security situation. Under such circumstances, better and new approaches were being sought.

The restoration and maintenance of security in Afghanistan had always been conducted in tandem with the U.S.-led coalition's campaign to mop up al-Qaeda and the Taliban. The ISAF under the command of the NATO had been active in the restoration and maintenance of the security, but the need for the rapid reconstruction of Afghanistan's own security apparatus was recognized, and five areas of security sector reform (SSR) were identified: (1) new national army, (2) police, (3) judicial reform, (4) counter-narcotics, and (5) disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of discharged soldiers (DDR).

The U.S., Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Japan, and the UNAMA were the lead countries, and close coordination had taken place. The UNAMA was one of the donors in this area and also played an overall coordinating role, but the U.S. had exerted significant influence on the substantive political coordination in the security area.

From the perspective of sharing roles with the international community, the Japanese government was forced to move beyond its traditional position of being involved only in economic and social reconstruction projects to

play some role in the SSR as well, and ultimately took on the role of implementing DDR. Japanese government justified its involvement into security sector using its ODA, by using the logic that "development cannot be progressed without security and assistance to security sector is a part of development assistance." Also, Japan's experience in implementing the demobilization and reintegration of soldiers who had been swollen during the war after World War II was said to believe that Japan could play some role in the DDR.

However, the actual DDR process was truly a part of the military reorganization project, and while the Japanese government focused on financing the reintegration process for demobilized soldiers and technical training programs to support the reintegration of ex-combatants into society, in cooperation with the U.S. (military) to support the reorganization of former soldiers into the new Afghan National Army was indispensable and an integral part of the series of tasks. The Japanese government provided its grant aid for the construction of around 15 training centers and JICA implemented its technical cooperation program for ex-combatants. The GTZ (German Technical Cooperation Agency) collaborated with JICA and sent its trainers to the training program.

The major problem with DDR, in which Japan was deeply involved, was that the DDR project was originally intended to support the demobilization of about 60,000 soldiers who had been part of the regular Afghan army under the Taliban regime (some were reorganized into the new Afghan National Army), and many of the soldiers who fought the Afghan civil war were not regular army. Therefore, even while the DDR was underway, influential local politicians had their own private armies in their respective regions, and many farmers, unable to make a living through agriculture alone, joined the ranks of these local warlords and took up arms and engaged in activities. Therefore, it was natural that the DIAG (Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups) project followed after the DDR was completed (in June 2006).

However, while DDR, which initially focused on dismantling and reorganizing the Afghan regular army, saw some success, the DIAG process was slow to progress. The major reasons for this were, first, that the leading politicians in the Afghan administration were kinds of local warlords, and they did not always cooperate in the dismantling of their private armies. Second, the reality of these illegal armed groups was that they were ordinary farmers living in the countryside, who could not make a living if they gave up their weapons and devoted themselves to farming in the land. It was very easy for them to acquire guns, arm themselves, and reorganize themselves into one of the influential leaders.

We cannot find the completion report of the DIAG project from the Japanese government and JICA, therefore, it is assumed that the DIAG process was unsuccessful and the failure of the DIAG process might have become one of the factors behind unstable security situations in rural area in Afghanistan during 2010s.

NSP (National Solidarity Program) of the World Bank

On the other hand, the World Bank, an international organization involved in reconstruction and development, had been supporting a lot of assistance programs in Afghanistan by using the huge amount of Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF). One of the most famous and ambitious programs was the National Solidarity Program (NSP), which targeted a number of villages across the country. This program was a so-called "participatory community development" project, in which funds were provided to local municipalities and villages for specific development projects, while the local self-governing bodies were given responsibility for the management and operation of the projects.

The scale of funding was extremely large, reaching a total of more than US $1 billion and the number of targeted villages was more than 50,000 between 2003-2015 (Phase I: 2003-2007, Phase II: 2007-2010, Phase III:

2010-2015). There are several evaluation reports to assess the effectiveness and impacts of the NSP, most of which concluded that the NSP had contributed to the improvement of the living situations of the people in rural areas (World Bank, 2013; 2015).

The World Bank managed the overall project, and assigned local staff to each village, and established the "community development council (CDC)" in each village, which was responsible for its own specific projects. Because the counterpart Afghan government (especially local governments) had limited human resources and capacity, consultants and local staff hired by the World Bank were in charge of the specific local coordination of the World Bank's NSP projects, and many of the local staff had experience of working as local NGOs.

They implemented the project in collaboration with "community development councils (CDCs)" established in individual villages. The composition of the CDC was required to include women and youth from the perspective of gender equality and empowerment to support their social rights and activities in Afghanistan. In reality, however, the decision-making process was a major challenge to the implementation of the project, as the decision-making process was made separately by the "traditional elder leaders" in each village (a system called "Shura"), which had a great deal of power.

Although the international community, including the World Bank, made efforts to instill modern administrative and social institutions, along with huge amounts of support, such as this World Bank NSP, it was not an easy task to root democratic administrative and social institutions in Afghanistan, which is a very traditional society and where local elders are the political center. During the period of implementing the NSP, the newly established CDCs were effective as decision making institutions, but once the program ended, the traditional Shura became active again and CDCs became nominal in reality. Although local leaders worked with the new administrative system to manage the projects, Afghanistan remained a traditional society, especially at the community level, where the traditional form of leadership led by local leaders persisted.

Similarly, even before the launch of the World Bank's NSP, the Japanese government implemented a number of small grant aid projects for villages, especially in the south, using the "grassroots human security grant aid" scheme. In 2002-2005, although the security situation was relatively stable, there was a possibility of attacks by insurgents, so when implementing local projects such as road rehabilitation of Ring Road between Kabul and Kandahar, many security guards with guns were deployed along the road construction sites. In addition, Japanese embassy requested to the surrounding village leaders that no sabotage be conducted during the implementation of the project, and as a means of some sort of deal, Japanese aid staff visited each of the surrounding villages and interviewed the village leaders (traditional village heads, elders) about the facilities and equipment they desired, using the "grassroots human security grant aid" described above. Specifically, many of the projects included the repair of well facilities and the renovation of communal facilities in the villages, and the number of villages in which these projects were carried out ranged from 30 to 40.[3]

The Government of Japan, in cooperation with the World Bank's NSP mentioned above, also financed community development programs with CDC in each village as the beneficiaries. Specifically, the program included the construction of schools and clinics in surrounding area of Kabul and Kandahar Province in the south (Watanabe, 2016). Although it took the form of a project of the Japanese government (JICA), the implementation method was the same as that of the World Bank's NSP, and in effect, the program was regarded as co-financed project with the World Bank's NSP. However, as the security situation worsened around 2010, it became difficult

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[3] Interviews to the Japanese officials in charge of grassroots aid at that time (JICA, 2005).

to implement the project, and it was completely suspended around 2014.

There have been some successes. For instance, in education, the number of school-going children has increased from 600,000 in 2001 to 3 million. Girls, who could hardly attend school at all, increased to 40% of the total. The number of medical clinics had also expanded dramatically. Nevertheless, the ongoing conflict made it difficult to eradicate poverty, and the majority of the population remained in a state of poverty.

PRTs (Provincial Reconstruction Teams) and Its Limitation

In response to the deteriorating security situation, ISAF has established Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in each of the 34 provinces in Afghanistan. PRT was a new aid method for implementing aid projects in rural areas with poor security conditions, in which military personnel provide security while supporting the activities of aid to rural villages.

PRTs responded to the need to provide balanced and detailed support to hard-to-reach areas, and grassroots support through PRTs in Afghanistan was positively illustrated by the Afghan government and others in the region as an effective support tool to address such needs. However, it is difficult for outsiders to find documents that monitor and evaluate the reality and the impacts of the PRTs in Afghanistan (Jackson, 2013). There is a report which claimed that the PRT aid projects provided in unstable areas did not lead to the stabilization in the region and provoked corruption in getting resources, based on the questionnaire survey in five provinces in Afghanistan (Fishstein & Wilder, 2012).

Japanese who worked as staff for PRT in Afghanistan described their experiences of the PRT activities as a book (Orikasa, Imai, Miyazawa, & Ishizaki, 2011). Since May 2009, the Japanese government dispatched diplomatic officials to the Lithuanian-led PRT in Chaghcharan (Ghor Province), and provided grassroots human security grant aid to local villages. It was reported that, as of December 2012, the Government of Japan had implemented 134 grassroots grant aid projects (primary education, vocational training, medical care and sanitation) in collaboration with 16 PRTs, 64 of which had been granted through the above PRT in Chaghcharan.

This kind of aid method implemented by the military provoked concerns and heated debates among the experts on peacebuilding (Malay, 2007). It is true that there were some controversial opinions even in Japan regarding the linkage between the military and aid activities. In fact, many development agencies were reluctant to cooperate with such military-led aid activities in rural areas.

For example, JICA refused to participate in or accompany staff to military-led PRTs. The military-led PRTs were conceived as a way to provide assistance in rural areas that were difficult to reach, but the argument was that cooperation with the military would increase the risk that development assistance personnel would be perceived by the local population as if they were part of the military, which in turn would increase the risk that aid workers would be viewed as hostile. In fact, the Japanese government, in response to JICA's refusal to cooperate with the PRT and the diplomatic need to demonstrate cooperation with the U.S. and NATO, recruited young diplomatic staff and young NGO members interested in humanitarian assistance and assigned them to the PRT projects as governmental personnel.

The Problem of the Political Process: The Exclusion of the Taliban

Importance of Inclusion of Opposition Party in Post-conflict State-Building

Political process was also critical even in implementing military operations in Afghanistan, as pointed out

by the assessment by Ben Barry (Senior Fellow, Chatham House U.K.), who argued the importance of political dimensions of military operations and said that regime change operations gave way to prolonged insurgencies in Afghanistan, in his book (Barry, 2017).

It is often argued that the key to establishing a "legitimate government" (a government with the power to make many people voluntarily follow laws and rules) through a peacebuilding process is to provide overwhelming economic and military support so that the local people can enjoy both "security" and "welfare", and an "inclusive political process" is necessary. In a book published by Higashi in 2015, he argued that in establishing a "legitimate government" through peacebuilding, the following four factors are crucial: (1) the role of the UN, (2) inclusive political processes, (3) improving people's livelihoods, and (4) improving enforcement capabilities such as police and military. He argued that the role of the United Nations and an inclusive political process are critically important (Higashi, 2015).

As evidence of this, he noted that so-called "political exclusion" had led to attacks by insurgent groups and risks creating a failed state, as evidenced by the continued state-building in Afghanistan that excluded the Taliban and in Iraq that excluded the Sunni population. Also, in the 2012 book, Charles T. Call also analyzed peacebuilding after the end of the Cold War using statistical methods and concluded that "political exclusion, rather than economic or social factors, plays the decisive role in most cases of civil war recurrence" (Call, 2012, p. 4).

Exclusion of Taliban From Afghan Political Process

In Afghanistan, Karzai was elected interim president in late 2001, and became an official president followed by presidential election in 2004 and parliamentary election in 2005, when a formal government was formed, but the Taliban were excluded from these elections.

Under these circumstances, attacks by the Taliban against U.S. forces and the Afghan government began around 2005, when the Taliban, which had been sending messages toward dialogue with the Karzai administration but had been rebuffed, began a reversal offensive militarily and rapidly expanded its area of control.

In the report published from UN DPKO in October 2008, it was reported that Afghan government officials, the UN, and civilian representatives of the UNAMA believed that "it was impossible to destroy the Taliban militarily or drive them out of the country, and that the only way was through political negotiations for a settlement." (UN DPKO, 2008).

Brahimi, who served as the UN representative to Afghanistan from late 2001 to 2004, claimed that the lack of reconciliation with the Taliban was a critical failure in Afghan peacebuilding. In a 2008 interview, Brahimi stated that his greatest regret was not engaging with the Taliban in 2002 or 2003, and that "if we had gone to the Taliban then [after the Bonn agreement] they would have appreciated that and many of them may very well have joined the political process." (Higashi, 2015, p. 80)

According to the journalist Coll's book, Mutawakil, who served as foreign minister during the Taliban regime, met with a senior CIA official in 2002 and proposed that "if the Taliban were recognized as a political party, many senior officials would lay down their arms and join national politics as a party." The CIA official asked Vice President Cheney for permission to proceed with the proposal, but Cheney replied, "There is no need for dialogue with the Taliban" (Coll, 2018, p. 68). It is reported that from 2001 through 2004, dozens of senior Taliban offered various forms of surrender and reconciliation in exchange for amnesty but the United States

rejected them (Bateman, 2023).

The U.S. government fixated on a purely military solution, and neglected a political solution, because the U.S officials saw the Afghanistan situations solely through the lens of the war on terror. Although it could be considered an unavoidable decision at the time, and anything could be said as the wisdom of hindsight, but from an objective point of view, it was essential to incorporate the moderate forces of the Taliban into the political process from the outset.

Afghanistan is a typical multi-ethnic country, with Pashtuns being the largest ethnic group, accounting for about 45%, Tajiks about 20%, Uzbeks and Hazara 10% each. The Taliban were based on the Pashtuns, and its forces expanded their territory in the south and east, where the majority of Pashtuns live. Both Karzai, the first president, and Ghani, who became president after September 2014 election, were Pashtuns but were raised in the United States, so it is not surprising that their regimes were seen as puppet governments of the U.S.

Negotiations With Taliban

Eventually, as the Taliban expanded its area of control and the areas beyond the reach of security forces grew, it became increasingly clear that political negotiations with the Taliban were essential. The following is the process of negotiations between the U.S. and the Taliban[4].

2008 was the last year of the Bush administration, yet there was still no consensus in the U.S. or the rest of the international community on whether to embark on peace negotiations with the Taliban. In January 2009, President Barack Obama took office, calling for reconciliation with the Arab world, and the environment changed to one in which the U.S. could support reconciliation in Afghanistan.

In late 2010, the Afghan High Peace Council, the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program, and the International Reconciliation Fund were established in a manner consistent with the international community, including the U.S. and the Afghan government. The international community as a whole began to work to support peace negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban. The following year, 2010, contacts began behind the scenes between the U.S. and the Taliban, the Afghan government and the Taliban, and others, and in 2012 the Taliban established a political office in Doha, the capital of Qatar, to conduct negotiations.

Meanwhile, the U.S. has reduced the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan from a peak of 100,000 in 2010, and by the time President Obama left office at the end of 2016, only 10,000 U.S. troops and about 5,000 foreign troops sent by other NATO countries remained. In the meantime, the Taliban's area of control continued to expand, and by 2018 it had taken control of about 70% of all of Afghanistan.

Up until 2018, the U.S. government consistently sought to achieve a complete victory against the Taliban on the battlefield focusing on winning militarily, rather than exploring a political settlement. However, the U.S. came to the negotiating table in 2018.

The Taliban demanded that negotiations first be conducted on a bilateral (two-party) basis between the U.S. and the Taliban, bypassing the Afghan government. The Obama administration refused to conduct bilateral negotiations with the Taliban, saying that negotiations could not take place without the Afghan government. However, President Trump, who took office in 2017, decided to meet this demand. Beginning in October 2018, the two-party talks with the Taliban began in Qatar, with special envoy Khalilzad.

The talks between the two sides lasted a total of 10 rounds over a year and a half, and at the end of February 2020, the Trump administration and the Taliban reached an agreement. The Taliban's lack of military offensives

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[4] The process described in the following paragraphs are basically based on the article written by Higashi (Higashi, 2015).

outside Afghanistan and its heavy fighting with the Afghan branch of the Islamic State (ISIS-K), which began operating in Afghanistan around 2014, were also factors behind the agreement. Under the agreement, the U.S. would withdraw U.S. troops from Afghanistan in 14 months, and the Taliban promised to do its best to keep al-Qaeda and other international terrorist organizations from operating in Afghanistan.

In September 2020, negotiations between the former Afghan regime and the Taliban also began in Qatar. Although peace negotiations began in April 2021, after the official announcement of the withdrawal of U.S. forces, the Taliban accelerated their military offensive throughout the country, launching simultaneous attacks on the provincial capitals of 34 provinces in early August. In response, Afghan government forces resisted for several days in several provinces, including Kunduz, but soon surrendered. Thereafter, there was no military resistance in all provinces and they voluntarily ceded control to the Taliban. The day after President Ghani fled the country, the Taliban entered an unresisting Kabul and took control of all of Afghanistan.

Ultimately, it must be said that the new Afghan government under President Karzai and Ghani, which was established by eliminating Taliban forces, failed to gain the support of the Afghan people rather than being militarily defeated. One of the major reasons for this was the corruption of the new Afghan government. Rumors of corruption among Karzai's close relatives persisted, and powerful local politicians continued to have private armies and to profit from the drug cultivation trade. The international community supporting the new Afghan government was aware of the existence of these problems, but turned a half-open eye to them, focusing on the survival of the new government without the Taliban. In the end, the cost of this attitude came out in one fell swoop at the last moment.

Conclusion

What Are the Reasons of the Failure in Afghanistan?

Ultimately, despite these efforts over the two decades since 2002, the Taliban seized all of Afghanistan in August 2021, resulting in the collapse of two decades of international community support for the building of a new democratic state.

This paper attempts to recapitulate the international community's ambitious 20-year Security-Development efforts in Afghanistan, where the resulting failure lies and what lessons can be learned.

The key points are tentatively: (1) the limitations of the UN's role and the fact that it had continued to provide assistance without a clear "exit strategy" as to when and how the international community's intervention should and can end; (2) although Security-Development Nexus was called, the security circle and the development circle had different objectives and their collaboration was not effectively conducted, (3) the failure to include Taliban in the initial political process of new state.

What Are the Lessons Learned From Afghanistan Experiences?

What can we learn in the end, and what could and should be improved?[5]

Difficulty of constructing "democratic states". To begin with, helping Afghanistan create a "democratic" government that shares Western values such as gender equality, respect for human rights, etc., was an extremely ambitious goal, and the international community's involvement in Afghanistan over the past 20 years has been

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[5] Kate Bateman (Unite States Institute of Peace fellow) proposed the following as lessons of Afghanistan for other conflicts in her latest commentary: the pursuit of military leverage should be paired (perhaps quietly) with diplomatic and other tools of national power, and U.S. policymakers should seek to maintain space for discussion, including within U.S. agencies, of various scenarios, outcomes, and the potential for a political process (Bateman, 2023).

the stage for this grand experiment.

Ultimately, however, traditional social structures and social norms are not so easily changed. While some argue that the only successful transitions to such democratic societies after the war were in Japan and Germany after the Second World War, efforts to engage the international community in building "democratic states" after many post-Cold War conflicts have not always met with solid success.

Involvement in the building of a new nation in Afghanistan, which began at the end of 2001, initially set extremely ambitious goals and generated a certain enthusiasm and zeal throughout the international community, especially in the West. However, in the atmosphere of that era, there was probably a disregard for the social structures, norms, and culture that were rooted in the traditions of the countries and regions where they were originally created. While there is nothing wrong with the goal of a "democratic society", international community and the U.S. government should have focused more on understanding the traditional norms of Taliban forces and Islamic societies and how to reconcile them in building new institutions.

Difficulty of cooperation between the military circle and the development circle. While the need for cooperation between the security and reconstruction/development sectors, in other words between the military and development circles, has been pointed out, the difficulty of the reality itself has not changed significantly over the past two decades. We can argue that cooperation between the two in the actual field of assistance has in some respects improved and progressed considerably in response to the needs of the field of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction assistance in the past 20-30 years, not only in Afghanistan but also in many of international interventions in post-conflict situations in the post-Cold War era.

Organizationally, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has been reorganized into the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), which is responsible for a wider range of comprehensive activities. There has been considerable progress in the coordination between the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPO) and humanitarian and development agencies such as UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, and UNOCHA.

On the other hand, development agencies such as the World Bank have become deeply involved in reconstruction and development assistance in fragile states, such as those deployed by UN PKO and UN political missions since the 9/11 attacks in 2001. In recent years, however, there has been a tendency to swing back to a focus on development issues rather than before (in the 2000s), as the importance of responding to new global agendas such as climate change, pandemics, and disaster response has increased.

A number of international NGOs involved in humanitarian assistance still have a negative attitude and awareness toward cooperation with the military. This remains particularly true in the case of Japan, where many Japanese NGOs tend to dislike involvement in military and security issues under the philosophy of "pacifism". Even more problematic is the fact that such a tendency can still be seen in JICA itself, a Japanese government development agency.

Various opportunities will need to be taken to build momentum for awareness and cooperation between the international security group and the international development and humanitarian assistance group.

What Should We Do for the Future of Afghanistan?

Not only in Afghanistan, but also in many countries in the Middle East, Central Asia, and even Africa, democratization seemed to have progressed for about 30 years after the end of the Cold War, as the international community as a whole supported democratization, but in the 2010s, a global democratic retreat is being noted. Not only Afghanistan, but also many of the surrounding countries in the Middle East and Central Asia maintain

undemocratic and authoritarian regimes.

In most cases, the international communities, including Western countries, while seeking democratization of these countries, maintain friendly relations with them from the perspective of promoting pragmatic diplomacy. In particular, Japan refrains from intervening in the internal political affairs and continues to support for socio-economic development and poverty reduction of these countries, and the Japanese government itself tends to recognize such pragmatic diplomacy as a unique asset of Japan as a non-western country. Currently, Japanese government has already reestablished its Japanese Embassy in Kabul, and insists on playing a role to achieve "people's self-reliance and national stability".

The Taliban is a force that has been opponent to the U.S. and had continued to fight against U.S. forces for a long time, and it is quite understandable that the U.S. would take a tough stance toward Afghanistan, a country that is completely controlled by the Taliban and its forces. The Taliban is an Islamic force, and it is natural for western nations to demand the policies that restrict women's rights and social advancement be changed and that the rights of citizens be improved, including all people regardless of their ethnicity and gender.

For that purpose, it is unrealistic to continue to impose sanctions and to expect to support the people while preventing any funds from going to the Taliban, since they are already in full control of both the central government and local communities. In addition, international organizations and NGOs have no choice but to provide assistance in consultation and cooperation with local government officials, including those of the Taliban[6] (World Bank, 2023a; 2023b).

Whether or not to recognize the Taliban as a legitimate regime, it will be important to first normalize the economy and finance so that the Afghan people will be able to survive on their own. In parallel with this, it is necessary to continue dialogue with the Taliban and continue to encourage them to become an internationally tolerant and acceptable regime. Such engagement would be a policy that would be meaningful both to the Afghan people and to the U.S. and the international community as a whole, in the sense that Afghanistan would not again become a base for international terrorist organizations. Afghanistan is located at a geopolitical node. The international community must work together to ensure that the new Afghan government will contribute to regional stability.

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[6] UN Agencies and the World Bank are continuing their assistance even after the fall of Gani regime in 2021. There are several reports on the current situations of Afghan socio-economic situations as follows: The World Bank (2023a), *Afghanistan Development Update: Uncertainty after Fleeting Stability*, October. The World Bank (2023b), *Afghanistan Welfare Monitoring Survey (Round 3)*, October.

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