

Summary of DFID's work in Afghanistan 2011-2015

May 2011

Why we work in Afghanistan

Over thirty years of conflict have left Afghanistan one of the poorest countries in the world. Average life expectancy is just 44. A third of the population lives below the poverty line – the equivalent of 60p per day. Only one in four Afghans can read and write, and one in six children die before their sixth birthday. The country will fail to reach any of the Millennium Development Goals before 2020. Women and girls still face enormous challenges participating in politics and decision making.

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Afghanistan is one of the UK's top foreign policy priorities. A weak and politically unstable state fosters insecurity and holds back social and economic development. Poor governance and corruption hamper the delivery of basic services such as education and health, and undermine ordinary Afghans' trust in the Government.

Tackling these issues will both reduce poverty and improve stability and security in Afghanistan, the region and beyond.

Our vision is a more peaceful, stable, viable and prosperous Afghanistan. This is a long-term goal that requires DFID's presence well beyond 2015 when UK combat troops are withdrawn. Over the next four years, DFID will work to put Afghanistan on a clear and irreversible path towards this vision by focusing on three critical areas: peace, security and political stability; economic stability, growth and jobs; and getting the state to deliver improved services.

What we will achieve

Over 2011 – 2015, UK aid in Afghanistan will:

- Create 200,000 new jobs for men and women
- Provide technical and vocational education and training for 45,000 young people (15,000 in Helmand)
- Help over 200,000 more children enrol in school – at least 40% of them girls
- Build or upgrade over 47 kilometres of roads in Helmand
- Encourage at least 4.3 million Afghans (1.7m women) to vote in 2013 and 2014 elections
- Help the Afghan Government increase food grain production to six million metric tonnes
- Help the Afghan Government improve public financial management, address corruption and strengthen delivery of basic services
- Reduce the impact of conflict and natural disasters through effective humanitarian aid

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Who we will work with

The UK is a long-term partner for Afghanistan. DFID's approach is to work mostly with and through the Government to enable the country to stand on its own feet and to improve how the state responds to the demands of the Afghan people. The Afghan Government is increasingly taking the lead by working to create better opportunities and improve lives for ordinary Afghan men and women. DFID's programme supports the Afghanistan National Development Strategy.

We work closely with other international donors and partners, such as the United States, the United Nations, the World Bank, the European Union and the Asian Development Bank. We work with the private sector, civil society and other development partners to support peace and prosperity. Our choice of partners and programmes is based on their efficiency and effectiveness in delivering what is needed.

DFID Afghanistan is located within the British Embassy in Kabul. We work closely with other UK government departments to achieve the UK's objectives in Afghanistan. We also have a team working in the international Provincial Reconstruction Team in Helmand.

How we will work

More than ever, in the current financial climate, we have a duty to demonstrate our work is achieving value for money for the UK taxpayer. Results, transparency and accountability are our watch-words. We are committed to channelling at least half our annual budget through Afghan Government systems since this is the most effective way of ensuring the state can deliver directly to its people. But we will only do this when we can guarantee the right mechanisms are in place to safeguard UK taxpayers' money. We have a robust system of checks and balances in place to ensure UK aid helps those it is intended to.

We are fully committed to being transparent about DFID funds spent in Afghanistan and to ensuring that this does not compromise the safety and security of our staff and partners. We will also encourage the Government of Afghanistan and other partners to become more transparent and accountable to the public. DFID Afghanistan's programme budget is £178 million per year for the next four years (2011/12 to 2014/15).

More information

For a more detailed breakdown of Afghanistan's Operational Plan, and for more information on DFID's work in Afghanistan, please visit www.dfid.gov.uk/afghanistan and <http://ukinafghanistan.fco.gov.uk>.

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