

## The Assessment of EU Crisis Response in Afghanistan

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### Introduction: EU Police Mission in Afghanistan

The European Union with the Member States have been key donors for Afghanistan who have donated approximately EUR 8 billion for the period 2002-2010. With the collaboration of international partners, the EU took on a major role in the stabilisation and reconstruction efforts.<sup>1</sup> After the overthrow of Taliban rule in 2001, the international community, along with various Afghan political elites, attended the UN conference in Bonn that resulted the Bonn Agreement to determine the establishment of the Afghan interim government and also the deployment of international military forces to aid the new administration in ensuring the security of Kabul and other provinces. The EU and its member states agreed to assist the government of Afghanistan in establishing a sturdy framework of the rule of law in the country.<sup>2</sup>

At the G8 conference in Geneva in April 2002, the donor community created a reform programme based on a “lead nation framework”. Under “lead nation framework,” the security sector was segregated into five pillars, with five countries assigned to supervise and support the reforms of each pillar. Germany was assigned to train Afghan Police forces; Japan was responsible for the process of De-militarisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR); Italy was consigned to the emendation of the justice system and prosecution process; The United Kingdom took responsibility for combating drugs and training of Afghan counter-narcotics forces; the United States was committed to building the Afghan National Army<sup>3</sup>. The “lead nation approach” in 2005 had attenuated, and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) became the genuine leader within the international community for

- 1 “European Union Council Secretariat Factsheet EU Engagement in Afghanistan.” January 2010. Retrieved from <https://goo.gl/NCLvLc>
- 2 Tim Youngs, *Afghanistan: the culmination of the Bonn Process*, Research paper 05/72 House of Common Library, 25 OCT 2017, Retrieved from: <https://goo.gl/x9oKwp> (Accessed last: 28 SEP 2017).
- 3 Geoffy Hayes and Mark Sedra, *Afghanistan: Transition under threat*, WLUP, P.194, 2008, Retrieved from: [https://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/afghanistan\\_transition\\_under\\_threat\\_0.pdf](https://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/afghanistan_transition_under_threat_0.pdf) (Accessed last: 28 Sep 2017)

supporting and developing the security sector in Afghanistan. The EU and its member states committed themselves to assist the government of Afghanistan in establishing a stronger framework of the rule of law in the country.<sup>4</sup>

EUPOL was set up in 2007 to assist the Afghan government in reforming its police service. EUPOL was aimed to contribute to the formation of viable, sustainable and effective civilian policing arrangements, under Afghan ownership that would guarantee proper interaction with the wider criminal justice system. EUPOL intended to build on the efforts of the German Police Project Office to coordinate the approaches and efforts of the various partners involved in the police reform.<sup>5</sup>

The EUPOL mission had three phases; the first phase was from 2007 to 2009, followed by the second phase from 2009 to 2013 and the third and final phase lasted from 2013 to end of 2016. The EUPOL mission provided training, advising and monitoring to the senior leadership of the Ministry of Interior (MOI), Afghan Police, Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and the Attorney General's Office (AGO)<sup>6</sup>. The estimated budget of EUPOL in Afghanistan from 2007 to 2016 was around EUR 457 million. EUPOL implements its mandate in Afghanistan along three lines of operations: the line of Operation 1) Advancing institutional reform of the Ministry of the Interior; the line of Operation 2) Professionalising the national police; and the line of Operation 3) Connecting the national police to the wider justice system.

## Methodology:

This policy brief is an outcome of the quantitative study that utilised a survey technique with quota sampling procedure of 300 respondents from three categories (100 randomly selected respondents per category) based on the respondents' involvement of EUPOL in Afghanistan. These three categories included the people in the community with EUPOL trained police assigned in their area, the beneficiaries (the police officers benefiting from EUPOL) and the stakeholders of ministries who served as partners in the EUPOL

implementation. For the community participants, 100 residents were randomly selected surrounding the Kabul Police District 3 where EUPOL trained police were assigned. Then, the AREU team surveyed eight zones with 12+ randomly selected individuals in each zone and attempted to have an equal inclusion of men and women as respondents. The beneficiaries' category, AREU's respondents, were the Afghan National Police Officers and a small number of staff at the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and Office of Attorney General (OAG) who had been trained by EUPOL. The rationale behind a small number of respondents at MOJ and OAG is that the Afghan National Police was the main focus of EUPOL. It only trained a few at MOJ and OAG, hence, just 13 people from the MOJ and nine people from OAG were included as respondents. The remaining questionnaires (78) were conducted with those departments of the ANP, with which the EUPOL worked. These departments include the Afghan National Civil Order Police, the Afghan Border Police, Fire Fighting Police and Special Force Police.

The stakeholders included the heads of departments, senior staff and training centres at MOI who were EUPOL partners for implementing its projects. AREU used Census and Survey Processing System (CSPro) for data entries and Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) for data processing. The data were processed through frequencies and percentages.

## Findings:

As to the profile of the respondents (Figures 1a,1b and 1c) involved in the study, out of the 300 respondents, seven out of 10 are male. The highest percentage of male respondents are the stakeholders from implementing ministries (81.4 percent), followed by police officers involved/benefiting from EUPOL (72.4 percent). In terms of age, 23.0 percent are 18 to 25; 41.0 percent are 26 to 39 years old, 34.0 percent are 40 to 60 years old, and 2.0 percent are over 60 years old.

Figures 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d. Selected profiles (sex, age and number of years in school of respondents [percentage]).

4 European Court of Auditors, *The EU police mission in Afghanistan: mixed results*, Special report, Luxembourg, 2015, Retrieved from: [http://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR15\\_07/SR\\_EUPOL\\_AFGHANISTAN\\_EN.pdf](http://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR15_07/SR_EUPOL_AFGHANISTAN_EN.pdf) (Accessed Last: 28 Sept 2017).

5 European Union, *EU Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan)*, Common Security and Defense Policy, October 2011, Retrieved from: <https://goo.gl/gjnK3Q>, (Accessed last: 28 Sept 2017).

6 Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power*, Alfred A. Knopf, 2003 p. 23, Retrieved from: <http://bookfi.org/book/1112316>, (Accessed April 22, 2013)

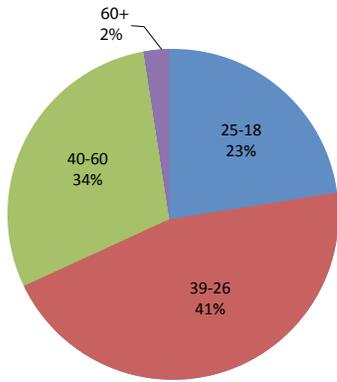


Fig. 1-b. Age

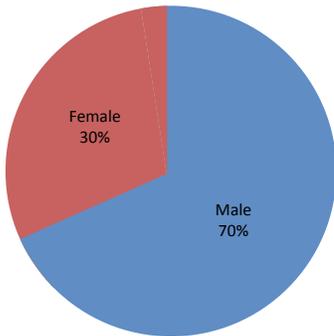


Fig. 1-a. Sex

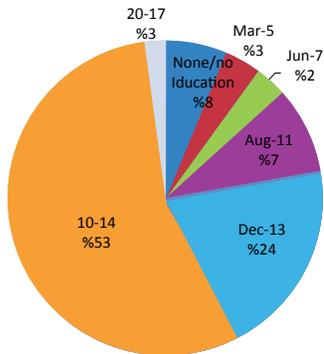


Fig. 1-d. Number of years in school

The stakeholders from implementing agencies and the police officers involved/benefiting from EUPOL are generally older than the respondents from communities with EUPOL trained police. Most of the respondents are educated, especially those coming from the police force who were involved in the EUPOL and those from the implementing agencies. However, almost a quarter of those coming from communities had no education and had difficulty understanding everyday written materials.

Overall, seven respondents out of 10 knew of an international actor involved in crisis response in Afghanistan. Figure 2 shows that stakeholders from

the implementing ministries have rated highest in terms of their level of awareness, followed by police officers and those in community.

Figure 3 depicts the top three most known international actors engaged in crisis response in Afghanistan, namely the EU (99.1 percent), UN (70.6 percent), and US (59.3 percent).

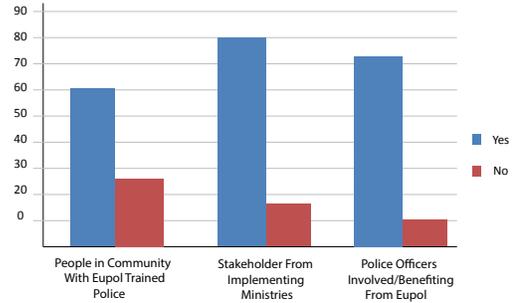


Fig 2. Knowledge of any international actors involved in crisis response in the country (percentage)

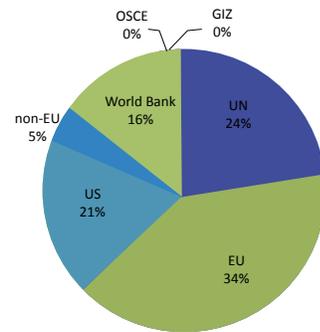


Fig 3. International actors identified who are involved in crisis response in the country (percentage)

As to the awareness of the EU crisis response, Figure 4 shows that overall, the two highest are the “Capacity Building” (80.4 percent) and “Development Aid” (70.2 percent), while the lowest is the “Rule of Law” (48.9 percent).

Pertaining to the “Professional/voluntary involvement in crisis response in the country” by respondent category, Figure 5 depicts that 67.6 percent of all respondents are involved in crisis response in the country. The highest percentage of those who reported that they are professionally/voluntarily involved in crisis response were the police officers involved/ benefiting from EUPOL (86.3 percent) and the stakeholders from implementing ministries (72.5 percent). These results are understandable as they

are related to the respondents' respective work responsibilities.

Less than half of the respondents from communities with EUPOL trained police reported that they are professionally/voluntarily involved in crisis response. There is not much involvement at the community level.

There is a perception that EU assistance has benefited EU officials (78.1 percent), state officials (77.6 percent) and the military (77.2 percent) (Figure 6). On the one hand, very few respondents reported that support was extended to the population in need such as minorities, migrants/refugees and orphans. Moreover, a significant number of respondents think "non-state armed actors" also benefited the EU assistance to Afghanistan (figure 6, h).

Among those who are aware of EU crisis response, most respondents reported as "neutral" when asked about their satisfaction level with the EU support. However, another means of analysis can be done by comparing the percentage who reported they are dissatisfied as against the percentage of respondents who reported that they are satisfied. There is about the same percentage of respondents who express satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the EU support.

As to the respondents who are aware of EU crisis response, they claimed that more needs to be done to improve such intervention. Overall, approximately 63 percent believed that the EU's intervention is conflict sensitive, while 35 percent of all respondents claimed that the intervention is not conflict sensitive (Figure 7).

From the EU's crisis response, in general, respondents were asked about their awareness and knowledge of EUPOL in particular; with 77 percent aware of EUPOL. The highest was among police officers involved/benefiting from EUPOL (95.9 percent), followed by the stakeholders from implementing ministries (85.0) and the lowest was among people in the community with EUPOL trained police. The data suggest that more needs to be done to increase awareness about the mission. While awareness is highest among police officers involved/benefiting from EUPOL, the question remains: why did the other 4.1 percent of police officers who directly benefit from the mission report no awareness about it. The same may also be asked of the respondents from the community with EUPOL trained police where over half reported not being aware of the mission (Figure 8).

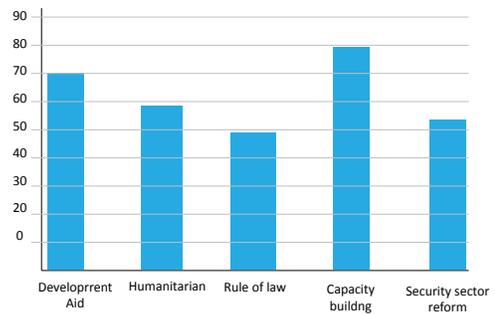


Fig 4. Awareness of respondents of type of EU crisis response (percentage)

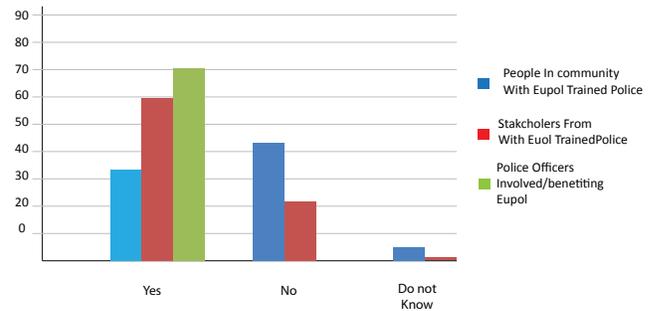


Fig 5. Professional/voluntary involvement in crisis response in the country by respondent category (percentage)

The data show that only 27.8 percent of all respondents were highly aware of the programme and 35.5 percent were aware, while the remaining 36.7 percent reported being slightly aware of the programme. The data further show that the level of awareness about the programme is lowest among the respondents from the communities with EUPOL trained police. Additionally, the data show that less than half (41.4 percent) of the police officers involved/ benefiting from EUPOL reported having a high level of awareness about the mission.

What is understood by the respondents about the mission? The data suggest that "Strengthening gender and HR aspects within Afghan National Police" is known by 78.7 of the 169 respondents who had some knowledge of the mission. The second most known information about the mission is "Police-justice cooperation" (75.7 percent), followed by "Police command, control, and communications" (53.8 percent) of the respondents who reported to have some knowledge about EUPOL. The data further demonstrate that "Intelligence-led policing" is the least known (30.2 percent) type of information about EUPOL (Figure 9).

Among the police officers involved/benefiting from EUPOL, the information on "Intelligence-led policing" is the least known (27.1 percent) information while

“Police-justice cooperation” is the most known (87.1 percent) followed by “Strengthening gender and HR aspects within Afghan National Police” (80.0 percent).

The “Implementation of anti-corruption strategy” is consistently the least known type of information about EUPOL by the respondents from communities with EUPOL trained police and the stakeholders from implementing ministries. The data show that only 29.0 percent of the respondents from communities with EUPOL trained Police and 29.4 percent of the stakeholders from implementing ministries reported knowing that the implementation of the anti-corruption strategy is part of EUPOL.

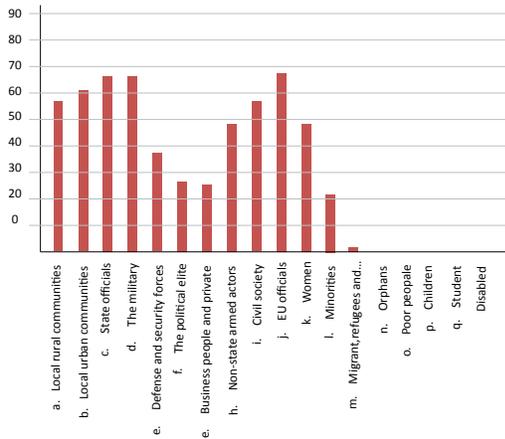


Fig. 6. Beneficiaries of crisis support as reported by respondents by category (percentage)

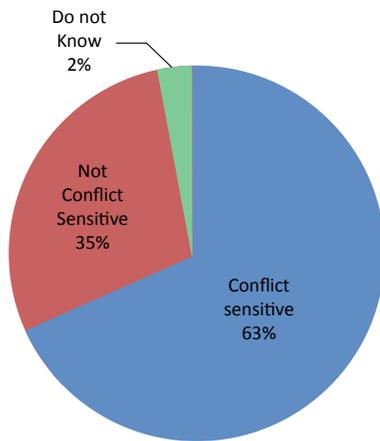


Fig. 7. Respondents' description of EU's intervention (percentage)

“Strengthening gender and HR aspects within Afghan National Police” is the most known type of information about EUPOL by the respondents from communities with EUPOL trained police and the stakeholders from implementing ministries. The data show that 77.4 percent of the respondents from communities with EUPOL trained police and 77.9 percent of the stakeholders from implementing ministries have knowledge of this particular programme pursued by EUPOL.

Overall satisfaction of the pillars of the mission is modest. Implicit in the data is the high degree of ambivalence and/or uncertainty by the respondents. Across all categories of respondents, the percentage of respondents stating they “Don’t Know” is quite high in all six pillars of the mission.

Figure 10 shows that the respondents who had some knowledge about EUPOL believed that the mission was instrumental in improving their lot. Particularly, 80.6 percent of the 165 respondents who reported to have some knowledge about the mission believed they would be better-off after the EUPOL mission in the country while only 5.5 percent said that they would be worse-off and 4.8 percent said they did not know. The data further suggest that 9.1 percent of the 165 respondents who had some knowledge of EUPOL believed that the mission made little headway (i.e., the situation is just about the same) in improving their lot.

## Conclusion:

- There is an existing gap in the knowledge about EU and its specific programme (EUPOL) at the community level. Hence, the majority of the respondents from the community could not assess their satisfaction with the EU support.
- A general perception among stakeholders interviewed was that EU officials, state officials and the military benefited hugely from the support of EU crisis response. Non-state armed actors are also identified as benefiting from the support. Those who are in need (such as migrants, refugees and internally displaced person; those with disabilities; students, and orphans) are not benefited from the support of the EU crisis response.

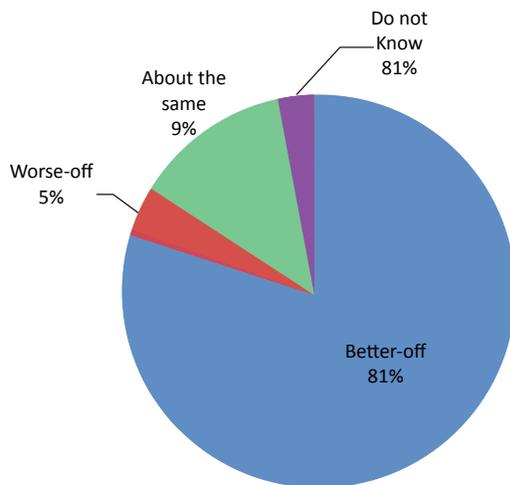


Fig 10. Respondents' perception of the condition after EUPOL mission in Afghanistan

- Police officers who were involved and benefited from EUPOL cannot relate to or do not know much about the pillars on intelligence policing and implementation of the anti-corruption strategy.
- There was a high degree of ambivalence or uncertainty by the respondents when asked about their satisfaction of the pillars of the mission in all categories, as the percentage of "Don't Know" responses was quite high in all six pillars of the mission.

## Policy Recommendations:

1. **Investing in Public Awareness Programmes:** The survey shows that local communities have very limited knowledge about EU and its programmes. They even suspect that some assistance of the EU's ends up in the hands of insurgents. Moreover, some police officers, who have been trained by EUPOL or its partners, do not know about the EU's mission and involvement in Afghanistan. Greater awareness would result in greater participation and involvement of the people from the ground. Tapping the power of mass media and social networking to inform people from various levels, specifically at the community level, would promote more informed and involved citizenry.
2. **Establishing or Enhancing Existing Information, Education and Communication Campaigns toward Community Involvement in EU-Programmes and Projects:** The campaigns can be anchored on implementing government or nongovernment organisations. The campaign can be anchored on the government and/or non-government organizations to mobilize involvement of people at various levels in EU programmes and projects.
3. **Designing Long-Term Programmes Rather Than Short-Term Ones with Clear Short-term and Long-term Outcomes:** Successfully implementing a sustainable strategy requires measuring outcomes of success with longer time horizon as external factors and challenges are longer term in nature. Sustainability mechanisms can be put in place. Even police officers who were recipients of the EUPOL's programmes could not remember what those were. Refresher courses to prop up knowledge and skills acquired from the capacity building activities undertaken should be programmed.

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## About EUNPACK Project

EUNPACK has been designed and developed to critically examine whether EU external crisis response is sensitive to the political and social context on the ground. In order to achieve this the project takes a holistic approach that covers the whole crisis cycle, the full EU toolbox, and the EU's ability to respond to crises in different types of regions (e.g. Enlargement Area, ENP Area and Extended neighborhood). This allows us to provide analyses of the EU's comprehensive approach - the method of choice in external action - and how it is implemented in the field; to undertake a comparative analysis of the Union's approach to crisis in different regional contexts; and thereby identify lessons learnt to suggest how EU crisis management institutions and policies can be improved.

The EU is one of the world's most frequently studied international institutions. However, what is lacking is systematic, in-depth analysis of the EU crisis response mechanisms in specific target countries and how these mechanisms are received and perceived on the ground, not just by governments and elites, but also by different groups of people. This is important as the EU's activities resonate differently with different groups of the population. The main objective of EUNPACK is therefore to unpack EU crisis response mechanisms in order to provide new insights that can increase our understanding of how crisis response functions and is received on the ground in target countries, and how it can be improved. By introducing a bottom-up perspective combined with an institutional approach, we will be able to explore local agencies and perceptions in target countries without losing sight of the EU's institutions and their expectations and ambitions. This allows EUNPACK to analyse the full cycle of dynamic events, from EU intentions, motivations and subsequent implementation, to local actors' perceptions and reactions, and back again to EU intentions and understanding. This will be achieved through the employment of a mixed-methods approach that combines desk research and fieldwork, including surveys, perception studies and in-depth interviews. In line with its grounded approach to research, EUNPACK will collect primary empirical data with a focus on practices rather than mandates, focusing on how the EU is seen as an operating actor in crisis response by target states and audiences. The cases studies in EUNPACK are selected on the basis of a range of challenges that the EU addresses (different types of crisis and different levels of crises) and the variation in policy frameworks and instruments employed to respond to these challenges. Our project will therefore study the EU's crisis response mechanisms in the policy realms of enlargement (Kosovo and Serbia), neighbourhood (Ukraine and Libya) and the extended neighbourhood (Mali, Afghanistan and Iraq). These studies are being conducted through consortium and AREU as member of consortium is conducting the project's studies in Afghanistan.

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### About the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit

The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) is an independent research institute based in Kabul. AREU's mission is to inform and influence policy and practice by conducting high-quality, policy-relevant research and actively disseminating the results, and by promoting a culture of research and learning. To achieve its mission AREU engages with policy makers, civil society, researchers, and students to promote their use of AREU's research and its library, to strengthen their research capacity, and to create opportunities for analysis, reflection, and debate.

AREU was established in 2002 by the assistance community in Afghanistan and has a Board of Directors comprised of representatives of donor organisations, the United Nations and other multilateral agencies, and non-governmental organisations.