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The Assessment EU Conflict Response in Afghanistan:

Assessing EUPOL Impact on Afghan Police Reform
(2007 – 2016)

EUNPACK Working Paper

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1. Foreword

AREU is proud to present the working paper on “Assessing the EUPOL Impact on Afghan Police Reform” focusing on the EUNPACK mission to Afghanistan. EUNPACK is a research consortium project to assess the European Union conflict response, which is being conducted in seven countries at the same time. EUNPACK has been designed and developed to critically examine whether the EU external crisis response is sensitive to the political and social context on the ground. To achieve this goal in Afghanistan, AREU has selected the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan) as its case study, and this working paper is the second publication for the project after its initial survey findings’ policy notes.

Reforming the Afghan National Police has been one of the most important and challenging jobs in post-2001 Afghanistan and it is no surprise that, despite years of training, mentoring and assisting the Afghan National Police, they still face serious obstacles. In fact, historically, Afghanistan has never had a professional civilian police force, and the international community was given the task to lay the foundations to the Afghan National Police. Nevertheless, a decade has passed since the Taliban regime collapsed and the international community established the Afghan National Police and, thus, it is a good time to evaluate these efforts, learn from mistakes and highlight the success.

With such a goal in mind, this working paper has assessed the EUPOL mission from its beginning (2006) to its end (2016). The paper will highlight the mission success and failure through in-depth interviews and surveys from the mission staff, trainees, counterparts and other officials. Therefore, reading this paper will not only be useful for our international partners, but also for the Afghan police officials for any future reform efforts.

Dr. Orzala Nemat
AREU Director
2. Acknowledgments

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3. Introduction

This working paper is a second publication for the EUNPACK conducted by Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), which examines the implementation process and impact of the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL). The paper has used a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative research. It has used survey findings, conducted by AREU for the first phase of this project from July to August 2017, as well as in-depth interviews with key national and international informants, including former Afghan officials who were involved in the EUPOL project, former international EUPOL staff and senior civil society activists. It also used extensively a literature review including EUPOL official documents and other reports and articles to comprehend the project management, structure and implementation processes.

This working paper begins with outlining the European Union (EU) involvements in Afghan Police reform in post-2001 Afghanistan, examining the approach employed by the German Police Project mission and how the initial shortcomings of the approach led to the launch of the EUPOL as its comprehensive civilian police mission to response the police reform crisis. It then evaluates the EUPOL’s mission against its goals and objectives, implementation processes and expected impacts.

The EUPOL had an important and sustainable impact, especially through Police Staff College, building for the Afghan National Police (ANP). The EUPOL commitment for the promotion of policewomen and inclusion of human rights in Afghan police training and procedures is another important achievement for the project. While Afghanistan had around 180 policewomen prior to EUPOL, today it has 3,200 policewomen officer and a special directorate to support strengthening female police in the Afghan National Police. Furthermore, EUPOL was an important player in the field of civilian policing, police-justice cooperation, inclusion of human rights in police manuals at the time of ongoing conflict.

However, EUPOL mandates were ambiguous and none of its mandates stated clear and measurable objectives to achieve. In light of this, it is difficult to clearly measure the EUPOL impacts on Afghan police reform. Moreover, the EUPOL was a minor player, considering its staff and budget compared to NATO and the United States, in Afghan police reform and therefore, had a minor impact on the overall status of Afghan police reform.

EUPOL provided a ‘civilian surge’ complementing the US/NATO military deployment. With over half of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) troops coming from the EU member states and the launch of European Union Police Mission (EUPOL), the operation was a substantial one for the EU. The EU expected two major benefits out of this engagement. The first was that it provided the EU with an opportunity to expand its role as a global actor especially in areas covered by the CFSP/ESDP. Second, this engagement would promote the European Comprehensive Approach to post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building. Compared to NATO and the US the EUPOL seemed at a first glance like a minor player. After a closer look the strict focus on different aspects of civilian policing like police-justice linkages, intelligence-lead policing, gender balance, upper management training, enhancement of MoI planning as well as coordination with the ANP and within the International Community, EUPOL had a real impact on the civilian aspects of Afghan police reform.

The EUPOL short-term training and short-term advisory missions for mentoring the Afghan Police meant that the Afghan Police was not exposed adequately to these programs. Many EUPOL trainees expressed that had the EUPOL training programs been a longer time, it would have a greater impact.

4. EU Member States Involvement in Police Reform

The EU and its Member States (MS) have been the second largest donor to post-Taliban Afghanistan
and have contributed 3.218 billion Euro from 2002 to 2016 to the country. The EU and its MS have also committed 5 billion Euro for the period of 2016 – 2020 at Brussels Conference on Afghanistan on October 2016. EU has been engaged in different sectors including fighting corruption, improving oversight, enabling economic growth, reduction of poverty and strengthening democratic institutions. One of the key commitment of the EU and its MS has been the training and reforming of the Afghan National Police (ANP) under Security Sector Reform (SSR) approach.

Reforming the Afghan police has been one of the most important challenges for stabilizing and securing post-Taliban Afghanistan. Afghanistan has never had a strong or effective civilian police force. Though during the 1960s and 1970s, Germany provided some assistance and training for Afghan police, the four decades of civil war from the 1970s had destroyed out all civilian policing structure thus, the Afghan police needed to be rebuilt from the scratch.

With the sudden collapse of the Taliban regime in December 2001, at the Bonn Conference, the international community agreed to help the “new Afghan authorities in the establishment and training of new Afghan security and armed forces”. The agreement, however, did not specify the number, composition and mission of the Afghan security forces. The agreement also did not indicate the division of labour among the nations for the establishment of the new Afghan security forces.

4.1. The Nation Led Approach to SSR

In April 2002, the donor community for Afghanistan decided on the division of labour for establishing and training of Afghan security forces at G8 conference in Geneva. Based on this conference agreement, five pillars of the SSR were defined and a nation was assigned to lead the pillar programs. Among EU’s the Member States, the United Kingdom was assigned to combating drugs and training of Afghan counter-narcotics forces; Italy was consigned to the emendation of the justice system and prosecution process; and considering Germany’s experience in Afghan police training during the 1960s, Afghanistan’s Interim Authority requested that Germany should take the lead in the police reform sector. Therefore, Germany was assigned to train the Afghan Police forces. Japan was assigned to the process of de-militarization, disarmament, and reintegration and the United States was committed to building the Afghan National Army. For the purpose of this paper, only the police reform and training pillar will be discussed.

Germany started organizing Afghan police reform effort before being officially assigned as the lead nation in this pillar. In February 2002, Germany organized a meeting of 18 donor countries and 11 international organizations to coordinate and discuss international support for Afghan police in

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4. EEAS, “EU-Afghanistan Relations, Factsheet - European External Action Service”.
6. Andrew Wilder, “Cops or Robers? The Struggle to Reform the Afghan National Police” (Kabul: Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, 2007), P. 94.
Berlin. After being officially designated as the lead nation, Germany launched a plan for Afghan police reform on 13 March 2002. In the plan five areas were prioritized: advising on the structure and organization of police; the rehabilitation of the Kabul Police Academy; the reconstruction of police buildings and institutions; the provision of equipment such as vehicles; and the coordination of all other donor activities related to police. On 3 April 2002, the project’s office commenced work in Kabul and On 12 March 2002, the German cabinet approved 17 police advisers for the project.

The main focus of Germany Police Program Office (GPPO) was Kabul Police Academy (KPA) and the rationale for such a top-down approach was the belief that only with professional and well-trained senior officers the police reform will be effective. The then-German Special Representative for Police Sector Reform for justification of the approach told International Crisis Group (ICG) the goal was “to start with the backbone; that is why we started with the leaders.” The KPA was reopened in August 2002 and by December 2006, the KPA had graduated 868 commissioned police officers (saranman) with three-year course and 2,636 non-commissioned police officers (satanman) from its nine-month course.

4.2. Challenges for Nation Led Approach

In early 2002, Afghanistan had 50,000 to 70,000 armed men who were serving at the police level, many of whom were Mujahidin fighters, particularly from Northern Alliance, who rarely had any professional training including those who were serving at senior police positions. It was estimated that 70 to 90 percent of those serving as Afghan police were illiterate and the police reform was “a poor second to the army in international security sector priorities”. These challenges and lack of the international community’s devotion to police reform had hampered Germany police reform efforts.

On the other hand, the United States was not satisfied with German approach to police reform and assigned DynCorp, a private contractor, to build and provide instruction programs at the Central Training Center (CTC) for Kabul police, which was completed in May 2003 and at seven Regional Training centres (RTC), which were completed in 2004. Since the Kabul Police Academy was only providing long-term training programs for the ANP officer, these centers were providing four to eight weeks basic police procedure training – depending on the level of the trainee’s education for existing patrolmen and new recruits. By 2006, around 60,000 police recruits and serving patrolmen were trained by the CTC and RTCs.

However, there was no coordination between Germany police reform programs and the United States program implemented by DynCorp. While the GPPO was focused on training civilian police, the United States training programs were mainly focused on the military aspect of policing. In other words, while the main concern for the United States was the rapid building of anti-
insurgency forces, the GPPO wanted to build a force that could undertake conventional policing in long term.21 So while “the Germans are creating high quality – but too few ... The US churn out a conveyor belt where quality is not an issue... there is nothing in the middle.”22

In 2006, with the deteriorating security situation in the country, there was an urgent need for the police forces to engage in compacts. Hence, with pressure from the United States, the end-strength goal (tashkil) of ANP increased to 82,000 while the Afghan government, based on the GPPO suggestion, had authorized an end-strength goal of 62,000.23 Moreover, the ANP budget increased from 837.9 million USD in 2005 to 2.7 billion USD in 2007.24 With such huge amounts of assistance, in practice, the United States replaced Germany as the official lead nation for police reform in June 2007 and shifted the focus of ANP training toward paramilitary capacities.

The GPPO, as nation led approach program, was tackling with serious challenges in the context of Afghanistan: first, while Germany aimed to reform Afghan police, in reality, there was not much to reform; rather everything had been rebuilt. Second, a vast majority of the Afghan police, including some high ranking officers, either did not have any professional training or were illiterate and, thus, a top-down approach did not mean anything for such a context. Third, the Kabul Police Academy being at the main focus meant that a majority of police personnel were not receiving any training.25 By end of 2006, there was a consensus surrounding the need of having comprehensive SSR strategy to reform and rebuild ANA, ANP and justice sectors in Afghanistan.26 Such a consensus was one of the main drivers of EU comprehensive police mission in Afghanistan.

5. EU Comprehensive Approach to Police Reform

On 23 April 2007, the EU Council decided to establish the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL). A year before, the London Conference on Afghanistan had already provided a new framework for cooperation between the Afghan government and international community. Prior to establishing the mission, the EU sent a joint assessment mission in Afghanistan to assess the “Afghan needs in the rule of law sector” at the fall of 2006.27 The mission was followed by another fact-finding mission that suggested the EU should establish a mission to rebuild the Afghan National Police.28

The first EUPOL mission was launched for three years and subjected to six monthly reviews. Article 3 of the Council Joint Action stated the below objectives for the mission:

EUPOL AFGHANISTAN shall significantly contribute to the establishment under Afghan ownership of sustainable and effective civilian policing arrangements, which will ensure appropriate interaction with the wider criminal justice system, in keeping with the policy advice and institution building work of the Community, Member States and other international actors. Further, the Mission will support the reform process towards a trusted and efficient police service, which works in accordance with international standards, within the framework of the rule of law and respects human rights.29

23. Andrew Wilder, “Cops or Robers?...”.
24. Olga Oliker Terrence K. Kelly, Nora Bensahel, Security Force Assistance in Afghanistan Identifying...
25. Olga Oliker Terrence K. Kelly, Nora Bensahel, Security Force Assistance in Afghanistan Identifying...
26. “Reforming Afghanistan’s Police”, International Crisis Group...
Moreover, Article 4 of the mandate stated that EUPOL will be a non-executive mission and “shall carry out its task through, amongst other means, monitoring, mentoring, advising and training”. The mandate tasked EUPOL to:

(a) work on strategy development, while placing an emphasis on work towards a joint overall strategy of the international community in police reform, taking into account the Afghanistan Compact and the i-ANDS; (b) support the Government of Afghanistan in coherently implementing their strategy; (c) improve cohesion and coordination among international actors; and (d) support linkages between the police and the wider rule of law.

Furthermore, the mandate approved a 43.6 million Euro budget for the first year of the mission and indicated that EUPOL staff should be those seconded by the Member States or EU institutions. The mission was mainly involved with Afghanistan’s Ministry of Interior Affairs (MOI), Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and Office of Attorney General. With such a mandate, EUPOL was welcomed by the Afghan government and the international community involved in Afghanistan.

The EUPOL mission was extended two more times: first, on 18 May 2010, the Council extended the mission from May 2010 to May 2013 and later in February 2014, the council decided to extend the EUPOL mission to December 2016. Each time, the council brought some amendments to the EUPOL mandate (as will later be discussed in greater detail). The EUPOL budget from 2007 to December 2015 was around 457 million euro.

EUPOL was to serve as a “potent symbol for the EU’s stated ambition to become a global security provider” and was aimed to be a comprehensive civilian approach. Therefore, the European Commission prevented donation of equipment which could have dual use, for instance, walkie-talkies, for several times. EUPOL was designed for “formation of viable, sustainable and effective civilian policing arrangements, under Afghan ownership that would guarantee proper interaction with the wider criminal justice system”. To assess the impact of EUPOL, the paper briefly evaluates its design and inception phases and focuses on its implementation phase as the main period of measuring the EUPOL impact on police reform.

5.1. EUPOL Design Phase

A Security Sector Reform (SSR) model assumes certain preconditions at the domestic level to be effective. These preconditions are security and stability, some level of cooperation and coordination, and a high level of elite consensus on the structure, content and direction of the reform process of which post-Taliban Afghanistan did not have many of the preconditions. In addition to a lack of these preconditions, the Afghan police were suffering from high levels of illiteracy, corruption and drug addiction among its members. Therefore, from the beginning of the EUPOL mission, it was clear that the mission would have to tackle serious challenges in the context of Afghanistan.

In this context, the EUPOL needed to plan and set objectives for the Afghan police reform that were realistic and achievable. However, the EUPOL suffered from ambiguous and inconsistent mandates,
though the mandate changed four times in the span of just nine years (in 2008, 2010, 2013 and 2014), struggling to overcome the difficulties on the ground, its objectives remained unclear and unmeasurable. While the number of mandate changes could be seen as a sign of hesitation and lack of direction, the MS for a long time struggled with identifying the right approach to civilian policing in midst of an open conflict. Depending on the perspective Afghanistan needed either a more effective fighting force or rather a civilian approach to policing. This is why the Member States reacted to the difficulties on the ground with constant mandate evolution and adjustments to the US/NATO preferences. Further this has become a somewhat normal procedure within the 30 + EU CSDP missions around the world as Missions often respond to an acute need within a changing conflict scenario.

The initial EUPOL mandate in June 2007 had no reference to some of what became the mission flagship. The promotion of policewomen, fighting corruption or countering narcotics were not mentioned a single time in the initial EUPOL mandate.

Comparing the EUPOL mandates also shows that after 2010, the EUPOL main focus was assisting the Afghan government in implementing anti-corruption, capacity building and training strategies and helping them to establish such strategies instead of trying to be an umbrella for all international community effort in police reform. From the inception of the Mission coordination with other international actors was a key challenge and objective. Following the premise of the Comprehensive Approach to synchronize the timing and application of available EU instruments a well-functioning IPCB secretariat provided the forum where all international actors could discuss policies and synchronize planning. While the US/NATO had a strict COIN approach until NTM-A was in place a closer coordination with EUPOL also brought the Afghans on board. The MS and CPCC/CMPD decision to set up the IPCB and finance the secretariat staff should be seen as a constructive step consistent with the Comprehensive Approach. Due to the Afghan lack of interest once the leadership was handed over to the MoI the IPCB seized to exist.

However, the mandates did not specify any output of these activities and so “EUPOL’s mission documents read like an activity-based job description that describes in what field EUPOL intends to be active; but they are not outcome-oriented.” Moreover, these official documents provide no baseline or numerical goals, which is a usual practice, probably “for the fear of being measured”.

In sum, since the mission’s operational plan and its monitoring reports are not publically available, this research paper has based its analysis on EUPOL mandates. EUPOL mandates are ambiguous and did not specify any measurable goal, neither did they detail how the mission should deal with challenges and obstacles to police reform in the context of Afghanistan.

5.2. Inception and Staffing Phase

EUPOL’s inception and staffing was not the mission’s strength; for several months EUPOL mission had only a few staff; the head of the mission changed three times within 18 months and the mission was suffering from logistics and staffing problems. While the council acknowledged that mission should have 400 international staff, it was never achieved. At its very best, the EUPOL had 341 staff in 2012 and then declined (See figure 1). However, as the House of Lords of the United Kingdom argued, even the planned size of the EUPOL 400 staff was “always too small to make a major difference in civilian outcomes in Afghanistan”.

There were several reasons behind having limited staff at EUPOL: first, considering the Afghan

security situation and that all staff in the civilian missions were volunteers, it was hard to find staff willing to join the mission, as EUPOL had to compete with other Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions; second, certain positions at EUPOL required legal and rule of law expertise that were difficult to find. Third, as the mandate of the mission indicated, staff had to be seconded from the Member States, but as many of the member states had their own mission and other bilateral engagement in Afghanistan, they were slow in assigning their staff for EUPOL. Therefore, then the head of NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan (NTM-A) raised doubt about the EUPOL ability to “play a more serious role”. Nevertheless by 2012 EUPOL and NTM-A found a good modus operandi by dividing the respective spheres of activities. In particular EUPOLs focus on the MoI and training of the upper management ranks of the ANP were welcomed. Coordination within the IPCB also improved with the perspective moving from COIN to Transition.

EUPOL mandate’s declared that the mission should work on police reform at central, regional and provincial levels. But at its peak, EUPOL had offices in 16 provinces of Afghanistan in 2009. However, only two of these provincial offices (Herat and Balkh) had more than 10 staff. Most of the other offices were poorly managed and by 2013, the EUPOL provincial offices decreased to two.

The main reason for EUPOL limited provincial offices was that the so-called “Berlin Plus Agreement” was not effective for EUPOL staff. The Berlin Plus Agreement allows the EU to use NATO assets for CSDP missions, but it was “effectively blocked due to a dispute between Cyprus (EU member) and Turkey (NATO member), who both enjoy a veto right to the activation of Berlin Plus.” However, considering the country security situation, the EUPOL could only operate outside Kabul if they could use Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and other NATO military bases. Therefore, the EU Council Director for External and Politico-Military Affairs requested NATO to accord EUPOL staff to the benefits of force protection, airlift, medical treatment and information sharing. Despite many attempts, such an agreement was never officially researched and EUPOL had to reach an individual memorandum of understanding with each PRT for protection of its staff. But even this approach did not work for all, as Turkey and United States did not the technical agreement with EUPOL which would allow the EUPOL to use their facilities.

To conclude, since the EUPOL could not reach even its small target of staffing, and due to disagreement among NATO members, EUPOL could not use their provincial bases, the mission impacts on Afghan police reform were limited and EUPOL itself remained a minor player. Certainly

42. C. Chivvis, EU Civilian Crisis Management: The Record So Far...
44. Author online interview with an ex-EUPOL staff, Kabul, 7 December 2017.
in the field the lacking infrastructure and often dire security situation limited the impact of the Mission, but on the central level at the MoI and in particular the mentoring and training of strategic level ranks had an impact on the ANP.

5.3. Implementation Phase

Unlike its design and inception phases, EUPOL implementation phase, considering the Afghanistan context, was the mission strength. In fact, the entire notion of civilian policing who are professional, apolitical and responsible for law enforcement was a new concept to Afghanistan and will have a long lasting impact on concept and culture of policing in the country. Needless to mention, such civilian approaches also largely balanced the paramilitary approach of United States to the Afghan National Police.

Interestingly, despite almost a decade of EUPOL mission in Afghanistan, a large number of the community where EUPOL had trained its police were not aware of the EUPOL. Based on the survey carried during the first phase of the project, 69 percent of respondents at the community level did not know about the EUPOL. Moreover, only around two-thirds of the staff at ministries and police officers that were trained by the EUPOL, remember EUPOL projects and their training.

This reflects the reality of most CSDP Mission and Commission financed programs around the world. While the EU was arguably the key supporter/donor of the Afghan government it never got the public recognition for it. In spite of over half of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) troops coming from the EU member states, the EU being the main contributor to LOTFA and EUPOL being the main actor in the field of civilian policing the perception that the EU was only a minor player persisted.

Practically, EUPOL focus was on three areas: policing, rule of law and human rights. The EUPOL objectives on policing included: (a) improving police command and communication; (b) introducing intelligence-led policing and (c) improving criminal investigations capacities. In the area of rule of law, the EUPOL objectives were: (a) fighting corruption and (b) improving cooperation between police and judiciary. Finally, on human rights areas, their focus was on developing human rights and gender structure policy for the police and MOI in general.50

The survey conducted for the first phase of the project reveals that the most well-known program of the mission among Afghans was strengthening the gender and human rights within the Afghan National Police. Justice and Police cooperation, police command, control and communication, and capacity building for criminal investigation department of Ministry of Interior Affairs follow the gender and human rights programs (see Figure 2).

This is not a coincidence that the gender and human rights program is the most well-known program of the EUPOL among Afghans. The number of policewomen at spring of 2006, prior to

50. C. Chivvis, EU Civilian Crisis Management: The Record So Far...
EUPOL mission, was around 18051 and today it has increased to 3,200 which is still only 2.13 percent of 150,000 Afghan police tashkil52 but in the Afghanistan context is a considerable achievement. The MOI is aiming to raise policewomen portion to 10,000 within 10 years. For reaching this goal, the MOI with the support of EUPOL has established the Human Rights, Gender and Children Directorate within MOI headed by policewomen. Though the Afghan policewomen are still facing serious cultural challenges and there are many reports about sexual harassment female members of Afghan Security Forces53 one should also admit Afghanistan “never had this amount of women in police in its history” and thus it is a big achievement.54

Furthermore, EUPOL had important achievements in institutions building for the Afghan police and its flagship is establishing the Police Staff College. The college was established to have “a platform for delivery of further training for the police officers at a strategic, operational and technical level”.55 To build the college, EUPOL developed its training curriculum and courses and EU delegation and Service for Foreign Policy Instrument (FPI) financed the project. The college was opened in January 2014 with a total cost of 7.3 million Euro. Though the then Afghan police officials were expecting EUPOL to provide scholarships for Afghan police to study abroad,56 EUPOL focused on hiring police experts from EU countries to train Afghan police in Afghanistan and establishing the staff college that could provide higher education for the police with much less cost and for many police officers compared to providing scholarships.

Currently, the college has six provincial offices along with its headquarters in Kabul. The college has 324 staff in Kabul that includes 192 professors and 132 administrative staff. The college also has 12 staff in each of its provincial centres. The college offers four different courses: an MA course (with 61 students), a BA course (with 468 students), a capacity building course (with 19 students) and a nine-month strategic leadership course.57 Since last year when the college was entirely handed over to Afghans police officials, the college operates normally and has not faced major challenges. The only problem that its officials noted during a visit to the college, was a lack of financial resources for printings and publications of training material. The acting head of

51. Andrew Wilder, “Cops or Robers?...”.
54. Interview with a former Afghan minister, 7 December 2017, Kabul.
56. Interview with a then Deputy Minister for MOI, Kabul, 20 December 2017.
57. Interview with senior Police Staff College Officers, 17 December 2017, Kabul.
Police Staff College said that during last year, a delegation from the Resolute Support mission (RS) promised them to print out around 30,000 copies of the college reading materials, but the promise was never met.58

The Police Staff College is in the Afghan Police tashkil and therefore the college will receive its ordinary budget (which include salaries and vehicles fuel and other expenditures) The only concerns of the college officials was the development budget, which, according to them, is about 6 million Afghani (around 86,000 USD) for this year and the Parliament recently approved the whole national budget. To conclude, the college is an important milestone of EUPOL for Afghan police and unless something strange happens, it will continue to sustain and train hundreds of the police officers each year.

Besides establishing the college, EUPOL has provided dozens of training, monitoring, advising and mentoring sessions at MOI, MOJ and OAG. EUPOL has developed a number of training material and policies for the MOI. For example, EUPOL produced a training package on children’s rights and policing that consisted of a booklet and an educational video. Back in 2008, when there was a better security environment, EUPOL staff were providing on the job training for Kabul police officers and regularly visited checkpoints to provide advice.59

While it is hard to measure the impact of such a training course in short-term, many EUPOL trainees that were interviewed, stated that the training was too short without follow-ups. For example, the trainees at the ministry of justice told that majority of them had only for one-day training and there was not any follow programs from EUPOL.60 Moreover, the police officers at District 3 of Kabul city who were mentored through Kabul City Police Project in 2012 did not receive any follow-up training and were not checked to understand if they are doing better after the training. Additionally, a general problem with such training and mentoring was the high level of staff fluctuation inside ANP and EUPOL which prevented a more sustainable and focused mentoring and training programs.61

In general, these trainings will have long lasting impacts only if the trainers have leadership and management skills while “most of those involved in police sector reform in Afghanistan have only operational experience. Operational knowledge and experience are essential for transferring policing techniques but on their own are not sufficient to achieve reform.”62 Additionally, since a vast majority of EUPOL police trainers did not speak Dari or Pashto, the whole training session had to be interpreted by mostly unprofessional interpreters who were unaware of policing terminologies. All these barriers have limited the EUPOL training and monitoring’s impact.

5.4. Unachieved Objectives and Challenges

The EUPOL did not achieve some of its important objectives that led some researchers to conclude that “EUPOL is a textbook case of failure in application of the SSR model for a variety of reasons, including security concerns, weak domestic institutions, institutional cacophony within the EU and between Euro-Atlantic institutions, and lack of commitment to the EUPOL mission.”63

An important EUPOL objective that was not met was to work as an umbrella for all police related reform programs of the international community. To achieve this objective, a program was supposed to establish the International Police Coordination Board (IPCB) in 2007 to coordinate

58. Interview with Acting Director of Police Staff College Officers, 17 December 2017, Kabul.
59. For example see the clip of EUPO staff visiting check points in Kabul city: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kavxjCVXoU
60. Authors interview with a EUPOL trainee at Ministry of Justice, Kabul city, 1 November 2017
all police reform-related efforts of the international community. However, there was not much success in achieving this objective as “the international stakeholders have been unwilling to be coordinated and have perceived the IPCB as an ambitious effort on the part of EU to take the lead in policing sector.”

Until 2010 there were not even enough clarification on role EUPOL, EU Special Representative (EUSR) and EU delegation in coordination and locally policy making. Furthermore, some of EU Member States continued their own parallel individual’s efforts in police reform instead of seconding their staff to EUPOL. While one of EUPOL’s main focus areas was mentoring, it was only in April 2013 that the mission developed a handbook of its own mentoring that included concepts, methodology and best practices of EUPOL in Afghanistan.

At the local level, Afghan police officials were unhappy with EUPOL’s “long and complicated procedures” of decision making, which they think were timing consuming and showed that EUPOL was “too much” reliant on every individual member state for decision making. Afghan police officials also stated that EUPOL restrict security measure was an obstacle for their impact and outreach. A senior official insisted that “EUPOL was so restricted and they didn’t take any risk. Most of the time they blocked themselves and we had to go to their place.”

Lack of involvement of Afghan police officials in the implementation of EUPOL Operational Plan was another important weakness of the project. Fact finding missions by CMPD consulted high level AFG officials from the MoI and internal planning documents for security reasons were kept confidential. In a more relaxed security environment sharing or even jointly benchmarking the implementation of the mandate would certainly have been preferable. On the other hand CPCC and MS made an effort to fully involve key international and national stakeholders.

Different Afghan police officials stated that they did not know much about the EUPOL activities. For example, a then deputy minister for MOI told that when it came to the EUPOL operational plan, nothing was clear for Afghans. As an example, he said that “it was not clear to us that how much budget they had and how they were spending their budget.” Additionally, a leading civil society activist criticized the EUPOL for not having any relationship with Afghan civil society organizations. He also added that the “civil society and Afghan police had no relationship and EU could not help these two organization to build a strong relationship and solve the main problem of Afghan police.”

This resulted in the shaping of a perception that EU officials have benefited from the assistance to Afghanistan. In the survey, out of 190 individuals who answered the question of “Do you think EU officials have been benefited from the assistance to Afghanistan?” 171 of them said, “yes” (see Figure 4). There are different reasons for such misunderstanding.

67. Interview with a high ranking police official, MOI, 13 December 2017.
68. Interview with a police officer, MOI, 13 December 2017.
69. Interview with a then Deputy Minister for MOI, Kabul, 20 December 2017.
70. Interview with the head a leading civil society organization, 18 November 2017.
During interviews, a police officer said that “the EUPOL had a very large number of guards for themselves and they spent a vast amount of budget for their expenses.”

Furthermore, according to the European Court of Auditors’ report EUPOL in 2015 had 146 armored vehicles in Afghanistan, of which only a few were regularly used and the total value of these armored vehicles was 25.2 million Euro (as the most important asset of the mission) and more half of their the first year budget. Finally, such a misconception also indicates that EU outreach to the local community was not efficient and fruitful.

In sum, while there were some shortcomings in the implementation of some objectives, EUPOL has left some important and sustainable impacts on Afghanistan police reform. Introducing the concept of civilian policing, the Police Staff College, strengthening of woman police officers, the inclusion of human rights in police training, and cooperation of justice-police sector are some of the most important of EUPOL impacts. A vast majority of our respondents admit that they are “better off” after the EUPOL mission and the police trainees of EUPOL has the highest percentage of believing that the police better off after implementation of EUPOL (see Figure 5).

6. Policy Recommendations

1. Defining Clear Goal and Measurable Objectives:

EUPOL experience shows that unless there is a clear measurable objective defined, it is hard to define and measure success or failure of a mission. A lesson learned from this mission to define a clear and measurable objective as possible to measure and track the mission improvement. Moreover, the objectives have been defined based on the reality on the ground and policymakers should understand context barriers for implementation of Security Sector Reform.

Therefore EU MS need to clearly define the Mission Mandate with mid-term and Exit benchmarks from the inception of the Mission while the Mission OPLAN should have clearly defined Annexes on methodology (training, mentoring, advising and monitoring) and application of the Comprehensive Approach.

2. Inclusion of Afghan Official in Planning and Implementation

Though the Afghan police may not have skilled and professional experts at the international standard, they could help in the planning of a conflict response project by helping to understand the local realities. So, involving them will increase the chances of success for a project. Moreover, with such an approach EU can be confident that local priorities are reflected in the mission planning and the mission goal and objective is realistic. This will also increase the level of ownership among locals and they do not feel that the whole mission is a foreign project. Furthermore the OPLAN and any subsequent mandate reviews must be shared and consulted with key local stakeholders.

71. Interview with a police officer, MOI, 13 December 2017.
3. **Investing in Public Relations:**

An important part of police reform should be focused on gaining the trust of the community and civil society. While such trust is gained through regular and transparent public relationships and information sharing, the paper found out that there was not enough interaction with local communities and civil society organizations, evident from few people at the community level who were aware of EUPOL. As such, a mission like EUPOL should invest more in public outreach and preferably organize meetings with civil society activists, media outlets and elders of a community.

While public relations is a weak point for all EU structures, EUPOL for a long time survived in Afghanistan due to its low key presence and did not suffer any major attacks during its 10 years of operating in a hostile environment.

4. **Keeping the Support for Afghan Policewomen**

The number of the Afghan policewomen have increased considerably during implementation of EUPOL. However, they still comprise only 2.13 percent of the Afghan National Police. The EU has to keep its support and focus on strengthening of Afghan policewomen and support in this long battle. This objective is closely related to the EU commitment in protecting human rights and training Afghan police to respect human rights.

5. **Providing Enough Resources and Budget**

As discussed in the paper, a part of EUPOL limited impact was due to lack of resources and staff, which had to be second from the EU Member States. Additionally, while it is good that all civilian mission is voluntary but a mission in a context like Afghanistan should have all its staff from the EU commission.

This is not a workable recommendation as EC staff are neither police staff nor CSDP secondees and they work at the Delegations. MS would certainly not support handing over arguably the only field (SSR) of crisis management, which is working within the CSDP. Rather a call for the MS to follow up on pledges made in the Council structures and ensure that all CSDP Mission, and in particular those in difficult security environments are fully staffed and have all the resources required to implement the Mission Mandate.

6. **The Need for Civilian Police**

There is no doubt that Afghanistan needs a professional and civilian police as there is no doubt that the goal having such civilian police has not been reached after 15 years of international support and specifically 10 years of EUPOL Afghanistan. While the EU did not get the job done, it was always the Afghans who needed to embrace ownership of the civilian aspects of SSR. In terms of sustainability and ownership the closure of EUPOL did not mean the end of EU involvement as the EU Delegation continues supporting a number of policing projects and finances LOTFA.
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