

Civilian Death and Injury in Afghanistan, 2001-2011¹

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"My house was bombarded in the middle of the night and my children were killed ... the Taliban were far away from my home, why was my house bombed?" Noor Agha in May 2011.²

"More civilians were killed in May [2011] than in any other month since 2007, when UNAMA began documenting civilian casualties." Georgette Gagnon, Director of Human Rights for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), June 2011.³

On 7 October 2001, the United States and Great Britain began an air assault against the Taliban followed by a ground invasion. The war led by the United States to degrade and destroy the Al Qaeda organization and replace the Taliban government launched Afghanistan's third major war of the last 32 years. It is fair to say that Afghanistan, a country of about 28 million people, most of whom make their living in agriculture, has been almost continually at war since 1979.⁴

By a conservative estimate, at least 12,500 – 14,700 civilians have been killed through June 2011, but no one knows with confidence how many Afghan civilians have been killed and injured in the current war, dubbed Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) by the US.⁵ If all categories of those killed are counted — civilians, military and police, insurgents, aid workers, journalists — between 30,400 and 45,600 people

¹ I thank Beth Osborne Daponte, Catherine Lutz, Norah Niland, John Sloboda, Mike Spagat, and John Tirman for comments on earlier drafts. I am responsible for any errors.

² Noor Agha, quoted in Reuters, "NATO Strike Kills Civilians, Afghans Say Most Were Kids," *Reuters IN*, 30 May 2011, <http://in.reuters.com/article/2011/05/30/idINIndia-57354320110530>.

³ Gagnon quoted in UNAMA "May deadliest Month for Afghan Civilians," in *Featured News, UNAMA*, 11 June 2011, <http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1741&ctl=Details&mid=1882&ItemID=13986>.

⁴ The Soviet invasion in 1979 launched a ten year war that generated millions of refugees and killed as many as 1 million Afghans. When the Soviet Union's forces departed in 1989, they left a Communist government headed by Dr. Mohammad Najibullah. Various mujaheddin groups, including the Taliban, resisted the regime until it collapsed in 1992. Several years of civil war among mujaheddin factions followed, until the Taliban seized Kabul in 1996 and established control over much of Afghanistan. The Taliban never completely controlled Afghanistan; the Northern Alliance continued to fight against the Taliban.

⁵ The United States Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) began in October 2001. NATO took command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in August 2003. In November 2008, ISAF and OEF formed a unified command structure. ISAF include the United States and other members of NATO as well as a number of non-NATO country forces contributing to what is called the International Security Assistance Force, commanded by NATO. There are thus more than 25 countries besides the U.S. contributing troops and equipment to the ISAF command.

have been killed directly (rounded to the nearest 100). But, unlike Iraq, there is no long run tally, no "Afghanistan Body Count," or similar independent public accounting of civilian injury and killing caused by all combatants since 2001. Uncertainty about the scale of the killing has been a problem since the start of the fighting in October 2001. While in more recent years there has been greater attention to counting the casualties in Afghanistan, in some years there were no comprehensive tallies or estimates for civilian death.

Indeed, it was about the war Afghanistan that U.S. General Tommy Franks famously said, "You know we don't do body counts."⁶ In line with that statement, the United States military has not made it a consistent practice to release its own data on civilian killing in Afghanistan. The two most recent releases of official data about civilian killing are the unauthorized transfer of US data about the war to Wikileaks published in 2010, and the authorized release of NATO ISAF data in March 2011. But neither database includes the entire nearly 10 year period of the war, and, as noted below, both data sets contain important omissions.

Again, using what is possible to piece together from public sources (see Appendix B), such as the United Nations figures based on their investigations of civilian casualties, I make an estimate of direct war deaths in Afghanistan from 2001 through 2010 and 2011. As noted above, between approximately 12,500 and 14,700 civilians (rounded to the nearest 100) have been killed directly by war (see Table 5 and Appendix A) through June 2011 but most sources are cautious and indicate that their counts are incomplete. My estimates for *direct civilian* death, based on those sources, is thus conservative. In the last two years, children have comprised nearly 15 percent of all civilians killed.

The number of Afghan civilians killed and wounded in 2011 has grown even as the U.S. has promised to reduce its forces. The most recent U.N. report highlights several issues that have been salient in recent months. Despite all its efforts, ISAF airstrikes continued to kill civilians in the first six months of 2011, slightly more than in 2010. Air operations remain the leading cause of pro-government forces killing of civilians. Helicopter close combat air operations are accounting for a greater number and proportion of civilian deaths since 2009, and in the first six months of 2011, accounted for the majority of civilian deaths and injuries caused by air operations. The UN reports that in all of 2009, 25 civilians were killed by

⁶ U.S. General Tommy Franks, quoted in "Success in Afghan War Hard to Gage," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, 23 March 2002.

helicopter strikes; in 2010, 56 civilians were killed by helicopter strikes. In the first six months of 2011, there have already been 44 civilian deaths due to helicopter strikes.

Further, the war in Afghanistan is increasingly linked to fighting in Pakistan. Fighting on the border in 2011 has led to a growing number of deaths and increased displacement in Afghanistan. Pakistani forces engaged in counter-insurgency on the border are responsible for killing and injuring 30 Afghans in the first six months of this year and shelling in Nangarhar province by Pakistan displaced about 2000 people. Pressure plate IEDs are increasingly lethal for civilians, Afghan National Security Forces and NATO/ISAF. In the last year ISAF and Afghan National Security Forces cleared 20,000 IEDs in Afghanistan. About 90 percent of the IEDs cleared were of the pressure plate design — an extremely lethal and indiscriminate weapon in Afghanistan.

An additional approximately 15,000-28,000 Afghan police, soldiers, Taliban and other insurgents have been killed directly by war, with the most uncertainty surrounding the number of insurgent deaths.⁷ I thus give a low and a higher estimate for total direct death in the war (excluding the deaths of international forces, NGO workers and journalists). If we assume as few as 15,000 Afghan combatants (Afghan security forces and insurgents) were killed, a low estimate and the lower estimate of civilian death of about 12,500 the total direct war Afghan war deaths is about 26,600 people; in this case civilian direct death comprise about 44 percent of total direct war deaths of Afghans in Afghanistan from 2001- mid 2011. If the higher, but still fairly conservative, estimates of both civilian and Afghan combatant deaths are used, the total toll in direct death of Afghans is about 45,600 people; civilians comprise about 33 percent of the total direct deaths. These figures are the estimate of direct war deaths of Afghans; the total direct death from the war includes an additional about 3,000 international military forces, aid workers, and journalists.⁸

But war also kills indirectly. Indirect deaths, due to the effects of increased malnutrition, lack of access to safe drinking water and medicine, and disease that would otherwise not be fatal, occur at some ratio to the direct deaths. Unfortunately, there have been no censuses of Afghanistan since 2001 (or even before then) that could be used to assess the number of Afghans who have died because of the indirect effects of war. There are some large-scale public health surveys, such as on child mortality, but there are

⁷ I assume that most of the insurgents are Afghans (including Pashtuns).

⁸ See table 6, below.

many blank spots in the data.⁹ It follows that any estimate of how many Afghan civilians have died because of the indirect effects of these wars will be an extrapolation at best, rooted in estimates of those who were directly killed.

On the one hand, nearly every factor that is associated with premature death — poverty, malnutrition, poor sanitation, lack of access to health care, environmental degradation — is exacerbated by the current war. Further, the prior wars and civil conflict in Afghanistan have made Afghan society extremely vulnerable to the indirect effects of the current war. On the other hand, Afghanistan has benefited from investments in the economy and health care that may have ameliorated some of the effects of war. Yet Afghanistan is still one of the poorest countries in the world, with high maternal, infant and child mortality rates, and high levels of malnutrition.

The general immiseration of the Afghan population is in part due to and exacerbated by past conflict. Afghanistan was poor and vulnerable before the war that began in 2001; its population remains poor and vulnerable. The structural and health effects of prior war have made the health effects of the current war much worse. Put simply, the effects of the current war may not be easily disentangled from the legacy of previous wars, but it is clear that the current war has created new problems, such as a legacy of amputees and other individuals who will need care in the coming decades.

Trends in Direct War Related Civilian Death

How are civilians being killed, directly and indirectly, in the Afghanistan war since 2001? In the first years of the war, direct war related civilian deaths were most often incidental to combat — civilians were caught in the crossfire between forces, or the victims of bombs that had gone astray. Of course, many instances of "unintended" collateral damage are foreseeable, such as when one launches weapons into a village. Later, the Taliban and other forces of Al Qaeda and the Haqqani network deliberately targeted civilians who they perceived as cooperating with NATO ISAF forces.

How have US, ISAF, and Afghan forces, often collectively called "pro-government" forces, harmed civilians? The pattern of civilian death caused by international military forces and the Afghan

⁹ See "CME Info" <http://www.childmortality.org/cmeMain.html>.

National Army and Police forces has been fairly consistent: from 2001 early 2011, most killing of Afghan civilians by US and other International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) militaries has been caused by airstrikes. Civilians have not been deliberately targeted in those strikes. Rather, civilians may be inadvertently killed because bombs go astray or because they are believed to be insurgents. In May 2011, more were killed by ground operations than by airstrikes.¹⁰

For example, on 28 May 2011, NATO ISAF officials said an insurgent attack in southern Helmand on a patrol caused the death of a U.S. Marine. Five insurgents continued to fire from civilian houses. The NATO forces called in an airstrike which killed the occupants of two houses. NATO said 9 civilians were killed. Afghan officials said those killed included 12 children and two women. Three other children were wounded. NATO apologized for killing civilians: "Unfortunately, the compound the insurgents purposefully occupied was later discovered to house innocent civilians."¹¹ A few days later, Hamid Karzai said, "From this moment, airstrikes on the houses of people are not allowed."¹²

The U.S. also dropped 1,228 cluster bombs (containing 248,056 bomblets) between 7 October 2001 and 18 March 2002. Although the US essentially stopped using cluster munitions in Afghanistan after March 2002, and many of the US cluster bombs were removed or destroyed, Afghanistan remains contaminated with unexploded ordnance from both the US war and the earlier Soviet occupation. In addition to those civilians who were immediately killed and injured by US dropped cluster bombs, civilians continue to be killed by those cluster bomblets that failed to detonate on impact.¹³ Ground fire or incidents, such as occur during night raids by U.S. forces, have also caused civilian death. Afghan civilians and NGO workers have observed that night raids, intended to kill or capture insurgents, all too often frighten civilians and frequently injure or kill individuals who are simply *suspected* militants.

The US military leadership gradually concluded that the number of civilians being killed by "pro-government forces" had hurt the U.S. war effort. The feeling among both civilians and government

¹⁰ UNAMA "May deadliest Month for Afghan Civilians."

¹¹ U.S. Major General John Toolan, quoted in Reuters, "NATO Strike Kills Civilians, Afghans Say Most Were Kids," *Reuters IN*, <http://in.reuters.com/article/2011/05/30/idINIndia-57354320110530>.

¹² Heidi Vogt and Rahim Faiez, "Afghan President Seeks to Limit NATO Airstrikes," *Army Times*, 31 May 2011, <http://www.armytimes.com/news/2011/05/ap-afghan-president-seeks-to-limit-nato-airstrikes-053111/>.

¹³ Human Rights Watch, "Fatally Flawed: Cluster Bombs and their Use by the United States in Afghanistan," Human Rights Watch December 2002. Handicap International, Cluster Munition Coalition, et al, *Cluster Munition Monitor 2010* (Mines Action Canada, October 2010) p. 118.

officials in Afghanistan was "resentment over high civilian casualties and perceived insensitivity . . . exacerbated by a lack of public accountability" for misconduct and civilian casualties.¹⁴ Experience in Iraq and research by scholars examining the pattern of insurgency showed that increased civilian casualties led to a predictable increase in insurgent activity in the area where the casualties occurred.¹⁵ As part of its "population centric" strategy designed to reduce harm to civilians, in mid 2009, the ISAF command shifted some of the "rules of engagement" including the rules for calling in aircraft to support ground forces. The aim of the tactical airpower directive was to decrease the harm to civilians, even though it was believed that the risk to ISAF soldiers would likely grow.¹⁶ U.S. and other ISAF casualties did grow, at least temporally but the proportion of Afghan civilians killed by ISAF declined after the new rules went into effect.

Some Afghan civilians have been killed by U.S. and ISAF forces in what are known as "force protection" or "escalation of force" incidents. An escalation of force incident occurs, for instance, when civilians approach ISAF vehicles too closely on the roads, or when civilians fail to stop quickly enough (perhaps because they fail to see the signal to stop) at checkpoints. In about half of the incidents where British soldiers were involved in killing or wounding civilians from late 2006 to late 2009, the incidents involved "warning" shots to people in cars, on motorcycles, or on foot. For example, when British Royal Marines in Helmand Province fired warning shots at a car in 2006 killing two civilians and wounding two others, including a child.¹⁷

A number of Afghan civilians have been deliberately killed by U.S. soldiers. Recently published "trophy" photographs taken by U.S. Army soldiers, who called themselves a "kill team," show the soldiers posing with their civilian victims.¹⁸ In a few instances, when Afghan civilians have been killed by US or

¹⁴ Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, "From Hope to Fear: An Afghan Perspective on Operations of Pro-Government Forces," December 2008.

¹⁵ Luke N. Condra, Joseph H. Felter, Radha K. Iyengar, and Jacob N. Shapiro, "The Effect of Civilian Casualties in Afghanistan and Iraq," National Bureau of Economic Research, *NBER Working Paper No. 16152*, July 2010.

¹⁶ Jim Garamone, "Directive Re-emphasizes Protecting Afghan Civilians," U.S. Department of Defense News, 6 July 2009, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=55023>; NATO/ISAF Unclassified, "Tactical Directive," 6 July 2009, Headquarters, International Security Assistance Force, Kabul Afghanistan. www.nato.int/isaf/docu/official.../Tactical_Directive_090706.pdf and www.nato.int/isaf/docu/.../pr090706-tactical-directive.html.

¹⁷ Wikileaks data as interpreted by the Guardian, "Afghanistan War Logs: List of Civilian Shootings by British Troops," 25 July 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jul/25/british-shootings-afghan-civilians-list>.

¹⁸ See Matthias Gebauer and Hanain Kazim, "US Army Apologizes for Horrific Photos from Afghanistan," Der Spiegel, 21 March 2011, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,752310,00.html>, Jon Boon,

other ISAF forces, soldiers have attempted to cover-up their actions by suggesting that those killed were insurgents or that the civilians killed had been harmed by insurgents. In one case, when U.S. Special Forces troops and Afghan forces stormed a house in February 2010 where family and friends were attending a party to celebrate the naming of a child, US forces killed 5 civilians, including two pregnant women and a teenage girl, and wounded several others by mistake. For some time, ISAF insisted that those killed were insurgents and that the women had been killed before the raid by others. Afghans charged that, in an attempt to cover up the killings, US Special Forces used knives to remove the bullets from the bodies of their victims. Survivors argued that two of the injured, who died of their wounds, a police commander his niece (the teenaged girl), might have survived had they been taken for medical treatment earlier.¹⁹

Hundreds of civilians have also been killed by Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police forces. Although Afghan civilians have expressed concern about the accountability of Afghan police and military forces, the incidence of civilian killing by ANA and Police has not been consistently tracked. In 2010, of the at least 2,777 civilians killed by all combatants that year, the Afghan security forces killed about 10 percent of all the victims, a third of those killed by "pro-government" forces.²⁰ In recent years, the ANA and ANP may well have killed about third of all the civilians killed by pro-government forces including ISAF.

The pattern and means of civilian death caused by the Taliban and other anti-government forces (including Haqqani network and Hizb-I-Islami) have changed over the course of the war. In the early years of the war, the Taliban focused their fire on the Northern Alliance forces, the US, and other international forces. Later the Taliban began to target the forces of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan

"Photos Show US Soldiers in Afghanistan Posing with Dead Civilians," *The Guardian*, 21 March 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/mar/21/afghanistan-trophy-photos-us-soldier>.

¹⁹ Jerome Starkey, "UN Report Criticises Covert Troops who Committed Afghan Killings," *The Times*, 16 March 2010, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/afghanistan/article7063184.ece>; Jerome Starkey, "US Special Forces 'tried to cover-up' Botched Khataba Raid in Afghanistan," 5 April 2010, *The Times*, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/afghanistan/article7087637.ece>; Richard A. Oppel and Abdhul Waheed Wafa, "Afghan Investigators Say U.S. Troops Tried to Cover Up Evidence in Botched Raid," 5 April 2010, *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/06/world/asia/06afghan.html>.

²⁰ Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict (CIVIC), Human Rights Research and Advocacy Consortium (HRRAC) and Oxfam, "No Time to Lose: Promoting Accountability of the Afghan National Security Forces," Joint Briefing Paper, 10 May 2011 accessed <http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/no-time-to-lose>. Afghanistan Rights Monitor, which records fewer civilian deaths than the UN, attributed 520 civilian deaths in 2008 and 239 civilian deaths in 2010 to Afghan forces of a total of 1620 and 790 civilian deaths attributed to both the Afghan and international forces fighting the insurgency. Afghanistan Rights Monitor, "The Crisis of Afghan Civilians in 2008," and <http://www.arm.org.af/index.php>

National Police (ANP). Civilians died in the crossfire of fighting, or as Taliban rockets fired at ISAF operating bases fell in neighborhoods near bases. In addition, Taliban weapons intended to kill NATO/ISAF forces, such as improvised explosive devices, have often killed non-combatants.

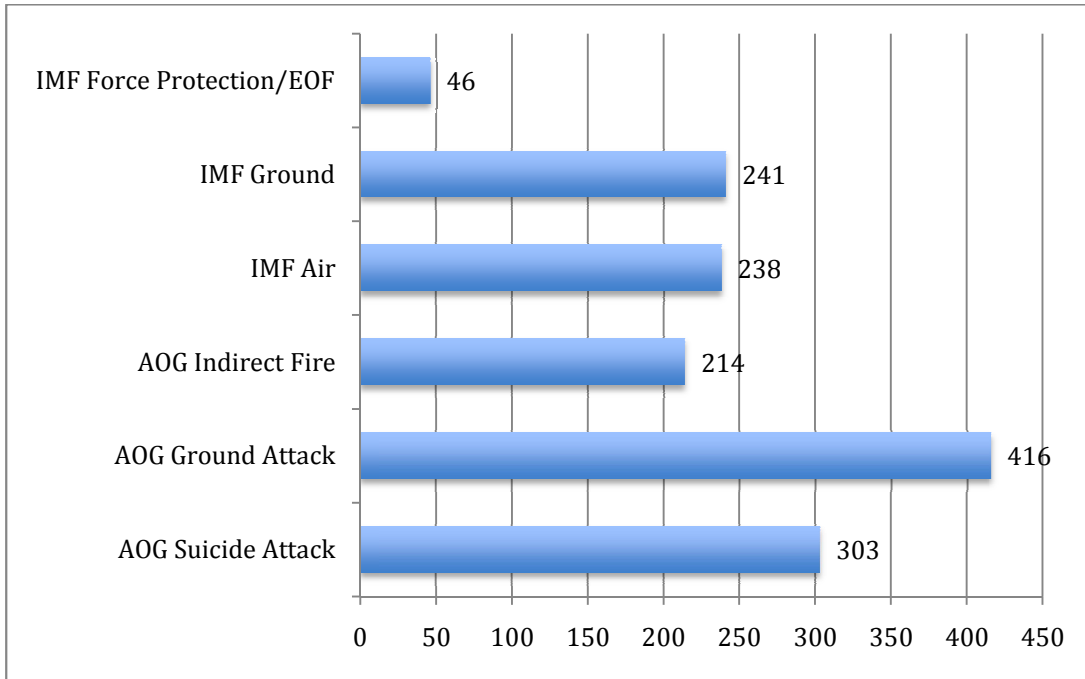
When the Taliban increased the level of their military activity in 2005, their forces began to more systematically target civilians who were perceived as collaborators, sometimes beheading or hanging suspected spies. Women and female children were also attacked. Further, random attacks on civilians by the Taliban have been increasingly deadly. The Taliban have also used suicide attacks in areas frequented by civilian, but the portion of civilians killed by the Taliban in suicide attacks in the most recent year has decreased from 2007. Instead, the Taliban and other anti-government forces have turned to targeting specific civilians for kidnapping and assassination.²¹

The Afghanistan NGO Safety Office (ANSO), a non-governmental organization based in Afghanistan, has documented the ways that Afghan civilians were being killed in 2010, the most recent year for which figures are available. Anti-government forces killed the majority of civilians, while US and ISAF (international military forces) killed about 18 percent of all civilians killed that year.

²¹ Antigovernment forces assassinated 271 people in 2008, 225 in 2009 and 462 in 2010 according to UNAMA reports from 2008 to 2010.

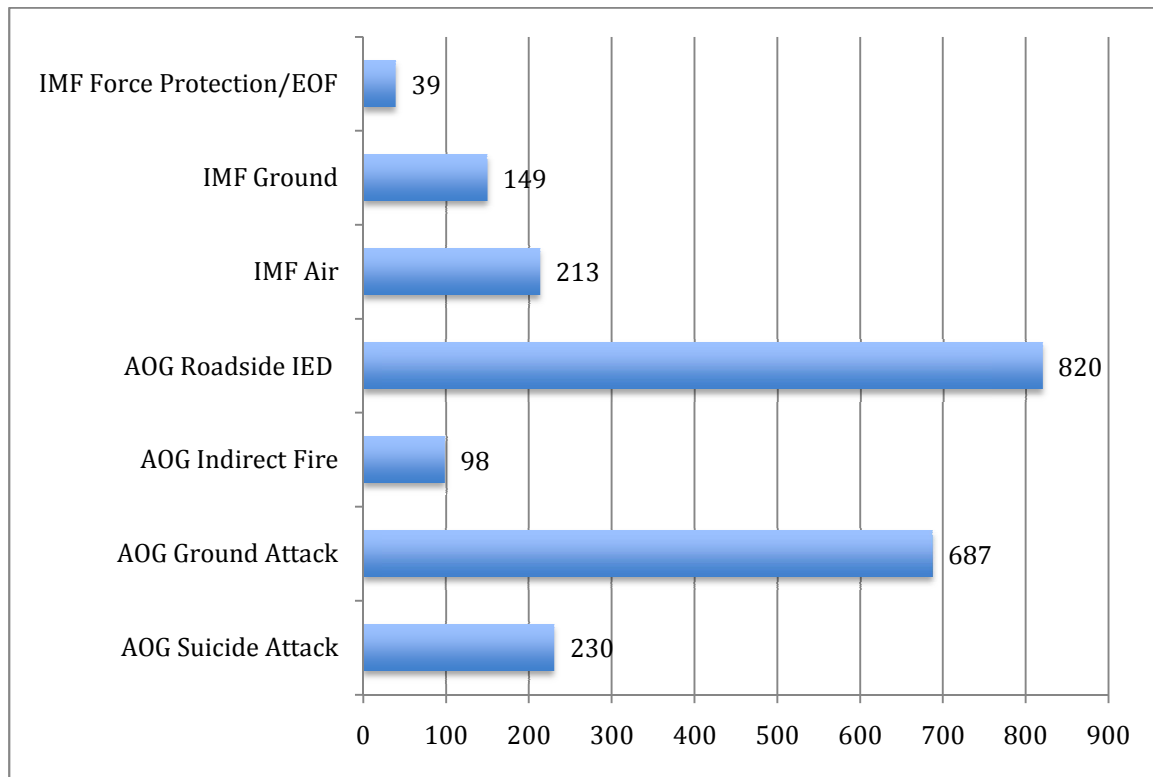
Figure 1:

Leading Causes of Direct Civilian Death in Afghanistan in 2007²²



IMF: international military forces AOG: insurgents
IED: improvised explosive devices EOF: Escalation of Force

²² Sources: Afghanistan NGO Safety Office (ANSO), *ANSO Quarterly Data Report and Annual Summation, (Q.4-2007)* (Kabul, ANSO, 2008).

Figure 2:**Leading Causes of Direct Civilian Death in Afghanistan in 2010²³**

IMF: international military forces AOG: insurgents
 IED: improvised explosive devices EOF: Escalation of Force

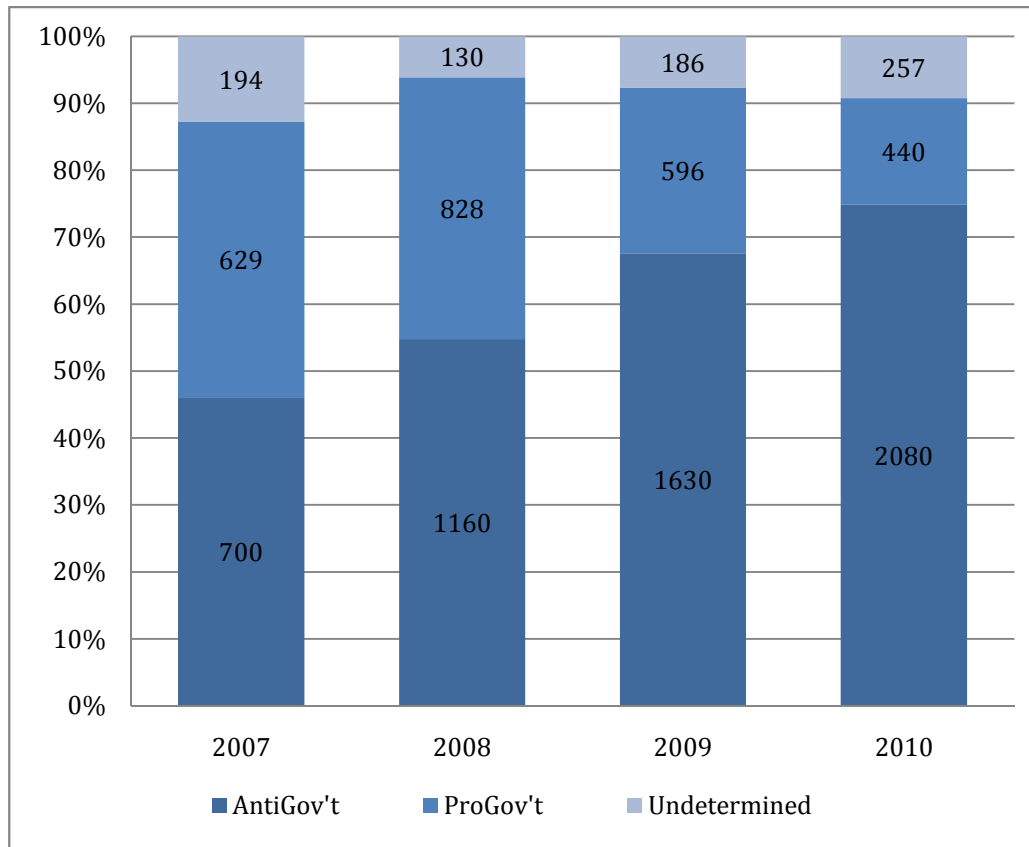
In any year, some portion of deaths cannot be attributed to a specific belligerent party. Understandably, the question of who is killing civilians has for years been highly politicized in Afghanistan, with the Karzai government repeatedly accusing the US and the International Security Assistance Forces of not taking enough care to protect Afghan civilians. Overall, United Nations data suggest that in the most recent years of the war in Afghanistan, roughly 10 percent of the civilian killing in Afghanistan cannot be attributed to either insurgent or pro-Afghan government forces, which includes the International Security Assistance Forces and the Afghan military and police forces. The UN data also clearly shows that the portion of direct civilian death attributable to insurgents has increased. While the

²³ Afghanistan NGO Safety Office (ANSO), *ANSO Quarterly Data Report, Q.4-2010* (Kabul: ANSO 2011), p. 14.

total number of civilians killed in the war has grown in recent years, the proportion of civilians killed by international forces has declined from a high in 2007.²⁴

Figure 3.

UN Attribution of Parties Responsible for Civilian Death, 2007-2010²⁵



Different interpretations of international humanitarian law, as discussed in Appendix A, yield different assessments of both the number of civilians killed and the party responsible for killing civilians.

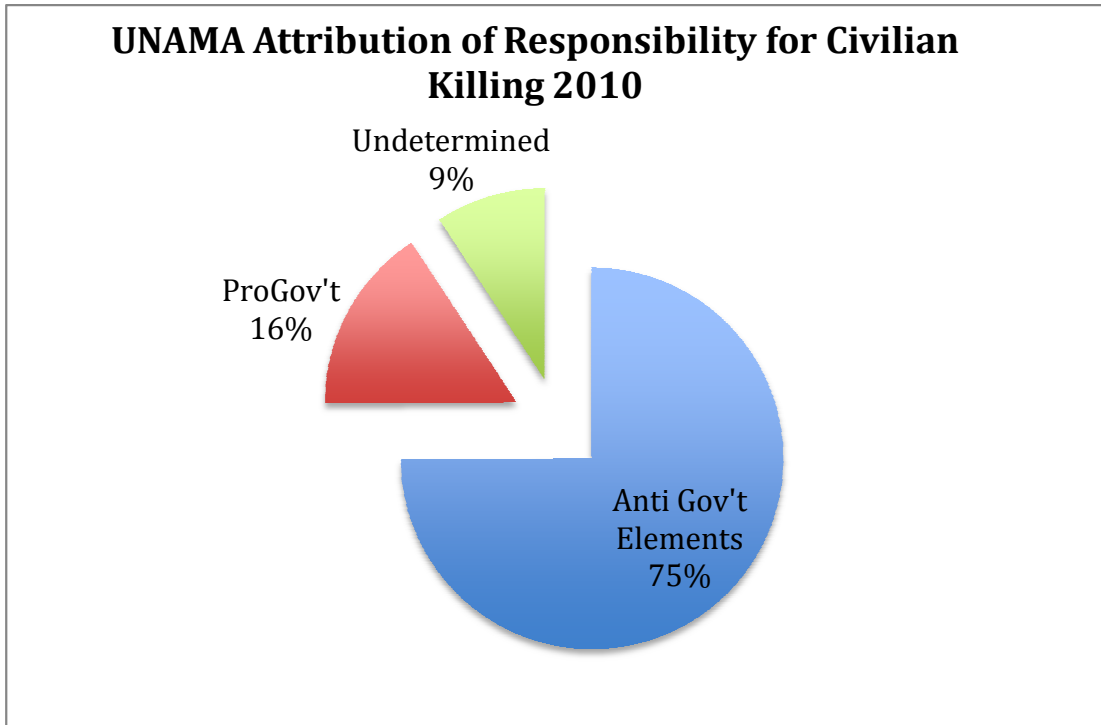
Figure 4 compares the UN/Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission data of civilians killed by

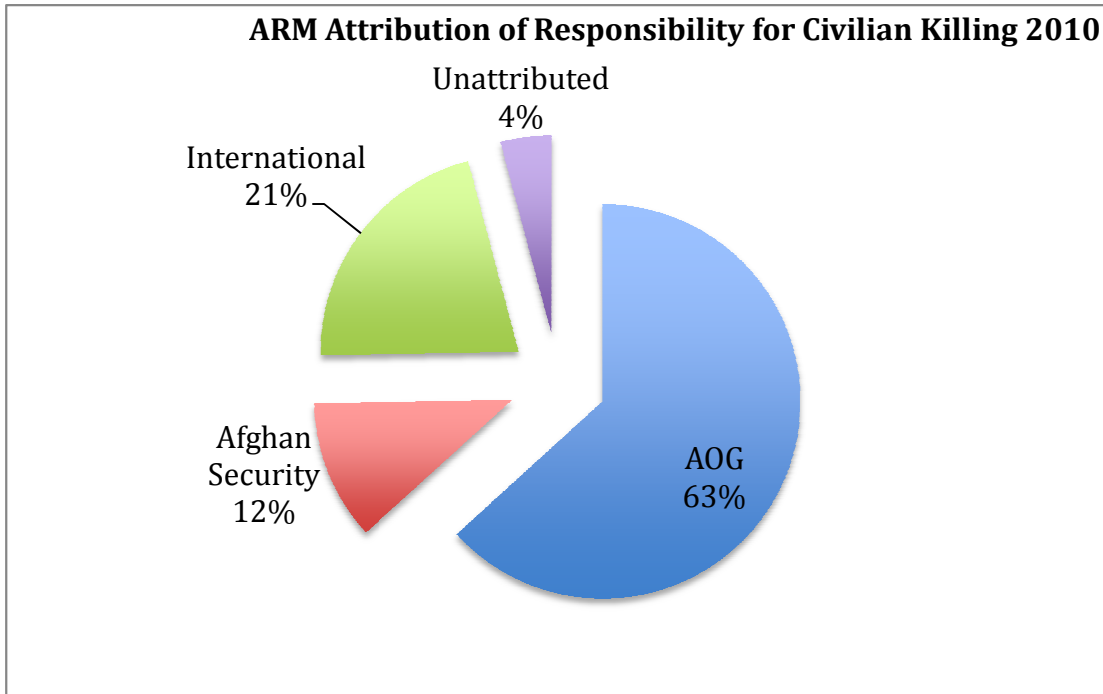
²⁴ Source: UNAMA: United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan, *Annual Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, 2008, 2009, 2010. Other organizations attribute the deaths to different forces. For example, while for 2010, the UN says that in the case of about 250 deaths, they were unable to determine the proximate cause, Afghanistan Rights Monitor says 100 deaths could not be attributed to either side that same year. Afghanistan Rights Monitor, *ARM Annual Report, Civilian Casualties of War, January – December 2010*, (Kabul, February 2011).

²⁵ Source: UNAMA: United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan, *Annual Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, 2008, 2009, 2010.

different forces to the Afghanistan Rights Monitor (ARM) figures for the same year, 2010. Note that the two organizations use different terminology to describe insurgents: the UN classifies pro and anti-government elements, while the ARM term insurgents AOG. ARM also distinguishes between pro-government forces, by distinguishing deaths caused by international forces and Afghan security forces.

Figure 4. Impact of Different Interpretations of International Humanitarian Law





Apart from their different interpretations of "combatant" and "civilian," the difference between the UN and ARM accounting is also perhaps due to the different networks and resources available to these organizations. The UNAMA Human Rights team tried to systematically investigate every incident and sends more staff to investigate large or hotly disputed instances of civilian killing.

In the most recent period for which there are UN statistics, UNAMA Human Rights reports that during May 2011 "Anti-government elements were responsible for 301 civilian deaths (82 per cent of all civilian deaths in May). Forty-five civilian deaths (12 per cent of all civilian deaths in May 2011) were attributed to pro government forces. Twenty-two deaths or six per cent of civilian deaths in May 2011 could not be attributed to any party to the conflict as most of these deaths were caused by crossfire."²⁶

Wounded Civilians

Unsurprisingly, Afghan civilians have also been wounded in greater numbers as the intensity of the fighting has grown. The precise number of war-wounded in Afghanistan may not ever be known. There are estimates, however, for the number of wounded for single years. For instance, in 2008, Afghanistan

²⁶ UNAMA "May deadliest Month for Afghan Civilians." Of deaths caused by the ISAF and Afghan security forces, UNAMA found that ground combat caused more civilian deaths than airstrikes.

Rights Monitor noted about 8,300 civilians were injured as a result of the war: NATO/ISAF forces wounded 2,800 people in addition to the 1,600 civilians wounded by the Afghan police and military. Insurgents wounded about 4,900 people in Afghanistan in 2008.²⁷ The ISAF CIVCAS (civilian casualty) dataset recorded wounded by both insurgents and ISAF from 2008 to 2010, there were at least 5,959 civilians wounded in that period.²⁸ But, the NATO numbers are probably an underestimate for those years, and in any case, the total for the entire war is likely to be much higher.²⁹

The International Committee for the Red Cross reported that it treated 5,173 wounded people at eight first aid posts in 2009.³⁰ The Red Cross does not see all of those wounded in Afghanistan. Some of the wounded are treated by NATO military hospitals, which transfer about 110 civilian wounded to local and Non-Governmental Organization run hospitals every month.³¹ Others are first treated at local or NGO run hospitals and first aid stations.

Many of the war wounded never make it to hospitals, or arrive after long journeys, because of the difficulty travelling in time of war. Michiel Hoffman, of Medecins San Frontieres said in 2010: "There is no such thing as a nice war wound. Even the simplest weapon has devastating medical consequences. But the biggest danger is for Afghans travelling any distance to get here [Boost Hospital in Helmand Province]. The biggest problem is them arriving late in terms of their disease. So a two hour peace-time journey could take two or three days as they go around the checkpoints, with the result that the disease has progressed much more seriously to life threatening in some cases. We hear lots about how it is for doctors, but the biggest danger is the poor farmer with the sick child."³²

²⁷ Afghanistan Rights Monitor, "The Crisis of Afghan Civilians in 2008," <http://www.arm.org.af/index.php>.

²⁸ The ISAF CIVCAS data set released in January 2011 does not record civilians wounded by insurgents in 2008. The NCTC data base documents a total of 17,544 people (including civilians, army, police and NGO workers and others) wounded by insurgents/terrorists in Afghanistan for the period 2004-2010. To this we can add the 969 civilians ISAF says that it wounded from 2008 to 2010 to derive a figure of 18,513 total wounded in Afghanistan from 2004 to 2010 by both sides.

²⁹ I can only assume that the total wounded varies with the standard for reporting. For 2008, Afghanistan Rights Monitor counted 8300 wounded by all parties; for 2010 Afghanistan Rights Monitor counted 3,270 wounded by all parties. Afghanistan Rights Monitor, "The Crisis of Afghan Civilians in 2008," <http://www.arm.org.af/index.php>; "ARM Annual Report, Civilian Casualties of War," February 2011 (Kabul, Afghanistan), <http://www.arm.org.af/index.php>.

³⁰ International Committee for the Red Cross, *Annual Report 2009*, "Afghanistan," pp. 202-207: 205.

³¹ "Afghanistan: Huge Rise in War Wounded Civilians," 30 November 2010, Channel 4 News, <http://www.channel4.com/news/afghanistan-huge-rise-in-war-wounded-civilians>

³² Quoted in "Afghanistan: Huge Rise in War Wounded Civilians," 30 November 2010, Channel 4 News, <http://www.channel4.com/news/afghanistan-huge-rise-in-war-wounded-civilians>.

In Kandahar province in 2010, Mirwais Hospital reported that they had treated more than 3000 war wounded civilians in the first 10 months of the war, compared to about 1,100 civilians treated there in all of 2009.³³ In Lashkar Gah, the Italian NGO run Emergency hospital in Helmand Province, the medical coordinator Dr. Matteo Dell'Aira said that in 2010, "We have more war wounded than we have ever had in our six years of being here."³⁴ He described a range of wounds: "We see lots of injuries caused by mines, bullets. Shell injuries. There are lots of losses of limbs — we are full of amputees and people who need prosthetics. But it changes every week. For example, last week we had to amputate three limbs on the same person — one arm and two legs. We obviously do our best but he came in after I don't know how many hours and had lost a lot of blood. We lost him after two to three days."³⁵

Many of the civilian victims of landmines who survive need new limbs, wheelchairs, or braces. In March 2002, Human Rights Watch documented the results when one U.S. cluster bomb that had failed to explode on impact was detonated by five boys on their way to a picnic in Takh-te-Sefar. "Ramin, 15, died immediately. . . . Soraj, 12, lost both legs. Ismaeel, 16 sustained a chest wound. Farhad, 18, injured his foot. Waheed, 5, received a chest wound and minor head injury."³⁶

Part of the requirement for prosthetic limbs has been addressed by the International Committee for the Red Cross. The ICRC runs six rehabilitation facilities in six Afghan cities and a factory for prosthetics components and wheelchairs in Kabul. In 2009, these facilities provided 3,734 prosthesis to patients, 64 percent of whom were survivors of land mines or unexploded remnants of war.³⁷ The prostheses provided by ICRC to Afghan survivors of land mines thus accounted for approximately one-third of the total of

³³ Data for Mirwais Hospital in "Afghanistan: Huge Rise in War Wounded Civilians," 30 November 2010, Channel 4 News, <http://www.channel4.com/news/afghanistan-huge-rise-in-war-wounded-civilians>.

³⁴ "Afghanistan: Huge Rise in War Wounded Civilians," 30 November 2010, Channel 4 News, <http://www.channel4.com/news/afghanistan-huge-rise-in-war-wounded-civilians>.

³⁵ Quoted in Afghanistan: Huge Rise in War Wounded Civilians," 30 November 2010, Channel 4 News, <http://www.channel4.com/news/afghanistan-huge-rise-in-war-wounded-civilians>. Afghans are not only victims of newly sown cluster bombs, landmines and improvised explosive devices. Despite considerable effort to remove or destroy the remnants of previous wars, thousands of landmines and cluster bomblets weapons left from the previous decades of war.

³⁶ Human Rights Watch, "Fatally Flawed," p. 27.

³⁷ The ICRC also provided 982 wheelchairs, 9,626 orthoses (devices such as braces that provide orthopedic support) as well as more than 4,400 pairs of crutches to some of the nearly 71,000 people who were treated at their centers in Afghanistan in 2009. International Committee for the Red Cross, *Physical Rehabilitation Programme, Annual Report 2009* (Geneva: ICRC, 2009) pp. 9 and 35. http://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/icrc_002_4031.pdf.

worldwide total of prosthesis provided for land mine survivors by the ICRC in 2009.³⁸ Yet even if a person receives a prosthetic limb, discrimination or continued significant disability may mean that he or she cannot work and thus requires continued support from other members of their family.³⁹

Mental Health

Psychological wounds are also pervasive in Afghanistan, undertreated, and according recent studies, high in comparison to other war affected populations.⁴⁰ The main psychiatric hospital in Kabul was destroyed early in the war, and as of late 2010, psychiatric services were still inadequate throughout the country.⁴¹ In 2009, the Afghan Ministry of Public Health cited statistics that 66 percent of Afghans suffer mental health problems.⁴² Surveys found a range of mental health problems in adults in Afghanistan, including depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder in the post-2001 era. Those who lost limbs or suffer other disfiguring injuries were more prone to anxiety and depression. This is not to say psychological distress is new to Afghanistan. Surveys of mental health in the 1990s found high rates of depression and anxiety under the Taliban. A survey of Afghans over 15 years old in 2002 found that about 70% of respondents had depression and anxiety symptoms, while a 2003 survey which inquired about traumatic events over a ten year period found symptoms of depression (39%), anxiety (52%), and post-traumatic stress disorder (20%).⁴³

³⁸ ICRC, *Physical Rehabilitation Programme, Annual Report 2009*, p. 11. The ICRC uses the term land mines to include both land mines and other explosive remnants of war in this report. The ICRC provided a total of 7,138 prostheses for landmine survivors in 2009.

³⁹ CIVIC, "Losing the People," pp. 20-21.

⁴⁰ Barbara Lopes Cardozo, Oleg Bilukha, Carol Gotway Crawford, Irshad Shaikh, Mitchell I. Wolfe, Michael L. Gerber, and Mark Anderson, "Mental Health, Social Functioning, and Disability in Postwar Afghanistan," *JAMA: Journal of the American Medical Association*, vol. 292, no. 5 (4 August 2004) pp. 575-584: 583. Martin Patience, "Coping with a Traumatized Nation," *BBC News*, 20 January 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7838270.stm. World Health Organization and Ministry of Public Health Afghanistan, "WHO-AIMS Mental Health System in Afghanistan," (WHOS Afghanistan, Country Office, Kabul, 2006).

⁴¹ Zarghona Salahi, "Afghan Health System Failing People with Mental Illness," *Pajhwak News*, 23 November 2010, <http://www.pajhwok.com/ps/node/127127>.

⁴² Patience, "Coping with a Traumatized Nation."

⁴³ Cardozo, Bilukha, Crawford, Shaikh, Wolfe, Gerber, and Anderson, "Mental Health, Social Functioning, and Disability in Postwar Afghanistan," p. 580. Willem F. Sholte, Miranda Olffe, Peter Ventevogel, Giel-Jan de Vries, Eveline Jansveld, Barbara Lopes Cardozo, Carol A. Gotway Crawford, "Mental Health Symptoms Following War and Repression in Eastern Afghanistan," *JAMA: Journal of the American Medical Association*, vol. 292, no. 5 (4 August 2004) pp. 585-593: 589.

Today, almost half of Afghanistan's population of approximately 28 million people are children, and children are a high proportion of those killed and injured in this war. Children in Afghanistan face many potential sources of traumatization, including war.⁴⁴ More than half the children questioned in a small survey of school children Kabul in October 2005 reported having been beaten by militias or other armed personnel, being close to gunfire or shelling, or observing someone else being tortured or beaten by armed personnel. Children in Kabul also reported being subject to forced labor, with about half the boys and a third of the girls reporting that they worked about 7 hours per day. The children also reported a high incidence of violence in the home. The rates of PTSD among those children exposed to at least one traumatic event were found to be high: about 25 percent for boys and 14 percent for girls.⁴⁵

Unsurprisingly, the greater exposure to traumatic events, the greater the likelihood of psychological distress. In another survey, conducted from April to September 2006, students aged 11-16 reported that exposure to violence (either under the Taliban or during the period of war after 2001) was the most distressing. Other stressful events, included living in a combat zone and the death or loss of close relatives, which the researchers found were "mainly related to war, but also included accidents and criminal acts."⁴⁶ That survey, which included children in Kabul and two other urban areas, found rates of about 22 percent for a "probable psychiatric disorder."⁴⁷ The rate of PTSD among children in Afghanistan is likely higher than for Iraqi children because Afghanistan has been at war much longer than Iraq and the health care infrastructure there is much more stressed than Iraq's health care infrastructure.

School attendance was also found to be a source of social support for children, so it is possible that the incidence of PTSD is even higher among children not attending school.⁴⁸ The number of children attending school has increased since 2001. In March 2011, about 8 million school age children were

⁴⁴ Cited in Zulfiquar Ahmed Bhutta, "Children of War: The Real Casualties of the Afghan Conflict," *British Medical Journal*, vol. 324, 9 February 2002, pp. 349-352: 351.

⁴⁵ Claudia Catini, Elisabeth Schauer, Thomas Elbert, Inge Missmahl, Jean-Paul Bette, and Frank Neuner, "War Trauma, Child Labor, and Family Violence: Life Adversities and PTSD in a Sample of School Children in Kabul," *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, vol. 22, no. 3 (June 2009) pp. 163-171: 166 and 169.

⁴⁶ Catherine Panter-Brick, Mark Eggerman, Viani Gonzalez and Sarah Safdar, "Violence, Suffering, and Mental Health in Afghanistan: A School-based Survey," *The Lancet*, vol. 374, 5 September 2009, pp. 807-816:812.

⁴⁷ Panter-Brick, Eggerman, Gonzalez and Safdar, "Violence, Suffering, and Mental Health in Afghanistan," p. 812. Girls fared more poorly in this survey, as compared to the Carini et al survey.

⁴⁸ Mark Eggerman and Catherine Panter-Brick, "Suffering, Hope and Entrapment: Resilience and Cultural Values in Afghanistan," *Social Science and Medicine* 71 (2010) pp. 71-83.

attending school, while another 4 million children were not in school.⁴⁹ The Taliban has not only relentlessly targeted schools, they have also attacked many school teachers. Literacy rates are low, with less than half the population literate.

Indirect War Related Death

The war related indirect deaths in Afghanistan, as with any war, are caused by many factors, including disease due lack of access to safe drinking water, malnutrition, and reduced access to health care. Environmental disasters, such as drought and floods, make living in war zones more difficult, and create what the humanitarian relief community calls "complex emergencies." Afghanistan, already a poor country, started the twentieth century as one of the least healthy places in the world to live with a legacy of landmines, drought, and malnutrition. Poverty has been exacerbated by the war and poverty has in turn exacerbated the suffering of Afghans.

How might war lead to disease and higher mortality? For example, cluster bombs, land mines, and improvised explosive devices may destroy livestock, make gathering wood dangerous, and keep farmers out of fields. War also obviously leads to displacement. Although many Afghan civilians were already displaced by fighting, many more were immediately displaced by the war in 2001. Many have returned during lulls in the fighting, but more have been displaced by intensified fighting as the conflict moves through the country, and many are refugees in neighboring countries, mainly in Pakistan and Iran. The internally displaced (IDPs) are also vulnerable. More than 8 out of ten school aged children surveyed in 2006 had been displaced due to conflict or economic reasons, while about 45 percent had been displaced three or more times.⁵⁰ As the Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict noted, "For every civilian killed, as many or more are injured, lose their homes or livelihood. For countless Afghan families living on the margins, the loss of a breadwinner, high medical or funeral costs, or the financial burden of supporting disabled or dependent relatives can make even basic survival difficult."⁵¹

⁴⁹ BBC, "Stop Afghan School Attacks, Hamid Karzai tells Taliban," *BBC*, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-12834295>, 23 March 2011.

⁵⁰ Panter-Brick, Eggerman, Gonzalez and Safdar, "Violence, Suffering, and Mental Health in Afghanistan," p. 811.

⁵¹ CIVIC, "Losing the People: The Costs and Consequences of Civilian Suffering in Afghanistan," 2009, executive summary, p. ii. www.civicworldwide.org/afghan_report.

A sample of about 1,000 survivors of the early fighting in Nangarhar Province in eastern Afghanistan (2001-2002) and years of Taliban rule described various hardships when surveyed in 2003 found that during the previous ten years respondents had faced a number of hardships. These experiences included: lack of access to food or water (69%); lack of access to medical care (71%); witnessing Coalition bombing in 2001 (62%) or other bombing; living in a refugee camp (50%); or suddenly having to flee (61%). More than 40 percent reported that a family member had died to illness or lack of food. These stresses tended to accumulate, with 43 percent of respondents reporting that they experienced 8 to 10 traumatic events in the past 10 years.⁵²

The median age in Afghanistan is 17 and children suffer the direct and indirect effects of war. Public health surveys of children in war-affected countries, have found that "children exposed to war or natural disasters are particularly vulnerable to secondary adversities such as homelessness, malnutrition, parental loss, and community violence."⁵³ A snapshot of Afghanistan's main children's hospital, the Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health in Kabul, suggests that malnutrition remains a key concern. A survey of hospital records for September 2002 through September 2003 found that about 25 percent of children admitted were malnourished to some degree, which exacerbated the other conditions the children admitted faced, including septicaemia, pneumonia, tuberculosis, measles and typhoid fever.⁵⁴

Despite the hardship caused by war and displacement, there have been improvements in public health in Afghanistan over the last ten years. Life expectancy, estimated to be 41 in 1989 was already among the lowest in the world and rates of infant mortality at about 148 deaths per thousand were among the highest in the world in 2000.⁵⁵ Life expectancy has improved to 44 years, rates of infant mortality have declined from 148 deaths per thousand in 2000 to 138 per thousand in 2009. Rates of vaccination for

⁵² Willem F. Sholte, Miranda Olffe, Peter Ventevogal, Giel-Jan de Vries, Eveline Jansveld, Barbara Lopes Cardozo, Carol A. Gotway Crawford, "Mental Health Symptoms Following War and Repression in Eastern Afghanistan," *JAMA: Journal of the American Medical Association*, vol. 292, no. 5 (4 August 2004) pp. 585-593: 590. A survey conducted in 2002 found that civilians faced a similar range of hardships.

Cardozo, Bilukha, Crawford, Shaikh, Wolfe, Gerber, and Anderson, "Mental Health, Social Functioning, and Disability in Postwar Afghanistan," p. 579.

⁵³ Catini, et al, " War Trauma, Child Labor, and Family Violence," p. 164.

⁵⁴ Amarendra Narayan Prasad, "Disease Profile of Children in Kabul: The Unmet Need for Health Care," *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 2006 vol. 60 pp. 20-23: 21.

⁵⁵ The World Bank, *World Development Report 2011*, data <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/wdr2011>.

children have improved.⁵⁶ Fewer women die in child birth — down from 1 in 9 to 1 in 11.⁵⁷ Child and infant mortality rates remain among the highest in the world⁵⁸ Some important progress has been made in public health, especially in immunization of young children. Other programs, for example to repatriate refugees and return children to school have led to increased hope, but also "raised expectations without sufficient follow-through to create lasting socio-economic opportunities and mitigate deep-set inequalities."⁵⁹

But the combination of on-going war and poverty are devastating; enormous resources are needed to help the country recover, enormous resources are spent fighting the on-going war. In many cases, civilians must wait a long time for any help. Millions of Afghans are in desperate need of food and housing assistance. The World Food Programme has recently indicated that it needs \$257 million in additional funds to feed more than 7.2 million people in Afghanistan in 2011.⁶⁰ When the nongovernmental organization Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict (CIVIC) visited a neighborhood in 2008 affected by an airstrike in Herat city on 22 October 2001, it found that the neighborhood remained damaged from the strike some seven years later. "The air-strike reportedly missed a military target and directly hit an area within the city, damaging or destroying the houses of forty-five families, killing twelve and injuring tens of others." CIVIC investigators interviewed survivors. "According to the father of one family, everyone he was close to was affected: 'One of the bombs landed in our yard. The other landed on my brother's house, the other my neighbor here, the other my neighbor there.'" CIVIC also found that "Even those who were spared direct harm complained about a general deterioration of their quality of life, and that they had received no help to recover."⁶¹

⁵⁶ The World Bank, *World Development Report 2011*.

⁵⁷ National Public Radio, "Public Health Minister: Providing Care in Afghanistan is Challenging But Essential," Transcript of Interview with Afghanistan's Acting Minister of Public Health, Suraya Dalil, 27 September 2010, <http://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=130161582>.

⁵⁸ UNICEF, WHO, The World Bank, UN Population Division, "CME Info" <http://www.childmortality.org/cmeMain.html>.

⁵⁹ Eggerman and Panter-Brick, "Suffering, Hope and Entrapment," p. 82.

⁶⁰ "Funding Shortfall Threatens Food Assistance to Millions of Poor Afghans," World Food Programme News, 15 April 2011, <http://www.wfp.org/news/news-release/funding-shortfall-threatens-food-assistance-millions-poor-afghans>.

⁶¹ CIVIC, "Losing the People," p. 27.

Counting? NATO Civilian Casualties Database Compared to Others

Not all losses can be easily quantified. And even the losses that can be counted may be counted differently by different organizations. This section shows how some of the accounting of casualties has been done in Afghanistan.

As reports of civilian casualties at the hands of NATO forces increased, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) of NATO in Afghanistan launched a "Civilian Casualty Tracking Cell" to compile basic information on combat related civilian deaths and injuries caused by both "insurgents" and "ISAF/OEF" activity. In early 2011, NATO released the civilian casualty data in Afghanistan for 2008-2010 to *Science*, which then made that data public in spreadsheet form. The United Nations and Afghanistan Rights Monitor also released some of their data in spreadsheet form at that time. The Wikileaks release of United States data in 2010 overlaps with and adds to other data sets but is essentially limited to U.S. sources and is certainly also an undercount of total civilians killed by either NATO or anti-government forces. The ISAF data includes tallies of both the killed and the wounded for the period of 2008 to 2010 where the "killed" column indicates "civilian deaths confirmed by ISAF" and wounded are "survivors following injuries received as a result of ISAF, ANSF or insurgent actions. The term encompasses all kinds of wounds. There are no specifics regarding thresholds for counting the injury, according to our data practitioners."⁶²

Table 1. NATO ISAF Data on Total Number of Civilians Killed and Wounded, 2008-2010⁶³

Killed	ISAF	Anti-Gov	total
2008	258	973	1231
2009	181	976	1157
2010	202	1178	1380
Total	641	3127	3768

Wounded	ISAF	Anti-Gov	Total
2008	365		
2009	335	2383	2718
2010	269	2607	2876
Total	969	4990	5959

⁶² International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), CIVCAS, 13 January 2011; as referred to in J. Bohannon, *Science*, 331, 1256 (2011).

⁶³ International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), CIVCAS, 13 January 2011; as referred to in J. Bohannon, *Science*, 331, 1256 (2011).

How accurate is the ISAF data? The tables below are summaries of ISAF data on deaths due to two types of air operations (close air support and close combat air) released by NATO in early 2011.⁶⁴ Data on civilian deaths due to air operations is instructive for two reasons. First, because we can be confident that because the Taliban and other anti-government forces do not operate fixed wing aircraft or helicopters, the attribution of the causes of incidents of civilian killing is relatively easy to make in comparison to the attribution of deaths of civilians, for instance, due to crossfire. We know, with more or less certainty, how someone was killed. The question is determining who was killed — whether a civilian or combatant. And second, ISAF changed the rules of engagement to reduce deaths from air operations in mid 2009.

Table 2.

NATO/ISAF Tally of Civilian Deaths, 2008-2010 Due To Air Operations.⁶⁵

	2008	2009	2010
Close Air Support	177	62	20
Close Combat Air	unknown	10	44
Total	> 177	72	64

As noted above, in late June 2009 the U.S. Commander in Afghanistan issued a tactical directive that was intended to reduce civilian casualties due to close air support. Assuming that NATO tracking was accurate, or at least unbiased, it could be used to help ISAF commanders and the public assess whether they had reduced civilian killing by air operations. This table suggests that ISAF has been relatively successful in reducing civilian casualties due to close air support operations. Table 3 compares the NATO Civilian Casualty Tracking Unit data for 2009 civilian deaths due to air operations to the UN figures for that same period. Comparing the first and the second half of the year, the NATO CIVCAS data suggests a dramatic decline in deaths due to air operations (a 50 percent reduction in deaths due to NATO air operations); the

⁶⁴ International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), CIVCAS, 13 January 2011; as referred to in J. Bohannon, *Science*, 331, 1256 (2011).

⁶⁵ Source: International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), CIVCAS, 13 January 2011, released with J. Bohannon, *Science*, 331, p. 1256 (March 2011). Human Right Watch found that 116 civilians were killed by NATO and US airstrikes in 2006 and 321 were killed by NATO and US airstrikes in 2007. Human Rights Watch, "Troops in Contact: Airstrikes and Civilian Deaths in Afghanistan," (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2008) pp. 13-14.

UN data suggests a more modest reduction. However the UN recorded five times more civilian deaths due to air power than the ISAF CIVCAS tracking cell.

Table 3.
Comparison of NATO Tally and UN Tally of Deaths Due to Air Operations 2009.⁶⁶

	Jan -June	July-Dec	Total for 2009
CIVCAS Data	48	24	72
UN Data	191	177	368

Who has the better data on civilian death in Afghanistan due to air operations? There is some evidence that the ISAF data is, at a minimum, incomplete. Specifically, the CIVCAS Tracking Cell figures are, in at least one important case, inconsistent with NATO's own actions and statements. For example, it was widely reported in the press that on 4 September 2009, under the orders of German officer Col. George Klein, NATO dropped two 500 pound bombs from fighter aircraft on people gathered around two fuel tankers in Kunduz Province in northern Afghanistan.⁶⁷ NATO initially suggested that all those killed, up to 130 people, had been Taliban fighters, though it said it would immediately investigate the incident. Later in September NATO investigation said that 70 of those killed were Taliban and 30 were civilians.⁶⁸ Subsequent NATO investigation found the actions of the German officer at fault, and called his orders to bomb the gathering a violation of the rules of engagement.⁶⁹ The NATO report said 142 people were killed.⁷⁰ NATO forces eventually acknowledged that most of those killed were civilians, and Germany made condolence payments to the families of 91 civilians killed and to the families of 11 wounded.⁷¹ Yet, the ISAF CIVCAS database does not record any civilian deaths due to close air support for September 2009 in northern Afghanistan, and only 8 deaths in the South West despite the fact that this is one of the most

⁶⁶ Source: International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), CIVCAS, 13 January 2011, released with J. Bohannon, *Science*, 331, p. 1256 (March 2011). UN Data from United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA).

⁶⁷ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "NATO Probing Deadly Airstrike," *The Washington Post*, 5 September 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/04/AR2009090400543.html>.

⁶⁸ Yochi J. Dreazen, "NATO Says U.S. Airstrike in Kunduz Killed 30 Civilians," *The Wall Street Journal*, 17 September 2009, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125315261757418561.html>.

⁶⁹ John Goetz, Konstantin von Hammerstein, "NATO's Secret Findings: Kunduz Affair Report Puts German Defense Minister Under Pressure," *Der Spiegel*, 19 January 2010, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,672468,00.html>.

⁷⁰ "Germany's Army Chief of Staff Resigns Over NATO Airstrike in Kunduz," 26 November 2009, *DW-World.de*, <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,4930694,00.html>.

⁷¹ Matthias Gebauer, "Germany to Pay \$500,000 for Civilian Bombing Victims," *Der Spiegel*, 6 August 2010, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,710439,00.html>.

well known incidents of civilian killing by ISAF forces in the war.⁷² The UN notes these deaths in their database.

If the CIVCAS Tracking Cell missed at least one widely discussed incident of civilian killing with regard to its ISAF operations, how well does the CIVCAS dataset do at counting civilian death due to *insurgent* attacks? The United States National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) keeps a dataset, its "Worldwide Incidents Tracking System" as part of their effort to monitor trends in terrorist attacks. The NCTC dataset includes a short description of each incident. For example, for 23 November 2010 the description is "2 civilians, 1 child wounded in RPG attack in Darzab." There is sometimes ambiguity about the identity of those killed and injured, as for example in this description for an incident on 8 October 2009: "17 police officers and civilians killed, 83 police officers and civilians injured in suicide VBIED attack by Taliban in Kabul." The focus of the NCTC dataset is "terrorist" incidents.⁷³ A comparison of the NCTC and ISAF datasets indicates that the NATO ISAF has likely undercounted civilian death that can be attributed to "insurgents." Further, the NCTC database notes that, "because of the difficulty in gathering data on Iraq and Afghanistan, the dataset undoubtedly undercounts the number of attacks in these two countries."⁷⁴

The following table compares the CIVCAS tracking cell data for civilians killed by insurgents and the United States National Counterterrorism Center data for civilians killed by "terrorists".⁷⁵ Note that there are two columns for the NCTC data. The NCTC counts all non-combatants whose deaths they can attribute to the Taliban and other organizations including the Afghan police and army, private security guards, NGOs staff and government officials. The column "NCTC identified as civilian" includes only those deaths where the NCTC describes the victim as a civilian. Even assuming that the United States National Counterterrorism Center data is incomplete, as they themselves acknowledge, the comparison suggests that the ISAF CIVCAS data is also incomplete.

⁷² S. Carran, A. Ravindar, S.Y. Lau, J. Bohannon, Afghanistan Casualty Timeline (2008 - 2010), 11 March 2011; as referred to in J. Bohannon, Science 331, 1256 (2011).

⁷³ The NCTC database apparently focuses on the Taliban and does not appear to mention violent incidents attributed the Haqqani network. Some perpetrators are also not identified.

⁷⁴ United States, National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) "Worldwide Incidents Tracking System," database, "Methodology," http://www.nctc.gov/witsbanner/wits_subpage_criteria.html.

⁷⁵ NCTC "Worldwide Incidents Tracking System," <https://wits.nctc.gov/FederalDiscoverWITS/index.do?N=0> accessed 9 May 2011.

Table 4.**Comparison of ISAF and NCTC Data for Civilians Directly Killed by Taliban and other****"Insurgents"⁷⁶**

	NCTC Total Deaths Due to Terrorists*	NCTC identified as "civilian"**	ISAF CIVCAS "civilians"
2004	289	155	
2005	688	306	
2006	1,254	592	
2007	1,952	806	
2008	1,997	1,045	973
2009	2,778	1,358	976
2010	3,202	1,777	1,178
total	12,160	6,039	3,127

* Includes civilians, police, soldiers, security guards, NGO and government workers, etc.

** Including children, teachers, religious leaders

Of course, until shown otherwise, we must assume that all these organizations aim to be accurate. But one must also keep in mind that they have with varying levels of resources to investigate incidents of civilian killing and collect the data for different purposes. The UN mission in Afghanistan is humanitarian: it is certainly not to count the dead. They investigate the incidents of civilian killing to inform the larger understanding of the dynamics of the conflict and to "use this evidence for advocacy" in their mission to protect civilians from all sides.⁷⁷ While they certainly care about civilian death, ISAF's main mission is of course fighting the war most effectively. And the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center has a more limited focus, on identifying incidents of terrorism.

⁷⁶ Calculated from the (ISAF), CIVCAS database, 13 January 2011, released with J. Bohannon, *Science*, 331, p. 1256 (March 2011) and the NCTC "Worldwide Incidents Tracking System," accessed 9 May 2011. The NCTC dataset includes attacks on individuals who are not only civilians, such as Afghan military and police, border guards, foreign forces, NGO workers, and government officials. The figures in Table 4 from the NCTC dataset do not include Afghan military, police.

⁷⁷ Norah Niland, former Director of Human Rights in UNAMA, email to the author, 7 June 2011.

Estimates of Afghan Civilian Death Through June 2011

I estimate that about 11,000-13,200 Afghan Civilians died between October 2001 through 2010 as a direct result of the war. The two columns in table 5 represent low and high estimates of death in each calendar year from October 2001 through 2010. These estimates are conservative (see Appendix A).

Table 5. Estimated Direct Combat Related Civilian Death, Afghanistan, 2001- 2010⁷⁸

YEAR	Low Average	High Average
2001	1537	2375
2002	200	400
2003	200	450
2004	214	214
2005	408	443
2006	939	961
2007	1455	1597
2008	1687	2153
2009	2041	2021
2010	2484	2777
total	10,961	13,293

At the time of this writing, September 2011, at a point when heavier fighting had resumed after the winter lull, over 1,462 Afghan civilian deaths had been recorded through June 2011. The above figures were derived by comparing the tallies of the sources listed in Appendix B. I am much more confident in the tallies made from 2008 to the present. The United Nations UNAMA figures are likely the most reliable for 2008 through 2010. In any case, nearly every source admits that their figures are incomplete, as Human Rights Watch does in its report on the deaths caused by insurgents in early 2007. "The totals cited here are conservative. Numerous Afghan officials and civilians have suggested that many deaths and injuries go unreported, and that violence in remote rural areas often remains unknown. The real number of civilian victims during insurgent attacks is likely higher."⁷⁹ Similarly, the author of the U.S. Congressional Research Service (CRS) reports on casualties in Afghanistan, Susan G. Chesser, urges "caution" in using her figures: "Because the estimates of Afghan casualties contained in this report are based on varying time

⁷⁸ See Appendix 1.

⁷⁹ Human Rights Watch, "The Human Cost: The Consequences of Insurgent Attacks in Afghanistan," April 2007, p. 70.

periods and have been created using different methodologies, readers should exercise caution when using them and should look to them as guideposts rather than as statements of fact."⁸⁰ The CRS often relies on UNAMA figures.

Why is civilian death in the early years of the war so difficult to estimate? Although an estimated 50,000 Taliban and Al Qaeda forces remained, but were essentially in hiding or had left Afghanistan in early 2002, many outside observers assumed that the war was basically over in early 2002 and that the task was to begin reconstruction.⁸¹ From 2002-2005, there were very few counts or estimates made by independent sources of the number of civilians killed in the conflict.⁸² The independent media shifted their attention to Iraq in 2003 and combat also decreased in Afghanistan from 2003 to 2006. The Taliban and Al Qaeda had largely withdrawn and were not yet targeting civilians in large numbers.

But to understand the full picture of all direct deaths in the war, we must include the war deaths of combatants.⁸³ These include forces of the Northern Alliance, which fought with the U.S. to defeat the Taliban in 2001 and later the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP). I have not found an estimate for the total number of Northern Alliance forces killed in the early months of fighting. About 5,000 Afghan National Army and Police have died from 2007 to January 2011, with the most deadly year being 2010, when more than 2,056 ANA and police were killed.⁸⁴ Again, these numbers may be incomplete.

While there are precise counts, updated daily, of ISAF and U.S. forces killed and wounded in Afghanistan, I have seen no estimates of the total number of Taliban or other armed opposition forces killed although there are frequently estimates and counts given for Taliban killed in a single incident and some for the numbers killed season of fighting.⁸⁵ Afghanistan Rights Monitor notes that neither the US or NATO have released figures on the exact number of anti-government insurgents that have been killed, but notes that for 2010, their estimates "suggest over 5,000 combatants and 'suspected' fighters were killed" in

⁸⁰ Susan G. Chesser, "Afghanistan Casualties: Military Forces and Civilians," *Congressional Research Service*, 6 April 2011, R41084 www.crs.gov.

⁸¹ William R. Hawkins, "What Not to Learn From Afghanistan," *Parameters*, Summer 2002, pp. 24-32: 26.

⁸² Elise Szabo, "In-attention to Detail: Civilian Casualties in Afghanistan," Center for Defense Information, 17 July 2007, <http://www.cdi.org/program/issue/document.cfm?DocumentID=4015&IssueID=168&StartRow=21&ListRows=10&appendURL=&Orderby=DateLastUpdated&ProgramID=37&issueID=168>.

⁸³ I am not including ISAF deaths here.

⁸⁴ Chesser, "Afghanistan Casualties"

⁸⁵ See, for example, the frequently updated web site, icasualties, <http://icasualties.org/OEF/Index.aspx>.

Afghanistan.⁸⁶ Another report in early 2011 quoted an Afghan Interior Ministry spokesperson as saying 5225 Taliban were killed in 2010.⁸⁷ If 2010, as we know, was a more intense period of ISAF and US force engagement in Afghanistan, we can presume that Taliban deaths were lower in 2009 and perhaps lower again in the period between 2002-2008. I would assume then that the total number of Taliban killed from 2002 to 2009 may be as low as 5,000, which is surely an under estimate, to as high as 10 to 15,000. Thus, if more than 5,200 Taliban were killed in 2010 and between 5 and 15,000 Taliban and other insurgents were killed from 2002-2009 an estimate for the number of insurgent forces killed would be a range from about 10 to 20,000.

In the following table, I suggest low and a high estimates for direct death in Afghanistan from 2001-2010. I then add what is known for deaths through mid 2011. The sort of demographic analysis required for a better assessment of indirect death has not been done for Afghanistan Or if a non-governmental organization, or other agency, has made an estimate, those figures have not been made public. The following table uses counts and makes estimates of direct death to derive an estimate for total direct death in Afghanistan.

Table 6. Total Direct Death Estimates, October 2001- 2011

Direct Death Estimates	Low	High
Afghan Civilians Killed Estimate 2001-2010	10,961	13,239
Afghan Civilian Death, Jan-June 2011 *	1,462	1,462
Afghan Army and Police Death 2007- May 2011 *	5,138	8,000
Estimate of Taliban Killed 2001-2011	10,000	20,000
ISAF total fatalities, 2001- August 2011 *	2,699	2,699
NGO humanitarian worker fatalities, all causes	178	178
	30,438	45,578

*Civilian Deaths for 2011, using UN figures through June 2011. CRS estimate for Army and Police Fatalities through May 2011. ISAF fatalities from Icasualties⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Afghanistan Rights Monitor, *ARM Annual Report, Civilian Casualties of War, January – December 2010*, (Kabul, February 2011) p. 12n.

⁸⁷ "Over 10,000 dies in Afghan Violence in 2010," *Bangkok Post*, <http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/214178/over-10000-died-in-afghan-violence-in-2010>. Afghan Ministry of Interior quoted in IRIN, Humanitarian News and Analysis, "Analysis: Afghan Police — Civilians or Combatants," 7 April 2011, <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportID=92405>.

⁸⁸ Chesser reports 341 Afghans killed January –April 2011. Susan G. Chesser, "Afghanistan Casualties: Military Forces and Civilians," *Congressional Research Service*, 18 May 2011, R41084, www.crs.gov. UNAMA "May deadliest Month for Afghan Civilians." UNAMA reports 368 civilians killed in May 2011 alone. UNAMA, *Mid Year Report 2011, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, (Kabul: UNAMA July 2011); ISAF numbers killed through August 2001 from icasualties, <http://icasualties.org/OEF/ByYear.aspx>. Accessed 2 September 2011.

The difference between the "low" and the "high" direct death projections for combatants and non-combatant civilians are based on the following assumptions which in part depend on the number of combatants killed. As noted above, there are no public estimates of the total number of Taliban killed. My low number is surely low if the number of Taliban killed for 2009 is estimated to be perhaps 5,000 and the number for those killed in 2010 is also about 5,000. I have not given an estimate for the number of Northern Alliance soldiers who were killed in the early months of the war.

On what basis could observers reasonably choose between the high and the low range estimates of total direct war related deaths? The low estimates of direct death are surely low according to the caveats made by all those whose estimates I have used. It is likely that "when civilian-loss information is collected directly from affected local communities, the tallies will be substantially higher than those made by observers restricted to media accounts."⁸⁹ The question becomes whether the high estimates of direct death are too high.

The war is also not abating from the perspective of Afghan civilians. The war is typically quiet in winter, with increased military action as the weather warms. Even accounting for the cyclical nature of the fighting, the first six months of 2011 were more dangerous to Afghan civilians than in any previous year since at least 2007.

Table 7. Civilian Deaths in Afghanistan in the First Six months 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2011⁹⁰

January-June	Total
2007	684
2008	818
2009	1054
2010	1267
2011	1462

The war has also killed and wounded humanitarian aid personnel, including United Nations personnel, the staff of both international and Afghan non-governmental organizations. For example, on 9 October 2001, UN demining workers were inadvertently killed by a US air assault. The number of aid workers killed and injured has been tracked by the Afghanistan NGO Safety Office (ANSO) which has

⁸⁹ Aldo A. Benini and Lawrence H. Moulton, "Civilian Victims in an Assymetrical Conflict: Operation Enduring Freedom, Afghanistan," *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 41, no. 4 (July 2004) pp. 403-422: 404.

⁹⁰ UNAMA, *Mid Year Report 2011, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, (Kabul: UNAMA July 2011).

recorded the deaths of 171 workers inside Afghanistan in war related incidents from 2001 through April 2011. Most humanitarian organization staff in Afghanistan are Afghan citizens and the harm to humanitarian NGO workers has increased over the years.

Table 8. Aid Worker Fatalities, 2001-2011 all causes⁹¹

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NGO FATALITIES</u>
2001	
2002*	4
2003	12
2004	24
2005	8
2006	24
2007	15
2008	31
2009	19
2010	28
2011**	13
total	178

2002* ANSO Number is for deaths from 1 Sept 2001-December 2002, according to 2005 ANSO report
 ** Through June 2011.

Reporters and other members of the news media have been also killed in various ways in Afghanistan since 2001. Of the 22 members of the news media killed since 2001, 7 were killed in crossfire, 11 were murdered, and 2 were killed while on dangerous assignments.⁹²

Is it Possible to Estimate Indirect War Related Death in Afghanistan?

We know that more die in wars due to indirect causes than would have otherwise died had there not been a war. Data from other armed conflicts suggest that in any military conflict the number of indirect

⁹¹ Compiled from the reports of the Afghanistan NGO Safety Office (ANSO), *ANSO Quarterly Data Report*, from 2005 to 2011.

⁹² News media deaths (motive confirmed and unconfirmed), Committee to Protect Journalists, Afghanistan <http://www.cpj.org/killed/asia/afghanistan/>.

deaths may be much greater than direct deaths.⁹³ But we cannot use figures derived from other conflicts to estimate the number of indirect deaths in a specific conflict.

No major source of conflict data for Afghanistan has made public estimates of indirect deaths in Afghanistan from 2001-2011. One media source, which did not elaborate on the methods used to derive the figure, suggested in May 2002 that indirect death in Afghanistan were then perhaps 20,000.⁹⁴ Why has no NGO made a public estimate of the number of indirect war related deaths in Afghanistan since 2001?

The primary reason is perhaps that estimates of indirect death depend on census data, and there has been no census in Afghanistan since the start of the war in 2001. Nor was there a prior census to use as a baseline. Estimates of war related indirect death also depend on other data, such as estimates of age specific mortality rates, maternal mortality and life expectancy. There are some figures for Afghanistan, which before the start of the war had among the lowest rankings life expectancy, infant mortality and child mortality rates in the world.

Indicators of health and well being in Afghanistan have been improving, but it is still ranked as one of the countries in the world with the lowest life expectancy and highest infant and child mortality rates.⁹⁵ According to the World Food Program, nearly a third of the population is "unable to get enough food to live active, healthy lives."⁹⁶ Without a recent census, making estimates of indirect or excess death with any confidence is difficult, to say the least.

We know that the war was most intense from October 2001 to February 2002 and then again intense, especially in the south, in 2009 and 2010. So one cannot simply say that total indirect deaths were constant each year from 2001 to the present. On the other hand, indirect deaths are only loosely correlated with direct death in the sense that the health effects of damaged infrastructure, and loss of access to health care are experienced some time after the initial direct deaths and higher mortality rates, or "excess" will persist beyond any ceasefire until infrastructure is repaired. Yet in Afghanistan, development — led by the UN and humanitarian non-governmental agencies has improved the lives of those who live in relatively

⁹³ Lacina and Gleditsch, "Monitoring Trends in Global Combat: A New Dataset of Battle Deaths," p. 149-160.

⁹⁴ Jonathan Steele, "Forgotten victims: The full human cost of US air strikes will never be known, but many more died than those killed directly by bombs," *The Guardian*, 20 May 2002, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2002/may/20/afghanistan.comment>.

⁹⁵ See WHO data, Global Health Observatory Data Repository, <http://apps.who.int/ghodata/?vid=3000&theme=country#>. Accessed May 2011.

⁹⁶ World Food Programme, "Afghanistan," <http://www.wfp.org/countries/Afghanistan/Overview>.

stable areas. So we cannot reasonably assume that indirect deaths will be as high as they might otherwise be in a country where infrastructure and health are only repaired after a ceasefire.

In sum, the dearth of estimates about indirect war related death in Afghanistan is no surprise. If such estimates were made, any figure would most likely be a guess based on judgments about excess death — the numbers who died because of war compared to what would have been the rates of mortality in Afghanistan had there been no war. But Afghanistan has been at war nearly continuously for the last 30 years. There is no true "pre-war" starting point.

Given the state of Afghanistan's public health system and the high rates of malnutrition and infant and child mortality, as well as other public health indicators, it is likely that the current war has caused indirect death. By all accounts, even though the investments in public health infrastructure and direct care in Afghanistan have yielded results, Afghanistan is still in dire condition along almost every indicator of health. Of course, Afghanistan would not be so poor, its citizens so malnourished, and its health care system so weak if not for the 20 years of war that preceded the war that commenced in 2001. If Afghanistan had not been at war almost continually from 1979 to 2011, the health care system would have still likely been poor. I cannot disentangle the causal effects of the war from 2001 to 2011 on indirect death from the effects of war from 1979 to 2001, which set the stage for poor health and vulnerability to additional war in 2001. I can only state the obvious: that if the resources devoted to war had been put into developing Afghanistan's agriculture and health care, many more Afghans would have lived and rates of disease, amputation, and mental illness would have been lower.

Appendix A: Assumptions behind the Estimates of Direct Civilian Death

I confronted two problems in making these estimates: a lack of data and conflicting data. There were some estimates of civilian killing at the start of the conflict. These estimates ranged from several hundred to several thousand, with Marc Herold suggesting about 2,700 civilian deaths, and the Project on Defense Alternatives suggesting 1,000 to 1,300 based on a tally of press accounts of civilian deaths.⁹⁷ Global Exchange, a U.S. based non-governmental organization did a count, based on survey interviews in Afghanistan that suggested “at least 824” civilians were killed. I had no data for total deaths in Afghanistan for 2002 and 2003.

New information has emerged with regard to the earliest period of the war. Specifically, Physicians for Human Rights uncovered a mass grave in 2002 which contained the remains of Taliban soldiers who had surrendered to US Special Forces and Northern Alliance Troops in 2001.⁹⁸ Estimates of the number of those killed vary from the hundreds to several thousand but one source gave the U.S. State Department an estimate that about 1,500 prisoners were killed. PHR estimated that about 2000 were killed.⁹⁹ Prisoners of war are considered non-combatants under international law. The Taliban became much more active in 2007 and the estimates of civilian casualties for 2007-2010, the years where the killing of Afghan civilians by international forces and insurgents greatly increased, are more numerous. The United Nations and NATO began investigating and documenting civilian casualties more systematically in 2008. Brookings report data were used for the low estimate of Afghan National Army and Police killed. The sources and the data used to derive the estimates of direct death are in the table below. I supplemented

⁹⁷ Marc Herold, “Appendix 4. Daily Casualty Count of Afghan Civilians Killed by U.S. Bombing and Special Forces Attacks, October 7 until present day,” <http://pubpages.unh.edu/~mwherold/>; and Marc W. Herold, “Afghan Tragedy,” *Frontline*, vol. 26, no. 13, 20 June – 3 July 2009 <http://www.hinduonnet.com/fline/fl2613/stories/20090703261300400.htm>. Herold gives a low and high figure: the numbers used here are the mid-points. Carl Conetta, “Operation Enduring Freedom: Why a Higher Rate of Civilian Bombing Casualties,” Project on Defense Alternatives, *Briefing Report # 13*, 18 January 2002, revised 24 January 2002, <http://www.comw.org/pda/0201oef.html>

⁹⁸ Physicians for Human Rights, “Investigation Timeline,” <http://afghanistan.phrblog.org/get-the-facts/chronology/>.

⁹⁹ James Risen, “U.S. Inaction Seen After Taliban P.O.W.’s Died,” *The New York Times*, 10 July 2009, p. 1. PHR estimates “as many as 2,000” were killed and buried. <http://afghanistan.phrblog.org/get-the-facts/chronology/>.

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the latest CRS figures for January to April with the release by UNAMA of their count for civilian death in July 2011 to derive an estimate for the January to June 2011 for civilian death in 2011.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ UNAMA "May deadliest Month for Afghan Civilians" and UNAMA, *Mid Year Report 2011, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, (Kabul: UNAMA July 2011).

Figures Used to Derive the Estimates

YEAR	ARM	ANSO	UNAM A	HRW min.	CRS	Wikileak count	GE	PDA	AI	AIHR C	ISAF	LA TIMES 101	Adjusted UNAMA and NCTC 102	Herold mid	PHR/ US DOS 103
2001							824	1000- 1300				1,067- 1,200*		2757	1500- 2000
2002															
2003															
2004						210							230		
2005						178							348	443	
2006		1315		929		800			>1000				635	711	
2007		1495	1523	1633	1523	747			2000				1603	1154	
2008	4050	1755	2118		2118	1241			2000		1231		1923	941	
2009	2502	2054	2412		2412					1252	1157		2100		
2010	2421	2428	2777		2777					1325	1380		2312		
2011			1462*		573**										

¹⁰¹ David Zucchino, "The Untold War: 'The Americans . . . They Just Drop Their Bombs and Leave,'" *Los Angeles Times*, 2 June 2002. "The Times reviewed more than 2,000 reports of civilian casualties from U.S., British and Pakistani newspapers and international wire services. After eliminating duplicate accounts, the review identified 194 incidents of civilian casualties from the start of the bombing on Oct. 7 until Feb. 28, when the air campaign was largely completed. The reported death toll, including estimates in some cases, was between 1,067 and 1,201. The Times excluded 754 civilian deaths reported by the Taliban but not independently confirmed, as well as 497 deaths that were not identified as either civilian or military." The *Los Angeles Times* also reported that Afghan officials had estimated the civilian toll at between 1,000 and 2,000 killed.

¹⁰² This column adds two complementary tallies: UNAMA deaths attributed to international forces from 2007 to 2010 and NCTC deaths of civilians attributable to insurgents, excluding those deaths the NCTC described as police, army, security guards, gov't officials, NGO/UN workers.

¹⁰³ Estimates of Taliban prisoners killed by the Northern Alliance in 2001.

I derived the low range estimates by averaging the lowest figure if a range was given by the source. I derived the high range estimates by excluding the lowest figures and averaging the remaining tallies.

Low Range Estimates

YEA R	ARM	ANSO	UNAMA	HR W min.	CRS	Wiki -leak count	GE	AI	AIHR C	ISAF	L/A TIME S	Adjusted UNAMA and NCTC	Herold low	PDA/ PHR/ USD OS*	Low Ave.
2001							824				1,067		2757	1500	1537
2002															
2003															
2004						210						230			214
2005						178						348	408		378
2006		1315		929		800		1000				635	653		939
2007		1495	1523	1633	1523	747		2000				1603	1010		1442
2008	4050	1755	2118		2118	1241		2000		1231		1923	864		1656
2009	2502	2054	2412		2412				1252	1157		2100			1984
2010	2421	2428	2777		2777				2777	1380		2312			2410
2011			1462*		573**										

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Deriving the High Range Estimate¹⁰⁴

YEA R	ARM	ANSO	UNA MA	HRW min.	CRS	AI	AIHR C	LA TIME S	Adjusted UNAMA and NCTC	Herold high	PDA + PHR/ US DOS *	High Ave.
2001								1,067		2757	3300	2375
2002												
2003												
2004												
2005									230	478		230
2006		1315		929		1000			348	769		413
2007		1495	1523	1633	1523	2000			635	1297		930
2008	4050	1755	2118		2118	2000			1603	864		1582
2009	2502	2054	2412		2412		1252		1923	1017		2118
2010	2421	2428	2777		2777		2777		2100			1964
2011			1462*		573**				2312			2582

*UNAMA TROUGH JUNE 2011

**CRS THROUGH MAY 2011

¹⁰⁴ Omitting the low Wikileaks, ISAF and GE estimates; Adding PDA and PHR estimates.

The next issue was providing estimates for the years in which data is unavailable, the years when few were recording the total dead in Afghanistan. I found no data that covers the entire years of 2002 and 2003. The incidence of violence dropped sharply in January 2002.¹⁰⁵ There are partial counts. For example, in a survey in Afghanistan in 2002, Human Rights Watch found evidence for at least 25 immediate civilian deaths from cluster bomb attacks and noted that the ICRC found that 29 had died and that 98 were injured when unexploded ordnance from previous cluster bomb use detonated between the start of the war and November 2002.¹⁰⁶ US killing by airstrikes and in force protection incidents were consistently raised, in these years, by Afghan civilians and public officials as a major concern. To estimate the toll for 2003, I use the Wikileaks data for 2004, derived from leaked US reports, which describes 210 civilian deaths. I have assumed that the number of direct civilian deaths was no higher than reported in 2004. I have given numbers for these years are based on the low Wikileaks reports for Afghanistan in 2004. Because Wikileaks is certainly an undercount, the estimates for 2004 (and hence for 2002 and 2003) are likely to be low. On the other hand, because the Taliban and other insurgent had largely withdrawn and were not yet targeting civilians as intensively as they were to do later in the war, most civilian deaths should probably be attributed to the operations of international forces.

Below is my best estimate of direct deaths through 20 May 2011. These estimates are certainly conservative. The UN tally, which the United Nations acknowledges is incomplete, is probably the most comprehensive. The UN numbers are also comparable to the figures given by other non-governmental organizations and I use it for the 2010 best estimate even though the high average would be lower.

¹⁰⁵ Benini and Moulton, "Civilian Victims in an Assymetrical Conflict: Operation Enduring Freedom, Afghanistan," p. 419.

¹⁰⁶ Human Rights Watch, "Fatally Flawed" pp. 21 and 25. Also see Handicap International, Cluster Munition Coalition, et al, *Cluster Munition Monitor 2010* (Mines Action Canada, October 2010).

YEAR	Low Average	High Average
2001	1,537	2,375
2002	200	400
2003	200	450
2004	214	230
2005	378	413
2006	939	930
2007	1,442	1,582
2008	1,656	2,118
2009	1,984	1,964
2010	2,410	2,777
2011*	1,462	1,462
	12,423	14,701

***Using UNAMA through June 2011**

Appendix B: Sources

ACBAR: Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief "Protecting Afghan Civilians," 19 June 2007. Figures for January –June 2007; Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief, "Statement on Protecting Civilians in Afghanistan," 1 August 2008. "This year 2,500 people have reportedly lost their lives in the conflict whilst exact figures are not available, this could include up to 1,000 civilians. . . . About two-thirds of the reported civilian casualties can be attributed to insurgent activities . . . "

AI: Amnesty International, "Afghanistan" *Amnesty International Report 2007*; "Afghanistan" *Amnesty International Report 2008*; "Afghanistan" *Amnesty International Report 2009*.
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/afghanistan>.

AIHRC: Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, "Civilian Casualty Figure; First Seven Months of 2010 (1st January – 31st July)".

Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, "NGO Insecurity in Afghanistan," Kabul, May 2005.

ANSO: Afghanistan NGO Safety Office, "ANSO Quarterly Data Report," Kabul, Afghanistan data from 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 quarterly reports.

ARM: Afghanistan Rights Monitor, "The Crisis of Afghan Civilians in 2008,"
<http://www.arm.org.af/index.php>; Afghanistan Rights Monitor, *ARM Mid-Year Report, January – June 2010* (Kabul Afghanistan) http://www.arm.org.af/index.php?page=en_Home. "ARM Annual Report, Civilian Casualties of War," February 2011 (Kabul, Afghanistan).

Brookings: Ian S. Livingston, Heather L. Massera, and Michael O'Hanlon, *Afghanistan Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction and Security in Post-9/11 Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute) 30 April 2011. For Afghan Security Force deaths, 2007-2011.

ISAF CIVCAS Database: International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), CIVCAS, 13 January 2011; as referred to in John Bohannon, *Science*, 11 March 2011, vol. 331 pp. 1256-1260.

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www.crs.gov.

GE: Global Exchange, "Afghan Portraits of Grief: The Civilian/Innocent Victims of U.S. Bombing in Afghanistan," (San Francisco: Global Exchange, September 2002)
<http://www.globalexchange.org/countries/mideast/afghanistan/>. The GE "survey [found] at least 824 Afghan civilians were killed between October 7 and January 2002 by the US-led bombing campaign."

Herold: Marc Herold, "Appendix 4. Daily Casualty Count of Afghan Civilians Killed by U.S. Bombing and Special Forces Attacks, October 7 until present day," <http://pubpages.unh.edu/~mwherold/>; and Marc W. Herold, "Afghan Tragedy," *Frontline*, vol. 26, no. 13, 20 June – 3 July 2009
<http://www.hinduonnet.com/fline/fl2613/stories/20090703261300400.htm>.

HRW: Human Rights Watch, "*Troops in Contact: Airstrikes and Civilian Deaths in Afghanistan* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2008). HRW says its totals for civilians killed in 2006 and 2007, respectively 929 and 1633, are "a minimum." Human Rights Watch, "The Human Cost: The Consequence of Insurgent Attacks in Afghanistan," 15 April 2007, <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/10984/section/1>

ISAF: NATO ISAF, *Afghanistan Report, 2009*, (Brussels: NATO, 2009).

JPR: Aldo A. Benini and Lawrence H. Moulton, "Civilian Victims in an Asymmetrical Conflict: Operation Enduring Freedom, Afghanistan," *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 41, no. 4 (July 2004) pp. 403-422.

LA Times: David Zucchino, "The Untold War: 'The Americans . . . They Just Drop Their Bombs and Leave,'" *Los Angeles Times*, 2 June 2002.

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<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2002/may/20/afghanistan.comment>.

NCTC: United States, National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) "Worldwide Incidents Tracking System," database.

NYT, 2002: Dexter Filkins, John F. Burns, and Carlotta Gall, "Flaws in U.S. Air War Left Hundreds of Civilians Dead," *The New York Times*, 21 July 2002. Deaths at 7 sites visited by reporters. Counts 313 Civilian dead.

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<http://www.slate.com/id/2261911/>.