**Project Title and Code:** SIGAR LL-02: Lessons Learned from Aid Coordination in Afghanistan  
**Date:** January 16, 2015  
**Interviewees:** (3) (6) (7) (C)  
**SIGAR Attendees:** Grant McLeod, Subject Matter Expert / Consultant  
**Location:** Telephone  
**Purpose:** (3) (6) (7) (C)  
**Non-attribution Basis:** Yes X No  
**Recorded:** Ye; No X  

**Summary of Key Discussion:**
- The UN and NGOs were having a tug of war over the early aid effort; NGOs did not want to work closely with the new government; Wanted to maintain distance from participants in the past conflict;  
- In December 2002, the Afghanistan Support Group abolished itself in Oslo; There was a move from humanitarian to development assistance; Ashraf Ghani left as the Minister of Finance in 2004; There was a political vacuum; This was a lost opportunity for President Karzai;  
- The 2006 Afghanistan Compact was a good document, but became overloaded by donor benchmarks, which led the Compact astray. The quality of Government strategy documents continuously declined during this time.  
- The development of the Interim – ANDS / ANS was an out of control and unnecessarily long consultant-driven process with hundreds of consultants muddying the water with no clear vision. The Strategy was so expansive that it was everything, but nothing at all at once. It could have been a good tool, but it was not a strategy and therefore of little use.  
- Consultative Groups that worked well were Afghan led. Some Consultative Groups, such as health and rural development, worked well. Health had their act together. For others, there was no amount of international coordination that would have made them work well. Capacity development needs to be aligned to actual needs.  
- The development effort after 2010 (the Kabul Process) was an effort to fix the shortcomings of the ANS. During this time costing of the ANDS was a huge issue and NPPs were projected to exceed available resources.  
- The JCMB was a large politicized committee attended by Ambassadors amongst others. Meetings were held for meetings sake. It confirmed decisions taken elsewhere, but did not make its own. The original recommendation was for a lean decision making body of 7 donors and 7 ministries, but the international community could not limit themselves. The other International Financial Institutions agreed to allow the WB to represent them.  
- The Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund’s success has allowed it to expand. Evaluation of the ARTF Incentive Window indicates that it works. Benchmarks are important.  
- The 2009 civilian surge affected the effort to coordinate.

**Follow-up:**
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- USIP paper on meetings in Afghanistan

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**Record of Interview**

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**Page 1 of 1**