A Broadcasting Model for Afghanistan

Based on Its National Development Strategy

A thesis presented to

the faculty of

the Scripps College of Communication of Ohio University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts

Haroon Rashid

June 2008
This thesis titled

A Broadcasting Model for Afghanistan based on Its National Development Strategy

by

HAROON RASHID

has been approved for

the School of Media Arts and Studies

and the Scripps College of Communication by

Don M. Flournoy
Professor of Telecommunications

Gregory J. Shepherd
Dean, Scripps College of Communication
ABSTRACT

SHERZAD, HAROON, M.A., June 2008, Telecommunications

A Broadcasting Model for Afghanistan based on its National Development Strategy (161 pp.)

Director of Thesis: Don M. Flournoy

This research begins with the assumption that Afghanistan should have a system that is suitable for the current economic, political, social and technological conditions of the country. Afghanistan is a young democratic country with strong social, religious and cultural values. To complement a growing commercial broadcasting sector, Afghanistan needs a structure for content production and distribution that is better integrated into its social structure. In terms of content, structure, operations and mission, this thesis presumes that a media system that serves the development process of the country based on Afghanistan’s National Development Strategy (ANDS) will be best for Afghanistan.

A centralized radio and television network with the capacity to reach the marginalized rural population that constitutes 85 percent of the population is recommended. The goal is to make media outlets and production facilities available in every village. In these locations, people will be invited to watch and participate in programming in close coordination with the community leaders. Formal educational, capacity building and public awareness programs will be designed based on the expectations and cultural sensitivities of the public. Unlike commercial broadcasters, the system of public service broadcasting (PSB) will involve the general population in ways that accommodate to their religion and culture. The idea is to use modern
telecommunications and media not to entertain the public but to involve and educate them in an entertaining and uplifting way.

To address the shortage of human and financial resources in Afghanistan, social channels of communication will be formalized among media, community leaders, government agencies and the United Nations. This approach is recommended as a way to solve the country’s problems collectively. The concepts of diffusion of innovation, with particular attention to the diffusion networks, social channels of communication and the use of human and financial resources, are introduced in this thesis to set the criteria and serve as a basis for its arguments.

Approved: _____________________________________________________________

Don M. Flournoy

Professor of Telecommunications
PREFACE

My name is Haroon Rashid. Even though I am currently a graduate student in the school of telecommunication at Ohio University, I have worked in Afghanistan from 1999 to 2006 in various positions. My working experience includes directing programs in public awareness, public information, and communications in Afghanistan. One of my jobs was the development, implementation and monitoring of a National Counter Narcotics Public Awareness and Information Strategy throughout the country. I have visited the hard-to-reach and most dangerous areas of the country to discuss with villagers what to do in order to get rid of poppy cultivation.

I had strong working relationships with the community and religious leaders throughout the country. They were consulted and invited to Kabul, the capital city of Afghanistan, on a regular basis to clarify the responsibilities of the government officials and the community and religious leaders in terms of eliminating the poppy plant. As a result of this close coordination with the local authorities and community and religious leaders, poppy cultivation was decreased in some provinces. However, because the government and the international community have failed to provide the villagers with alternative livelihoods, poppy cultivation has increased again in those areas. I have learned during working with villagers, that they can accept your message when the message does not violate their culture and religion as well as if the program or project benefits them. One of my most interesting jobs was working as a surveyor with the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC). Traveling village by village and talking with people and living in different communities enriched my understanding of
how the social system works in Afghanistan and how different communities live with different lifestyles.

Based on my own six years experiences working with the Afghan government, international NGOs, and the United Nations, national and international employees are less concerned about using traditional means of communication. Similarly, international advisors sometimes follow international standards of communications which may not work in the traditional environments of in Afghanistan. Sometimes international NGOs focus only on easy-to-reach populations for security reasons or to spend less budget.

I have lived among both the rural and the urban population of Afghanistan and have experienced first-hand the mentality, expectations, needs and life-styles of both worlds. Media usage among these groups is totally different. One day I visited my uncle’s house in Khogaini, one of the remote districts in the Eastern part of the country. I found approximately thirty village men in his guest room gathered around a single television set watching regional satellite channels. The set was powered by a China-manufactured electric generator. None of the other villagers and the villagers in my uncle’s guest room could have afforded to own and operate such a generator. Nor could they afford to buy a television set or car battery to run it. The most disturbing fact was that my uncle was not allowing his family to watch the satellite programming which included Afghanistan’s national channels. I asked him why he did not allow his children and his wife to watch these programs. He replied, “There are no education programs for my children, and the other programs are not appropriate for the women.” All such television programs are screened by men and their approval is necessary. Without the authorization of men, no media program will reach women in the rural areas of Afghanistan.
My cousin told me that one of his friends had bought a VCR, a TV set, a power generator and many video cassettes of Indian, American and Pakistani movies. His guest house was being used as a mini-cinema where local men paid to watch. Villagers threatened to burn down this house because he was showing foreign movies. In the end, the person sold the VCR, the TV set and the movies under the pressure of the local people. I was once invited to such a place. The environment in that room was amazing. Adult males were acting as if they were criminals; they were afraid of what would happen if they were discovered watching these movies. The idea of collective media usage exists in Afghanistan, but the problem is what should be watched and how women and children will be given access to programming that is acceptable.

Norms exist in the rural communities of Afghanistan where villagers obey hidden restrictions that urban people cannot understand or accept. Outsiders cannot communicate with the rural population of Afghanistan using foreign languages and unacceptable practices. Development has to be an inner-made phenomenon, and the diffusion of any innovation must be compatible with the cultural and religious understandings of those communities. The idea of establishing a broadcasting service in Afghanistan that will integrate traditional and modern means of communication emerge from these realities.
To the Afghan population who assume television is a devilish phenomenon...
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my academic advisor and committee chair, Prof. Don Flournoy, for his continuous support and advice not only during my thesis development but throughout my academic program. I would also extend my thanks to Dr. Greg Newton for helping me to better understand the managerial, administrative and financial concepts of the media business and to Dr. Drew McDaniel for helping me acquire specific knowledge about the tools of comparative media analysis.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>xiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations</td>
<td>xv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Profile</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One: Background for the Thesis</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the Study</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANDS: The Vision of ANDS-BB</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANDS: A Platform Using Social Channels for Communication</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANDS: A Platform of Coordination and Collaboration</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANDS: Coordination of Public Awareness Campaigns</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANDS: The Functional Mechanism of ANDS-BB</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadcasting Models for Development</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Framework</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffusion of Innovations</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1</td>
<td>Afghanistan Regional Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2</td>
<td>Afghanistan Administrative Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3</td>
<td>Afghanistan Ethno-linguistic Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4</td>
<td>Radio Outlet Map in Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 5</td>
<td>ANDS Programmatic Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 6</td>
<td>ANDS-BB Administrative Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 7</td>
<td>Media Assistance Activity by Donor and Implementing Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 8</td>
<td>Operational Network of ANDS-BB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 9</td>
<td>Decision-Making People in Villages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10</td>
<td>Centralization-Decentralization Process in Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11</td>
<td>Social Channels of Communication of ANDS-BB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABBREVIATIONS

ANDS  Afghanistan National Development Strategy

ANDS-BB  ANDS-Based Broadcasting

BBC  British Broadcasting Corporation

CDCs  Community Development Councils

ERTV  Education Radio Television

GD-ANDS-BB  General Director of ANDS-BB

MCN  Ministry of Counter Narcotics

MoE  Ministry of Education

MRRD  Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development

NGOs  Non-government Organizations

NRTA  National Radio Television Afghanistan, a government-owned media system

UN  United Nations

UNDP  United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO  United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

VOA  Voice of America
COUNTRY PROFILE

Afghanistan is a landlocked country located in Southern Asia that occupies a total land area of 647,500sq km (CIA: Afghanistan, 2006). It has borders on the north with Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, on the south with Pakistan, on the east with China, and on the west with Iran (Giger & Davidhizar, 2002). Its largest land boundary is with Pakistan and constitutes 2,430 km while the smallest, at 76 km, is with China. The other boundaries are 1,206 km with Tajikistan, 936 km with Iran, 744 km with Turkmenistan and 137 km with Uzbekistan. The irrigated land constitutes 3.68% or 23,860 sq km of the total land area. The Hindu Kush mountains running northeast to southwest separate the northern provinces from the rest of the country (CIA: Afghanistan, 2006).

Figure 1: Afghanistan Regional Map (Source: worldatlas.com)
Based on geographical characteristics, the 34 provinces of Afghanistan are divided into the three areas of the central highlands, the northern plains and the southwestern region. The central highlands consist of high mountain peaks and strategic passes which are important to link the northern plains of Central Asia to Pakistan and India. The northern plains link Afghanistan with Iran in the west and with the Pamirs in the east. This area is known for its agricultural fertility and deposits of minerals, oil, and natural gas. By contrast, the southwestern region consists of deserts and semi-deserts leading into southern Iran (Seddon, 2003; Giger & Davidhizar, 2002).

Economically, Afghanistan is a poor country dependent mainly on agriculture and livestock, but this source of income has suffered nearly three decades of political and military conflicts. However, the country is rich with unexplored natural resources of gas, petroleum, coal, zinc, lead, iron, ore and precious stones (Giger & Davidhizar, 2002). In 2001, the rural population constituted 78 percent of the national total and the urban population was 22 percent (Country profile, 2006).
Figure 2: Afghanistan Administrative Map (Source: http://www.afghan-web.com/images/geography/province_divisions.jpg)

Ethno-linguistic Map:

Although there are just over 30 ethnic groups in Afghanistan, the country’s population is divided into eight principal ethnic groups the largest of which are Pashtoon (62.73 %), Tajik (12.38 %), Hazara (9.00 %), Uzbek (6.10 %), Turkmen (2.69 %) and Aimaq (2.68 %) (Noorzai, 2006).
Figure 3: Afghanistan Ethno-linguistic Map (Source: http://www.sabawoon.com/maps/afghanistan_ethnoling_97.jpg)

Map of Media Outlets in Afghanistan:

The distribution of media outlets is uneven in Afghanistan. Coverage by the state media stations is comparatively better than private stations. The government-owned National Radio Television Afghanistan stations exist in 17 main provinces including Kabul, Badakhshan, Baghlan, Balkh, Gardez, Ghazni, Farah, Faryab, Helmand, Herat, Kandahar, Khost, Kunar, Kunduz, Logar, Nangarhar and Takhar (Media Commission Final Report, 2005; National Radio Frequency Survey, 2004). Theoretically and
structurally, NRTA is under the direct control of the government (Afghan media reconstruction in focus, 2002). The administrative structure of NRTA faces fundamental problems such as overstaffing, low salaries and a lack of management expertise. The employees of the NRTA number approximately 2,500 (Stiles & Weeks, 2006). Although independent radio stations are mainly located in Kabul, they have extended to other provinces too. Internews, an international media-supporting NGO, has established 28 independent community radio stations in different areas of the country (Recent news, 2008).

*Figure 4: Radio Outlet Map in Afghanistan - Internews. (Source: Recent news, 2008)*
There are 50 radio stations and about 16 television stations throughout the country, including government-owned radio and television stations (Mason, 2006). Eight of these television stations operate only in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, but are on the air for about 3 hours. This is because of a scarcity of electricity and because people cannot afford to switch on their generators for more than 3 hours (Bearak, 2007). The growth of broadcasting stations in numbers does not guarantee their financial and editorial independence. Based on a 2005 survey, only 19 percent of the households in Afghanistan own a television set (Bearak, 2007). Private media are not all politically independent. For instance, Aina TV, one of the private broadcasting stations operating in Northern part of Afghanistan, is famous for supporting powerful warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum (BBC Monitoring, 2007).

Economic, developmental and security situations are different in each province. These variations may lead to unbalanced media development at the provincial level. The government has no mechanism to monitor and evaluate the media situation to implement the concept of universal access and media diversity. Unlike Kunduz province, which has developmental projects and electricity, many other provinces, including Paktiya, Zabul, Paktika and Bamiyan, lack these developments. Although Kunduz enjoys the availability of electricity, its only television channel is controlled by the government. On the other hand, multiple television stations exit in Herat province (Babibzai, 2005). In some areas, there is a clear overlap between the independent, state, and international radio coverage. Other areas do not have any radio coverage at all. In order to provide universal access, there is a need to coordinate the issuing of radio licenses. The overlapping of media
outlets is a positive factor in providing diverse voices, but the researcher has concluded that at least one radio station should be provided in each area.
CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND FOR THE THESIS

Introduction

The media of Afghanistan do not currently follow Afghanistan’s National Development Strategy (ANDS). There is a need for a new approach to broadcasting that will more effectively address the public interest being ignored by commercial and private media. Afghanistan is a young democratic country with strong social, religious and cultural values. Afghanistan needs a broadcasting system that is integrated into the social structure of the society. Broadcast content, structure, operations and mission should each address prioritized goals that serve the development process in the country. In a practical manner, such a process should be implemented based on the current social, religious, cultural, political and economic realities. These realities should serve as a guide in conceptualizing the gradual development of a broadcasting model for the long-term.

This thesis discusses the establishment of a broadcasting model based on the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). For convenience, the model is named Afghanistan National Development Strategy-Based Broadcasting (ANDS-BB). The goal is to have the broadcasting system contribute in the development process of the country by making programming available at the village level to the under-served populations of the country. The result will be communities watching programs more suited to their needs with the help of satellite communication. The idea is to centralize broadcasting facilities in a partnership relationship with each ministry, the United Nations, non-government organizations and community radio stations in order to reach remote populations and to complement, not to compete with, the programming strategies of the existing broadcasting outlets in the country. Currently, such micro and macro-level
coordination is neglected. Following the basic principles of ANDS, the plan will be to use media as a tool of national development for the whole country, respecting its social and cultural institutions and values while encouraging the development of a communication strategy to initiate a two-way flow of information between the government and the public. Afghan media system does not currently envision such a development goal.

Using collective resources to address shared problems is still a challenge in Afghanistan. Since the establishment of ANDS-BB is not the responsibility of a single unit in Afghanistan, a mechanism of social channels of communication needs to be recommended that includes community leaders, the government, the Parliament and such outside agencies as the United Nations and international non-government organizations. This approach will more fully utilize the professional, technical, financial and human resources of Afghanistan (Haythornthwaite, 2005), using the ANDS-BB concept as a guide.

Religious and traditional communities in Afghanistan are not consulted in terms of media availability. Currently, where they can be received, commercial channels introduce western culture through their entertainment and informational programs (Dayee, 2007). But, poor and often illiterate communities may not need or want entertainment programs based on Western formats. A new media system needs to be established to comply with the needs, expectations and the traditional and religious values of the Afghan society. Since the proposed model introduces a system for reaching into remote areas, it should consider tribal norms and codes of honor (Ghani, 1978).

Media can help to solve challenges facing the government and the international community in Afghanistan. For instance, the majority of the rural population cannot
provide their children with high quality education because the quality of the educational system is not satisfactory overall. Poor educational facilities, lack of professionally trained teachers, unsuitable educational instructional programs, crowded classrooms, and insufficient teacher salaries are the main barriers in the creation of educational opportunities in Afghanistan (Manzo, 2006). Similarly, a shortage of skilled human resources constrains development of the country. “Due to a complete absence of vocational training capacities and opportunities, skilled and semi-skilled labor must be imported from, outside the region at a high cost” (Education, 2006). Currently, the government and the international aid agencies spend a huge budget on public awareness and national development programs. ANDS-BB can be a cost-effective alternative in providing human resource development opportunities, and educational and public awareness programs nationwide. This thesis attempts to advise the government, the United Nations and the international community in ways to address some of these challenges through an ANDS-BB system.

This thesis focuses on the integration of traditional and modern media and communication strategies based on community participation. The diffusion of Kabul-oriented programming cannot address the needs and expectations of the village population. The establishment of ANDS-BB local facilities will provide villagers access to the programs that are relevant to their needs. Media production and consumption will be grounded in the culture and religion of the targeted villages. The establishment of separate facilities is expensive, particularly in a poor country like Afghanistan, but this thesis advocates the involvement of local leaders because they are the most influential adopters and opinion leaders. ANDS-BB can use local schools, clinics and district
government offices as ANDS-BB local facilities. Where there are no clinics and schools, local leaders can provide other local facilities. The financial sustainability of the ANDS-BB is hidden in the centralization of the public awareness budgets of all the international and government partners working in their different fields.

Because of the politically fragile environment of Afghanistan, the relationship between the ANDS-BB and the government can be tenuous. Ideally, it should be reasonably sympathetic and collaborative since a structure consisting of social channels of communication will be set up to decide how to best benefit the public. Unlike some other South Asian countries, the current government policies and programs in Afghanistan are established to follow the norms of human rights and practices of the larger international community. Strengthening the current democratic government with its development mission means strengthening it against both the Taliban and the provincial warlords. The government of Afghanistan has approved the freest media law in the South Asian region (Media is development, 2007) which means the government will need strong public and international community support in their implementation.

The future operational and structural characteristics of the ANDS-BB are important considerations. If the support of the international community continues, Afghanistan will be headed toward increased development. But, with the changing social, economic and technological environment, implementation of the ANDS-BB will also require adjustment measures within the society. This thesis discusses how ANDS-BB can be sustained as a centralized source of development broadcasting in the country, yet its channels can be targeted to the needs and wishes of the individual provinces and regions.
The main purpose of multiplying and extending the channels is to reach niche, fragmented and diverse audiences throughout the country.

Methodology

This research consists of a comparative analysis of selected models of public service broadcasting around the world. The thesis mainly focuses on those broadcasting systems intended to be used for the development process, for public awareness programs and for giving access to the rural population. The rationale for examining case studies of international broadcasting models is to inform a broadcasting model for development in Afghanistan. The broadcasting systems used in this thesis are Doordashan in India, Colombian community radio, community radio in South Africa, Radio Television Malaysia and indigenous radio stations in Mexico.

The thesis includes an analysis of the media situation in Afghanistan, including an examination of the economic, social, religious and cultural realities of the country. Such important in-country media as BBC Persian, BBC Pashto, VOA Afghanistan (later Ashna TV), Afghanistan News Center and Pajhwok News Agency were regularly followed for daily news, discussions, interviews and commentary during the time period from January 2006 until June 2008.

The literature addressing the theoretical framework of diffusion of innovation has been examined as a model for showing how diffusion networks and social channels of communication operate. The literature on social channels of communication is used to show how financial and human resources are managed within such societies. These two theoretical frameworks were useful in this thesis in helping to identify appropriate criteria for gathering, analyzing and presenting data.
The thesis also includes an analysis of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) that serves as the foundation for the arguments and discussion found within this thesis. ANDS is analyzed to build its relationship with the ANDS-BB proposed in this thesis based on a development communication strategy. ANDS becomes a strategy of support for the creation of ANDS-BB, a coordinative mechanism and a justification for its programming.

To eliminate the bias of the researcher, three in-depth interviews were conducted with three students from Afghanistan who were enrolled at Ohio University. Their responses were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. The main focus of the interviews was to understand and articulate cultural and religious sensitivities, public expectations, the characteristics of media development, and the difference between rural and urban populations in Afghanistan. Their responses also helped the researcher to understand how ANDS-BB should take the level of public understanding into account.

**Research Questions**

No 1: Why is Afghanistan National Development Strategy important for the effective operation of a new broadcasting model in Afghanistan?

No 2: What kind of organization and management structure will ensure the legal and political independence of this new broadcasting model based on Afghanistan National Development Strategy?

No 3: What programming strategy will help to develop the mission and philosophy of a broadcasting model that addresses public expectations and needs?

No 4: Which social channels of communication will be important for the implementation of a new broadcasting model based on Afghanistan National Development Strategy?
No 5: How can the ANDS-Based Broadcasting survive during the social, economic and technological development of the country in the future?

**Organization of the Study**

The thesis is organized into four chapters as noted below:

*Chapter One: Introduction:* This chapter discusses the background of the topic based on the importance and scope, goals and objectives, methodology and theoretical framework of the study. It also provides the rationale for using the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and broadcasting models from around the world for the establishment of ANDS-Based Broadcasting.

*Chapter Two: Media Situation in Afghanistan:* This chapter discusses the state of media development in the country, including existing media outlets, current media laws and regulations, available media programs and the cultural and religious sensitivities toward those programs.

*Chapter Three: The Concept of ANDS-BB:* This chapter discusses the idea behind ANDS-BB for advancing the public interest. It also explains the need to establish a national broadcasting station and gives a rationale for a centralized approach to broadcasting.

*Chapter Four: Structure and Programming:* The concept of ANDS-BB argues that there should be a centralized ANDS-BB station operating from Kabul, with affiliated provincial and village-based facilities. The programming section focuses on providing curriculum-based education, human resource development and public awareness programs.

*Chapter Five: Social Channels of Communication:* This chapter mainly focuses on the formal and informal mechanisms by which decisions are made in Afghanistan. Social
channels of communication are one of the important ways things get done in coordination with community leaders, government, non-government, Parliament and UN organizations that can ensure the effectiveness and acceptance of ANDS-BB.

Chapter Six: Conclusion and Recommendations: This chapter makes recommendations concerning the future structure of ANDS-BB to sustain its operation in a politically, economically, socially and technologically changing environment. It also discusses the legal conditions necessary for the future of ANDS-BB. This chapter also suggests the lobbying techniques that will be needed to create a policy window for its approval.

Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS)

This thesis conceptualizes a new model of broadcasting in Afghanistan, based on the country’s National Development Strategy. ANDS conceptualizes the participation of the public through access to media and full freedom of the press. Media development is strategically discussed in the ANDS in a separate thematic sector on education, culture, media and sport. This sector assures the establishment of “an independent and accessible media” and “preservation of Afghanistan’s culture” (ANDS, 2005, pp. 136-139).

The government’s five-year strategic benchmark for the end of 2010 is to ensure the protection of media “as independent, pluralistic and accessible to Afghan women and men throughout the country, thereby promoting an open and democratic society” in order to check government policies, expose corruption and allow freedom of expression (ANDS, 2005, pp. 136-139).

ANDS can ensure the financial sustainability and programming strategy of the ANDS-Based Broadcasting to ensure its complementary role in the existing media system and to guide its development objectives to address public expectations. ANDS is
the principal supportive document the country can look to justify establishment of the
ANDS-Based Broadcasting. For example, the idea that community radio stations should
be delivering educational, human resource and public awareness programs can easily find
its rationale in this document.

ANDS should not be considered just the government’s top document, but the top
document of the overall development of the country. It has been developed through a
long process of discussions, working group meetings, seminars, and workshops among
the lawmakers, professionals, donors, civil society, the private sector and the general
public. The most important point of its development was the participation of the rural
population. Through 400 community development councils (CDCs1), villagers in 10,000
villages throughout the country were consulted. Each Afghan ministry has enriched the
ANDS with its priorities, strategies and sectoral working plans through its own working
groups. The outcomes of all these consultations and contributions have been translated
into the vision, priorities, strategies and action plans of ANDS to guide the government
and the international community toward the development of Afghanistan (ANDS, 2005).
Because the development of ANDS was articulated through a public participatory
process, it better addresses the question of what public services are needed. All
institutions in Afghanistan, public or private, national or international, on a micro or
macro-level, are expected to accommodate their activities within this development
strategy to provide fruitful and cost-effective services to the public.

1 Community Development Councils (CDCs) are community-based public councils whose members are
selected by the villagers through free election. “The main objective of the CDCs is to provide much needed
services to local communities until such time as local governments are capable of providing comprehensive
support to the local population” (ANDS Working Group, 2005)
As a proposed national broadcasting and program distributing structure, ANDS-BB should enhance the young and fragile democracy in Afghanistan (Democracy's chance in Afghanistan, 2004), while supporting and utilizing ANDS as a basis for providing broadcasting programs based on the public’s interests. Within the framework of ANDS, the promotion of “economic, political, and social objectives of government policies” does not mean backing “the power of political figures” in Afghanistan (McDaniel, 2002, p. 11) because ANDS-BB will focus only on the social development sectors of ANDS, based on the public’s interests. As an educational, public awareness and human resource development tool, ANDS-BB supports the development process of the country (Heudre, 2007).

**ANDS: The Vision of ANDS-BB**

The vision of the ANDS was developed based on the current political, economic and social realities of the country. With respect to the religious and cultural values, ANDS envisions meeting the Millennium Development Goals in 2020 as:

If we achieve this vision,…All our children, boys and girls alike, will complete their primary educations. Afghanistan's women will enjoy greater equity in education, political participation and justice. We will cut by more than half the number of children dying before they reach five, and the number of mothers [who] die in childbirth. We will halt the spread of tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases and ensure that our development is environmentally sustainable. And we will accomplish all of this through a strong partnership with the international community that helps...to support the stable political environment upon which our economic development will depend (ANDS, 2005, p. 3).

Based on the ANDS vision, ANDS-Based Broadcasting can refine its vision to help in the implementation of ANDS by providing educational, capacity building and public awareness programs, with the help of social channels of communication among the government departments, United Nations, local leaders and other community
broadcasters. The political, economic and social visions of ANDS can be used to guide the operation and programming strategy of ANDS-BB.

The political vision of ANDS is the establishment of “a state in which institutions are more accountable and responsive to poor people, strengthening their participation in the political process and in local decision-making.” Furthermore, the non-government organizations (NGOs) are seen as important partners in the development of the country (ANDS, 2005, p.15). This vision can be effectively utilized to establish an independent ANDS-BB accountable to the public. Non-government media organizations and the international community need to help in nationalization and standardization of ANDS-BB with the help of their professional, financial and human resources. As ANDS-BB acts as a complementary broadcasting model, it can support and strengthen community broadcasters throughout Afghanistan.

The economic vision of ANDS supports the private sector “to generate legitimate profits and pay reasonable taxes” which can “be invested in public services.” One of the priorities of ANDS is to invest in human resource development. Rural development is an attractive area for the investment priorities of ANDS (ANDS, 2005, p. 16). Taxes on commercial broadcasters and electronic goods can be easily allocated to support the ANDS-BB model in the future. Also, the investment in human resource development can be used by ANDS-BB through its programming strategy to provide the public with programs that support this vision. As attention is given to rural development, one of the missions of ANDS-BB will be to extend broadcasting programming to the rural population which is currently ignored by the media.
The social vision of ANDS is to provide universal educational, professional and technical skills by 2020. Health and other social problems, such as agricultural productivity, are of prime importance (ANDS, 2005). The programming strategy of ANDS-BB is proposed to focus on informal and formal education. Social problems are addressed through the public awareness programs of the ANDS-BB programming strategy to focus on health and agricultural issues which are, again, ignored in commercial broadcasting.

A guiding principle of the Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper (PRSP)\(^1\) of the World Bank and the IMF is to provide “public programs that assist the poor” (ANDS, 2005, p.20). Since the rural population cannot afford to buy TV sets and the electric generators to run them, ANDS-BB Local Facilities need to be established or identified in every village with the help of international organizations. People can be invited into these facilities to watch the provided programs with the close coordination of the community leaders or CDCs.

**ANDS: A Platform Using Social Channels for Communication**

In the creation of ANDS, an effective network of social channels has emerged that is being utilized in different ways to address public needs. Transmission of knowledge, aggregation of human capital and the development of trust are the most important economic advantages of participation in social networks. Participation can improve the outcomes of a larger unit, or a single organization (Alesina & Elliana, 2000). ANDS-Based Broadcasting will provide justification for centralizing the budget of the

---
\(^1\)A Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper (PRSP) on the basis of which World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) can support the government of Afghanistan with debt relief and concessional loans if it establishes guiding principles on how to address poverty reduction in the country (ANDS, 2005).
government and the contributors of the international community being used for public awareness and for utilizing their resources (offices, personnel, networks and international funds). With funding and access to personnel and other resources, ANDS-BB will be able to produce high quality national programs for the general population. It can also give support to local community broadcasters in their efforts to address local issues with local programming. Second, ANDS-BB can secure local facilities in clinics, schools and other village locations (Middleton, 2004) where educational programs have been shown and sometimes used for local public awareness through temporary mobile cinemas in the past (Power Point Presentation, 2004).

**ANDS: A Platform of Coordination and Collaboration**

Budget management is a key concern in the implementation of ANDS (ANDS, 2005). According to the Afghanistan Compact, an agreement between the Afghan government and the international community, and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005, donors and the international community focused on the necessity of coordination. A basic principle of the agreement was to work on priorities, to halt activities that led to duplication of effort and to increase cost-effectiveness of development programs (The Afghanistan Compact, 2006). One of the rationales behind centralizing ANDS-BB as a complementary broadcasting model is to mainstream funding resources. Hence, ANDS-BB will have the capacity to produce, distribute and broadcast programming for those development sectors identified by ANDS. With the help of its coordination mechanism, ANDS-BB will be able to eliminate duplication of programs and projects among community broadcasters, international NGOs and the government. This approach should increase the cost-effectiveness of the development budget.
Weak coordination among government institutions is a matter of serious concern since it undermines the productivity, achievements and further development of media in Afghanistan (Strand, 2002; IRIN News, December 31, 2007). Weak coordination in a resource-scarce environment worsens the situation. Oliver (1990) saw inter-organizational relationships as necessary to establish “cooperation, collaboration, and coordination” (p. 244) among interconnected organizations in order to meet public expectations. However, for the facilitation of the coordination efforts, it is important to establish a formal institution (Chew, 2000). The establishment of ANDS-BB as a legal broadcasting entity can facilitate the multiple relationships among the various organizations to reduce complexity and maximize effectiveness of the coordination system (Lorrain, 2001).

Any community broadcasting system faces sustainability concerns in Afghanistan. Currently, international non-government media agencies independently support media institutions there. For instance, Internews, Sayara and Equal Access and other international media supporting NGOs are directly involved in supporting local broadcasting and print media (Afghan media- three years after, 2005). However, because of the overall economic, rehabilitation and poverty problems in the country, concerns exist about the sustainability of community broadcasting in Afghanistan (IRIN, 2007). To sustain such a system, a complementary broadcasting model with ready-made development programs is needed. Collaboration between the donor community and government offices is crucial because they must agree on a funding process for the establishment and sustainability of national institutions. Such a collaboration would be a green light for the establishment of ANDS-BB since that could encourage other national
and international media supporting NGOs to use the structure of ANDS-BB not only to implement ANDS but also as a production center to strengthen the operation of community radio stations throughout the country (Casamayou, 2001).

**ANDS: Coordination of Public Awareness Campaigns**

ANDS favors development of a communication strategy by which diverse participation by the public, particularly in remote rural areas, would be encouraged through using mosques, schools and Community Development Councils (CDCs) to disseminate the information about what the government and the public can do (ANDS, 2005). One of the strongest rationales for the establishment of ANDS-BB and its financial sustainability is the use of the public-awareness budget that exists in each of ANDS’s cross-cutting sectors. For instance, the gender-equity sector currently undertakes a national advocacy campaign to empower women; the narcotics sector works on public awareness campaigns to address counter narcotics issues; and the anti-corruption sector seeks to strengthen independent media so that the public is aware of corruption. The goal is to build the investigative reporting capacity of the media. Similarly, ANDS sponsors public awareness campaigns in the environmental sector with the goal of changing attitudes and behaviors that will protect the environment (ANDS, 2005).

**ANDS: The Functional Mechanism of ANDS-BB**

ANDS can provide the operational and structural rationale of ANDS-BB through the third pillar: economic and social development divided into six sectors. Establishing...
broadcasting infrastructures at the national and local levels will help ANDS carry out its economic and social development plan. ANDS-BB national infrastructure is necessary to support educational, health, agricultural and rural development, human resource development and public awareness programs. A strong national broadcasting structure can create an administrative, financial, operational, programming and coordinating mechanism that also works with local organizations and community broadcasters.

![Figure 5. ANDS Programmatic Framework (Source: ANDS, 2005)](image)

The Afghan ANDS-BB administrative structure will differ slightly from the administrative mechanisms of most public service broadcasters in the world. In Afghanistan, a media commission has been already established by the Parliament to oversee the government-run station along with other commercial and private stations. In close coordination with, but not under the authority of, the supreme media commission, the General Director of ANDS-BB (GD-ANDS-BB) would be appointed jointly by the government and the Parliament. It is not realistic to involve UNESCO or UNDP in the
selection process of the General Director. However, the government and the Parliament can consult UNESCO or UNDP communication departments in this process. Under GD-ANDS-BB authority, a professional team of directors would be assigned to coordinate program production and distribution in cooperation with related working groups of the various government ministries, the United Nations and NGOs (ANDS, 2005).

![Diagram: ANDS-BB Administrative Structure](image)

**Figure 6.** ANDS-BB Administrative Structure

Zone officers will be very important in ensuring universal access to the media outlets and programs. These ANDS-BB employees can provide valuable information about which areas of the country lack media outlets and strategies for implementing public awareness campaigns. They will be responsible for communicating with school
principals, clinic heads, district governors, university faculty directors and other focal points for public access. Their function will be to invite villagers, with the assistance of local leaders, to designated locales to watch programs of interest.

Broadcasting Models for Development

The concepts of media and national development are inseparable in Afghanistan. After experiencing almost three decades of war, Afghanistan requires reconstruction and redevelopment of a society in which young democratic institutions can be strengthened in the context of Islamic and cultural values. Such a mission has been addressed by the media of several developing countries, including India, Colombia, South Africa and Mexico. Other broadcasting systems, namely Malaysian public broadcasting and the British Broadcasting Corporation, have also been studied and are in-part the inspiration for ANDS-BB. This thesis uses each of these case studies to develop a broadcasting model based on ANDS that is suitable for the country of Afghanistan.

Following a civil war in Colombia, the purpose of public interest broadcasting was the promotion of national unity, identity, culture, and educational programs while minimizing conflicting political challenges. Even with the political pressures, community-based radio in Colombia, Juventud Stereo, survived because of its indirect involvement in the politics, leadership training and political awareness programs which encouraged the young generation to reach even the National Congress as congressmen (Murillo, 2003). ANDS-BB also avoids direct political conflict when offering public development programs based on ANDS. Its political and development achievements will be based on a long-term plan that can be measured over time.
In India, rural educational programming and nation building were the main focus of broadcasts into the countryside to promote agricultural practices and address issues of health, education, capacity building and national security. The technological innovation of satellite helped the Indian media system to reach the rural population. For instance, the major achievement of Doordarshan, the public service broadcaster, was the establishment of SITE, a satellite system which expanded television viewership in 2,400 villages and provided rural communities with health, literacy, and agricultural programs. The messages of its specially-created soap operas were based on principles of national development, particularly family planning, the importance of women’s education and religious epics (Fursich & Shrikhande, p. 111). The programming strategy of ANDS-BB will also be based on formal and informal education, human resource development and public awareness programs. The broadcasting model for Afghanistan focuses on the rural population, which constitutes 78% of the country (Country profile, 2006), currently being ignored by commercial broadcasters.

The indigenous radio stations in Mexico operate under a hybrid model of ownership and control. Because of this, the stations cannot be categorized as exclusively government, public or community-based. However, the components of all these can be examined in looking for an appropriate model for Afghanistan. For instance, “like official or governmental radio, it is totally financially dependent on a federal body, and thus important decisions at the macro level are made by bureaucrats following governmental policies. But like public radio,…stations are primarily not for the diffusion of official propaganda.” From the perspective of a community broadcaster, the station serves the needs of the local community (Rodriguez, 2005, p.157). Some of their programs follow
national development and public awareness policies, and the stations are restricted from broadcasting religious or political propaganda (Rodriguez, 2005). ANDS-BB is inspired by this hybrid concept to develop a social channel of communication among the agencies of government, the United Nations and local communities to come up with workable development and public awareness campaigns.

Media play an important role in an illiterate society, but the main question of some of the media critics is whether media executives decide the type and content of programs or allow people to decide for themselves. Media-controlling institutions and the leadership of Radio Television Malaysia (RTM), a public service broadcasting system in Malaysia controlled by the government, assumes the programming needs to be centrally directed, especially during the times when rapid Western modernization is intruding into the society (Khattab, 2004). Similarly, John Reith, a popular early manager of the BBC, doubted the capacity of the audience to decide what it needed (Cave, 1996). Since critics say the purpose behind shaping an educated and informed society in Malaysia is no more than controlling media by the government (Khattab, 2006). However, racial conflicts in May 1969 were a decisive factor causing the Malay government to articulate strict policies for the media requiring them to focus on national unity. The political situations of Malaysia and Afghanistan are totally different. The ministerial policies of the Afghan government are based on international standards. The concept of directing an illiterate and uninformed society seems logical in Afghanistan. ANDS-BB can avoid the mistakes of RTM that favored some groups “over several others, one language over many others and one set of religious values over others” (Khattab, 2004). ANDS-BB can focus on both Pashto and Dari, the official and dominant languages of the country. However, it
does not mean that other minority languages will be ignored. Programs will be produced or dubbed in Uzbaki, Tajaki, Hazaragi, Balochi and other minority languages. Culture and religion are the shared factors throughout the society; therefore, both need to be strictly considered in the Afghan media programming. The majority of Afghan society is illiterate, so the philosophy and mission of ANDS-BB should be based on guiding the population until the society becomes more developed, educated and informed.

The formalization and legalization of ANDS-BB’s structure, its operational procedures, and creating its social channels of communication need to be clarified through a separate law. The articulation of ANDS-BB Law can clarify the power and control of the model and its mutual relationship. Without ANDS-BB, it is also difficult to implement its mission and programming strategy.

The establishment of ANDS-BB cannot occur in a vacuum. This issue needs to be identified as a problem in order to convince the local communities, the government, the Parliament and the United Nations how important is the establishment of ANDS-BB. Strong lobbying techniques should be used. The creation of an advocacy group will be necessary for the success of lobbying in the social system. Advocacy groups can easily contact the Parliament, the government administration, the United Nations, and the community and religious leaders lobbying for the creation of ANDS-BB.

**Theoretical Framework**

*Diffusion of Innovations*

Diffusion of innovation is a social process “by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system” where the units of a social system adopt or reject an innovation (Rogers, 2003,
This process of innovation-decision is explained in five stages as a series of actions and activities. These stages detail gaining knowledge about an innovation, the function of an innovation, and development of an attitude about an innovation based on some related persuasive components of the innovation. Consequently individuals or organizations make decisions about whether to adopt or reject an innovation, put the innovation into practice and, in the end, confirm the decision (Rogers, 2003).

Diffusion of an innovation is a long-term process in which different categories of adopters emerge: early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards. Opinion leaders are considered the highest adoptive category, while marginal groups are thought to be low adoptive category of adopters (Rogers, 2003). One of the challenges of the diffusion of innovation is communication with laggards who are perceived the last category in the process of accepting an innovation. They are not the negative members of the society. They need much attention to understand why they refuse to accept an innovation. ANDS-BB’s structure is designed to regularly communicate with local communities, opinion leaders, community and religious leaders, government officials and UN representatives about the programming of the ANDS-BB in order to better address the needs of the public.

**Innovation**

Relative advantage, compatibility and observability are the most important attributes of the innovations to explain the rate of adaptation of an innovation in the diffusion process (Rogers, 2003; Singer, 2004).
**Relative Advantage**

Potential adopters actively examine the price and performance of an innovation. Innovation that reduces the cost can be more easily adopted in a community. Information helps to reduce uncertainty about the price and performance of an innovation (Quirmbach, 1986, p. 33).

ANDS-BB can gain relative advantage in several ways. It must not harm anybody and must not violate cultural values. Its programming strategy is based on providing educational, public awareness and human resource development programs that benefit particular segments of the society. The public will be provided media usage facilities in villages to watch their related programs without any payment. The government and the international community can reach hard-to-reach groups in the remote areas without allocating a huge budget to conduct separate public awareness campaigns. However, it is important to convince the gatekeepers in each village, government administration and the United Nations about the importance of the ANDS-BB.

**Compatibility**

An innovation can be diffused if it is compatible with the norms and values of the social system (Becker, 1970). Compatibility and standardization of an innovation attracts the attention of people in the marketplace and paves the way for its adoption (Farrell & Saloner, 1985). ANDS-BB system will be sensitive to the cultural and religious values of the society. Its structure and function are designed to provide the public culturally appropriate broadcasting programs that have been ignored by commercial broadcasters.
Observability

An innovation is introduced in a community as a trial project that allows people to experience it. If the experiences of the public are positive, the innovation can be diffused. It is a long-term process to increase the rate of adaptation of a positive innovation in a society (Singer, 2004). The consequences of an innovation can be observed in the experimental stage of the diffusion process. It clarifies the desirable or undesirable, direct or indirect and anticipated or unanticipated changes that occur in the social system in order to make the observability visible about the innovation (Rogers, 2003). In Afghanistan, people exchange information among themselves because of the communal lifestyle. After experiencing ANDS-BB programming, they can exchange both positive and negative feedback about the programming strategy and its suitability and appropriateness to their needs.

Time

The innovation decision period is the time within which an individual or a unit of a social system gains knowledge about an innovation, builds an attitude about the innovation, makes decision about whether to accept or reject the innovation, and implements and confirms the innovation (Rogers, 2003). With the passage of time, learning about and directly or indirectly experiencing an innovation can increase the advantages of an innovation which paves the way for its higher adoption and diffusion (Feder & O'Mara, 1982). The diffusion of innovations is a long-term process in which people experience or gain knowledge about an innovation to decide whether to accept or reject the innovation. Damanpour et al. (1989) describe organizational innovation in the context of an administrative and technical process which clarifies the importance of
“rules, roles, procedures,…structures” and operating aspects of an organization to understand the performance of an innovation in an environment (Newell & Swan, 1995). ANDS-BB is designed as a unique technical and administrative mechanism to extend the principle of universal access to rural areas. Universal access is possible when local media consumption facilities are established where all people will have access to ANDS-BB programming. These facilities will be connected to the central broadcasting station via satellite technology. The specification of rules, roles, procedures and structure of the ANDS-BB need clarification. Therefore, a social as well as telecommunications networks are recommended in this thesis so that macro and micro-level opinion leaders will be spreading the information.

**Social System**

“A social system is defined as a set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal.” Existing norms and opinion leaders are important components of such social systems when it comes to diffusion of innovation (Rogers, 2003, p. 23).

Compatibility of an innovation with the social norms of a social system facilitates the diffusion of an innovation (Singer, 2004; Rogers, 2003). Opinion leaders become the earliest adopters when innovations are based on group norms (Becker, 1970). ANDS-BB programs will respect the cultural and religious values of Afghans. Its local facilities will be established in every village based on the norms of that village.

Rogers (2003) argues that “interpersonal communication drives the diffusion process by creating a mass of adopters” with the help of opinion leaders (p. 300). Two kinds of opinion leaders are identified: polymorphic leaders deal with a variety of issues
and monomorphic leaders deal with only one topic. Village leaders in Afghanistan are polymorphic since what they say and do greatly affects everyone. Opinion leaders in Afghanistan can be separated from the ordinary followers based on their exposure to external communication, accessibility to social participation, comparatively higher socioeconomic status and more innovativeness. However, opinion leaders are also limited by the norms of the social system. That is why commercial broadcasters with their immoral foreign programs violating the norms, culture and religion of the villagers cannot be easily diffused even if they have the support of the opinion leaders.

Hierarchy and social status play an important role in the diffusion of an innovation. People with high social status tend to adopt an innovation sooner than the people with lower hierarchy or social status (Knoke, 1982). The idea behind the creation of a social channel of communication based on social relationships between the ANDS-BB and the Parliamentarians, the government officials, the UN representatives and the community and religious leaders is to utilize their high esteem and authoritative positions for the benefit of the rural population. Strong relationships among opinion leaders and the ANDS-BB will be essential for persuading the villagers and increasing the percentage of potential adopters.

**Social Channels of Communication**

Opinion leaders are at the center of the social channels of communication that must be established when interconnecting individuals or organizations (Rogers, 2003). Such a social network of communication cannot be established in a vacuum until a social structure is created to facilitate the social channels of communication including interpersonal relationships needed to diffuse an innovation. The social channels of
communication, then, help coordination among different groups to increase the participation of initial adopters, followers and late adopters (Chew, 2000). The establishment of ANDS-BB is a necessary step in facilitating creation of a social channel of communication among government, United Nations, and community leaders that allows it to effectively deliver its programming to the local communities.

Social channels of communication can accelerate or slow down the diffusion process and they can facilitate or hinder the exchange of feedback about an innovation (Abrahamson & Rosenkopf, 1997). The amount of negative or positive comments about the diffusion of an innovation depends on the percentage of enlightened opinion leaders or conservative and marginal population in a community. Communities with more enlightened opinion leaders tend to accept innovations more quickly than communities with less educated and informed leaders. The level of diffusion of the innovation also depends on the level of interaction and contact between opinion leaders and the villagers and with the professional population who deal with the innovation. They can influence each other (Becker, 1970; Burt, 1987). The development of the ANDS-BB is a long-term process. Opinion leaders in Afghanistan are thought to be among the highest adaptive categories because of their enlightened characteristics, while some conservative and marginal villagers are considered to be as low adaptive people because of their illiteracy. So, it is important for the ANDS-BB to develop regular contacts with opinion leaders at the village level to increase the diffusion process. Because of the strong socialization culture in Afghanistan, the decision of those who refuse to watch the ANDS-BB programs can be altered by those who have accepted the ANDS-BB system.
The social channel of communication model describes an interconnected network of individuals or organizations in which relationships are purposefully created to facilitate effective interaction. These relationships can develop into quite complex networks based on multiple relationships (Kadushin, 2004). ANDS-BB will have multiple relationships with both formal and informal groups. While addressing public expectations, the mission of ANDS-BB will be to provide educational, human resource development, and public awareness programs. This mission will shape its relationship with affected organizations. For instance, the relationship of ANDS-BB and the government will be based on the implementation of ANDS. The relationship of ANDS-BB and the international community will be based on the centralization of the public awareness budget to minimize the duplication of programs.

**Organizational Innovation**

Organizational innovation explains the diffusion of an innovation into a “system of individuals who work together to achieve common goals through a hierarchy of ranks and a division of labor” (Rogers, 2003, p. 404).

Collective innovation-decisions are made through consensus to adopt or reject an innovation in a social system (Rogers, 2003). Ohshita and Ortolano (2006) explain the solution to poor diffusion of an innovation as being to promote integrated planning and the involvement of related partners. The establishment of ANDS-BB is based on the National Development Strategy of Afghanistan which provides an open platform for the involvement of all the related partners. The most important feature of the ANDS-BB is the concept of coordinating and involving the community leaders, the UN and the government.
Cooperation is an effective strategy in a resource scarce environment. The idea of using resources of other organizations without acquiring them, according to Pfeffer & Salancik (1979), can be an effective strategy in a resource scarce environment. The principle of “external economy” is a theoretical concept that conceptualizes the function of ANDS-BB in that it uses the resources, facilities and services of other organizations to lower its financial costs (Kadushin, 2004). The use of the human and financial resources of other organizations and social institutions in Afghanistan can ensure the expansion of the ANDS-BB to the remote area of the country.

Authoritative innovation-decision making is a process in which the adoption or rejection of an innovation is made by a few individuals in a social system. Organizations create within communities the basis for “collective understanding” and “shared meaning” which can be “reinforced by regulatory processes involving state agencies and professional bodies” (Greenwood et al., 2002, p. 59; Lorrain, 2001). Top-down decision making process is broadly practiced in Afghanistan. Therefore, the decisions of bureaucrats and lawmakers are important for the establishment of ANDS-BB at a national level.

**Organizational Structure Variables**

Centralization of an organization “encourages the implementation of innovations once a decision is made to adopt” (Rogers, 2003, p. 412). Freeman (1979) described the centrality of organizations as based on three concepts: “centrality as control, centrality as independence, or centrality as activity” in order to clarify the type of relationships that exist between different organizations held together by social channels of communication (p. 238). ANDS-BB’s purpose is to control the unnecessary duplication of activities, to focus on extending the developmental mission of ANDS, and to solve shared problems
among related organizations. This centrality is not to dominate them but to coordinate
their scattered activities to maximize their performance in media and communications in
Afghanistan (Freeman et al., 1980).

“Formalization is the degree to which an organization emphasizes its members’
following rules and procedures” in the implementation of an innovation (Rogers, 2003, p.
412). Powerful organizations can legitimize the institutionalization of a new formal
structure in a networked environment because they control resources and are able to
exercise authority in the organizational environment (Tolbert & Zucker, 1983). One of
the missions of ANDS-BB in terms of addressing public expectations is to provide
important media programs based on the ANDS guidelines but which require strong
government, United Nations, and parliamentary support. For these reasons, a unique
mechanism of social channels of communication is being proposed to encourage the
adoption of ANDS-BB.

Having a workable inter-organizational network is very important in the diffusion
of innovation (Newell & Swan, 1995) to overcome various socioeconomic pressures, to
contain costs, and address technological and legal challenges. Organizations try to
establish “multi-institutional arrangements” to stabilize the operation of their
organizations and to satisfy increasing public demands through their “cooperative efforts”
(Fottler et al. 1982). ANDS-BB must connect all the important decision makers for its
smooth function. In this case, the players are the government, the UN, the Parliament,
and the community and religious leaders.
CHAPTER TWO: MEDIA SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

Development of Afghan media is not yet parallel to the development of the Afghan society. Because of inconsistent applications and infrastructure, conflicts emerge regularly. With the removal of many years of oppression under previous authoritative regimes, Afghans are enjoying the freedoms permitted under democratic rule; some are taking these freedoms to excess. Habibullah Rafi, the prominent Afghan writer, poet, critic, researcher, political and media analyst and member of the Academy of Science says, “Freedom sometimes means anarchism and chaos. Media freedom should have an effective framework. Attacking the status of others, disturbing others and useless provocation are themselves against the freedom” (Safi, 2006). With the introduction of a new democracy, commercial media have changed the way the media address social issues, and, the majority of Afghans have not digested these rapid changes. Rawan (2002) suggests the penetration of modern media, including their concepts of social change, needs to occur in a gradual manner because Afghans are very sensitive about any new change that occurs around them.

With the privatization and commercialization of the media in Afghanistan, the perceived differences between development, modernization and westernization have been basically eliminated. Afghan media now use western strategies without taking into account the current critical political situation and fragile democracy of the country. For instance, Arzo TV, a local private television station in Mazar-e-Sharif, introduced a western-inspired fashion modeling program. For the first time in the history of Afghanistan, young girls were introduced to the viewing public as models in this program. The producer of the program said, “We want to develop our country and
introduce young girls and boys as models to the Afghan society and the world” (BBC video clip, 2007). One of the misunderstandings of these people who introduce western type programs is that they do not differentiate between development and westernization. Based on their programming strategy, commercial and private media see social development from the Western perspective of modernization, which the media assume can be applied elsewhere regardless of political, social, cultural, religious and economic differences. Modernization theory perceives communication to be a delivery system that will facilitate the diffusion of western ideas, behaviors and concepts as a way to develop third world countries (Melkote & Steeves, 2001).

Some media organizations in Afghanistan do understand communication to be inseparable from the culture of the society. For instance, community radio and the BBC provide culturally-based programs that are compatible with the national culture. *New Home, New Life*, a BBC soap opera in Afghanistan, is popular in rural communities for its spoken language of everyday life and for its sensitivity to local cultural and religious values (Afghan media reconstruction, 2002).

**Existing Media Outlets and Stations**

After the toppling of the *Taliban* regime in 2002, diversification of Afghan media took place rapidly. However, the development of media in the country has not developed at a pace compatible with the development of the society, nor is media development compatible with the economic realities of the public. In Kabul, eight television stations compete for the three hours of viewer attention in the evening schedule. This is also true in the major cities of other provinces, because people cannot afford to switch on their generators for more than 3 hours (Bearak, 2007).
There are about 50 radio stations and 16 television stations throughout the country, in which eight television stations operate only in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan (Mason, 2006). These stations compete for limited media consumption time. Furthermore, based on a 2005 survey, only 19 percent of the households in Afghanistan own a television set (Bearak, 2007). Private media are not all independent stations. Some radio and TV stations are under the control of provincial warlords (BBC Monitoring, 2007).

The media environment is full of conflicts and tensions. The affiliation of independent broadcasters with individuals increases the political tension in the country. Eshaq (2007), the general director of the National Radio Television of Afghanistan (NRTA), argues that because of the political and cultural sensitivities in Afghanistan, the licensing of community radio stations should not be made to those people “who have radical social and political agendas” (p. 7). But he avoids discussing the impossibility of this action because people hide their radical social and political agendas in Afghanistan. According to the researcher’s experience, it is difficult for some people in Afghanistan to say they are communists because they were involved in killing mujahidin. Similarly, some of them want to work for their own ethnic groups but they cannot announce it publicly. Some 30 community radio channels are being operated without the public knowing their hidden political and social agenda (Stiles & Weeks, 2006). Criticisms exist about the Tolo TV channel operating against the Pashtoon ethnic group. Similarly, the Aian TV channel is labeled as working for Rashid Dostum, an Uzbek-Afghan and powerful warlord. Based on the researcher experience’s, hidden social and political agendas do exist in Afghanistan with the help of which one ethnic or political group can
systematically marginalize another ethnic or political group. However, to prove these allegations, a separate study should be conducted to expose the political and ethnic affiliation of these stations. There is a need to provide the public with a media system that has a local and national development agenda but that does not enflame matters relating to ethnicity and politics.

Private broadcasters are currently under pressure from the government and from community and religious groups (BBC Monitoring, 2007). The friendly relationship between the government and the media is decreasing, as the government tries to impose restrictions based on their growing criticism about the ineffective policies of government and interference from the international community (Eshaq, 2007). Indeed, their criticism can be exploited by terrorist groups and fundamentalists to justify their war against “ineffective government.” It is perceived that the government worries less about the print media because the majority of people are illiterate and the level of print distribution is not that high (BBC Monitoring, 2007). However, the government has prosecuted many print journalists for the articles they have printed (BBC News, January 23, 2008).

Considering the role of media in Afghanistan, the political situation of Afghanistan needs to be seen differently from more politically stable countries. On the one hand, the government of Afghanistan is directly in war with terrorism. On the other hand, Afghanistan has newly started democratization and rehabilitation of the country. In this situation, the government needs a sympathetic media, not a critical media. Exposing the government’s failure without mentioning its success stories increases the hostility of the public toward the government. The media needs to understand whether their criticisms will help the government or the Taliban and terrorists. In five provinces, the
Taliban operates its own pirate radio station, Shariat Ghag (voice of Islamic Law). The purpose of the station is to persuade people to fight the government and remove the international military forces from Afghanistan (Barua, 2005).

This seems to be the only reason why the government is not ready to transform National Radio Television of Afghanistan (NRTA) from state-controlled to public service broadcasting. Therefore, instead of trying to convert the state-owned media into public service broadcasting, this thesis proposes that the government and the international community get behind a new model of ANDS-BB to help with the implementation of its national development strategy.

National Radio Television of Afghanistan (NNRTA) is the only government radio and television station that is operating in Kabul and in almost every provincial capital. But currently, in a financially competitive market, it is losing competent staff. Private broadcasting stations pay more; therefore, it is difficult for NRTA to retain its staff (Eshaq, 2007). The most rapid development of the media in Afghanistan is heading toward commercialization, suggesting that national development goals may be undermined, or at least neglected.

The government-owned broadcasting service is trying hard to expand its local coverage throughout the country. The government recently established a new radio and TV channel in Helmand, the most dangerous province in Afghanistan. However, the problem with the establishment of local radio and TV channels are their dim prospects for financial and technical sustainability. The government lacks the budget to support local production or to provide technical assistance and training in running local stations.
effectively. Even the government engineers are afraid of visiting provincial stations for technical support because the Taliban may kidnap and kill them.

Providing regular electricity to keep the programs on air is also a challenge. The NRTA station’s new director has asked the government to provide ready-made programs because the station lacks professional, technical and financial resources to produce them (Dayee, 2007). Different ministries, particularly the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), operate their own stations that have diverted the government’s funding process and programming mission from a central channel to government-owned fragmented channels. With the establishment of ANDS-BB, ministries will not need to operate their own channels because the development mission of the ANDS can be implemented centrally through ANDS-BB. This will strengthen the effectiveness of government by focusing its attention on a single broadcasting station to compete in the marketplace.

Foreign stations are also being operated under the supervision of those countries who have military presence in Afghanistan. These includes “BBC, VOA (under the name of Radio Liberty), Voice of Germany, Turkish Radio, Radio France International, the Voice of Freedom of ISAF” (Eshaq, 2007, p. 7). These affiliated stations often use the international financial aid allocated for the reconstruction of Afghanistan (Eshaq, 2007), and the Afghan government cannot monitor their budget or operations. This approach leads to lack of coordination, and often duplication, of programs and ineffectively uses the budget provided to Afghanistan by various international partners.

---

1 International Security Assistance Force
Affiliation of both government and private broadcasting stations with foreign countries and with international non-government organizations can create sensitivities. For example, such a practice can pave the way for the flow of foreign ideologies that may be in conflict with the cultural and religious values of Afghanistan (Kadushin, 2004). So, there is a need for the establishment of a centralized broadcasting station not only to centralize the budget that is allocated for the reconstruction of Afghanistan in media development but also to strengthen the national media production capacity of the country.

Unlike other commercial broadcasters, Shamshad is the only television channel that operates with the concept of providing educational, entertainment, cultural and religious programs that focus on the development and reconstruction of Afghanistan (Shamshad, 2007). However, none of its programs focus on curriculum-based education and human resource development. Its educational and public awareness programs only sometimes focus on the types of public awareness programs that the government and international community want to focus based on ANDS. The channel understands that the rural population is mostly ignored. Therefore, it has signed an agreement with AsianSet 2, a free-over-the-air satellite broadcasting system for Asia, to provide its programs throughout the country (News Release, 2006). Shamshad does seek to preserve the cultural and religious values of the country, but cannot focus heavily on such programs because of its commercial mission. ANDS-BB can, however, work with them side by side not to compete but to complement their programs.

**Current Media Laws and Regulations**

Unlike developed countries, Afghanistan lacks complex and abundant rules and regulations in its media environment. It has four important laws that affect media and
telecommunications: Mass Media Law (MML), Telecommunications Services Regulation Act (TSRA), Information and Communication Technologies Policy (ICT Policy) and Telecommunications and Internet Policy (TIP). TSRA promotes and develops “telecommunications services,” regulates and supervises “the telecommunications market,” guides “the relationship between the Telecom Regulatory Authority (TRA) and Operators, Service Providers, Users and other interested parties in the country,” and manages national frequency allocation for broadcasting and other wireless services (TSRA, Date unknown, p.4). ICT Policy deals with the use and availability of information and communication services to a wide range of users. ICTs include such technology facilities as the telephone infrastructure, broadcasting media outlets and the Internet to deliver text, image, sound and video services. As a government legal document, ICT Policy encourages the government-owned broadcasting station to use converging technologies, including the Internet, to reach its audience (ICT Policy of Afghanistan, 2003).

Another government initiative is its first law for intellectual property protection to encourage foreign investment and to protect the literary and artistic work of Afghans (Wick & Klosek, 2003). The government has established a board for copyright protection and has an office to “register inventions, discoveries, books and trademarks” (Muhammad, 2007).

Article 34 of the Constitution states, “Freedom of expression shall be inviolable. Every Afghan shall have the right to express thoughts through speech, writing, illustrations as well as other means” but Article 5 of Afghanistan’s Public Media Code obliges “the government to provide information requested by journalists or other citizens
unless it endangers national security, the country’s territorial integrity or the rights of others.” The government or other powerful politicians and warlords exploit Article 5 of the Public Media Code because there are no clear informational categories or criteria to explain what types of information endanger national security (Amani & Ibrahimi, 2007). However, these restrictions cannot affect ANDS-BB because it will not involve in political criticisms and because it is proposed as a broadcasting model with the development goal and for the implementation of Afghanistan National Development Strategy.

The current Afghan Media Law was developed in a gradual manner over the past several years but still has flaws which need amendments or complementary orders or laws to clarify the articles. The new Afghan Media Law orders the establishment of a Supreme Media Commission. The members of the commission are to be the ministers of Information, Culture and Youth, Communication and Information Technology as well as the representatives of the ministries of Justice and Haj and Auqaf (pilgrimage), Supreme Court, Parliament, Journalists Association of Afghanistan and civil society who will be elected through an election in the Parliament. The Afghan Media Law also clarifies the administrative structure of the National Radio Television of Afghanistan (NRTA) to be run by a director who will act as the executive head of the NRTA Commission and its seven members appointed by the Supreme Media Commission (Saeed, 2007).

Although the new Afghan Media Law is to be passed by the upper and lower houses of Afghanistan and submitted to the President before November 20, 2008 for approval (Amani & Ibrahimi, 2007), the President has refused to sign it because he sees problems with some articles that contradict language in the Afghan Constitution.
(Pajhwok Afghan News, December 26, 2007, b). The new Afghan Media Law includes four points that raise the concerns of journalist and other media activists. First, the law states that the NRTA does not belong to the government but to the state in order to fulfill the obligation of Article 75 of the Afghan Constitution (Koche, 2007) which obliges the government to “safeguard the interests and prestige of Afghanistan in the international community” and “devise and implement social, cultural, economic and technological development programs” (Afghan Constitution, 2004). The second point obliges the media outlets and their programs to conform to the teachings of Islam, to preserve morality and to not violate psychological security, defined as banning those programs that show scenes of the current war in Afghanistan. Third, the media law clarifies the structure of the Media Commission (Koche, 2007). Other than some grammatical and translation errors, the reasons for the President’s refusal to sign the Media Law are as follows:

Draft bill mentioned nine members for the Media Supreme Council which included members of the Supreme Court, parliamentarians and civil society members; however [the] constitution in the 151, 152 and 153 points did not allow parliamentarians and top Court members to undertake any other responsibility while they already have official assignments. Also, in the draft bill, appointment of the state-owned TV and Radio head requires MPs vote in the parliament which is also again contradictory to articles number 64 and 157 of the state constitution, …the 11th, 12th and 64th of the constitution specify the posts that require parliament approval[,] and the government-owned TV and Radio head post was not among them. The draft plan lacked clarity about media violations and punishments (Pajhwok Afghan News, December 26, 2007)

Journalists (NUAJ) can minimize the government’s influence over media laws. Sayed Fazal Sancharaki, the president of the NUAJ and a media activist, praised the outcomes of this relationship and said that the “new law... is better than the former law[,] and [it] is
in the interest of media officials and journalists. In many countries, media activists and media owners are concerned about such vaguely illustrated terms as defamation and insult that can lead to misinterpretation and exploitation of the law (BBC Monitoring, 2007). Therefore, with the establishment of ANDS-BB in Afghanistan, the ANDS-BB Law is thought to be essential to explain all those terms that are vaguely articulated in media related laws.

The justification of the government’s restrictions on media is based on national interest, insecurity and the existence of terrorists in the country is understandable, but the concerns of the media owners in Afghanistan is the lack of a trustworthy and independent media commission which can give them justice (Eshaq, 2007). Media Law in Azerbaijan tries to establish such an independent media commission in which non-governmental organizations, such as the Press Council, creative unions, religious organizations, labor unions, employer associations, women’s and youth organizations, sports organizations, and the National Academy of Sciences. Similarly, the faculty of journalism, the councils of art and culture and the UN organizations in Afghanistan can also contribute in the election of the establishment of a trustworthy Supreme Media Commission. However, based on the law, the parliament will have the right to approve the nominated candidate members.

The government imposes taxes on media outlets, but there is no clear strategic plan for how to use these revenues for the development of the media. The revenue of media outlets is not high because the annual tax of a newspaper is 10,000 Afghanis (200 U.S. dollars) while a television channel is 5 percent of its income. The level of tax

---

1 This comment was mentioned for the Media Law that was approved before the current Media Law. The interval between both laws was just a few months.
revenue depends on the annual revenue amount produced by the broadcasting station (Xuequan, 2007) which is not that high. However, that revenue can be increased with the development of the media.

Available Media Programming

Production capacity, audience, and controversial programming are the most important factors to focus on in this section. All these factors relating to broadcasting content are linked together in the media environment of Afghanistan. Discussing the lack of production capacity leads us to the issue of imported content. Imported programming raises the issue of lack of sensitivity to local audiences. Most of the government and the public criticism regarding the media are based on cultural and religious sensitivities. There are few criticisms based on political conflicts. The solution to these problems needs to be found, otherwise the conflict between the media and the government and between the religious leaders and the public will never end. For instance, the owners of the private broadcasting stations and the conservatives and traditional leaders could all come to mutual understanding and agreement were the broadcasting media to tone down airing of western programs and to provide culturally and religiously appropriate programs (BBC Monitoring, 2007).

Audience

Having urban-oriented programming content distributed throughout the country is not an effective strategy. Programs of the commercial and private broadcasting channels mainly focus on the urban population. The rural population is almost totally ignored by the national broadcasting channels. This may be one of the reasons that international NGOs are encouraged to fund the establishment of community radio facilities in various
provinces. Because the commercial stations center in Kabul where the advertisement revenue is higher, they focus on a very limited segment of the audience. There are fundamental differences between people who live in Kabul and between the few other cities and the rural population. Kabul was a modern city beginning with the Kingdom era of Amanullah Khan, Nadir Khan, and Zahir Shar, and continuing into the post-kingdom era of Presidents Daud Khan, the communism era of Noor Mohammad Tarakai, Hifizullah Amin, Babrak Karmal and Dr. Najeebullah (Seddon, 2003). Kabul is still a modern city. However, in the rural areas where 78 percent of the population lives, the general public has not yet accepted modernized thoughts of the cities. Extending what is suitable for the people of Kabul into the rural areas can create cultural disruption and conflict (Eshaq, 2007; Wali, 2002).

The ability to diffuse broadcasting content depends on people’s perception, which can be understood only by understanding the history of Afghanistan. The compatibility of an innovation to the values and past experiences of adopters is a key to paving the way for the diffusion of an innovation in a society (Rogers, 2003). The development and survival of the broadcasting stations depend on how they gain the trust of the public. In other words, the broadcasters’ main challenge is to demonstrate to the public via their programs that their stations are not against Islam and that their goals are not to westernize people, especially not to westernize females.

In 1919, King Amanullah Khan issued decrees about using Western-style dress banning the *burka*\(^1\) to modernize his traditional society. But, King Amanullah’s modernization process did not take into account the cultural and religious realities of the

\(^1\) Burka is an all-enveloping cloak worn by women in Afghanistan.
country, and the people resisted. The strong public backlash forced King Amanullah Khan to leave the country. Similarly, the communism-based social and economic reforms after 1978 - directly contradicting Islamic values - were strongly challenged by the Afghans and, within six months, the anti-communist revolt turned into a military *jihad*, one of the various kinds of Islamic struggles within the Afghan communities (Seddon, 2003). The roots of this military resistance were in rural communities. Therefore, broadcasting stations need to understand that there are fundamental differences between the rural and urban population of Afghanistan and their programming should reflect these differences.

**Content Controversy**

The diffusion of media facilities and the diffusion of their contents are totally different concepts. However, the outcomes of the one can influence the other. With the establishment of a new radio and television channel in Helmand province, the public was provided with alternatives to the programming of the national channels. More culturally sensitive programs replaced those which offended local cultural and religious values. In an interview about the establishment of the new channel and the airing of programs of other private TV channels, a resident of the Helmand province said, “At last we don’t have to watch dirty programmes like those on *Tolo* [A commercial TV channel].” Another resident also expressed his happiness by mentioning, “I am very happy that people can now watch their own television, in their own culture,…Before this, my children were watching Tolo TV, but now no one will watch that station and its Indian programmes.” The majority of Afghans, particularly the *Pashtoon* ethnic group and other rural population, appreciate programs that are based on their culture and religion. To
analyze these interviews, it is clear that people are not against the national channels but they are against those programs that offend their cultural and religious values (Dayee, 2007).

Cultural and religious insensitivity can increase future public negative reaction to the commercial TV channels. Although the commercial broadcasters with their investigative journalism have been effective exposing corruption and other negative aspects of government activities, they are also the target of public hatred. A sign of this distrust occurred during a conflict between Abbul Jabar Sabet and Tolo TV. The most interesting part of this conflict was that many civilians in many provinces including Kabul protested against Tolo TV and asked the government to close the channel. A journalist of the BBC commented on this issue noting that it was the first time that civilians had protested in favor of the government official. These protests apparently show that people dislike those channels that endanger the religious and cultural values of the country (Koche, 2007).

Production Capacity

Afghanistan lacks strong content production capacity. This leads the broadcasting station to ignore the audience, which increases controversy. Because of the weak production capability, broadcasting channels tend to air dubbed foreign movies and dramatic series. The result is a program schedule that faces serious political, religious and

---

1 Abdul Jabar Sabit is the Attorney General of Afghanistan and one of the strictest officials against corruption. The conflict was occurred when the Attorney General arrested Tolo’s officials accusing them of changing facts in his interview. But the owner of Tolo TV rejected these allegations. Sabit raided Tolo TV station, arrested three journalists, and detained them for short period of time. Officials of Tolo TV were arguing this act was attack on freedom of speech, but Sabit was accusing the channel of misusing its freedom.
public criticisms since what is aired is often against the culture and religion of the Afghan community (Eshaq, 2007).

The Senate’s Complaints Commission criticizes Tolo TV about programs that are contrary to constitutional law and Islamic values of the country (BBC Monitoring, 2007). The main criticisms revolve around female singers and dancers who appear immodestly dressed in its programs. The passionate and erotic scenes of imported Indian and Western movies have increased the cultural sensitivity. Qiamuddin Kashaf, a member of the Office of Chief Justice and the Council of Islamic Scholars, does not criticize Tolo TV in general, but criticizes those programs that include foreign movies with its semi-naked appearances of women. The owner of Tolo TV argues that the programs are appropriate because of their compatibility with other Islamic countries such as UAE and Qatar (Gardish, 2005). This is one of the common mistakes of the owners of commercial broadcasting stations. They consider Afghanistan to be like other Islamic countries.

The culture, social system and political history of Afghanistan are quite different from other countries. For instance, Afghanistan fought a long war with the Communist Soviet Union that served to radicalize the entire Afghan society. After almost three decades of war, Afghanistan has remained a marginalized country with little exposure to foreign cultures. Also, the majority of the Afghan population still follows a tribal system of leadership which is to some extent very conservative. Afghanistan needs to go a long way to reach the conditions that are comparable to other Muslim countries. Sheikh Mohammad Asif Mohseni, a famous religious scholar, explained the programming strategies of the TV channels in Afghanistan as follows

We are under attack from foreign traditions and cultures. We must not lose our Islamic identity … otherwise we will lose our liberty… Broadcasting "naked movies" has a bad influence on young boys, encouraging them to immorality. …Instead of feeding our starving young people, we will drive them to the grave and feed them to the dragon of AIDS. Then we will call it liberty (Gardish, 2005).
Some people even feel embarrassment watching Tolo TV with their families. A 40-year-old shopkeeper said, “One day in an Indian movie, a girl who was semi-naked was kissing the hero on the lips, and my four-year-old daughter asked ‘What are they doing?’ I had no answer for her.” He also blamed the channel as a tool for “preaching foreign cultures.” One female school-teacher labeled Tolo TV as the “enemy of the country’s culture.” A 37-year-old TV repairman praised Tolo TV for its news and discussion programs but criticized its other programs and said, “Tolo gives poison to the people, covering it with honey” (Gardish, 2005).

International support is significant but not sustainable when it comes to the development of media programs. International organizations tend to provide already produced programs to Afghan TV and community radio stations. UNESCO supplied NRTA 102 different programs collected from different countries. This was a positive step in filling the gap due to the weak production capacity of the station. These programs included “documentaries from Niger, Jamaica, Fiji, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe, fiction from Nepal, Mexico and Uruguay, children's series from Denmark and Germany, and English and business instructional programs from the USA.” The rights of these programs were purchased for two years. Although with good intentions, this support was not in the best interest of the country when building national capacity was one of the government’s priorities. Instead of purchasing foreign programs for a particular duration of time, effective support of the international community would be to help establish production capacity, helping the NRTA to produce its own culturally appropriate programming (UNESCO, 2002).
**Facilitating Media Consumption**

Understanding the importance of the media can be a first step towards real media development in the country. “Organizational innovation is the result of learning process” to utilize new opportunities in order to develop a better understanding of the relationship between an organization and its services in the community (Strambach, 2002, p. 218). In the case of Afghanistan, media consumption will depend on the overall consciousness of the people. Before bombarding the local communities with diversified media, local people need to realize how they satisfy their own interests and address their own problems. Because of the low GDP (UNOCHA, 2007), the overall consciousness of the people is limited to such prioritized needs as feeding their families and providing them shelter, medicine and other necessary living conditions. The media are not yet included among their fundamental priorities.

Poverty affects the listenership and viewership of the public. Radio listenership in poor areas has been demonstrated to be less than in fertile areas. Drought decreases public assets, including radio ownership. Listening hours may be limited to only 30-60 minutes depending on the affordability of batteries. “Batteries represent a significant recurrent expense for the poor people,” according to a report by BBC World Service Trust. Based on surveys, the majority of the Afghan families do have a radio, but the rural population use batteries to tune in radio programming because they do not have electricity. The rural population usually buys batteries at times when they are paid for their seasonal crops. Some two-thirds of the families who live in mountain villages are in debt. Yet, the assumption still exists ownership of radio is important (Afghan media reconstruction, 2002, p. 47).
Media consumption in Afghanistan is not like other countries where almost everyone has access to multiple types of media. Media consumption in Afghanistan depends on economics, geography and such technical consistencies as the availability of electricity throughout the country. Because of the lack of technical capacity in the mountainous landlocked country, terrestrial channels cannot reach rural and remote areas in Afghanistan (Bethune, 2001). Satellite broadcasting can serve as an alternative to terrestrial broadcasting. However, because of their weak economical conditions, people cannot afford to buy satellite receivers. Mohammad Eshaq, Director General of the NRTV, pointed out in the 39th General Assembly of the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) in Tokyo in 2002 that “five hours of TV broadcasting and 18 hours of radio broadcasting every day reach only 20 percent” of the Afghan population (Hauser, 2002). However, he does not mention what the population is watching and listening to and where they receive these programs because no comprehensive data exists in the country. Based on one audience survey, in 15 provinces, 40 percent of the people own a television set among which only 22 percent have access to local signals. It means that 22 percent of those surveyed are urban residents because TV signals exist only in provincial capitals. Radio ownership is higher at about 83-95 percent (Afghan media after three years, 2005). Radio listenership may have increased the national media consumption level. In any case, media consumption in Afghanistan needs to be facilitated in the districts and villages.

Based on the experiences of modernization processes in the past, Afghan society does not tolerate rapid changes (Seddon, 2003). Therefore, encouraging media consumption should not be oversimplified. The current economic, political and social realities of the country suggest that innovations should be introduced in a gradual manner.
based on its integration with traditional means of communication in Afghanistan (Rawan, 2002). Gradual development of the ANDS-BB can start with an experimental stage, leading to incremental evaluation of the successfulness of its diffusion process (Rogers, 2003).
CHAPTER THREE: THE CONCEPT OF ANDS-BB

Public Interest

One of the problems in the media policies, rules and regulations in Afghanistan is the lack of a comprehensive definition of the public interest. Without understanding the needs and expectations of the native population living in the geographical boundaries of Afghanistan, suitable media laws and policies cannot be established. Because of a lack of understanding of the media and communication needs of the public, Afghanistan lacks a public broadcasting system. Commercial broadcasters are focusing their attention on urban and elite populations in big cities. Western-types of programs are aired to traditional and often illiterate rural populations. Community radio stations are established in the poor communities where people cannot afford to pay for them to operate on a regular basis. Better identification of the characteristics of the whole public can help to find ways to address the concept of the public interest.

The principles of public interest within the system of ANDS-BB include the concepts of universal access, localism, competition and diversity (Napoli, 2001). In this thesis, these ideas are examined within the overall political, social, economic and cultural system of the country and the characteristics of the Afghan public. Indeed, the concept of public interest in Afghanistan may differ from the concept of public interest in other countries.

Universal service application needs to be dynamic to accommodate social, economic and technological changes. Lack of understanding of this concept may mislead the government and the international community into unrealistic prioritization of the distribution of broadcasting services in the country. For example, the NRTA started
transmissions to Europe and America on January 04, 2008, where the Afghan diaspora will have access to the Afghan national channel. This new development is counted by the Minister of Information and Culture of Afghanistan as the greatest achievement of the country (Jafar, January 04, 2008). However, inside the country, 80 percent of Afghans do not have access to television signals (Hauser, 2002). In the researcher’s opinion, if the government wants to implement the concept of universal access to media in Afghanistan, its greatest achievement will not be provide transmission signals to the Afghan diaspora in Asia, Europe, and America, but to facilitate broadcasting distribution services to the rural areas of Afghanistan. The plan to establish ANDS-BB Local Facilities is introduced in this thesis to address the concept of universal access by providing not only the connectivity facilities but also the provision of broadcasting content in those facilities.

The principle of localism is based on addressing the needs and interests of the local communities. The geographic and content-based definitions of localism are based on whether the programs should be limited to point of origin of the programs or the nature of the program content (Napoli, 2001). ANDS-BB balances both the geographic-bound production of local content and the nature of some programs. ANDS-BB is not a competitive broadcasting model but a complementary model. The concept of complementary model is based on filling the gap of existing programming strategy. The government-owned media focuses on government propaganda and commercial media focus on revenue generation through commercially-driven entertainment programs. To fill the missing programs, ANDS-BB will produce formal educational, human resource development and public awareness programs for the general population. Community broadcasters can produce their local news, public affairs and agriculture programs, but
they also need to make available the culturally produced programs of ANDS-BB. ANDS-BB programs will be complementary to all rural and urban community programming. Comparatively, the urban population has more access to educational institutions, capacity building programs, and health related knowledge and facilities than the rural population. Therefore, the ANDS-BB approach is designed in this thesis to ensure that the local communities get educational, capacity building, and public awareness programs through the broadcasting facilities of their local areas.

ANDS-BB is intended to fill the information gap and lack of content diversity in the media environment that the government has so far failed to create. Content diversity includes the types of programs and demographics that are missing or ignored. ANDS-BB will help policymakers to better understand the complementary roles that the broadcasting media can play. Therefore, the broadcasting model conceptualized in this thesis suggests three types of programs that will be useful for both rural and urban populations (Napoli, 2001). The goal behind the provision of these alternative programs is not to compete but to complement the available programming packages of the commercial, private and government-owned broadcasters.

**Mission**

The mission of ANDS-BB is to preserve public values, to address public expectations and to strengthen not only a complementary broadcast and communication system in Afghanistan but to strengthen other national institutions based on the Afghanistan National Development Strategy. Addressing public expectation through a programming strategy also extends its mission to focus on the rural population. All these can be achieved using the platform of the ANDS, which is the overall development
instrument of the government and the international community in Afghanistan. All the ministries, UN organizations, international and national NGOs, foreign embassies, and, even civil societies are working to implement the ANDS. The overall goal of ANDS-BB is to help the society develop. This can best be achieved through the ANDS in which related government and non-governmental organizations can offer their human and financial resources. Structural balance is a concern while using human and financial resources of disparate organizations within an inter-connected network. Therefore, ANDS-BB is proposed to reduce instances of the domination of individual units in the network (Lin, 1999, p. 32) and to protect the Afghan society from undue influence of international ideologies.

ANDS-BB needs to be established; otherwise, globalization of the media and media commercialization will work to undermine public values and public expectations in Afghanistan. International NGOs with their strong human, financial and technical resources can jeopardize the sustainability of the national and local media organizations in Afghanistan. Not that the activities of the international organizations should be eradicated in Afghanistan, rather, the skills and resources of the international media organizations should be channeled through an indigenous institution whose goal is to support community stations throughout the country.

Public Values

Public values include the strengthening of national identity, national integration and cultural preservation of the Afghan society that can be accomplished through ANDS-BB public awareness programs. The concept of public values gives the public a basis for trusting ANDS-BB programs since their culture and identity are portrayed. Building
cooperative relationships between the ANDS-BB and the public based on respecting their public values can accelerate the diffusion process of the ANDS-BB system.

**National Identity**

An effective programming strategy can help to develop the idea of national identity and a united nation through national discourse. These can be developed through defining national narratives, myths, historical prides, and traditions and folklore of the Afghan nation (Kaldor-Robinson, 2002). Discussing these values will give the public a sense of national and local identity which cannot be found in imported programs. The most important factor of these programs will be the portrayal of national traditions and the daily life of public. Hence, the public will come to understand and trust not only the programs but also the channel. Experiences show that Afghans are more attracted by programs focusing on local patriotism, as one aspect of the public’s national identity. They are proud of their origin, tribes, history and the historical monuments of their provinces (Afghan media-three years after, 2005).

**National Integration**

Political and social factors can help develop the role of media. What is important in other countries may not be important in Afghanistan. What is important for Afghan media is to accelerate the process of national integration through programming. To penetrate the autonomous communities, a media strategy that diffuses a common set of norms, values, and symbols is needed to lay the foundation for national integration. Community and private broadcasting stations should not be considered as contributing to the development of Afghanistan. When their programs are based on a goal to westernize, to modernize rather than develop the country. They may be established by those who
have racial agendas. The issuance of licenses to people who have a radical ethnic agenda seems to be encouraging ethnic conflicts. In this situation, the establishment of a centralized ANDS-BB is very necessary to provide all the broadcasting stations with programs produced in a central production center that gives priority to the goal of national integration.

It is important to clarify the role of media in the process of national integration. Afghanistan is a multicultural and multiethnic society and a federation of tribes and racial groups (Piacentini, 1996). The diversity and fragmentation of the communities has caused disunity (Adamec & Clements, 2003) and instability in Afghanistan. Therefore, it is necessary for the country to take steps to ensure the sustainability of its overall development (Chu, 1973). Afghans need some opportunity to detach themselves from their radical ethnic groups to ensure the successful process of national integration (Uwalaka, 1994). The role of ANDS-BB will be very important in the development of a united Afghanistan which is currently divided by linguistic, tribal and ideological factors (Altbach, 1985).

**Cultural Preservation**

Programming that is based on culture and religion can be influential in Afghanistan. People listen and watch programs without any resistance when they find broadcasting channels that reflect the daily life style of their communities. Talking with people through their own culture and religion can be an effective media strategy. Media can bring about changes that cannot be possible in daily life. As illustration, of the interviewees of the audience research declared that after hearing a religious program on radio, he decided to give permission to his daughter to choose her husband (Afghan
media-three years after, 2005). This decision represents a great change in Afghanistan where arranged marriages are broadly practiced.

Currently, commercial broadcasting programs are considered culturally inappropriate. Sex topics, using taboo words and irreverent talk, are controversial among local people. The BBC audience research reveals that some presenters in broadcasting stations are popular among both males and females because of their polite voices. Unlike the more developed countries, people dislike those presenters who talk improperly and make jokes, especially between opposite sex. One of the female presenters of Arman FM was criticized for laughing improperly and speaking recklessly with other male presenters. The major concern expressed by people is that these shows may affect the younger generation negatively (Audience perceptions, 2004). Unlike the commercial media, ANDS-BB’s programming strategy is to focus on not only the development but also the preservation of religion and culture of the Afghan society.

Public Expectations

Based on the analysis of news, interviews and discussion programs of the different media and survey reports, the Afghan people have high expectations from the government, United Nations and the international community (Stallard, 2003). With the changing landscape of the media, a more complex and demanding audience has emerged (Heudre, 2007). Unlike commercial broadcasting, the mission of the ANDS-BB will not be to generate revenue but to address what the public expects from the national broadcast station. In addressing public expectations, ANDS-BB will develop a strong relationship with the public and develop a programming strategy to benefit the general population of the country.
ANDS-BB will be judged by how much it satisfies needs other media cannot satisfy. Public expectations and public values are intertwined. Without respecting public values, ANDS-BB cannot satisfy public expectations. The most important public expectations are education, information and public awareness, entertainment in the context of culture, national development and human resource development, all of which will need to be accommodated in the programming strategy. The programming strategy should balance educational, entertainment, informational, capacity building and national development programs. It is possible that a single soap opera drama series will act as an umbrella genre to educate, entertain and advance the development of the society.

**Strengthening National Broadcasting Station**

The institutional mission of the ANDS-BB is to centralize the fragmented efforts of media development in the country by providing a national broadcasting platform. Currently, donor agencies, international NGOs and UN organizations are the main institutions supporting media for social change in Afghanistan. Everyone understands that if they reduce or stop their funding, real problem could occur.

Internews, an international media support agency, has helped to establish 28 local stations in more than 24 provinces (Afghan media- there years after, 2005). But their sustainability is a serious problem. The sustainability of community broadcasting is made more difficult due to the overall economic and poverty problems in the country (IRIN, 2007). Afghanistan is the fifth-least-developed country in the world, and the majority of its population is in poverty lacking access to basic services (IRIN News, December 31, 2007).
Another organization is Sayara Media and Communication\(^1\) which operates as a social marketing, advertising and public information organization that attracts donor funds for its various public awareness campaigns to bring about social changes in the country. Similarly, the organization Equal Access has distributed “satellite radios to 3.8 million rural communities in Afghanistan to listen to the organization’s satellite radio network.” Equal Access provides students, teachers, and villagers community development programs including “teacher training, landmine awareness, agriculture, governance, women’s health, and national news” (Equal Access…November 12, 2007). The organization also stages dramas in public facilities about social problems in schools for example (Road to salvation, November 12, 2007). Equal Access also attracts funds from other donor agencies to produce its dramatic series and public awareness programs. The dissemination of radio drama takes place through FM micro-transmitters and satellite radios placed in Community Development Councils (CDCs), established by the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development (MRRD), “cultural centers, schools and law courts,” and other public places throughout the country. The drama program is also aired via other FM networks. Villagers are usually invited to these public facilities to listen and discuss the radio programs. The most interesting aspect of the production is that the content is evaluated by a content advisory group. The members of the advisory group differ based on the type of programs Equal Access produces. For instance, in one of its drama series about human rights in Islam, the content advisory group was “made up of government employees from the Ministry of Women Affairs, member of the Supreme

---

\(^1\) Source: Sayara official site: http://www.sayara-media.com/
Court, academics, and experts in human rights and Islamic Law” (Human Rights and Islam, November 12, 2007).

Prior to 2003, media assistance activities were implemented and funded by the organizations mentioned in the diagram below. Assistance included the production of radio programs, the provision of technical assistance in distribution, establishing media centers, development of educational programs, printing and distribution of newspapers, facilitation of free flow of information, creating radio stations and training centers, giving financial support, conducting public awareness programs, paying salaries, distributing radios, and providing grants to NGOs (Miller, 2003).
Table 4: Media Assistance Activity by Donor and Implementing Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Implementing Agency</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>BBC World Trust (UK)</td>
<td>Training more than 150 journalists and technical staff in Kabul and the regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Working with the AIA to assess future media needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Providing radio information programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emergency reconstruction of Afghan media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>Baltic Media Centre</td>
<td>Provision of services to the Ministry of Information and Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Denmark)</td>
<td>Assistance in the start-up and running of the news program ‘Good Morning Afghanistan’ on Radio Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Technical consultant on national distribution system for Radio Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AINA (French)</td>
<td>Establishment of the Afghan Media &amp; Culture Center in Kabul and start of media development in the regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BBC World Trust (UK)</td>
<td>Radio education for Afghan children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Khiid</td>
<td>Printing and distribution of a national Afghan newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTZ</td>
<td>Bilateral assistance</td>
<td>Support the free flow of information and media development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID/OTI</td>
<td>Afghan entrepreneurs</td>
<td>Start first independent, non-state owned radio station for Kabul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IWPR (UK)</td>
<td>Training to reporters and editors of Bakhtar Information Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internews (US)</td>
<td>Establish training center in Kabul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Technical assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Media law advocacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radio Afghanistan</td>
<td>Technical and financial support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loya Jirga and Bom conference support</td>
<td>Grants to Internews, AINA and MSS to provide programs that educate public on events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Voice of America</td>
<td>Salary and communications support to reporters on the ground in Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Expansion of information on relief efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Office of Migration (Switzerland)</td>
<td>Distribution of 30,000 radios in 11 provinces across Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation of a daily humanitarian information bulletin for radio broadcast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provision of grants to Afghan NGOs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AACA database and websites of government organizations or implementing agencies

Figure 7. Media Assistance Activity by Donor and Implementing Agencies

Source: (Miller, 2003).

Fragmented funding processes can lead to duplication of activities. International non-government organizations spend huge amounts of money in recruiting international advisors, renting offices and establishing separate production and distribution systems.
With a strong national ANDS-BB station and production center, the program production and distribution costs can hopefully be reduced and duplicated effort lessened when formal and informal education, edutainment, informational, capacity building and public awareness programs are arranged collaboratively.

**Rationality of ANDS-BB’s Centralization**

Centrality does not mean dominating other organizations within the context of ANDS-BB’s operation. It represents a joint mission of interconnected organizations or groups in a social channel of communication to address shared problems. Freeman (1979) describes centrality-based control and activity as a way to clarify the types of relationships among different organizations in social channels of communication. The operationalization of ANDS-BB will be mainly based on centrality as a way to get control of the public awareness budget so that its mission can be coordinated among the efforts of all organizations. ANDS-BB will look to the public awareness budgets of other organizations and seek to utilize it for a single development mission. With centrality based on activity, it will offer a coordination mechanism with other organizations by providing them a single platform for implementing their public awareness and development activities (Freeman et al., 1980). It should help to minimize concerns about weak coordination affecting international aid to Afghanistan (IRIN News, December 31, 2007).

Centralization of broadcasting stations is not a new concept. Public service broadcasting stations are supported by a single structure in many countries. Radio Audizioni Italiane (RAI), a public broadcasting company in Italy, was established to control the many terrestrial and satellite channels when high numbers of separate
channels decreased the financial resources of individual stations resulting in low quality of programs. Dual model of broadcasting, commercial and public service, dominates broadcasting market in Italy to effectively promote democratic practices, education, entertainment and information (Hibberd, 2004). There are several factors that justify the establishment of a centralized ANDS-BB in Afghanistan. They are listed below:

**Lack of Monitoring and Coordination System**

The Afghan government lacks a strong monitoring, evaluation, control (IRIN News, September 28, 2005) and coordination system (IRIN News, December 31, 2007) to ensure the public interest. Local warlords and influential ethnic leaders dominate media at the provincial level because of the weak central government (Afghanistan, 2006). The lack of coordination among government institutions undermines productivity and achievements of the government’s policies (Strand, 2002). This has also forced the international community to rush in funding different media projects without any consideration of the country’s overall priorities.

Other factors also contribute to weakening the monitoring power of the government. The government and security officials, political leaders, drug lords, warlords, armed militias, hostile groups and the Taliban are the most obvious elements intimidating and threatening journalists, especially at the provincial level. Psychologically, self-censorship is regarded as a practice within the journalistic profession (Afghanistan, 2006). In this situation, the establishment of a centralized ANDS-BB is important to monitoring some of the intimidating factors at local levels. With the support of the government, the Parliament and the international community, ANDS-BB is in a good position to minimize the influence of local hostile elements.
**Weak Economy**

Financial problems exist for both the public and the media. The rural population lives with “little changed since the Middle Ages” (Looking ahead, 2005). The economic condition of the people strongly influences ownership of media receivers. For example, the improved economic conditions of people in Balk, Herat and Nangarhar has led to increasing numbers of families owning television sets in the region. Similarly, the influence of wealth is considered stronger than literacy rate on rates of media consumption. When the price of the women’s magazine Malalai doubled, its sales dropped from 200 to 50 issues per week. The overall development of the regions influences the types of media consumption. For example, compared to TV viewership, radio listenership is higher in the most isolated and less developed provinces because people cannot afford to buy television sets (Afghan media-three years after, 2005). In this situation, a centralized ANDS-BB can ensure the provision of balanced media structures in those areas where the public really needs them. Although two-thirds of the families who live in mountainous areas are in debt, and cannot buy radios and televisions, they think media is important (Afghan media reconstruction, 2002).

Afghanistan is a poor country. Its development budget is based on foreign aid to prioritize rehabilitation projects (Ichniowski, 2002). The growing number of private media outlets is interpreted as media development. It is ignored that they are financially unstable and dependent on individual sponsors that undermine editorial independence of the media (BBC, 2002). The establishment of the most modern TV station and the production of the most interesting and entertaining programs are useless when they cannot be sustained financially (Heudre, 2007).
Afghan society lacks the culture of paying for broadcasting. Otherwise, it would be possible to recommend community owned radio or television stations. Based on a 2005 audience survey in 15 provinces, only 40 percent of the people owned television sets. The ownership of television sets does not mean access to television signals. Only 22 percent of the audience had access to local signals, 3% had cable, 4% had satellite and 11% people had their own DVD devices. The figures in this survey may be exaggerated if they did not conduct the survey in rural or remote areas. If the survey was collected in only urban or semi urban areas, where the ownership can be high, the statistics might be higher than average. In these figures, the percentage of cable is very low because of its unavailability as well as its monthly subscription. While the survey shows the radio ownership is high at about 83-95 percent, radio does not require any monthly fees (Afghan media after three years, 2005). It is very important to understand the relationship between the media program availability and poverty. A poor villager who does not have money to buy a notebook for his son cannot afford to operate a generator which will make it possible for him to watch commercial entertainment programs. A centralized ANDS-BB can provide the public with high quality education, human resource development and public awareness programs through their local facilities by subsidizing these programs and working to make facilities available.

Globalization of the Media

The fourth factor is the influence of globalization, in which strong international broadcasting channels such as the BBC, Voice of America and Radio Free Europe, dominate the Afghan media market and undermine the establishment of national broadcasting stations (Ozanich & Wirth, 2004; Fitzpatrick, 2004). Meanwhile, media of
neighboring countries, particularly Iran and Pakistan, can create political tension in Afghanistan (Hollifield, 2004). Since 1973, Radio Pakistan, the state-owned station of Pakistan, has been broadcasting programs over Afghan borders. For instance, Pakistan has launched 10kw short wave regional stations at Quetta, near the Afghanistan border. Its programming agenda may not be in favor of the national interests of Afghanistan (Jensen, 1999).

As the realized worst case scenario, dozens of pirate radio broadcasters also exist in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), the Eastern part of Afghanistan, and in other frontier regions along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Pirate radio stations, usually called *FM Mullahs*¹, preach fighting against the government of Afghanistan and the international peace forces while railing against the West and its supporters (Fatah, 2006). Some religious leaders in Pakistan who fuel the *Taliban*² also support these border radio channels. Afghanistan cannot counter the influence of media globalization and the propaganda of terrorists in the border areas until the local communities are provided alternative media and programs. ANDS-BB is the appropriate alternative because it not only respects the cultural and religious values of the country but also provides development-based programs.

*Lack of Central Production Center*

Unlike most other countries, Afghanistan lacks a strong national production company. The audience market is not sufficient to cover the production expenses of the broadcasting stations everywhere and the government has not taken up the challenge.

---

¹ Religious leaders
² Taliban is a religious military movement in Afghanistan. They ruled Afghanistan for six years (1996-2001) but were toppled by the invasion of the United States. Currently, they fight against the democratic government of Afghanistan operating from the tribal areas between Pakistan and Afghanistan.
International private agencies are somewhat involved in program production making use of the budget allocated for the development of Afghan media and public awareness campaigns. Government departments doing production, do so without coordination, resulting in duplication of programs. As mentioned, the government cannot effectively operate NRTA because of its overstaffing, low salaries, lack of management expertise and weak production. Ministry of Education and Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development operate their own channels (Stiles & Weeks, 2006; BBC News, 2007). Instead of operating separate channels with separate production centers, the government offices could coordinate their programs and production efforts in a more cost-effective manner through a single production center.

The international community supported the establishment of ERTV and about 30 community radio stations in different provinces without plans for their sustainability. With the current weak economy, the establishment of independent terrestrial transmission for ERTV is not practical. ERTV can easily collapse because it lacks strategic planning, sustainable funding sources and skilled management. NRTA now provides free transmission slots on which to air ERTV educational programs (Stiles & Weeks, 2006), but the production of the separate ERTV programs will not survive for long.

Production of high quality programs satisfying the needs of targeted audiences is still a challenge. According to a 2004 audience study, because of the lack of high quality programs, listeners constantly switch between stations. Local state radio is blamed in the capital city for broadcasting old and local news (Audience perceptions, 2004). Provincial government-owned TV stations mainly broadcast NRTV’s programs because they are not well-equipped to produce local programs (Afghan media-three years after, 2005). The
production of high quality programs is essential to satisfy and retain the curious audience, and that is only possible in a single production center.

Broadcasters import foreign programs because of the lack of production capacity in Afghanistan. When these programs do not portray the unique social issues of Afghanistan, their usefulness to Afghan audiences is in doubt. Imported programs were produced for specific societies based on their own cultural focuses. These can create sensitivities in Afghan communities. The language of the dubbed programs is another problem. For instance, the Egyptian Sesame Street is dubbed in Dari. Although Dari is one of Afghanistan’s two official languages (Middleton, 2004), it cannot be understood by the majority of Afghan children, particularly Pashtoon speakers. According to the researcher’s six years of experience working with Afghanistan media, some of the international NGOs do what is easiest for them rather than what is useful for Afghans. Minority groups such as Uzbak, Tajak, Hazara, Baloch and others have the right to receive programs in their own languages.

The integration of production centers is an alternative solution in providing high quality programs and reducing high cost of production. Collective action among stakeholders can increase effectiveness in project implementation. Maintenance of the project can be ensured because the income, resources, interests and skills of the homogeneous groups can be concentrated on a shared mission (Kurian & Dietz, 2004). Producing new programs is expensive, which limits their affordability. If production activities are the responsibility of ANDS, there will be no reason to produce separate programs. The international aid allocated for addressing the social problems of Afghanistan will also be integrated and coordinated.
ANDS-BB is a suitable location for a central production company because it will have been assigned the responsibility for implementation of the ANDS, addressing all social problems. Public awareness budgets can be integrated and coordinated to produce higher quality programs and to deliver them cost-effectively.

Lack of Balanced Broadcasting System

Based on the comparative analysis of world media systems, the model of “duopoly broadcasting\(^1\)” is found in various countries. Although the duopoly model is mainly used to justify the co-existence of public and commercial media, in some countries other community and private media also operate, extending the duopoly system concept (Cave, 1996; Aufderheide, 1996; Daalmeijer, 2004; Metykova, 2004; Murillo, 2003; Brown & Althaus, 1996; Hibberd, 2004; Boardman & Vining, 1996). For example, that model has been introduced in South Africa. According to Chapter 3-Article 5 of South African media law, the broadcasting service is classified into three broadcasting categories, which can be named a tri-opoly\(^2\) model: commercial, public and community broadcasting services (Broadcasting Act, 1999).

Media consumption in developed countries is different from consumption in developing or poor countries. Giving the poor people limited but highly targeted choices can better address the needs and expectations of local users. In a duopoly or tri-opoly system, people can more easily decide whether they like to watch or listen to the commercial broadcasting with Western programs or the educational and culturally appropriate programs designed with them in mind. Duopoly or tri-opoly broadcasting

---

\(^1\) In this thesis, duopoly broadcasting system means that dominant broadcasting systems are public and commercial.

\(^2\) Tri-opoly broadcasting model means that the three dominant broadcasting models dominate in the country are commercial, public and community-based.
systems are a way to minimize the excessive and unnecessary fragmentation of broadcasting media satisfying both the rural poor and the urban population effectively. Otherwise, in a country like Afghanistan, the audience market could not cover the production expenses of such diversified independent media structures.

Government can play a role in clarifying the differences between commercial, public, and community broadcasting. In the case of Afghanistan, the government can authorize designated broadcasting systems the opportunity to reach out to specific audiences. Although the public service broadcasting system in the United States is not a unified structure, its philosophy of programming is based on a definition of public interest that encourages public and community broadcasting that does not compete with commercial operators (Aufderheide, 1996). Regulatory bodies in the United States monitor media programming schedules to ensure that media stations fulfill public interest obligations. For example, three hours of educational programs per week for children is one of the requirements to be met in the renewal of license of any broadcasting station (Jordon, 2004). Many U.S. commissions have been constituted to apply public interests obligations in digital broadcasting to represent political and cultural life of America (Napoli, 2003). But in Afghanistan, the media law and regulatory bodies are to some extent unaware of those kinds of obligations. A central ANDS-BB can serve as a balance to the programs currently offered by commercial and community broadcasters in Afghanistan.

**The Existence of Fragmented Society**

A relationship between fragmented society and fragmented media can be hypothesized, in that fragmented media increases tension among fragmented
communities in countries where ethnic and political conflicts are serious threats. The fragmentation of a society into ethnicity, race, religion and political ideologies leads different groups developing ideological media to advance their cause. Afghanistan is a multiethnic society and a federation of tribes or groups (Piacentini, 1996). Ethnic groups and political parties directly or indirectly support particular media for the purpose of promoting their ethnic and political agendas. Diversification of media and fragmentation of society are potential threats to a united Afghan nation. Mir Ahmad Joyanda, a civil society activist and member of the Afghan parliament, says, “Unfortunately, our media is excessively political and party-bounded” (Safi, 2006).

A too diversified media can undermine the young democratic process in Afghanistan. Defending ethnic and political rights are positive factors in a democratic nation, but when political and ethnic affiliated media are used to radicalize the already divided ethnic and political communities, the net result may be unacceptable chaos. Might it not be easier to vocalize the segmented groups via a broadcasting channel that creates an environment where everyone is represented as a member of a society rather than as a member of a group (Aust, 2006)? The process of unifying the media can be a way to unify the nation, a way to ensure successful national integration (Uwalaka, 1994).

To reach out to the autonomous communities of Afghanistan, a media structure is needed that diffuses a common set of norms, values, and symbols to lay the foundation for national identification and national integration (Chu, 1973). This thesis proposes that a central ANDS-BB can play a vital role in the development of a united Afghan nation which is currently divided by linguistic, tribal and ideological factors (Altbach, 1985).
CHAPTER FOUR: STRUCTURE AND PROGRAMMING

Radio and Television Broadcasting

Rapid implementation of an innovation creates problems (Rogers, 2003). With the passage of time, people learn about an innovation through the availability of information or direct or indirect experience of it. People need time to understand the importance of an innovation. An advantageous and culturally and religiously compatible innovation can increase the diffusion and adoption of the innovation or new idea (Feder & O'Mara, 1982). Provision of television programs and expansion of Afghanistan National Development Based Broadcasting (ANDS-BB) to every village is a long-term process. Therefore, the broadcasting system needs to be expanded gradually. Development of the media in Afghanistan needs gradual penetration to integrate traditional means of communication and the modern media (Rawan, 2002). Otherwise, the rural communities will resist the diffusion process (Seddon, 2003). Changing the attitudes of the donor agencies and the government takes time as well.

Through ANDS-BB, the rural population can be provided with regular radio programs as the first stage. It will be important to establish a strong contact mechanism with the community leaders in each village before television programs are provided in the second stage. The programs need to be offered during an experimental stage in order to evaluate the strengths or weaknesses of the diffusion process (Rogers, 2003). The experimental process can be started in the capital cities of the main provinces, i.e. Nangarhar, Kandahar, Paktiya, Herat, Badkhshan, and Balkh. The third stage would be the establishment of ANDS-BB Local Facilities in clinics, schools, districts and other
public-access places in remote villages where residents would be invited regularly to watch ANDS-BB programs.

**Structure of the ANDS-BB**

Organizational innovation is the administrative and technical process of understanding the operational and structural rules and roles (Damanpour et al., 1989) and the performance of a new social structure in an environment (Newell & Swan, 1995). This chapter discusses the functional structure of Afghanistan National Development Strategy Based Broadcasting (ANDS-BB) geared to reach remote areas. The chapter also provides a broadcast programming strategy to solve problems of the government and the international community regarding their public awareness, human resource development and universal educational goals. It focuses on the rationality of a centralized broadcasting structure that complements existing structures while extending its programming to district and village levels.

**Kabul-Based Structure**

The implementation of Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) goals via media communications needs the establishment of a separate broadcasting station to coordinate all public awareness programs and to provide educational and human resource development programs. Taking technical, economic, professional and social challenges into account, ANDS-BB needs to be operationalized as a production and program distribution service to meet international standards of universality of access and diversity of programs.

The Kabul-based station will act as a distribution center providing programming to Kabul through terrestrial transmission and transmitting programming to the 34
province-based stations and various village-based facilities via satellite. The Kabul station will be expected to establish a close collaboration with Kabul University, other prominent schools, and government and UN organizations to produce high-quality programs. Where appropriate, these programs will be shared with all provinces.

Expanding the opportunities available in Kabul out to the provinces will be a key factor in the universalization of education, human resource development and public awareness efforts throughout the country. The plan is for programming to be delivered via ANDS-BB to all the provinces using satellite communications. The U.S. has established the American Corner and English language training centers in Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif, Jalalabad, and Heart to improve the students’ English language skills (Ambassador Khalilzad, 2005). It is very difficult and expensive, however, for the international community to establish these centers in every province. Yet it is possible, via satellite communications, for ANDS-BB to disseminate programs on a weekly basis to the provinces, where school and university students can watch them in their own educational locations.

Based on their capacities, provincial stations can also re-broadcast the central signal through terrestrial transmission for local distribution. The current structure of the government-owned NRTA in Kabul and those in the provincial capitals are the same, but that structure does not cover all districts and villages. Plan for the ANDS-BB structure is to supplement village structures with ANDS-BB Local Facilities.
Unlike provincial capitals, villages do not have retransmission facilities. To serve this purpose, ANDS-BB Local Facilities, open public media usage facilities, will be established in clinics, schools and district offices where women, students, farmers and illiterate and professional people can be invited to watch appropriate programs. Health programs, for instance, would be shown in clinics, educational programs in schools, and
other programs in district governor offices. Community leaders could play an important role in assuring that these facilities are available.

Province-Based Structure

Provincial stations are important in connecting Kabul with the provinces. They are the only way to minimize the concerns of those who claim diffusion of innovation increases the knowledge gap between rich and poor (Rogers, 2003). Providing formal and informal educational, human resource development and capacity building, national development and thematic public awareness programs produced in Kabul constitutes an important part of ANDS-BB’s mission. The provincial stations will re-broadcast many of the programs produced in Kabul and the provinces.

Provincial stations are important in decentralization of educational and capacity-building opportunities. Currently the population of Kabul is growing because it is the only city with abundant opportunities especially in terms of education and business. Provincial stations will be the way government ministries, the UN and other international NGOs cost-effectively reach the country’s large population, even in those areas where UN activities are stopped because of insecurity. A single capacity-building or educational program can be broadcasted to 34 provincial capitals and in every village in Afghanistan if interconnected organizations help the Kabul-based station in production and distribution.

Village-Based Structure

With the notion of a gradual development process, the integration of traditional means of communication and modern media can conceivably become the central nervous system of Afghan society. The rural population is located far away from the modern big-
city lifestyle. Physical and social distances between communities often set the conditions
which either accelerate or slow down the adaptation process in diffusion of innovation.
One constraint on communication media in Afghanistan is the difficulty in extending
media access to rural areas where the majority of audiences live (Heudre, 2007). While
focusing on the rural population, the mission of ANDS-BB will be to reduce the physical
and social gap between the rural and urban population by establishing local media
facilities in every village where people can watch and listen to programs at no cost. This
thesis recommends the establishment of ANDS-BB Local Facilities in clinics, schools or
district government offices.

The establishment of ANDS-BB Local Facilities will need the support of the
opinion leaders, both the government officials and the leaders in the community. District
governors can play an important role in convincing tribal leaders to facilitate the opening
of these facilities. Since hierarchical social status influences the diffusion of innovation,
villagers reluctant to watch television programs in the beginning may be convinced to do.
Such hierarchical status exists in every village where people are not independent in
decision making. Traditional and religious leaders are the people who can most influence
the decisions of villagers. Within a family, the father and husband is the most important
person deciding what is good or bad for its members (Afghan media-three years after,
2005). If the people with high social status accept the idea of watching ANDS-BB
programs, they can influence the rest of the villagers who may constitute the late majority
of the adopter’s category (Knoke, 1982, p. 1316). Hence, the relationship between
ANDS-BB and the local community can be expected to be an important factor in the
diffusion process.
The establishment of new facilities and the diffusion of innovations are impossible in Afghan communities when they are perceived to be against their religious values. On the positive side, community contribution has a long history in Afghanistan where villagers donate land to build mosques, schools and clinics, where they mutually agree to sink deep wells or join together to take on projects benefiting the village (Quarterly project, 2007; Vorgetts, 2005). In one study on adaptation of radio in Afghanistan done by Radio Free Europe, the authors reported that, “There is one mosque for every 50 to 100 households.” These were all “community-built, community-run, and community-supported institutions, the expenses of which are paid through voluntary or community-organized mechanisms” (Fitzpatrick, 2004). When establishing social channels of communication with community leaders, it will be important to show them that ANDS-BB can benefit the villagers. Potential adopters will actively examine the price and performance of an innovation. A set of information helps to reduce uncertainty about these issues (Quirmbach, 1986, p. 33).

*Figure 9. Decision Making People in Villages (Afghan media-three years after, 2005).*
In most cases, the existing traditional and social institutions and infrastructures can be used for the establishment of these facilities. *Shuras*, community councils, can be utilized in each village to establish ANDS-BB Local Facilities in schools, clinics, or other public locales where people can easily watch and listen to TV and radio programs. Local ANDS-BB facilities will function as communal media consumption locales to raise public awareness and to promote the importance of TV and radio programs. These community-based facilities will create new possibilities for family, and then individual, media consumption in local communities once people understand their importance.

Community leaders can be convinced to sustain the operation of ANDS-BB Local Facilities in the future. Culturally and religiously, villagers fund mosques in Afghanistan. According to researcher’s own experiences during his official visits throughout the country, people buy loudspeakers, electric generators and prayer mates for mosques. Every village family is required to buy woods to keep their mosques warm is winter seasons. *Mullah* or *Imam*, acting as a priest in mosque, are provided food three times a day and paid by the villagers. They take care of the daily maintenance of the mosques. Similarly, the community leaders and villagers should be convinced to take the responsibility of the technical maintenance of ANDS-BB Local Facilities. However, it depends how people perceive about these facilities and the programs they offer. In the long-term, villagers can be trained for the technical maintenance of these facilities.

As mentioned, the rural population has little or no access to television signals; therefore, clinics will likely be the best places for rural women to watch health, family, women’s rights and childcare programs. Similarly, schools can provide students and teachers and parents with relevant educational programs. People will be offered these
programs through close coordination with religious and community leaders who play an important role in encouraging villagers to allow females to watch television programs, for example (Kwape, 2000). The idea of inviting people to clinics, schools or district governor offices will be the first step in an experimental stage to increase media consumption behavior.

ANDS-BB Local Facilities will act as arrangement centers for public awareness campaigns. The people in charge of these facilities will invite villagers to watch their related programs on a regular basis. For instance, the head of a clinic will invite village females only during specific times of the day when ANDS-BB airs women’s or health programs related to women. As the decisions of families are taken by heads of the families, they need to be contacted to clarify the types and advantages of the programs.

There is a strong rationale behind the establishment of ANDS-BB Local Facilities. One of the unique potentials of media consumption in rural areas is the characteristic of collective usage. The consumption of television is high in some rural and remote areas because villagers gather around the only television set in the village. They share information on a regular basis. It is estimated that 78 percent radio listeners and 67 percent television viewers exchange information with other people about what they listened to and watched. Usually the community leaders, elders and educated people in the community are looked to for information (Afghan media three years after, 2005). If community and religious leaders and heads of families are convinced, the diffusion of the ANDS-BB system will grow rapidly. The communication process related to ANDS-BB’s diffusion will be easier in this communal system when villagers know that the types of programs they will view are not against their religion or their culture. Eventually, it is
hoped the villagers will develop positive attitudes about ANDS-BB which will help the adaptation process (Rogers, 2003).

**Programming**

An innovation is diffused through the society successfully only if there is need for it and if community members are convinced about its benefits (Rogers, 2003). In addition to strengthening the national broadcasting station based on a development goal of extending access to the rural population, the mission of ANDS-BB will be to reduce the illiteracy rate, to develop the human resources of the country and to preserve the culture and religion of the people. Three basic types of programs, e.g., formal education, human resource development and public awareness, will be carefully designed by ANDS-BB to complement the existing broadcasting system and to avoid undue political and community resistance.

**Curriculum-Based Educational Programs**

Afghan students are very interested in education, but the capacity of the government to satisfy the overwhelming demand for education is weak. Supporting well-educated professors and effective and comprehensive academic programs are challenges to the government. During the Taliban regime, from 1996 until 2001, the universities became semi-madrasar (religious schools). The Taliban focused only on religious subjects and only about 4,000 students were accepted nationwide in the poorly funded universities. Females were totally banned from the universities and schools.

Since the fall of the Taliban, there has been a 900 percent increase in enrollment of students. There are four private institutions and one private university in the country but their tuition fees are too high for poor students. Also, 13 government universities and
six government educational institutions operate in the country. Student enrollment has risen to 40,000 college students nationwide. High school enrollment increased to six million. In 2007-2008, 51,556 students took the government university entrance examinations, but the universities and institutions could only accommodate 19,815 of them (Loepf, 2006; Ministry of Higher Education, 2008; Ministry of education, 2008). The literacy rate is almost 36 percent in Afghanistan, which is very low (USAID, 2004). According to the Ministry of Education (2008), 11 million out of around 30 million people are illiterate. However, there is no comprehensive survey to certify this figure. The educational level varies from area to area (Afghan media three years after, 2005). Comparatively, the literacy rate is higher in urban areas than in rural areas. It is not surprising that the need for educational programs exists mainly in the communities. According to the BBC audience research, the public is much interested in educational programs, particularly those that offer help and advice (Audience perceptions, 2004).

Educational programs, particularly curriculum-based ones, are lacking in the broadcasting schedule. Tolo TV, one of the commercial channels, is appreciated for fun, entertainment and news bulletins, but is also criticized for not focusing on educational programs (Audience perceptions, 2004). Besides having an interest in programs about the history of Afghanistan and democracy, people are interested in English education programs, especially among the young. With the growing competition to get jobs in the UN and other international organizations and the availability of educational and professional fellowships and scholarships, people are interested in learning English. Some international organizations provide the broadcasting stations with imported educational programs. For instance, dubbed Sesame Street program cannot portray the
unique social issues and educational needs of the Afghan children. Sesame Street, as with all the imported programs, was originally produced for a specific society with its own cultural focus.

In this social crisis, ANDS-BB can be an instrument supportive of the mission of education through the education for all. Supporting human resource development, public broadcasters are in a good position to strengthen the professional skills of educators and inform the public through discussion of educational issues (Kwape, 2000). The new ANDS-BB will articulate a strategic approach to reduce the educational gap by delivering to students nationwide formal educational programs that promote a lifelong-learning process.

The government-administered entrance exam for higher education, Kankor, is a tough exam, and Amadage Bray Kankor\(^1\) is not available to all who wish to sit for this examination. Poor rural students cannot afford to go to the cities to prepare themselves for this exam. Because they must stay near home to support their families, many students miss the preparation courses leading to the taking of this exam. An ANDS-BB model can help them by initiating Kankor preparation programs focusing on the essential subjects including physics, math, algebra, trigonometry, biology and chemistry. The main focus of these programs will be curriculum-based, including primary, secondary and high school subjects to attract different levels of students in all villages. Similarly, youth and childhood development, adult education and human resource development programs for teachers can be accommodated in ANDS-BB’s daily programming strategy (Kwape, 2000).

\(^1\) It means preparation for government entrance exam.
The provision of educational programs will need strong coordination with other organizations to achieve ANDS-BB’s strategic goal. Partnerships with the government, UN, NGOs and others can help the station in the production of high-quality programs and the creation of a distributing mechanism. New guidelines will need to be developed in the Ministry of education on the role of educational programs that are delivered via television. ANDS-BB will seek to reinforce the national strategies of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education (Kwape, 2000).

As the experience of India has shown, concerning accessibility, quality and cost of education, distance learning works well for those people who have jobs or who are “unable to get enrolled in a conventional system of education.” The affecting factors normally include poverty and lack of accessibility (Nimbalkar et al., Date unknown, p. 2). Education should not be confined to physical attendance in schools. Government bodies and the ANDS-BB in Afghanistan should be involved in joint educational programming production and the launch of a satellite system that will provide tele-schools for school children, countrywide classrooms for college students, open universities and other relevant projects on a long-term basis (Reddi, 2005).

**Human Resource Development/Capacity Building Programs**

After almost three decades of war, Afghanistan’s administrative system has collapsed. Low capacity is one of the main constraints in the development process. In the coming years, the need for skilled human resources will increase as the senior staff retires. A serious concern is the lack of capacity building at provincial levels; this can jeopardize the effectiveness of the central government (Massing & Bari, 2005). Human
resource development is recommended in this thesis to cope with the government’s lack of capacity building, and it should be a major part of ANDS-BB’s programming strategy.

Although broadcasting stations are effectively used for skills development and capacity building in India, this is a totally new practice in Afghanistan. As Calder (2002) explains, the use of broadcasting for skills development can provide technical and vocational education and training to cope with the growing demands of public, non-government organizations and the private sector. Fortunately, the opportunity exists to invest in capacity-building because the ARTF, the multi-donor trust fund in Afghanistan, reserves funds for just this purpose (Massing & Bari, 2005), which can be made available to ANDS-BB’s human resource development programs.

One of the missions of ANDS-BB should be to address the needs of human resource development throughout the country. However, without strong coordinated networking, production of human resource development programs will be difficult. For instance, coordination with Ministry of Education is required to start radio broadcasts of adult literacy programs that can target 51,000 teachers throughout the country with the plan of increasing their professional skills (Afghan media reconstruction, 2002, p.38). Similarly, there is a need for management, administrative and other professional, technical and vocational programs. All this requires coordination.

The social channels of communication concept works well for human resource development programs. Related offices can easily be contacted at the provincial level about the programs to be aired. Because the lack of skilled human resources is a serious problem, ANDS-BB can create obligatory partnerships with all the government offices. The “Three-Hour Rule” of the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) in the United
States mandates that commercial broadcasters provide three hours of educational programs per week for children (Jordon, 2004). Somewhat along those same lines, the Afghan government staff, particularly those in the provinces, will be required to watch during office hours every day a one-hour human resource development program related to their divisions.

**Public Awareness Programs**

The Afghan government and the international community spend a considerable budget of public awareness campaigns to bring about positive social changes in Afghanistan. The main problem with the public awareness strategies of these organizations is duplication, their temporary nature, the high costs of those programs and the fact that only a small proportion of the national population can be reached. Each organization conducts separate awareness campaigns and establishes separate distribution mechanisms for them. These efforts make the activities excessively expensive.

The government, the UN, and NGOs use different approaches in their public awareness campaigns. Some send out teams to conduct community awareness programs in mosques and community centers, such as clinics and schools (Tolliver, 2002). This can be effective as an approach but it is impossible for a single organization to send its community awareness teams to all of the approximately 24,000 villages in Afghanistan (Denmark in Afghanistan, 2008). Since the deployed teams cannot reach every village on a regular basis, it is logical that they will focus only on easy-to-reach communities. Such efforts may be unsustainable in the long run. During a media conference in 2007, the director of Sayara Media and Communication pointed out that Sayara organizes public awareness campaigns in regions and provinces, and it sometimes conducts
communication campaigns at the district level (Heudre, 2007). Hard-to-reach districts and villages are locations that public awareness campaign organizers tend to by-pass. Also, there is no assurance that two organizations conducting a similar public awareness program in districts and villages will not focus on the same audiences.

Some organizations provide public awareness projects according to their budget. Their limited budgets and resources limit their focus to a small audience, which makes them less effective. As noted earlier, the Egyptian version of Sesame Street is recorded on video cassettes and shown in remote villages through VCRs (Middleton, 2004). The project could dub the program not only into Pashto but also into other languages such as Uzbaki, Tajaki, Hazaragi and Balochi. These initiatives do not guarantee regular exposure in communities. A limited number of people will watch them once and forget them. There is no organized mechanism to deliver these programs on a regular basis. Similarly, deployment of teams to villages cannot guarantee all the villages will be covered. UNDP called for proposals to conduct radio programs on justice issues by producing, designing and broadcasting “radio spots, presentations, panels, interviews, dramas, debates, surveys, songs, stories, documentaries, etc.” The programs were provided in only 15 districts of two provinces (Aslam & Jamal, 2007), although Afghanistan has approximately 326 districts (Education development center, 2006). Providing programs in a few villages of 15 districts is not an effective awareness effort.

Public awareness campaigns are mostly based on the thematic sectors of Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). For instance, the gender equity sector empowers women; the counternarcotics sector eliminates illegal involvement in narcotics; the anti-corruption sector educates the public about corruption; the
environmental cross-cutting sector tries to change environmental attitudes and behavior; and the justice sector upholds justice and strengthens laws (ANDS, 2005). Dealing with all these social issues in terms of communication campaigns needs a single organization to coordinate and consolidate individual public awareness investments. ANDS- Based Broadcasting’s public awareness programming can act as a national strategy center. There is no need for separate production capacity in ERTV, MRRD, Aina, Equal Access and Internews to produce separate public awareness programs. The support of some international organizations will be useful, however. For instance, the European Commission will not provide funding to media as a separate sector but promises funds through “sector programs – governance, health and rural development” (Media is development, 2007). The phenomenon of social channels of communication in the context of ANDS is ANDS-BB’s best option for sustainability and to attract funds for sector programs for education, public awareness, and human resource development.

**Edutainment**

Soap operas can be a popular and effective media communication genre in Afghanistan. BBC soap operas are popular in rural communities, providing information about mental health issues; post-traumatic shock syndrome, especially in children; “repatriation, reintegration of returnees, mines awareness, health, hygiene and sanitation and conflict resolution.” The BBC radio soap opera is also popular among men, women and children for its use off the language of everyday life, concentrating on the spoken language rather than a literary one (Afghan media reconstruction, 2002, p.40). Based on a 1997 survey of 60,000 households conducted by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aids (UNOCHA):
"New Home, New Life" has been incredibly successful in communicating key messages to vulnerable people….listeners of "New Home, New Life" were far less likely to become victims of landmines … than non-listeners. It attributed a dramatic fall in the number of mine accidents after 1994 to the impact of mines awareness messages in the soap opera. Around 47 % of people interviewed by UNOCHA were daily listeners of "New Home, New Life". Anecdotal evidence suggests that listenership has risen since 1997 and the overwhelming majority of the Afghan population (including refugees in neighbouring countries) now listen to the programme in one or both languages, many of them regularly (UNMAPA Report, 2002, p.29).

Entertainment Education is very important as a strategic tool of ANDS-BB for boosting the sectoral concentration of the government and non-government efforts for social change and social mobilization (Tuft, 2006). A well-designed soap opera can not only address the social problems of Afghanistan but can also provide an integrating public entertainment opportunity in the context of the Afghan culture.

The success of the popular BBC radio soap opera is based on its producer’s contacts with the target audience and receiving audience feedback. The monitoring and evaluation team in the BBC Afghan Educational Project always fed the scriptwriters with data collected through survey, audience need analysis, focus groups, interviews, observations, and audience letters to develop certain themes of the soap opera (Afghannistan: Radio soap opera “New Home, New Life,” 2007). ANDS-BB should use the same research practices in order to address public expectations and needs. Such strategies will make the Kabul-based station accountable to the public.
CHAPTER FIVE: SOCIAL CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

Not restricted to the individual level, diffusion of an innovation can also take place within an organizational system. Rogers suggests there are five stages: 1) agenda setting, 2) matching, 3) restructuring, 4) clarifying, and 5) routinizing. He says agenda setting explains an innovation as a solution to an organization’s problem; the matching stage pairs the problem with the innovation; the restructuring stage discusses the accommodation of the innovation to the organization’s needs and structure; the fourth stage clarifies the implementation of the innovation in a gradual manner; and the last stage explains the institutionalization of the innovation on the basis of participatory process of the leadership (Rogers, 2003). Using the idea of communication channels, Afghanistan National Development Strategy Based Broadcasting (ANDS-BB) wants to routinize itself as a development institution in the context of Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and involve for partners, the government and the United Nations, to pave the way for the diffusion process.

ANDS-BB needs financial, political, and cultural sustainability to offer broadcasting services over the long term. The diffusion of the ANDS-BB model will occur within a social structure, which is a set of interrelated but not identical units. A common goal of the interrelated units can strengthen the nature of such interrelatedness (Rogers, 2003). The involvement of relevant partners through an integrated mechanism can ensure the routinization and accelerate the diffusion process of an innovation. Ohshita and Ortolano (2006) explain that the solution to poor diffusion of an innovation is to promote integrated planning and the involvement of related partners. Therefore, Afghanistan National Development Strategy is introduced in this thesis to provide the
ANDS-Based Broadcasting a platform of coordination and collaboration, to link the local communities with the government and effectively utilize a development budget. The diffusion of ANDS-BB is expected to be difficult in the organizational and social structure of Afghanistan until it establishes an institutional relationship with the government, the international community, Parliament, and local community leaders.

**State with Cooperative Micro-Societies**

Afghanistan is a federation of strong micro societies where the concept of state is very weak, often leading to anarchy. Unlike what is done in more mature democratic countries, the central government of Afghanistan tries to impose by force regulations on micro societies in order to implement the core mission and goals of the development process. However, to be sustainable, the relationship of the government and micro societies must be horizontal to accelerate the concept of interaction between the state and the public (ANDS, November 05, 2007). Based on this argument, public interest can only be secured if the central institutions become stronger than, but are accountable to, the micro societies in order to create a balance between anarchy and dictatorship in the current political situation of the country. This interaction is more likely to happen when the social channels of communication among the community leaders, Parliament, the government and the UN in Afghanistan are used effectively. Community participation in development projects has increased in recent years in many developing countries (Kurian & Dietz, 2004). The outcome of social channels of communication is more likely to lead to development of public policies based on public interests.

The establishment of any new institute, therefore, needs to be both centralized and decentralized in nature. The balance between these can lead to better balance between
authoritative and chaotic situations. Centralization of institutions is essential to minimize ineffectiveness caused by unnecessary fragmentation of activities, while decentralization can create strong extended relationships. The decentralization process can include producing programs based on audience research and public feedback. Without taking care of public expectations and participation, a centralized institution can lead toward an authoritarian relationship. Throughout its history, Afghanistan has witnessed both dictatorship and anarchy during centralization and decentralization processes. The government of Taliban was a clear example of a centralized process that implemented dictatorship based on violent force. Prior to the Taliban government, the Mujahideen era exemplified anarchy. The development of Afghanistan requires a central institution to build capacity at the level of local communities. One future imperative of the centralization-decentralization process of development is to build Afghans’ capacity to create an effective civil society (ANDS, November 05, 2007). The relationship of ANDS and ANDS-BB is greatly strengthened in the context of this imperative because one component of the ANDS-BB programming strategy is human resource development.

![Centralization-Decentralization Process of the Development](image)

*Figure 10. Centralization-Decentralization Process of the Development*
Centralization of the Development Budget

The development budget needs to be coordinated with and within the government in order to evaluate the effectiveness of projects funded and implemented directly by the international partners. Coordination can also build the capacity of the government institutions in monitoring and evaluation over the long-term. As of today, the major part of the development budget spent directly by the international partners has been focused on quick-impact projects that are not sustainable. The well-being of the public can only be secured through sustainable projects whose impacts are long-term. Afghanistan National Development Strategy encourages and promotes long-term projects.

There is a need to use international grants wisely. The services of the international NGOs are very expensive, but they have professional human capacity and resources to manage the international aid. Service delivery by the international NGOs will jeopardize the self-sufficiency of the national institutions in Afghanistan. National or government institutions will remain marginalized in the implementation process of the development budget. If international organizations continue controlling the implementation of international aid, human resources of the national institutions cannot be developed. The well-being of the public can only be secured if the development budget is controlled and monitored by the state institutions. The transfer of service delivery from international institutions to national institutions will help not only to build the capacity of the government but also to coordinate the implementation of ANDS. The current government is almost ignored by the NGOs in the implementation of development strategies. Out of U.S. $15 billion in international grants, five percent has been spent by the government so
far. The government has remained weak which has caused distance between the
government and the public and undermined the democratic process of the country.

Since ANDS portrays the government of Afghanistan as a strong but accountable
institution. (BBC Discussion, November 22, 2007), the ANDS-Based Broadcasting
structure is needed to help the government and the international community implement
the national agenda. It must focus on the establishment of a national broadcasting station
to take control of public awareness, human resource development and educational
initiatives in the country. On one hand, it should control the international funding process
for media programming, and, on the other hand, it should creates a strong network to the
local community in the context of culture and religion, which are currently violated by
commercial broadcasters.

**Institutional Relationship**

Institutional relationships develop when there is a common mission among
different organizations (Freeman, 1979). The formal relationship of ANDS-Based
Broadcasting with other institutions is to share organizational activities for the solution of
shared problems in order to develop effective performance measures for ANDS-BB
(Freeman et al., 1980).

The social channels of communication strategy of ANDS-Based Broadcasting are
proposed in this thesis as a way to get the public to cooperate in the implementation of
ANDS. Based on the communication channels concept, ANDS-Based Broadcasting will
first establish a relationship with the Parliament and UN in order to be protected from
political interference by the government. Secondly, ANDS-BB will cooperate with the
government in the implementation of ANDS using government authority and resources at
the micro-level (provincial, district and village). The homophileous relationship with
different social units based on similar activities guarantees a more sustainable operation
in which ANDS-BB can breed, form, and maintain interconnected activities. A single
homophileous relationship does not mean a similar relationship will be formed with all
organizations. Different types of relationships can be formed based on “different levels of
homophily on different dimensions.” Therefore, ANDS-Based Broadcasting looks to
create multiplex relationships with the community leaders, Parliament, the government
and the UN, based on systematic and common issues (McPherson et al., 2001, p. 437).

The influence of social capital, mainly human and financial resources, within and
between subgroups is also very important in social channels of communication. One of
the strongest factors of social channels of communication is the integration of subunits to
expand access to diverse resources (Frank & Yasumoto, 1998). Subunits may be local
authorities, community and religious leaders or other influential and rich people. Some of
these relationships may be weak; therefore, the combination of collective efforts of
government officials, parliamentarians, UN organizations and community leaders are
essential to fill the gaps. The relationship of parliament and government officials with
these subunits plays an important role in the social channels of communication system.
These relationships can financially sustain ANDS-Based Broadcasting in the future
because every community leader has his own connections in the community and can
easily persuade villagers to financially support the ANDS-Based Broadcasting model.
Therefore, in the long-term, financial capital can be transferred from the micro to the
macro level.
The concept of social capital explains the use of financial and human resources and sets the criteria of human action (Teachman, Paasch & Carver, 1997). The relationship of ANDS-BB with the government and representatives of the international community in Afghanistan is based on transferring financial resources (wealth) and human capital (knowledge and experience) to ANDS-BB. Similarly, ANDS-BB’s relationship with Parliament is necessary to secure the legal power and authority to enjoy long-term sustainability in the power structures of the social system. Human capital of the different ties can develop the human capital of ANDS-BB and thus decrease its dependency on their partners.

Relationship with the Government

As the biggest administrative unit in Afghanistan, the government will be an important ally in helping ANDS-Based Broadcasting expand administratively and be
sustainable over the long run. Powerful organizations, such as government ministries, can legitimize the institutionalization of formal structure because they dominate and control the centralization of resources and authorities in organizational networks (Tolbert & Zucker, 1983).

The relationship of ANDS-BB with the government is very important in the current situation. However, it should be limited to the implementation of ANDS in order to defend its editorial independence. ANDS-BB can support and complement the government’s initiatives, policies, and programs that are based on ANDS. For example, the UK government, as a representative of the international community, is the lead nation in drug control in Afghanistan (Counter narcotics, 2006). Therefore, supporting the drug control policies and initiatives of the Ministry of Counter Narcotics means to support the policies of the international community.

Ministerial budgets, strategies, projects, local offices, personnel and resources enrich the programming strategies of ANDS-BB. The Ministry of Higher Education can second a highly qualified professor to ANDS-BB to deliver curriculum-based programs regularly. ANDS-BB will not need to worry about the financial obligations because the professors are paid by the government. Similarly, The Ministry of Education can help ANDS-BB produce educational and literacy programs. In short, every ministry is mandated to implement a particular sector of ANDS which can benefit ANDS-BB in producing high-quality programs.

The support of the provincial governors is also crucial to help ANDS-BB to expand its network from big cities to small remote communities. Provincial governors can direct district governors to help in establishing ANDS-BB Local Facilities. District
governors working under the direct supervision of the provincial governors play an important role at the district level. They can ensure the function of ANDS-BB’s program distribution mechanism and facilitate conducting public awareness campaigns in villages. They can encourage local community and religious leaders to seriously consider the establishment of ANDS-BB Local Facilities. ANDS-BB cannot force or influence local leaders but district governors can. Therefore, based on this relationship, the government can empower ANDS-BB. With the help of the district governors, local leaders will be encouraged to buy a satellite receiver, a television set and a generator for each facility, ensuring regular exposure of ANDS-BB programs.

The Afghanistan National Development Strategy mandate gives ANDS-BB the authority it needs to use existing government resources to strengthen its broadcasting and distributing networks in the country. One of the most important government initiatives was the establishment of the Community Development Councils (CDCs) at the district and village levels which can be utilized for the establishment of ANDS-BB Local Facilities. As of September 30, 2007, 18,303 Community Development Councils had been established, under the National Solidarity Program of the government funded by the UNDP. These councils occur in 345 of 398 districts in all 34 provinces to prioritize community development plans and projects through the direct participation of the villagers (Paiman & Armour, 2007; World Bank, April 30, 2007). Similarly, all the clinics, schools and district governor’s offices, including the 104 newly established Health Centers (health centers, May 1, 2007) that can be used as ANDS-BB Local Facilities in rural areas with the help of the related ministries.
The cooperation of the government and ANDS-BB is essential to standardized value-added activities. Indian broadcasters and the Indian government have established strong cooperation to provide the public with high-quality educational and human resource development programs (Nimbalkar et al., Date unknown, p. 2). The government bodies and ANDS-BB can establish the same cooperation to provide tele-schools for children, countrywide classrooms for college students, open universities and vocational training (Reddi, 2005).

ANDS-Based Broadcasting ensures the success of the Afghan government in accomplishing its strategic goals for the public benefit. The millennium development goals (MDGs) set the strategic goals of the education, culture and media of ANDS and obliged the government to address education and human resource and skills development in Afghanistan. The government’s five-year strategic benchmark is to ensure the protection of the media as independent institutions and accessibility of the media to all Afghan women and men by the end of 2010. This means that if the government has not facilitated public access to at least radio and television signals in every village of the country, it will count as a failure of the government. Therefore, the cooperation among different organizations as social channels of communication can ensure the availability of radio and television access throughout the country by establishing ANDS-BB Local Facilities. Also, the central ANDS-Based Broadcasting production center will provide educational and human resource development programs to fulfill the obligations of the government.
Relationship with the International Community

Professional integration can create a coordinated relationship among organizations to systematically implement their shared goals (Newell & Clark, 1990). Multilateral collaboration, strategic opportunities and long-term perspectives of the international organizations can help the establishment of ANDS-BB. In Afghanistan, UNESCO is the main external policy entrepreneur trying to link inside and outside policy actors to accelerate the process of establishing public service broadcasting and creating a collaborative mechanism of support for its funding (Stiles & Weeks, 2006). However, the government is not yet ready to transform the National Radio Television of Afghanistan (NRTA) into public service broadcasting. Instead of waiting for the establishment of public service broadcasting, this thesis proposes a unique model of broadcasting which can fill some of the gaps not being addressed by commercial broadcasters or by government broadcasting.

Cooperation between the Afghan government and the international community was mandated through the Bonn Conference in 2001, the Afghanistan Compact in London conference on February 1, 2006, and other international agreements. Based on the Afghanistan Compact, the international community was advised to respect the cultural and religious values of Afghanistan. Another principle of this cooperation is the creation of partnership between the Afghan government and the international community to build capacity of the government and civil society institutions. Some of the important principles of the cooperation are that both partners will ensure the allocation of balanced resources throughout the country and public investments in infrastructure, education, health, agriculture and rural development (The Afghanistan Compact, 2006).
Every international organization is mandated to implement certain activities. ANDS-BB is conceptualized in this thesis to utilize the mandates of each international organization. Some international organizations may wish to not support the establishment of ANDS-BB because of its organizational mandate. For instance, the World Health Organization (WHO) does not need to fund the establishment of ANDS-BB because it is mandated to support health-related issues. In this case, with a cooperation agreement, the programming strategy of the ANDS-BB can attract the WHO funding through its health awareness programs. ANDS-BB’s public awareness programs are broad enough to attract the public awareness budgets of the different organizations in the context of ANDS.

The financial sustainability of ANDS-Based Broadcasting will depend on the support of the international community. Because of the political and economic dependency of the government on the international community, ANDS-BB also needs stabilized international financial support. With the development of other social institutions, however, ANDS-BB will shift its dependency from international grants to national and local resources in the future. This will take time. The most important achievement will be, in the first stage, to attract the favorite attention of local communities by providing them educational, vocational and capacity-building programs. Later, the public can be convinced to financially support the ANDS-BB system in the future. However, it needs strong commitment of the community leaders to convince villagers to financially support it. As an alternative, the government should provide long-term funds for its operation. District governors should regularly meet community leaders in order to convince them to maintain the technical aspects of ANDS-BB local facilities.
the same way they support other communal projects such as cleaning canals, protecting
trees on their village mountains and supporting mosques.

**Relationship with the Parliament**

Segmenting networks into groups is not free of concerns because every unit of the
social system may preserve its boundaries (Kadushin, 2004) and thus jeopardize the
independence of other units. One of the most influential units in the social channels of
communication is the government, which will keep influencing ANDS-BB with political
and economic pressures. However, the programming format of ANDS-BB will tend to
eliminate the need of government political pressures. ANDS-BB is a development
broadcasting model that complements the programming schedules of other broadcasters.
However, ANDS-BB’s political impact is expected to be long-term. Educating the public
and building human resources in the society will have considerable influence on political
behavior in the future. To circumvent financial or political pressures from the
government, ANDS-BB needs to establish a formal relationship with the Parliament to
secure its editorial freedom. As the representatives of the public, Parliamentarians can
make the government accountable and pressure it to keep ANDS-BB free of government
control. Similarly, Parliament can oblige the government and the international
community to secure the financial functionality of ANDS-BB.

The relationship between Parliament and the ANDS-BB is based on strengthening
weak ties that cannot be strengthened by the government or the international community.
Some local leaders are against the government and the international community, but have
strong relationships with the Parliamentarians. ANDS-BB can better utilize these contacts
for the establishment of ANDS-BB Local Facilities and its own financial sustainability in the local communities.

**Relationship with the Community Leaders**

Opinion leaders become the earliest adopters if innovation is based on a group’s norms (Becker, 1970). The diffusion of a new idea or program takes place at the village level. These ideas or programs can be spread or banned through village councils controlled by community leaders. Therefore, the role of opinion leaders should be considered seriously in Afghanistan because media structures and media contents are closely related to the “traditional, economic, ideological, and communicative structures” of the country (Rawan, 2002, p. 167). Community leaders have the power to ban the diffusion of an idea or program. For instance, community leaders in the tribal areas between Afghanistan and Pakistan banned television usage because of the number of uncultural and un-Islamic programs. Their main concern was that since their people are illiterate, they cannot follow television programs positively (Mandokhel, 2007).

The relationship of ANDS-BB and community leaders is very important for its cultural sustainability. Implementation and confirmation of the ANDS-BB model will take place at the community level, so community leaders are the most influential people to put ANDS-BB to use and to reinforce the top-down decisions made (Windahl et al., 1992, p. 187). Without convincing such leaders, ANDS-BB cannot be diffused in the local communities. Community leaders and heads of the families influence the decision-making process. Maliks (community leaders) and Mullahs (religious leaders) are influential people who can encourage villagers to send their females to watch the ANDS-BB channel programs (Kwape, 2000).
The involvement of community leaders is also important for security reasons. It can minimize potential threats of Taliban attacking ANDS-BB Local Facilities. Because of the involvement of the international community in the establishment of ANDS-BB and the opposition of the Taliban to television, ANDS-BB is a vulnerable phenomenon. Gerry Barr, the president of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation, concluded that the reason for insurgents’ attacks on reconstruction efforts is the involvement of military forces in such activities. The overall development process can be disrupted if it is initiated by the international community without giving decision-making, planning, implementation and monitoring authority to local leaders (CTV News Staff, October 27, 2007). So, ANDS-BB needs to involve the community leaders not only to ensure the security of its local facilities but also to sustain its cultural obligations.

Cost-Effective Mechanism/Concept

Relative advantage makes an innovation beneficial, which increases its degree of adaptation based on its compatibility with the social norms (Singer, 2004). To understand the cost-effectiveness of the diffusion of ANDS-BB, the concept of an inter-organizational network is introduced in this thesis based on “multi-institutional arrangements” (Newell & Swan, 1995). These arrangements can help to overcome various socioeconomic pressures, cost containment, technological and legal challenges, to satisfy increasing public demands and to stabilize organizational and operational structure of ANDS-BB (Fottler et al., 1982).

The cost-effective concept justifies the establishment of strong social channels of communication of ANDS-BB with the government, the United Nations, and the community leaders to provide educational, capacity building and public awareness
programs at a low cost. For instance, if the Ministry of Education wanted to organize a teacher-training program in the 34 provinces (only in the provincial capitals which excludes all the districts and villages) of Afghanistan at a cost of $1,000 per program, it would cost the ministry $34,000. But with this amount of money, ANDS-BB could broadcast 34 different programs for 34 provinces. In this case, ANDS-BB could reach 34 provinces (plus all the districts and villages) by airing one program the total cost of which would be just $1,000, freeing up $33,000 for other development activities. This justification can be applied to every organization working in Afghanistan. Suppose, 30 ministries want to organize just one public awareness program each in the 34 provinces (only in capital cities). It would cost the government $102,000,000. But ANDS-BB would spend only $30,000 to give the program universal coverage. ANDS-BB would coordinate the program with the Ministry of Education, and together they would inform each Ministry of Education offices in all provinces, including provincial capitals and district and village-based offices to watch the program. So, the government would save $101,970,000. The effectiveness of in-classroom training is of course more than good broadcast programs. However, less effective training is better than not receiving it at all.

The most attractive aspect of the cost-effective model of ANDS-BB is re-usage of a program several times a year. For instance, to organize a program for the second time for a different audience, the government must spend $102,000,000 again, but ANDS-BB could use the recorded programs for an unlimited number of times without any production cost. ANDS-BB’s production cost would be zero for the second time. The government and the international organizations hire international consultants to train the staff in different ministries, for a limited number of personnel. With the help of ANDS-
BB, these programs can be recorded, translated and distributed throughout the country.

There would be no need to hire them again.
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

What is the mission and philosophy of Afghanistan National Development Strategy-Based Broadcasting (ANDS-BB) in Afghanistan? It is the preservation of public values, the provision of high-quality programs compatible with the cultural and religious values, needs and expectations of the Afghan public, strengthening national institutions, the elimination of gaps between the rural and the urban population, and implementation of the national development goals of Afghanistan’s National Development Strategy. Public expectations will be addressed through curriculum-based education, human resource development and public awareness programs. All programs, whether they are entertainment or informational will be based on the concepts of national development and national integration, in the context of the social, cultural and religious realities of Afghanistan.

ANDS-BB will be a centralized production, distribution and broadcasting system for the country. But it will produce its programs based on audience research methods. It will establish local viewing facilities in clinics, schools, and other community locations to provide media participation opportunities associated with public awareness campaigns using satellite communications. Programs will be coordinated with community leaders to invite targeted groups to watch related programs on a regular basis. It is understood that the establishment of distribution and public awareness facilities in every village will be the result of a series of negotiations and communication among community leaders, Parliament, the United Nations and the government needed to provide ANDS-BB with adequate financial, human and institutional resources.
To answer the first research question about why the Afghanistan National Development Strategy is important for the effective operation of a new broadcasting model in Afghanistan, ANDS-BB focuses on utilizing the vision, coordination mechanism, and sectoral public awareness strategies of ANDS. The political, economic and social vision of ANDS will help the establishment of an ANDS-BB station accountable to the public with its rural development goal, sensitivity to the religion and culture of the country and unique programming strategy based on education, human resource and public awareness. ANDS can also provide a platform of social channels of communication that can be used to share information and human and financial capital, to develop trust and to coordinate communication strategies among different government and non government organizations. It provides a cost-effective mechanism to manage the development budget and to reduce duplication of programs.

To answer the second question, the functional, administrative and structural mechanisms of ANDS-BB can minimize political and legal conflicts with the government. Its operational and administrative structure is based on the implementation of ANDS's sectoral areas to support educational, health, agricultural and rural development, human resource development and public awareness programs.

To answer the third question about the programming strategy of ANDS-BB, three categories of programs are proposed: curriculum-based education, human resource development and public awareness programs. These programs will implement the mission of ANDS-BB preserving public values, addressing public expectations and needs and to strengthening complementary broadcast systems and other national institutions.
These programs can also reduce the gap between the rural and the urban population in Afghanistan.

To answer the fourth question about creating social channels of communication for the establishment of ANDS-BB, relationships are proposed with the government, the Parliament, the United Nations, and community and religious leaders. The characteristics of these relationships are each different. For instance, establishing relationships with community and religious leaders can help the implementation and diffusion of ANDS-BB at the grassroots level. Parliament and United Nations can protect ANDS-BB from political interference by the government. ANDS-BB can use the authority and resources of the government, based on creating relationships for the implementation of ANDS, both at micro and macro-levels.

To answer the fifth question about the survival of ANDS-BB during the future social, economic and technological development of the country, ANDS-BB needs to reevaluate its operational structure and programming strategy. This station will need to find alternative financial sources at the community level to shift away from its dependency on the international community. Because of the fragmented Afghan society based on different ethnic groups and languages, different regional and content-based stations will be established to address the needs and expectations of different audiences.

**Future Structure of ANDS-BB**

With the changing economic, political, social and technological conditions of the country, ANDS-BB will also need to make adjustments to reach niche and fragmented audiences throughout Afghanistan. The future survival of ANDS-BB will be based on its universal and diverse presence in the country. However, the universality of ANDS-BB
programming nationwide will depend on the development of the country, the growing literacy rate, the changing economic conditions of the people and the strengthening of the government institutions to collect revenues and taxes. One of the important moves of Doordarshan, the state television authority of India, was narrowcasting, the installation of 12 low-power transmitters across the country, to provide agriculture, health, education, and rural development programs (Fursich & Shrikhande, p. 111). The government of Afghanistan should pave the way for the establishment of regional transmitters to provide terrestrial broadcasting in geographically isolated areas.

The development and adaptation of an innovation depends on the institutional development systems of a country that pave the way for the innovation. Therefore, “organizational innovation is the result of [the] learning process” (p. 218) to utilize new opportunities to develop better understanding about the relationship between an organization and its services in a community (Strambach, 2002).

ANDS-BB should remain a centralized single station for some years until it develops its human and technological capacities and overcomes its financial problems. Again its other channels will be different from the commercial or government-owned channels because ANDS-BB’s channels will follow the same development goal. The same concept has been followed in many countries. For instance, it took many years for Australia to extend its dual structure of broadcasting and to provide a second public service station (Brown & Althaus, 1996). Similarly, in the UK, extension of the dual broadcasting system to complement the programming of ITV and BBC with extra channels worked well because a single service did not satisfy fragmented audiences. In the case of Great Britain, all public service radio and television channels were proposed
under the control of a single BBC structure (Cave, 1996). Therefore, a centralized ANDS-BB in Afghanistan should pave the way for the establishment of a national satellite system providing separate channels to reach the multiple fragmented audiences throughout the country.

**Future Channels**

Tushman et al. (2006) discuss the concept of innovation streams to develop portfolios of innovation either to add an innovation to core services or to extend the core services through substantial innovation to enter another market. ANDS-BB will be a centralized station designed to attract different audiences. It will be flexible to provide separate channels. These may include a higher educational channel, a children’s channel, a religious channel, an entertainment channel, a human resource development channel, a sports and news channel and an agriculture and vocational training channel. All channels will be required to meet and apply ANDS-BB’s development policy goals based on ANDS.

To meet the international standard of diversity, ANDS-BB will establish different channels for different audiences in Afghanistan. In the case of India, because of its multicultural and multilingual society, Doordarshan has four national channels and 21 regional ones. In 2002, Doordarshan launched an educational channel to provide curriculum-based and career-oriented programs with the collaboration of its Department of Human Resource (Fursich & Shrikhande, p. 111). ANDS-BB will need over time to address the fragmented ethnic groups in eight regions by providing them different channels in their own languages.
National and Regional Channels

ANDS-Based Broadcasting needs gradual development. The first priority will be the establishment of national channels providing programs in both the dominant and official languages, Pashto and Dari, and in other languages of the main ethnic minorities separately. Although the dominant languages are understood by most Afghans, potential ethnic and language conflicts can be eliminated by providing programming to the main minority groups, the Tajik, Uzbek, and Hazara etc., in their own languages. Uzbek, Tajik, and Hazara people respect and speak Dari language. They can turn against Pashto but cannot turn against Dari. In the case of the Canadian model, the CBC is also mandated to provide programs in the two official languages of the country. However, to meet the international standard of universality in Canada, the CBC also has other private or commercial affiliated stations (Boardman & Vining, 1996). Afghanistan is a federation of tribes (Piacentini, 1996), with more than 34 languages, with Pashto and Dari the official and dominant ones. The population of Afghanistan is divided into eight ethnic groups: Pashtun (62.73 %), Tajik (12.38 %), Hazara (9.00 %), Uzbek (6.10 %), Turkmen (2.69 %) and Aimaq (2.68 %) (Noorzai, 2006). To avoid language problems, ANDS-BB should eventually provide programs in all these languages.

ANDS-Based Broadcasting Law

Stability and legitimacy are the reasons for inter-connected organizations to meet “legal and regulatory requirements” and “to exercise power and control” over an institution (Oliver, 1990, p.43). State-level legitimation accelerates the adoption of the procedures of civil services, and without this legitimation, the adoption often takes place slowly (Tolbert & Zucker, 1983). The adoption process of ANDS-BB in the formal
and tribal systems of Afghanistan can be accelerated by formalization and legalization of its structure, clear operational procedures and making use of social channels of communication. Setting the roles and responsibilities of each partner in the social networks of ANDS-BB can help to clarify the types of relationships of organizations about how to adopt the ANDS-BB system (Rogers, 2003).

The degree of power and mutual relationship in the social channels of communication are important factors (Kadushin, 2004) that can set the independence or dependency of the ANDS-BB. Although mutual cooperation can be strengthened because of the interrelatedness of the missions of ANDS-BB and other organizations external to the system, the financial or political power of organizations can influence operation of ANDS-BB which in this case needs legal authority. External organizational participation will need to be found by the government’s legal agreements to help ANDS-BB. The ANDS-BB Law should clarify the power and control of the system of mutual relationships. It should also clarify ANDS-BB core mission, philosophy and purpose in order to eliminate confusion and to increase mutual recognition among other organizations. Similarly, the ANDS-BB Law can identify network relations “by values, organization and institution” (Kadushin, 2004, p. 26).

Legal authority enforces trust among interconnected groups paving the way for their financial and human transactions or mutual obligations. It sets various norms and patterns for the interconnected ties of the network to comply with each group’s expectations and obligations (Frank & Yasumoto, 1998; Johnson, Headey & Jensen, 2003). Therefore, the ANDS-BB Law should be articulated and approved by the Parliament and President in order to clarify the roles of each participant. If this is not
done, the role of ANDS-BB will tend to be influenced by the political power and authority of the government which can undermine its independent function. The ANDS-BB Law would be the only legal document that could create formal networking relationships between ANDS-BB, the government and the international community. In a formal networking relationship, trust and obligations can be easily enforced among different ties to the network. The regulatory process of the government and other monitoring and professional bodies reinforces the “collective understanding” and “shared meaning” of the organizational community (Greenwood et al., 2002, p. 59).

The ANDS-BB Law can ensure editorial independence in the presence of social channels of communication balancing and neutralizing the influence of each partner. The law will clarify the structural and operational procedures of ANDS-BB. As in the case of public service broadcasting in Azerbaijan, the independence of the broadcasting system depends on the overall system of the country. Democratic governance, a balanced power structure, rule of law and the existence of a strong civil society are the supporting elements for establishment of an independent ANDS-BB (Hajili, Unknown). Afghanistan is on the doorstep of establishing such a democratic system. The ANDS-BB Law should be articulated as a standard legal document, but its implementation may take some time.

The creation of ANDS-BB and its formalization through the ANDS-BB Law are among the first steps in building the coordination, cooperation, communication and involvement of different organizations to support the system. The creation of a social structure, as a starting point, increases the participation of initial adopters, followers and late adopters respectively in a social channels of communication. The participation of other organizations in considering ANDS-BB as a collective action depends on their
degree of willingness (Chwe, M. S. Y, 2000). Therefore, articulation of the ANDS-BB Law is necessary to encourage willingness of the different organizations to participate over the long-term. It can be predicted that with the mutiplexity of ANDS-BB’s network, a complicated coordination system among the government, Parliament, the UN and community institutions will emerge that needs regulation of its individual units (Lorrain, 2001).

Supporting Community Broadcasting Stations

The support of the international community is not sustainable in terms of continuing to strengthen community broadcasting stations. The international community may at any time reduce direct funding to independent media which can jeopardize the operational sustainability of the Afghan community media structure. According a 2007 report of a media forum, the European Commission and USAID reduced by 80% direct funding to independent media, from the $30 million allocated from 2002-2006 to just $6 million for 2007-2010, but they later allocated an extra $5 million for the establishment of new radio stations. With this reduction, two possibilities arose: Would the broadcasting stations collapse or would they be controlled by local warlords and political parties? The Killid Group and IPS-Inter Press Service organized a forum in 2007 in which the problems of the current media were described as:

“The lack of donor funding, small advertising market, low professionalism of journalists, poor content quality, limited outreach, distribution and a largely illiterate population remain the major obstacles the independent media has to overcome in order to fulfill its constitutional responsibility to serve the public interest” and “watch dog function” (Media is development, 2007, p. 9).

Community broadcasting stations do not generate as high revenue as commercial media in the country, which can undermine their mission and operation. To compete for
limited advertising revenues, broadcasters mainly provide entertainment programs including “music, movies and soap operas” and avoid educational, cultural and other important social issues. On the other hand, private commercial television and radio channels focus on urban audiences and ignore the expectations and lifestyle of rural the population (Media is development, 2007, p. 9). Nine out of 34 Afghan provinces lack local media (Media is development, 2007) because there is no comprehensive plan to point out which areas need TV or radio stations. The remaining 25 provinces, however, do have local media, but this does not mean they provide programs to individual districts and villages. Unlike Afghanistan, community radio stations in South Africa are very strong, covering many categories of programs. The funding level of each station has reached almost a million units in local currency (Olorunnisola, 2002). Even this amount is not sufficient however which jeopardizes the sustainability and independence of community broadcasting in South Africa.

ANDS-BB’s role as a complementary broadcasting model is essential to support community broadcasting stations because it can provide ready-made programs. If ANDS-BB receives sufficient funding, it can create partnerships with local media to cope with their financial problems. A centralized ANDS-BB station, with its central production capacity, could reduce duplication of community radio stations’ costs. Although community broadcasters provides local contents, their major programs in Afghanistan consist of health, good governance, education, mining, agriculture and other development issues. There is no need for all community radio stations to create separate programs addressing all the same issue. ANDS-BB can cost-effectively distribute a single program to every local radio station throughout the country. With the development of satellite
communications in Afghanistan, communication between the capital and the provinces is easier for the central broadcasting station to send its production products to provincial stations (Eshaq, 2007, p. 7).

**Policy Window**

The establishment of ANDS-BB will require considerable persuasive effort to gain an opportunity in the formal policy process. The decision to approve or reject the model of ANDS-BB will proceed through five stages: knowledge about the innovation, persuasion of the decision makers and opinion leaders, decisions about whether to accept or reject the innovation, actual implementation of the innovation and overall confirmation of the innovation in a system (Rogers, 2003). Pushing the establishment of ANDS-BB towards the government agenda needs the opening of a “policy window.” A policy window is the agenda-setting model in which three streams of activities – problem stream, political stream and policy stream – get together to open a window of opportunity to get an issue onto the government agenda. As John Kingdon describes it:

>This model deals with the question of state and non-state influences on agenda-setting by focusing on the role played by policy entrepreneurs both inside and outside government in taking advantage of agenda-setting opportunities - *policy windows* - to move items onto formal government agendas. It suggests that the characteristics of issues (the problem stream) combine with the characteristics of political institutions and circumstances (the politics stream) and the development of policy solutions (the policy stream), leading to the opening and closing of opportunities for agenda entrance. Such opportunities can be seized upon or not, as the case may be, by policy entrepreneurs who are able to recognize and act upon them (Howlett, 1998, p. 496-497).

The transformation of state-media into public service broadcasting has been suffocated in Afghanistan. Therefore, this thesis proposes a different model of broadcasting which has little to do with the transformation of the state-media. Rather its
approach is complementary; to fill the gap of what is missing. The approval of this structure now needs to be converted into an issue that can get government and legislators’ serious attention. So far, the establishment of ANDS-BB in Afghanistan is not yet seen as a matter for serious decision. Unlike the establishment of public service broadcasting, which was a discussion-only agenda among a few outside policy entrepreneurs, establishing ANDS-BB will need to move onto the governmental agenda where legislators and administrators will be obliged to take serious action (Anderson, 2006).

A policy window is a window of opportunity because all the streams rarely combine so a problem has a chance to reach the government agenda. This thesis covers the policy stream and provides a policy proposal to establish an ANDS-BB broadcasting system in Afghanistan. Regarding the political stream, the greatest event in the political history of Afghanistan was the first-ever presidential election and the involvement of the general population to elect their leaders directly (Boucher, 2004). The long-term commitment of the international community in Afghanistan (The Afghanistan Compact, 2006) is a motivational factor to accelerate the lobbying process for the establishment of ANDS-BB.

Representatives of the United Nations, for instance the UNESCO, should act as policy entrepreneurs to coordinate the lobbying activities among inside and outside policy actors (Stiles & Weeks, 2006). However, there is a need to work on the problem stream in order to promote the importance of ANDS-BB and to get the attention of the public, Parliament, the administration and the international community. Creation of an advocacy group from the committed outside or inside policy entrepreneurs can carry the task of agenda setting in an organized manner. The members of the advocacy group in
Afghanistan may be sympathetic legislators, particularly the media committee in Parliament, and the representatives of the UN, especially the UNESCO. The advocacy group will regularly use lobbying or advocacy techniques to attract support until the decision is made to establish ANDS-BB system in Afghanistan.

**Lobbying and Advocacy**

The most important lobbying technique will be addressing the Parliament of Afghanistan to accentuate the need of ANDS-BB. Policy entrepreneurs should regularly deliver speeches in Parliament. Outside policy entrepreneurs who favor ANDS-BB should seek sympathetic policy entrepreneurs in Parliament, the government, among powerful community leaders and the international community to build up a collation for establishing ANDS-BB in Afghanistan. Collaboration and contact with the main donors - UNESCO, UNDP, USAID, DFID, JICA, EU, EC etc – and government officials are also important in order to use their networks to get the ANDS-BB issue onto the government agenda. The collaboration of the donor community and government officials is crucial because they must agree to the centralization of the funding process for the establishment and sustainability of ANDS-BB. They will encourage other national and international NGOs to use the central plate form of ANDS-BB to strengthen production capacity of the system and to channel the operation of community radio stations through it (Casamayou, 2001).

Opinion leaders are considered the highest adaptive category; therefore, regular contacts among opinion leaders and professional people increase the diffusion process among them (Becker, 1970). Convincing strong community leaders, tribal councils, youth associations, religious leaders can value the establishment of ANDS-BB at grassroots
level. Regular meetings with the parliamentarian committees, the Ministry of Information, Culture and Youth, the Association of Journalists and the civil society can keep the issue alive until it passes through the policy window. UN or other international partners can help to organize conferences and seminars to inform and motivate those who can support the establishment of this new broadcasting system. Based on the tribal structure in Afghanistan, meetings with powerful community and religious leaders inside and outside Parliament are also effective lobbying techniques to convince them that ANDS-BB is based on their cultural and religious values.

Friendly media can generate support and expand a coalition (Casamayou, 2001) of ANDS-BB, not only among formal policy actors but also among the general population. Therefore, contacting the main international and national media to, encourage them to include the ANDS-BB issue in their future agenda will create an effective trend toward ANDS-BB.
REFERENCES


Telecommunications Services Regulations Act. Ministry of Communications and Information of Afghanistan.


URL_ID=1774&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html (November 29, 2007).


Wali, A. (2002). Kabulis try to circumvent government bid to take the spice out of Indian movies broadcast on Afghan television [Online]. IWPR. Retrieved: 

