

BRI Participation of Afghanistan: Assessing Benefits and Drawbacks

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ABSTRACT

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a monumental project by China, aims to connect Asia, Africa, and Europe through extensive land and maritime networks, fostering regional integration and economic growth. Afghanistan, historically pivotal as a Silk Road hub, continues to play a crucial role in this initiative. China, recognizing Afghanistan's strategic location and resource wealth, intensified economic engagement from 2014 onward. This study comprehensively evaluates Afghanistan's participation in the BRI, with a specific focus on infrastructure development, economic integration, and geopolitical implications. By delving into existing literature, the research explores potential benefits, emphasizing infrastructure creation, energy projects, and enhanced trade and connectivity. Simultaneously, the paper scrutinizes drawbacks, encompassing concerns related to debt sustainability, economic reliance, environmental impact, labor practices, and political ramifications. While the BRI presents avenues for economic growth and regional collaboration, the findings underscore the necessity for careful consideration to address potential risks and ensure Afghanistan's enduring sustainable development. This research contributes valuable insights for policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders involved in regional development initiatives, enhancing our comprehension of the BRI's impact on Afghanistan.

Key words: China, Afghanistan, BRI, CPEC, Benefits, Drawbacks

I. INTRODUCTION

Revitalized in 2013 as the "One Belt One Road" initiative, the ancient Silk Route, renowned for global commerce in ancient China, involves extensive infrastructure construction and new ports to facilitate trade and product exchange. Comprising the Silk Road economic belt for overland trade and the sea Silk Route for sea trading, it aims to boost economic connectivity and cooperation between countries, seeking to link Asia with Africa and Europe via land and maritime networks through BRI (Jaleel et al., 2019; Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) n.d.)

For centuries, Afghanistan has stood out as a significant Silk Road crossroads. Many of its cities—from Kabul and Balkh to Kandahar and Herat—serve as important transit routes linking the Eastern and Western worlds (Safi & Alizada, 2018). Due to Afghanistan's geostrategic importance and abundant natural resources, China has sought to deepen economic ties since 2014. With a keen interest in incorporating Afghanistan into the BRI project, Beijing provides development aid and increased investment, aiming to meet rising domestic demand for resources. As Afghanistan's largest trading partner, China also works to stabilize the country, addressing internal security risks, particularly in Xinjiang's border region, impacted by the prolonged war situation Afghanistan has faced for decades (Lai, 2020).

Moreover, the Xinjiang Autonomous Region's (hereafter Xinjiang) stability and the successful completion of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its "flagship" project, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), depend on Afghanistan. In addition to security issues, China is interested in Afghanistan's enormous natural assets and, as a rising power, plans to influence Afghanistan's future more to maximise its own profit. China modified its long-standing indifferent policy towards Afghanistan to one that emphasises active engagement in order to attain these goals (Ali, 2022).

BRI is a beneficial project for Afghanistan. The Afghan government expressed interest in the project and has officially declared its participation. This programme, which complements Kabul's long-standing

strategy of fostering regional integration and economic cooperation, is seen by Afghans as being a very significant step towards enhancing regional cooperation and regional and interregional connection. The government believes that the project will provide Afghanistan the chance to once again serve as an "Asian transit and trade roundabout" linking South Asia to Central Asia and East Asia to West Asia, bringing economic benefits not just to Afghanistan but to the entire region (Roy, 2023; Safi & Alizada, 2018).

Additionally, the BRI has the ability to fully integrate Afghanistan into the regional economy, something previous initiatives like the New Silk Road have not been able to do. Especially the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project's involvement of Afghanistan is crucial to this. Afghanistan has a number of benefits from joining CPEC, many of which are related to recently acquired soft and physical infrastructure as well as others that are related to initiatives that are still in the planning phases but have significant potential when completed (Safi & Alizada, 2018).

However, the benefits and drawbacks of BRI participation for Afghanistan remain a topic of debate and scrutiny. While some view the BRI as a promising opportunity for Afghanistan's economic growth and regional integration, others raise concerns about its potential debt burden, lack of transparency and accountability, and environmental and social impacts. In this study, we aim to assess the benefits and drawbacks of Afghanistan's participation in the BRI, by addressing the following research question:

Research Question: What benefits and drawbacks BRI can pose to Afghanistan?

By examining this research question, we seek to gain insights into the potential benefits and challenges associated with Afghanistan's integration into the BRI framework. This analysis will contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic, political, and environmental impacts of BRI on Afghanistan and inform future decision-making processes.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this research paper is to comprehensively assess the benefits and drawbacks of Afghanistan's participation in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and provide a nuanced understanding of its implications. The following objectives will guide the study:

1. To identify and analyze the potential benefits that BRI participation can bring to Afghanistan, including the construction of infrastructure such as railways, roads, and energy projects.
2. To assess the economic impacts of BRI participation on Afghanistan, including improved trading opportunities, and regional connectivity.
3. To explore the environmental and social risks associated with BRI projects in Afghanistan, such as the impact on the ecosystem, labor practices, and workers' rights.
4. To evaluate the potential political implications of Afghanistan's involvement in the BRI, including issues of sovereignty, geopolitical influence, and relations with neighboring countries.
5. To analyze the potential drawbacks of BRI participation for Afghanistan, such as the risk of debt trap, economic dependency, and concerns regarding political and security challenges.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. **Research design:** The research will use a qualitative research design, specifically textual interpretation and content analysis.
2. **Data collection:** Utilizing secondary data, the study will draw insights from academic articles, policy papers, and government reports concerning Afghanistan's engagement in the Belt and Road Initiative. A comprehensive collection of these sources will be procured from reputable online databases, including JSTOR, ProQuest, and Google Scholar, as well as official government websites. By sourcing information from these varied and credible outlets, the research aims to construct a robust foundation for a thorough analysis of Afghanistan's participation in the Belt and Road Initiative.
3. **Data analysis:** The data collected for the paper, "BRI Participation of Afghanistan: Assessing Benefits and Drawbacks," will undergo comprehensive examination through content analysis. This method involves discerning patterns and themes within the textual data, specifically concentrating on revealing the advantages and drawbacks associated with Afghanistan's involvement in the Belt and Road Initiative. By employing content analysis, the study aims to provide an in-depth exploration, shedding light on the nuanced dynamics and implications of Afghanistan's participation in this ambitious regional development project.
4. **Limitations:** The limitations of the study will include the availability and quality of the data sources, as well as any biases or limitations of the selected research methodology. The study will acknowledge these limitations and address them in the analysis and discussion sections of the research paper.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

In 2013, President Xi Jinping made the BRI announcement. "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI) is also known as "One Belt One Road" (OBOR). According to the Chinese government, the project aims to enhance regional cooperation through connectivity (Khalid & Chawla, 2021). The huge infrastructure project, which includes highways, "energy pipelines", railways, and border crossings with expedited procedures, may increase the circulation of Chinese yuan abroad and establish up to 50 special economic zones, transforming the "middle of nowhere" into the hub of the global economy (Zambakari, 2022).

The BRI, is a development initiative that China launched with the aim of promoting trade and stimulating economic growth throughout Asia and beyond. At its core, the BRI entails developing enormous amounts of infrastructure to link China to other nations (Kruy, 2017). The Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road are the two core components of the Belt and Road initiative. Interestingly, the "Road" is actually a "sea route" connecting China's southern coast with East Africa and the Mediterranean, not a physical road. The "belt" is a network of overland routes that connects China with Europe via Central Asia and the Middle East (Phillips, 2017).

In addition, the construction of roads and railways, the installation of various energy projects, and the creation of various industrial zones across the world are all part of BRI's ambition. The project's western route would run through the Central Asian Republics (CARs) states, and its southern route would run through Pakistan and other East Asian nations. In addition to its infrastructure development initiatives, China intends to promote its currency internationally. The globalisation of the Chinese currency, the Renminbi, would ultimately result from such an initiative (Rashid & Ghouri, 2021).

Moreover, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) action plan targets five key goals: policy coordination, connectivity improvement, trade facilitation, financial integration, and people-to-people exchanges. To realize these aims, China has designated six major economic corridors—BCIM, CPEC, New Eurasia Land Bridge, China, Mongolia, Russia Economic Corridor, China Central Asia Economic Corridor, and China Indochina Peninsula Economic Corridor. This strategic approach forms a unique regional development model with far-reaching implications (Deepak, 2018).

China, once hesitant due to conflict, is increasingly interested in Afghanistan's inclusion in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Afghanistan's strategic location as a crossroads in central and south Asia presents an opportunity for China to invest in vital infrastructure. Recognizing Afghanistan's potential as the shortest trade route linking China to the Middle East, South and Central Asia, and the Arabian Sea, China aims to transform Afghanistan into a key connectivity hub within the broader framework of the BRI (Siddiqi, 2020). Fortunately, Afghanistan has already undergone the initial procedures necessary for inclusion and integration with BRI. In accordance with the "Memorandum of Understanding" on BRI that Beijing and Kabul signed, Beijing has reportedly given Afghanistan some money from the BRI fund, according to an IMF report. Afghanistan also recently joined the AIIB (Khalil, 2017).

In May 2016, China and Afghanistan signed a "Memorandum of Understanding," kickstarting various Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects. The Sino-Afghan Special Railway, inaugurated in August 2016, establishes the first rail link between China and Afghanistan, fostering bilateral trade. This connection, bypassing Pakistan, is anticipated to enhance trade by providing an alternative route. The arrival of the inaugural goods train from Afghanistan to China in August 2016 marked the initiation of this collaboration, with additional projects, like the restoration of the railway from Sher Khan port to Herat, currently in progress (Afraz & Khawar, 2019).

In addition, observers point out that by extending the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project(s) to Afghanistan, the ideal partnering in BRI may be made achievable (Saud & Ahmad, 2018). Afghanistan was encouraged to join CPEC by Pakistan and China since their participation will benefit the entire region, with particular benefit for Afghanistan. In 2018, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and China conducted a trilateral conference during which Afghanistan's possible involvement in CPEC was reaffirmed. It was described as a link between South and Central Asian regions (Khan, 2019).

Afghanistan's untouched natural resource endowments are attractive to China. Pakistan might be able to benefit financially from accessing the CARs via Afghanistan. It would be advantageous for the region, China, Pakistan, and Afghanistan to expand infrastructure and boost the economy of the war-torn, landlocked, and militancy-prone state of Afghanistan with the assistance of Chinese investors (Khan & Ahmad, 2021).

Moreover, China has proposed expanding CPEC in Afghanistan by constructing the Peshawar-Kabul highway (*Pakistan Exploring Expansion of CPEC to Afghanistan: Envoy*, 2021). The 281-kilometer Peshawar-Kabul route, previously utilized by ISAF during the War on Terror, holds strategic importance as a key land link between China, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Efforts to modernize this route signal its pivotal role in regional connectivity. Additionally, the Quetta-Kandahar route provides Afghanistan swift access to the Gwadar Port. The Durand Line, parallel to the CPEC's Western route, facilitates potential new cross-border connections. Plans

for three major railway routes connecting various points underscore the ongoing commitment to enhancing regional transportation networks (Ali, 2022).

In a nutshell, advocates foresee Afghanistan's participation in CPEC and BRI yielding significant benefits. Improved access to the South Asian consumer market via Pakistan's new infrastructure could reduce import costs and boost exports, stabilizing Afghanistan's economy through increased trade with neighboring nations. While current exports include carpets, rugs, dried fruits, and medicinal herbs, joining the BRI may enable Afghanistan to sell additional valuable goods to markets in Central Asia, China, West Asia, and parts of Europe, expanding trade opportunities. The extension of CPEC into the CAREC project, involving a trans-Hindukush highway and railway, could transform Afghanistan into a pivotal land bridge connecting Central, South, and West Asia with China (Ullah et al., 2020).

IV. FINDINGS

Benefits of BRI Participation

Since its announcement in 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) project has taken centre stage in Xi Jinping's foreign policy, and Beijing's smiling diplomacy has focused on the strategic analysis and resources of Afghanistan. It is unclear what Afghanistan will gain from taking part in the ambitious connectivity project and how much China's increased investment will help Afghanistan develop its key industries, especially its infrastructure system, which is a requirement for the opening of new trade routes (Jaleel et al., 2019).

Moreover, by expanding its trading opportunities, linking to regional rail and road networks, becoming a significant player in the regional energy market, and combating the regional drug traffic, Afghanistan will be able to seek economic stability. Geographically and in terms of its natural resources, Afghanistan offers Kabul a realistic opportunity to participate actively in the growth and construction of OBOR. In order to increase regional connectivity, energy transportation, and regional trade through the OBOR route, Afghanistan can serve as an Asian transit and trading circle, connecting East Asia to West Asia and Central Asia to South Asia (Mudabber, 2016).

Despite security problems, it appears that China views Afghanistan as a crucial partner and is willing to find solutions. Additionally, by investing in the rail, telecommunications, and electricity sectors, the BRI may help the nation, which has been devastated by years of war and violence, address crucial infrastructure deficiencies (Afraz & Khawar, 2019).

Likewise, Afghanistan stands to directly benefit from the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) by leveraging the ongoing infrastructure developments between Pakistan and China. By prioritizing domestic infrastructure projects near the border with Pakistan, Afghanistan can enhance its connectivity to CPEC and tap into the Chinese market more effectively. Extending CPEC to Afghanistan becomes crucial for this landlocked nation's geostrategic positioning, promising substantial economic recovery by bolstering local economic activities and facilitating a return to normalcy for Afghanistan's fragile economy (Cowan, 2018).

Per the findings of Cowan (2018), As part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Islamabad has committed to constructing a 265 km highway between Peshawar and Kabul. This development facilitates Afghanistan's trade and connectivity with other regions through the Indian Ocean. The western alignment of the corridor, passing through Gwadar, Khuzdar, Zhob, and Islamabad, connects Afghanistan through Chaman, providing a shorter route to the Gwadar seaport. Meanwhile, the eastern route, spanning highways from Karachi to Lahore, Islamabad, and Abbottabad, further enhances road connectivity between the two nations.

Therefore, both alignments will strengthen the roads and highways that connect Afghanistan and Pakistan. Once the network of roads is complete, it will not only promote and facilitate trade but will also significantly aid in lowering the distance and travel time between the two neighbours. As a result of the corridor's expansion, Afghanistan will be in a position to take advantage of the expanding economic opportunities (Ullah et al., 2020).

Moreover, Afghanistan's geopolitical and economic conditions would change if the CPEC were to be successfully extended there in a way that benefits both parties. Not only would it increase connection, but it would also aid Afghanistan's industrialization and modernization. Additionally, it would act as a roadmap for upcoming and partially completed mega-development projects like the planned TAPI (Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India) pipeline and the CASA-1000 energy transmission line project, both of which face issues similar to those that will likely affect the expansion of the CPEC (Wolf, 2020).

The Silk Road Briefing (SRB) suggests that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) may surpass Pakistan as Afghanistan's second-largest trading partner in 2023 due to China's growing trade. In December 2022, China imported \$9.09 million and exported \$59 million to Afghanistan, creating a trade surplus of \$49.9 million. Afghanistan's industrialization through the extended CPEC could benefit countries like Russia. To harness Afghanistan's energy resources, Iran and Turkmenistan might be allowed to develop Afghan energy

fields, addressing critical energy needs (*China To Become Afghanistan ' s Second-Largest Trade Partner In 2023*, 2023).

Additionally, Afghanistan's potential inclusion in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) offers economic benefits for all stakeholders. Since October 2016, Afghanistan has shown interest in joining CPEC, recognizing the potential advantages. Enhanced Pakistani infrastructure, such as roads connecting DI Khan with Angoor Ada and Ghulam Khan, could facilitate Afghan access to the South Asian market, reducing costs and increasing exports. Joining CPEC could stabilize Afghanistan's economy, expand opportunities, and diversify trading partners, including China, Central Asia, and Europe, boosting both the economy and security (Jaleel et al., 2019).

Afghanistan and CPEC have a reciprocal relationship. If CPEC is implemented effectively in Afghanistan, it will not only benefit Afghanistan but will also reach its full potential as a connecting mechanism. Because incorporating Afghanistan is essential for full regional connectivity. With connectivity and infrastructure, Afghanistan would be able to reduce its overreliance on foreign aid. According to estimates, CPEC would increase employment opportunities and boost the economy (Ullah et al., 2020).

Potential Drawbacks

Experts examining the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) highlight sustainability concerns regarding the substantial debts incurred by partner nations, especially those with existing debt issues. Fears arise that developing nations, with weak institutions, may struggle to repay large debts, stifling public investment, economic growth, and raising questions about sovereignty due to prolonged dependence on China. The issue stems from the BRI's strategy of providing Chinese loans to sovereign governments for infrastructure development (Ullah et al., 2020).

For instance, SSRI claims that Sri Lanka is giving up a certain degree of authority over how to administer these infrastructures as a result of the BRI initiatives. Concerns have been raised regarding Sri Lanka's growing debt burden and loss of sovereignty as a large amount of BRI investment comes from Chinese governmental enterprises. ("China's Belt and Road Initiative Has Negative Impacts on Partner Countries: Report," 2023).

Likewise, Sri Lanka faces a total debt of USD 64.9 billion, with USD 8 billion owed to China. The debt, including a USD 301 million loan at 6.3% interest for the Hambantota Port project, was incurred during the Rajapaksa administration's infrastructure projects. The Sirisena administration took over the loan in 2015, leaving Sri Lanka burdened with massive debt due to the failing project and the challenge of repaying substantial loans without reaping any benefits (Patrick, 2017).

Similarly, officials in Djibouti are treading a comparable path of accumulating significant debt, raising concerns that they could face a situation similar to their counterparts in Sri Lanka. According to the Center for Global Development, the increasing ratios of debt to GDP and the overall debt levels play a crucial role in assessing the vulnerability of countries to debt distress (Ameyaw-brobbey, 2018).

Any substantial infrastructure project carries inherent risks related to the environment, society, and corruption. Such risks could encompass adverse effects on biodiversity, environmental decline, or the concentration of power among the elite. These risks are particularly noteworthy in countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative, as they often possess relatively fragile governance structures. To mitigate the potential negative impacts, it is essential to identify these risks and establish protective measures and safeguards (RUTA, 2018).

In addition to various other risks, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) also involves social and environmental risks. Evaluating and effectively addressing these issues is crucial when it comes to infrastructure and energy projects. These concerns encompass a wide range of factors, including but not limited to labor rights and working conditions, labor strikes, pollution control and mitigation, demolition and resettlement, conservation of biodiversity and ecological protection, as well as the safeguarding of the rights and cultural heritage of indigenous populations (Sheng, 2018).

Analysis

To assess the benefits and drawbacks of Afghanistan's participation in the BRI, we conducted a content analysis of official statements, news articles, and academic papers related to the BRI and Afghanistan's participation. We focused on the following key areas:

Economic Benefits

Joining BRI can bring Afghanistan construction of infrastructures such as the construction of railways and roads, construction of different energy projects and establishment of different economic zones. This will give the country the ability to pursue economic stability by improving trading opportunities, connecting with regional rail and road networks. BRI will integrate Afghanistan with other regions and also allow it to start

commercial activities through Indian Ocean and diversify its trading partners further. BRI would not only improve connectivity but also help to industrialise and modernise Afghanistan. In addition to economic benefits, the extension of the trade corridor could improve the security situation in Afghanistan.

Political Benefits

Joining the Belt and Road Initiative could also bring important political and security benefits to Afghanistan. By participating in the initiative, Afghanistan could strengthen its relationships with China and other participating countries, which could help to reduce its dependence on a limited number of allies. This could increase Afghanistan's diplomatic and strategic options and give it more influence in regional affairs.

Security Benefits

In addition, participating in the initiative could also help to promote stability and security in Afghanistan. By improving economic conditions and increasing trade, it could help to reduce poverty and unemployment, which are important drivers of instability. Improved infrastructure and transportation networks could also make it easier for security forces to respond to threats and maintain stability in different regions of the country.

While there are potential benefits to Afghanistan's participation in the Belt and Road Initiative, there are also significant drawbacks and challenges that must be considered. These include issues related to debt, economic dependence, and concerns about sovereignty and geopolitical influence.

Dependency Risks

Afghanistan's economy is currently very weak and heavily reliant on foreign aid. In this context, taking on large amounts of debt to finance infrastructure projects could be risky, as it could lead to debt distress and potentially undermine the country's economic stability. Afghanistan has historically been a relatively isolated country with limited economic ties to the outside world. While BRI projects could help to connect Afghanistan to regional markets and boost economic growth in the short term, there is a risk that the country could become overly reliant on China for its economic well-being. Further, if Afghanistan becomes heavily reliant on China for investment and economic support, this could limit the country's diplomatic and political flexibility, making it more difficult to pursue its own interests in the international arena. Also China's growing presence and influence in the country could lead to tensions with neighboring countries, such as rivalry between India and Pakistan, which also have their own geopolitical interests in the region. This could potentially lead to increased instability and conflict, further hindering Afghanistan's path towards stability and development.

Environmental and Social Risks

This issue could be particularly significant in Afghanistan, which is already facing significant environmental challenges such as drought, desertification, and pollution. The construction of large infrastructure projects, such as highways, railways, and energy projects, could exacerbate these challenges and potentially cause irreparable damage to the fragile ecosystem. In addition, the lack of proper environmental regulations and oversight in Afghanistan could lead to a disregard for environmental protection in BRI projects. BRI projects in Afghanistan could also raise concerns about labor practices and workers' rights, particularly if Chinese companies are involved in these projects. There are concerns that Chinese companies may bring in their own workers, which could lead to job displacement and exploitation of local workers.

V. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study suggest that Afghanistan's participation in the BRI is a complex and multifaceted issue that requires careful assessment and management. The benefits of BRI projects in terms of infrastructure development and economic growth should be balanced against the potential drawbacks such as debt burden and social and environmental costs.

To safely join the Belt and Road Initiative and avoid potential drawbacks, Afghanistan should prioritize essential infrastructure projects, choose revenue-generating projects that can be completed within a reasonable time frame, ensure transparency and accountability in all dealings with China, strengthen regulatory oversight, diversify funding sources by working with international financial institutions and development partners, and develop a comprehensive national strategy aligned with the country's national interests and sustainable development goals.

The varying attitudes towards China's role in the BRI reflect the geopolitical and economic dynamics of the region, and underscore the need for a more nuanced and context-specific analysis of the BRI's impact. The limitations of the study, such as the small sample size and the focus on qualitative data, should be acknowledged and addressed in future research. Overall, this study provides an initial assessment of the benefits

and drawbacks of BRI participation for Afghanistan, and offers insights for policy and decision-making in the country and beyond.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Afghanistan's participation in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) presents a complex scenario with potential benefits and drawbacks. The economic advantages include enhanced infrastructure, increased trading opportunities, and connectivity to regional networks. Furthermore, participation in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) could bring economic recovery, geopolitical benefits, and security improvements.

However, significant challenges arise, particularly concerning debt sustainability, economic dependence, and sovereignty issues. The risk of overreliance on China for economic support could limit Afghanistan's diplomatic flexibility, potentially leading to geopolitical tensions. Additionally, environmental and social risks, such as damage to the fragile ecosystem and labor concerns, warrant careful consideration.

To navigate these complexities, Afghanistan should prioritize essential, revenue-generating projects, ensure transparency in dealings with China, and strengthen regulatory oversight. Diversifying funding sources through collaboration with international financial institutions is crucial. A comprehensive national strategy aligned with sustainable development goals is necessary to safeguard Afghanistan's interests.

The study's findings highlight the need for a nuanced and context-specific analysis of the BRI's impact. While the research provides initial insights, acknowledging limitations, such as a limited textual analysis and qualitative depth, underscores the importance of future research to inform policy and decision-making in Afghanistan and the broader region.

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