

## **Community Driven Recovery in Afghanistan: Triggering Institutional and Attitudinal Reform after War**

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There is international agreement that the war-affected ought to take charge of their recovery as soon as possible after intervention. This principle has emerged gradually over the past three decades but recent changes in policy and practice reflect a new level of consensus and commitment at the field level. The strategy of Community Driven Recovery crystallises this principle and its application by UNDP and the World Bank among other agencies across a wide range of post-conflict contexts demonstrates its popular appeal. This session will assess the value of Community Driven Recovery by drawing upon an extensive field study in Afghanistan. The presenter will argue that it has been an effective though flawed international-led response to local needs during the difficult transition out of war. In particular, the findings demonstrate the unique ability of Community Driven Recovery to create tangible change by triggering the reform of formal and informal institutions of governance in addition to public attitudes during the early and medium-term period of recovery. Nevertheless, the research also reveals critical gaps and weaknesses that remind policymakers and practitioners that this is not an adequate strategy for long-term state-building.

### **About the Authors**

This session has been co-written by Professor Sultan Barakat and Dr David Connolly. Dr Connolly will present this paper at the Romanian Development Camp, 16-19 September 2009.

Professor Barakat is the founding director of the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit (PRDU) at the University of York, UK. Alongside graduate teaching and research, Sultan has played vital international roles in evaluating the recovery of war-torn and fragile societies, and advocating best practice through his writings and his practical engagement with various professional bodies. He has acted as an advisor on policy and strategy, provided technical assistance, delivered training workshops, and undertaken studies and evaluations for several governments, intergovernmental organizations and numerous nongovernmental organizations. For more please visit: <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/poli/prdu/Sultan.htm>

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