



Afghan Media in 2010

Priority District Report Arghandab (Kandahar)

October 13, 2010

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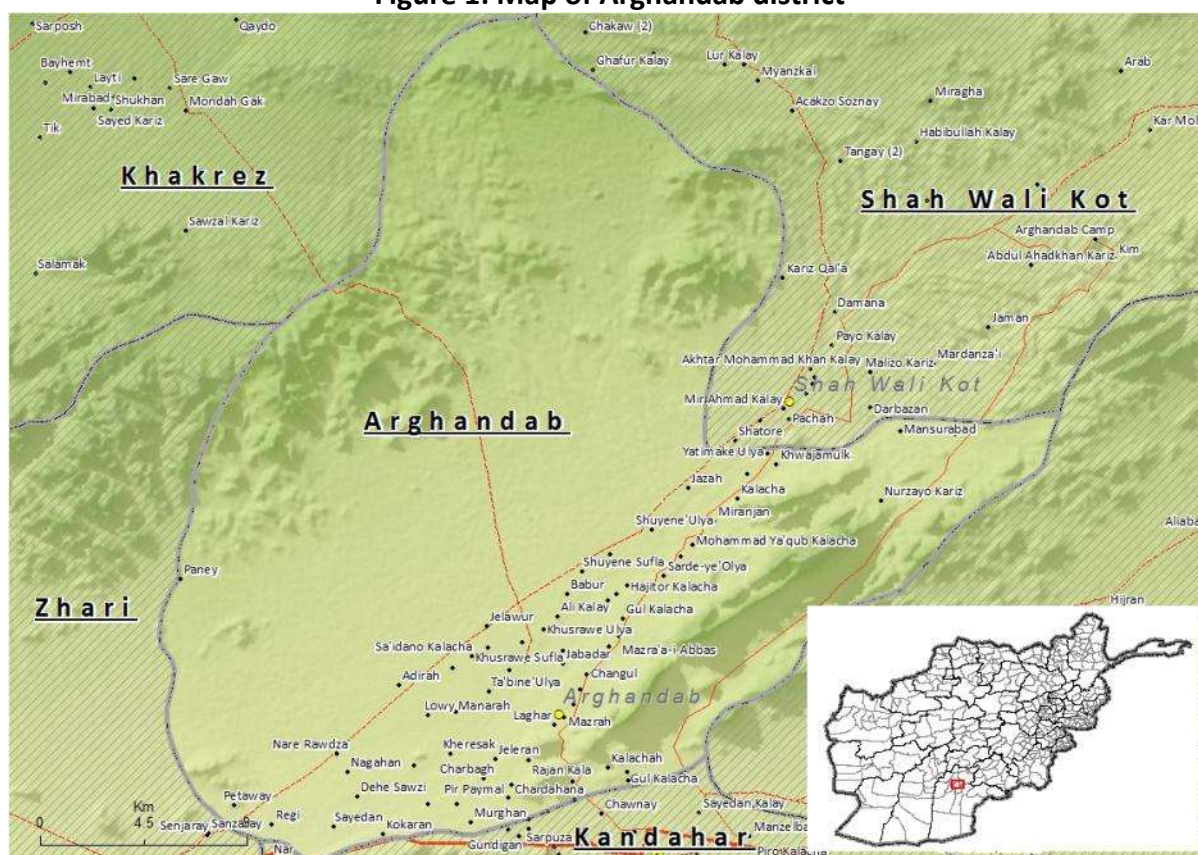
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1 Introduction

1.1 District profile

Arghandab district is located in the center of Kandahar province. It includes almost 80 villages spread across an area of 665km². It borders Shah Wali Kot district to the northeast, Daman to the east, Panjwayi and Kandahar to the south (within close and affordable reach – approximately \$1 one way, about 30km), Zhari to the southwest, and Khakiriz to the northwest. The district has approximately 53,000 inhabitants, predominantly Pashtun.

Figure 1: Map of Arghandab district



There are three clinics in the entire district, including, according to the Ministry of Public Health, one Comprehensive Health Center and one Basic Health Center. There are about 16 primary and secondary schools and 5 high schools, as well as 1 *madrasa* and 1 teacher training center.

Electricity in the district is very limited. The National Solidarity Program (NSP) built power grids three years ago, but it seems that a power supply never followed. Currently, individual generators and small dams are making up for this absence on a private level.

There is a general perception among the Arghandab population that government development and reconstruction efforts have left the district out. Basic service provision is generally poor. Not even Nagan village, where most government officials come from, and which the population thus perceives as being a government priority, has any advantage over other areas in this respect. NSP has provided fertilizers through Kandahar-based staff on their occasional visits to the district.

All four cell phone operators (AWCC, Roshan, MTN, and Etisalat) are present, but the quality of the connection is said to be weak.

Arghandab was considered relatively secure five years ago, but things have changed significantly, especially in the area south of the river and in the west. The interviewer reported that one village elder was killed during the fieldwork.

1.2 Methodology

Fieldwork was carried out in April 2010 and consisted of close-ended interviews (25 within the district and 75 by phone) and key informant interviews (KIIs) with community and opinion leaders. The audience section also refers to audience data collected by means of a phone survey with 61 individuals living in Kandahar province as a whole, which took place from July 9 to 23 and from August 22 to 28, 2010. For more details on the sampling methodology, see the main methodology document.

The following areas of the district were part of the fieldwork: Langar Kali (Baba Sahib Kali), Mazra Kali, Nawi Kali, Barq Ali, and Maranjan Kali. These are all rural villages located in the northwest of the district, which is considered a relatively safe area (areas east of Baba Shrine and south of the Arghandab River are ruled by insurgents). Nagan is the one village in the south of the district that does not support the insurgents.

KIIs were conducted with the following 11 community leaders: nine *qawmemeshers* (village elders) (two from Baba Sahib, one from Barq Ali, three from Nawi Kali, and three from Mazra); the dean of Arghandab primary school (Baba Sahib); and one educational administrator (Baba Sahib).

No outlet manager or journalist was interviewed, given the lack of local media outlets in the district.

2 Media landscape

The media landscape in Arghandab is dominated by outlets in nearby Kandahar. The only local broadcast media outlet is a military station, which was established only very recently (June 2010).

There are no public spaces for individual media users, such as video shops or Public Call Offices (PCOs), nor are there any public spaces for watching TV or listening to the radio within the visited communities. There is no public library in the district.

Local government offices are connected to the Government Communication Network (GCN). The local police station has a TV set, which most policemen watch in groups, but it is apparently not accessible by the general public.

2.1 Media outlets

Arghandab district has access to six terrestrial TV channels, two of which are broadcast from Kandahar, and twelve radio stations, one local and five broadcasting from Kandahar. Newspapers and magazines are distributed occasionally in the district from other areas.

2.1.1 Television

Besides satellite channels, six TV channels are available in the district. There are no cable networks.

Name	Scope	Ownership	Antenna location	Broadcast radius
Kandahar RTA	Provincial	Government	Kandahar	60km
Hewad	Provincial	Private	Kandahar	35km
Shamshad	National	Private	Kandahar	30-160km
Lemar	National	Private	Kandahar	40km
Tolo	National	Private	Kandahar	50km
Ariana	National	Private	Kandahar	35-75km

Kandahar RTA

The state-run TV station, Kandahar RTA (Radio Television Afghanistan), was established in 1984. The 40m antenna is located in the RTA compound in Kandahar (in Ainomina neighborhood). The transmitter is 500W and has a 60km broadcast radius which, besides Kandahar city, covers Daman, Dand, and Panjwayi districts, and a part of Arghandab district (said to be roughly 100,000 viewers). The station broadcasts seven hours a day (4-11pm) through eight programs, 80% of which are in Pashto. It plans to increase this to 18 hours a day. See the Kandahar report for further details.

Hewad

Hewad was established in 2006. It is owned and managed by Mr. Khazi Mohammad Omar, who also owns Afghan Independent Radio (AIR). The 36-40m antenna is located in Shaedanu Chawk in Nawe Shar ("New City"). The 2.5kW transmitter has a 35km broadcast radius (apparently approximately 800,000 viewers). Hewad broadcasts 20 hours a day, mainly in Pashto (95%). See the Kandahar report for further details.

National TV channels

Additionally, the following national TV channels are received over the air in Arghandab district: Shamshad, Lemar, Tolo, and Ariana.

2.1.2 Radio

Besides the shortwave radio stations that are available throughout Afghanistan, there are 12 radio stations in the district. Six of these are local stations.

Name	Scope	Ownership	Freq.	Antenna location	Broadcast radius
Arghandab Ghag	Local	Military	101.4 FM	District center	-
Kandahar RTA	Provincial	Government	105.2 FM 1305 AM	Kandahar	300km
Wranga	Provincial	Private	95.2 FM	Kandahar	50km
Talimul Islam	Provincial	Private	94.60 FM	Kandahar	35km
Islam Ghag	Provincial	Private	88.9 FM	Kandahar	6km
AIR	Provincial	Private	88 FM	Kandahar	80km
Arman FM	National	Private	98.1	Kandahar	60km
Killid	National	Private	89.4 FM	Kandahar	100km
BBC	National	Private	90 FM	Kandahar	30km
Nawa	National	Private	103.1 FM	Kandahar	75km
Azadi	National	Private	100.5 FM	Kandahar	25km
VOA/Ashna	National	Public (US)	100.5 FM	Kandahar	25km

Arghandab Ghag

Arghandab Ghag (“Voice of Afghanistan”) is a military radio station. It was established by the Canadian army and started broadcasting on June 9, 2010. The Afghanistan Stabilization Initiative (ASI), a program funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), sent radio production equipment from Spin Boldak to Arghandab. The antenna is located in the district center and has a 500W transmitter, apparently reaching 75% of the local population.

The station broadcasts 24 hours a day but, as it has just been created, its program schedule is still in development. As of June 2010, it broadcasts mostly music and rapid response messages. Current sources of information include line ministries and government agencies. The station aims to be more interactive and to focus on agriculture, education, and drama. Its schedule has been submitted to the Government Media and Information Center (GMIC).

The radio station should be completely up and running by July 2010. It is 100% Pashto and employs one public affairs officer, who ensures the information is being gathered on schedule, one radio operator, and a few trainees (to become radio operators).

Kandahar RTA

Kandahar RTA is the state-run radio station for Kandahar province. It started broadcasting in 1974. Its 30m antenna is located on the RTA compound in Kandahar and its 10kW transmitter has a 300km broadcast radius. Coverage is greater than for other Kandahar stations, and includes all of Kandahar, Helmand, Uruzgan, and Zabul provinces, reaching an estimated total of 2 million listeners. It broadcasts for 15 hours a day (7am-10pm) through 15 programs. Kandahar RTA management plans to increase broadcasting to 18 hours a day. See the Kandahar report for further details.

Wranga

Wranga started in June 2009. Its antenna is located in the office's yard in Kandahar, with a 600W transmitter and a 50km broadcast radius. It covers Kandahar city, Dand, Daman, Arghandab, Shega, and Spin Boldak districts, and some parts of Panjwayi district. The radio station is managed by Mr. Mohammed Ibrahim and was founded by a businessman (Mr. Haji Pashah Kakar) who runs a soap factory and funds the station on an *ad hoc* basis. The radio broadcasts 15 hours a day – 7am-11pm, with an interruption between 12pm and 1pm for prayers. See the Kandahar report for further details.

Talimul Islam

Talimul Islam (“Commandments of Islam”) started in 2009 and is owned and managed by Mr. Mawlahi Mohammad Omar Khetabi (who also owns Islami Larshowana magazine). It is a 100% Pashto radio station and its programs are oriented exclusively towards religion. Its 40m antenna is located close to Kandahar Stadium in Kandahar. It has a 200W transmitter and a broadcast radius of 35km, covering Dand and Daman districts and a part of Arghandab district (reaching an estimated 600,000 listeners). See the Kandahar report for further details.

Islam Ghag

Islam Ghag (“Voice of Islam”) is a state radio station founded in 2002 and managed by Mr. Mawlawi Hekmatullah Hekmat, who also manages the monthly magazine Islami Dawa. Its antenna is located on a tree in the Afghan National Army (ANA) compound in Kule Urdu neighborhood in Kandahar. The antenna is approximately 20m and the transmitter has a power of 50W, with a 6km broadcast range (reaching an estimated 200,000 listeners). The station broadcasts four hours a day (8am-12pm). See the Kandahar report for further details.

Azada Afghan (AIR)

Azada Afghan (AIR) started broadcasting in 2002 and is owned by Mr. Khazi Mohammad Omar, who also owns Hewad TV station. It broadcasts 24 hours a day, mainly in Pashto (80%) and the rest in Dari. Its 36-40m antenna is located in Shaedanu Chawk in Nawe Shar (Kandahar) and its transmitter is 10kW. With an 80km broadcast radius, the station estimates a total of 1.8 million listeners. See the Kandahar report for details.

National radio stations

Additionally, the following national radio stations are received through FM signals from Kandahar: Arman FM, Killid, the BBC, Nawa, Azadi, and Voice of America (VOA)/Ashna.

2.1.3 Newspapers

There are no local newspapers, nor is there any organized distribution of national/regional newspapers from other districts. People occasionally bring newspapers to the district when travelling back from Kandahar city. Below is a snapshot of the major provincial printed press found in the district.

Name	Type	Cycle	Scope	Ownership	Circulation	Price
Surghar	Newspaper	Weekly	Provincial	Private	50,000	\$0.2
Tolo-e-Afghan	Newspaper	Daily	Provincial	Private	1,000	-
Kandahar	Magazine	Monthly	Provincial	Government	-	-
Showanzai	Magazine	Quarterly	Provincial	Private	1,500	\$0.2
Sada-e-Azadi	Newspaper	Bi-weekly	National	Military	423,000	Free

Surghar

Surghar newspaper was established in 2005 as the first weekly newspaper in Kandahar. It has been managed by Mr. Abdul Kadir Afghan since 2008. It is a 16-page publication that publishes 50,000 issues a week at a unit price of \$0.20. It is 85% Pashto and 15% English. See the Kandahar report for further details.

Tolo-e-Afghan

Tolo-e-Afghan is a state newspaper (the first daily newspaper in Kandahar) which started in 1921 as an irregular two-page publication. In 2008, it became a regular daily newspaper. It is currently managed by Mr. Abdul Kuduz Baes, who has been employed at the magazine since 2001. The newspaper prints 1,000 issues per day and is free. It is now a four-page newspaper written in Pashto (80%) and Dari (20%). See the Kandahar report for further details.

Kandahar

This monthly state magazine was run by the head of the Department of Culture and Information in Kandahar, who was killed by insurgents in April 2010 and has not yet been replaced in his capacity as manager of this outlet.

2.2 New media

2.2.1 Mobile media

All four cell phone operators (AWCC, Roshan, MTN, and Etisalat) are present, but connection quality is said to be weak. Mobile phones are commonly used, for talking only.

2.2.2 Internet

There are no internet cafés or PCOs with internet access in the district center.

2.3 Media and information actors

2.3.1 Government

Government media in Arghandab is represented by Kandahar RTA, located in Kandahar city. There are no representatives of the Ministry of Information and Culture (MoIC) or Bakhtar News Agency (BNA) in the district. There is no public library.

2.3.2 Outlet managers and journalists

No journalists are based permanently in Arghandab. Journalists are generally based in Kandahar city and come to the district when they need to. It was claimed that they must ask

permission from the district governor before they can approach and interview community members. The new military radio station Arghandab Ghag (which currently employs one public affairs officer, one radio operator, and a few trainees) might change this scenario.

Respondents acknowledged that various media outlets had specific political affiliations, making a clear distinction between the state-run Kandahar RTA radio, which reportedly never mentions corruption, and private radio stations, such as AIR, which are considered more independent and critical.

The qualitative interviews suggested a general agreement on the need to limit some content. Indeed, censorship is generally accepted as being necessary to comply with local culture (e.g. no uncovered shoulders on TV). Youth and educated people, who are relatively more open to Western culture, are said to secretly watch Indian movies.

2.3.3 Other content providers

There are no other local content providers and, since there are no local media outlets in the district, there is no flow of information from content providers based in Kabul or elsewhere – with the exception of content for Arghandab Ghag.

2.3.4 Media NGOs

There are no media non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Arghandab.

2.3.5 Traditional information sources

Besides the official media, additional sources of information include community leaders (elders at district or village level and *mullahs*), family, and friends. Going to Kandahar city to shop reportedly enables people to access current affairs news. In the evenings, the public space around the mosque is a spot for men to debate and acquire general information. Women's "tiredness," as well as a general view that it is not a priority to keep women informed, is a key factor hindering news sharing with wives and female household members.

2.3.6 Insurgents

Shabnama ("night letters") are distributed in different locations of the district, warning people not to support the government, work for NGOs, join the army, or support school attendance. Respondents suggested that intimidation, rather than trust, is at the heart of any compliance with these messages: "*Locals do not like the Taliban but they are scared of them and have no other choice than to comply with what they say.*"

2.3.7 Military

Canadian troops are present in the district and recently established Arghandab Ghag, which is the only local radio station broadcasting from the district (June 2010).

2.3.8 Others

No other major interest group was reported.

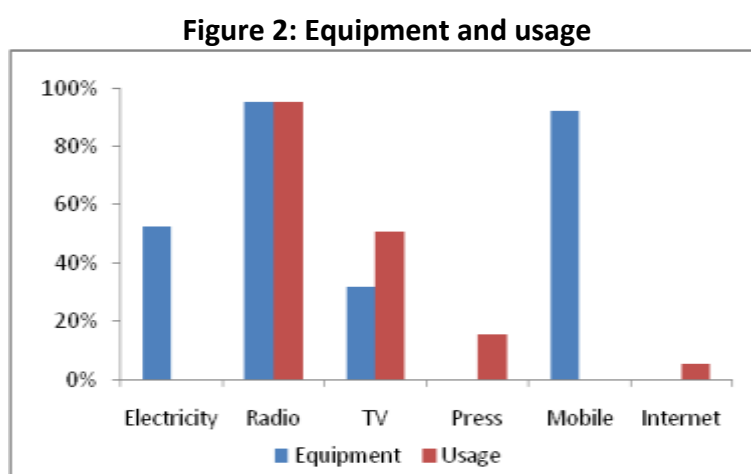
3 Audience

The following is a description of the audience in Arghandab district, based on 100 interviews. Audience data were also collected by means of a phone survey of 61 individuals living in Kandahar province (not specifically in Arghandab district), which took place from July 9 to 23 and from August 22 to 28, 2010.

3.1 Equipment and usage

3.1.1 Household equipment

Arghandab is similar to other rural districts in this study. Respondents are predominantly radio owners: 95% of the sample own at least one set. Mobile phone penetration is quite high (92%) for a rural and insecure district.

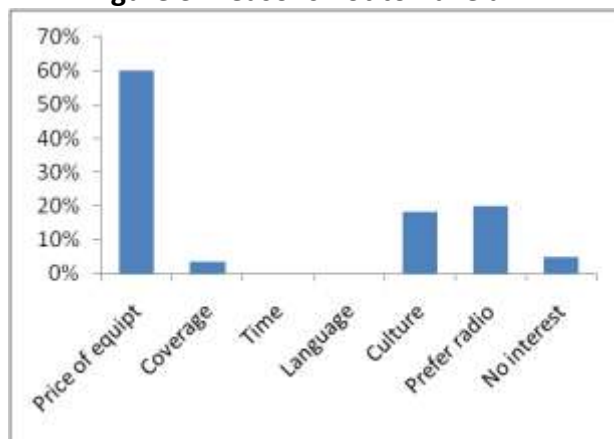


Only 32% of respondents own a TV. One of the natural obstacles to TV ownership is low access to electricity. Half of the respondents (48%) do not have any access, 35% have access to irregular power through city or village generators, and 17% have a private generator. Some interviewees explained that, with very limited power, owning a TV set was pointless, and more a sign of wealth than anything: *“Some people buy items to show off their wealth but do not have the power to use them. People have unused refrigerators or uncharged mobiles.”*

A number of other obstacles to TV ownership were mentioned: 60% of people cannot afford to buy a TV set, and the correlation between equipment and household income is strong. In addition, 20% of respondents prefer radio. Another 5% are not interested at all.

However, and despite a relatively low equipment rate, many people manage to watch TV outside of their homes: mostly at work (14%), relatives’ houses (11%), and in shops and bazaars (9%). With a total of 51% watching TV in spite of all the above-mentioned obstacles, it seems that almost all those who are interested in TV are able to access it.

Figure 3: Reasons not to have a TV



Printed press readership is relatively high for a rural district, at 15%, but this is not so surprising if we consider that 36% of respondents declared having a good literacy level. Around 70% of readers prefer magazines.

Internet usage is unsurprisingly low, at 5%, given that there is no local access and that people must commute to Kandahar to use it. Although no respondents have internet at home, 5% use it, mostly at work (43%) or through mobile phones and internet cafés in Kandahar city (29% in both cases).

3.1.2 Sources of information

When asked about their preferred source of information on different topics, interviewees quoted radio first for most (65-84% of respondents, depending on the topic). The second most popular information channel is TV, chosen as the first source of information by 11-29% of respondents, depending on the topic. Taking into account major differences in relation to access between the two sources, there is nothing unusual in this.

Two topics are exceptions: religion and development projects. For religious content, the second most popular source of information after radio is the local *mullah*. In the case of development projects, the local *shura* (council) is also considered an information source, after TV (12% and 21%, respectively).

Table 1: What is the most used source of information?

	Family, friends	Mullah, mosque	Radio	TV	Shura	Khan, malik, commander	Book	#
Politics	1%	0%	77%	22%	0%	0%	0%	118
Religion	0%	23%	65%	11%	0%	0%	1%	129
Local news	0%	0%	83%	17%	0%	0%	0%	128
National news	0%	0%	84%	16%	0%	1%	0%	128
International news	0%	0%	78%	22%	0%	0%	0%	125
Development projects	0%	0%	67%	21%	12%	0%	0%	116
Movies and songs	0%	0%	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	112

Qualitative interviews revealed that agriculture is one of the most debated topics in the community, which is not surprising given that over 90% of the population works in this sector.

3.1.3 Usage patterns

In the morning, Arghandab respondents strongly prefer radio to TV. Only around midday do people begin to switch to TV, when they tend to turn on power generators. During the evening and night (7pm-5am), TV viewership is higher than radio listenership (72% versus 53%), especially from 11pm, when the radio audience almost vanishes.

Figure 4: Preferred times to listen to the radio

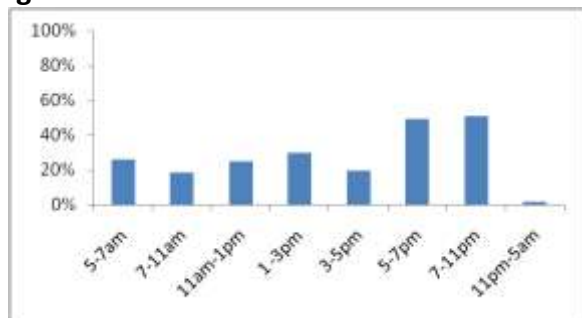
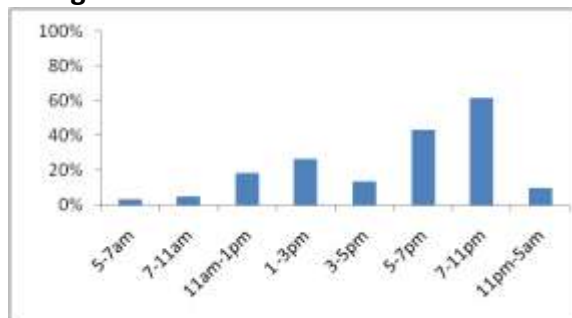


Figure 5: Preferred times to watch TV



Almost all (95%) interviewees listen to the radio at least several times a week, if not every day. Only 37% of respondents declared watching TV on a weekly basis. A total of 60% of printed press readers have access to newspapers or magazines on a weekly basis. Usage frequency seems to be related more to access level than anything else.

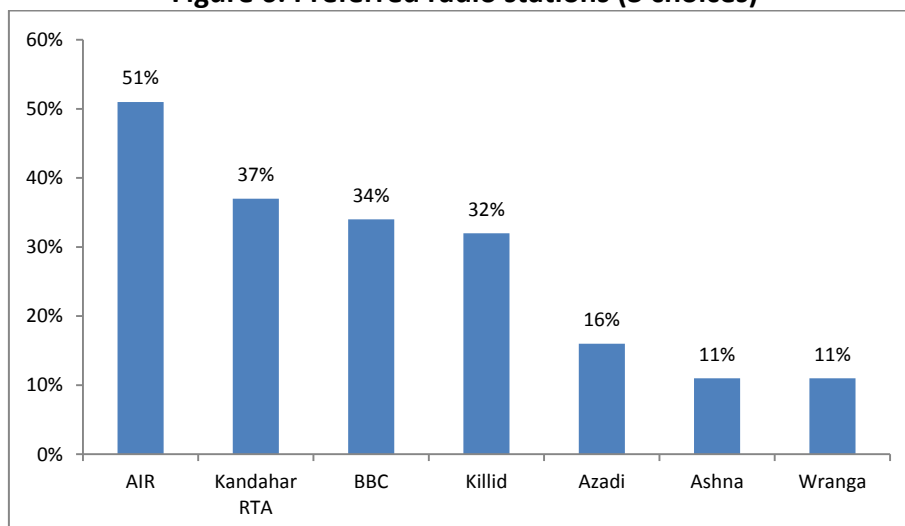
3.2 Preferences

3.2.1 Outlets

Radio

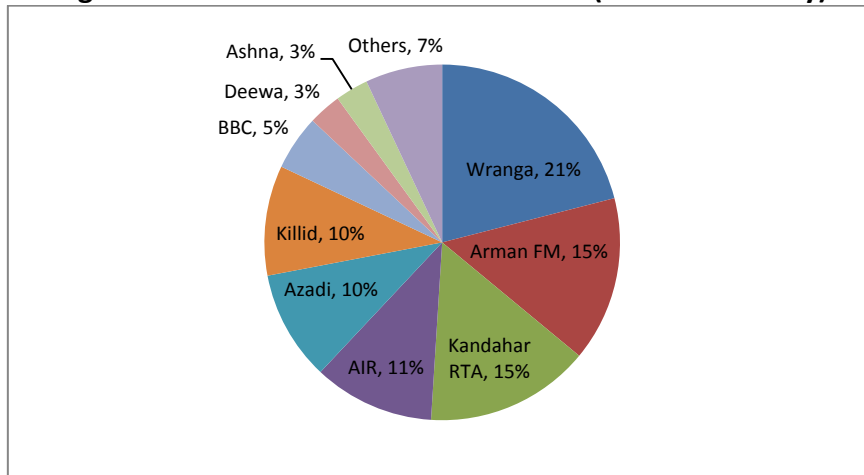
Arghandab respondents prefer local (regional) radio stations. The most popular is AIR, with slightly over half (51%) citing it as one of their three preferred stations. Kandahar RTA and Killid (Kandahar) are also popular: 37% and 32% of respondents, respectively, put them among their preferred stations. Among the favorites are two national stations: the BBC for 34% of respondents and Azadi for 16%.

Figure 6: Preferred radio stations (3 choices)



Audience survey data from across Kandahar province suggest that Wranga has the largest audience share in the province (21%), followed by Arman and Kandahar RTA (15%). AIR, Azadi, and Killid follow, as the fourth and fifth most listened to stations in the timeframe analyzed.

Figure 7: Most listened to radio stations (audience survey)

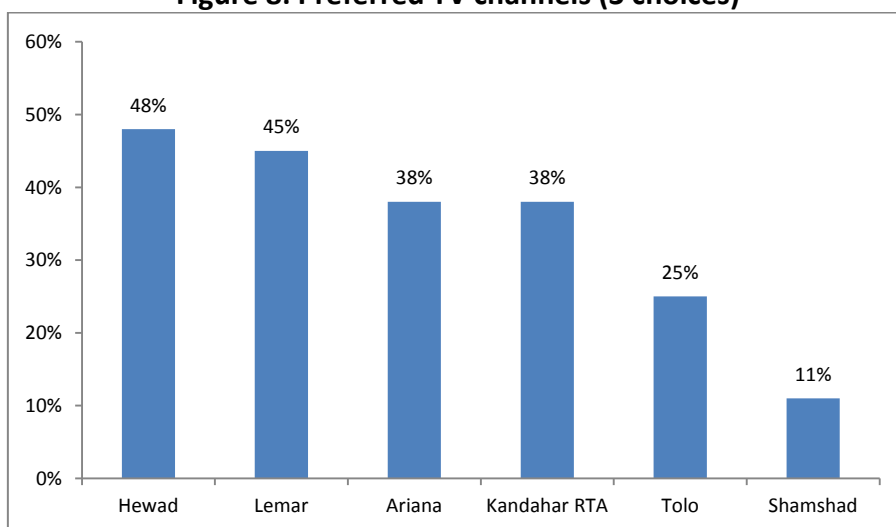


Television

The most popular TV channel is the regional station, Hewad. The second most preferred TV channel among Arghandab interviewees is Lemar, one of the two Pashto-only national TV channels. Shamshad is less popular, since the language used is closer to that of eastern Afghanistan (it is preferred by TV users in Nangarhar and Kunar, for example).

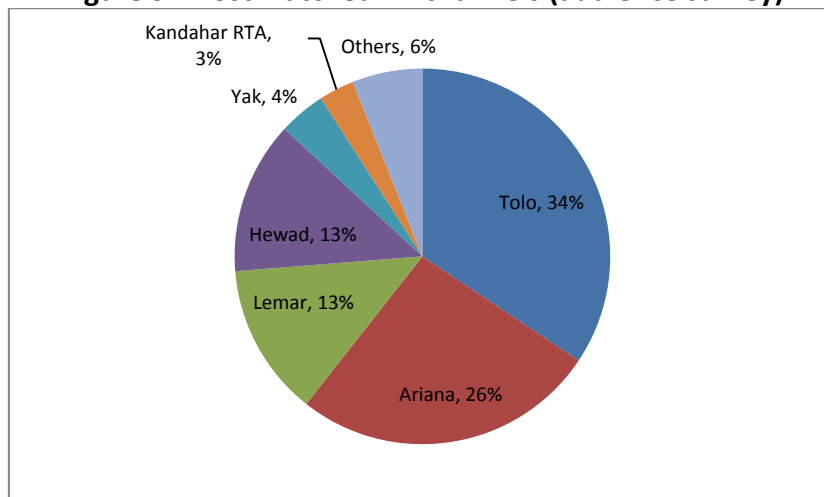
Lemar is followed closely by national Ariana and regional Kandahar RTA. National Tolo comes in fifth position; this is quite a high audience share, given that 66% of respondents do not understand Dari, the main programming language on Tolo.

Figure 8: Preferred TV channels (3 choices)



Audience survey data from across Kandahar province suggest that Tolo has the greatest share (34%), followed by Ariana (26%) and, equally, Lemar and Hewad (13%).

Figure 9: Most watched TV channels (audience survey)



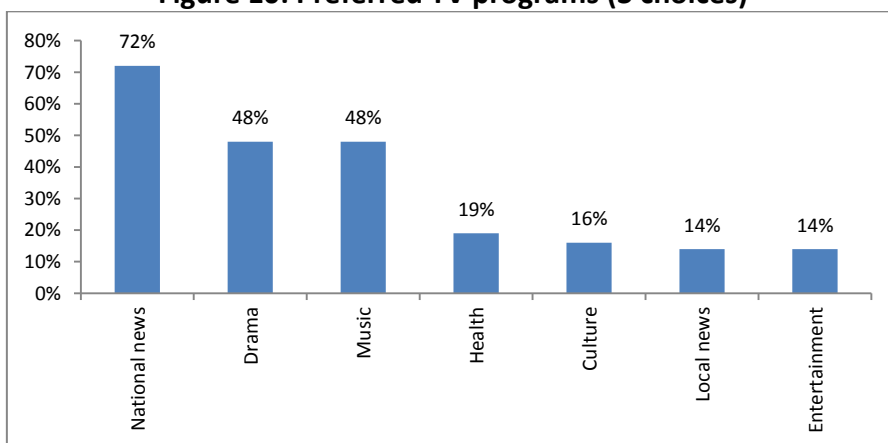
Printed press

The two most popular newspapers/magazines are Kandahar (29% of respondents mentioned it as their preferred title) and Surghar (24%). Other popular papers are Tolo-e-Afghan, Showanzai, and Azadi, all in the top three preferred titles for 18% of respondents.

3.2.2 Programs

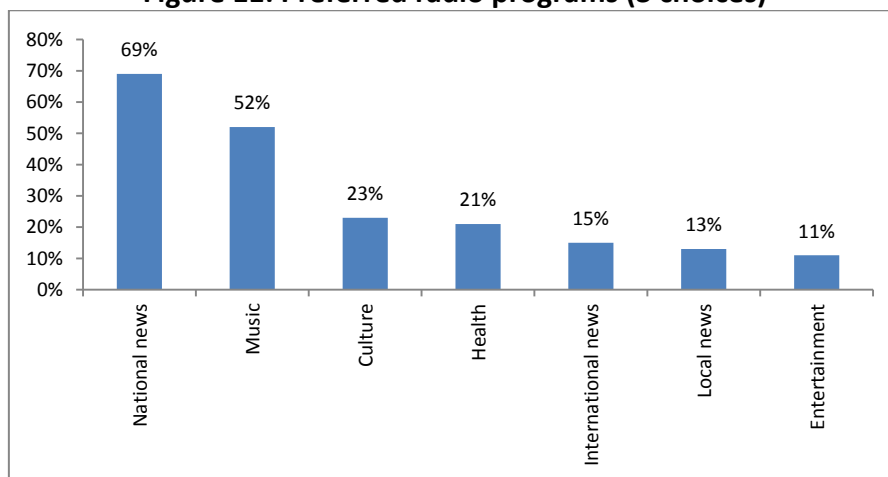
National news is the top reason for watching TV for 72% of respondents. This is closely followed by entertainment programs, with 48% of the sample listing music as well as drama as their favorite type of TV program.

Figure 10: Preferred TV programs (3 choices)



On the radio, national news is again the preferred type of content (mentioned by 69% of interviewees), followed by music (52%). Cultural programs come third (23%), followed by health-related programs (21%). Local news is surprisingly low in popularity (13%).

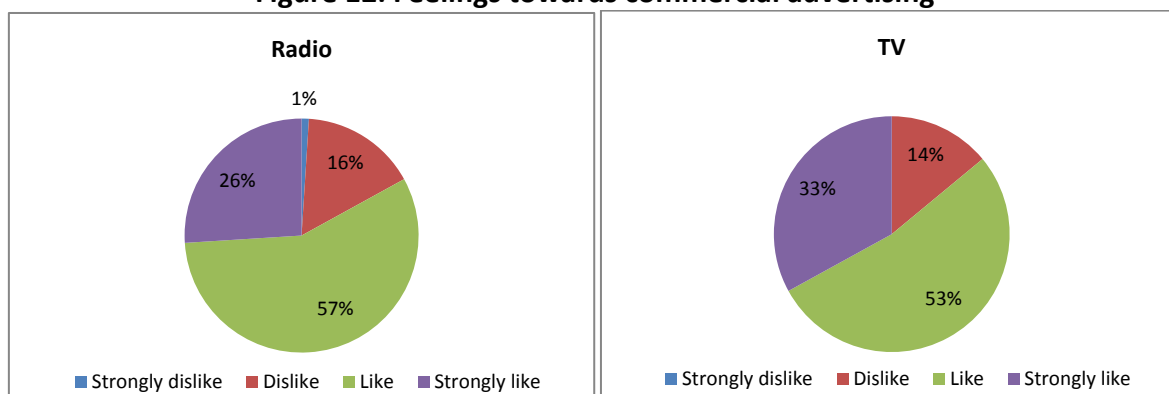
Figure 11: Preferred radio programs (3 choices)



3.2.3 Advertising

Over 86% of TV viewers and 83% of radio listeners like or even strongly like advertising.

Figure 12: Feelings towards commercial advertising



Generally speaking, advertising is considered useful. Over half (54%) of TV viewers and 36% of radio listeners felt adverts were very informative. At the same time, however, they tended to feel there was too much advertising (44% in the case of radio and 51% on TV).

Among the most remembered adverts are those for mobile companies, which strongly dominate advertising on the radio. On TV, banks seem to be slightly more active advertisers.

3.2.4 Personalities

Poet, songwriter, and short story writer Mohamad Rafi was mentioned as a popular guest on many TV stations. Noor Nawz was referred to as a notable (albeit jobless) politician, part of most political debates on TV, with the role of explaining current affairs but with no real political angle.

With regard to personalities that respondents would like to see or hear on the media, President Karzai was the most cited (52%). Other personalities, mentioned by a small number of interviewees, were Nangarhar governor Gul Agha Sherzoy (20%), former presidential candidate Dr. Abdullah Abdullah (2%), and Haji Adam, a village elder (2%).

3.3 Participation and impact

3.3.1 Comprehension

Only 15% of respondents declared having problems with radio content (generally related to language and terminology), whereas 41% had problems understanding TV programs. Terminology used in TV programs seems to be a major challenge for most Arghandab TV viewers; language and pronunciation are difficult for half of them.

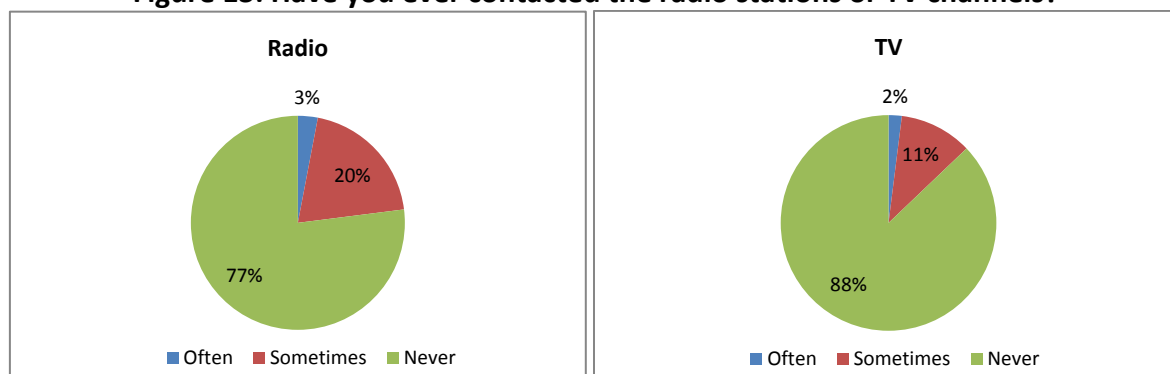
Qualitative interviews showed that Kandahar RTA radio is the most easily understood. Women were said to have some problems understanding specific terms used by presenters or journalists, but respondents claimed they got used to them with time and with regular usage of the media.

3.3.2 Participation

Arghandab respondents do not seem very interested in interacting with the media. A total of 23% of the sample have contacted a radio station, and only 13% have tried interacting with a TV station. The main reason to interact with a media outlet is to request a song (64% responses in the case of TV and 66% for radio); the second is to ask a question (27% and 52%, respectively).

Not surprisingly, the most popular radio stations are the most often contacted: Azadi, AIR, and Killid. Similarly, for TV, 75% of all contact is with Hewad, the favorite of all local TV channels.

Figure 13: Have you ever contacted the radio stations or TV channels?

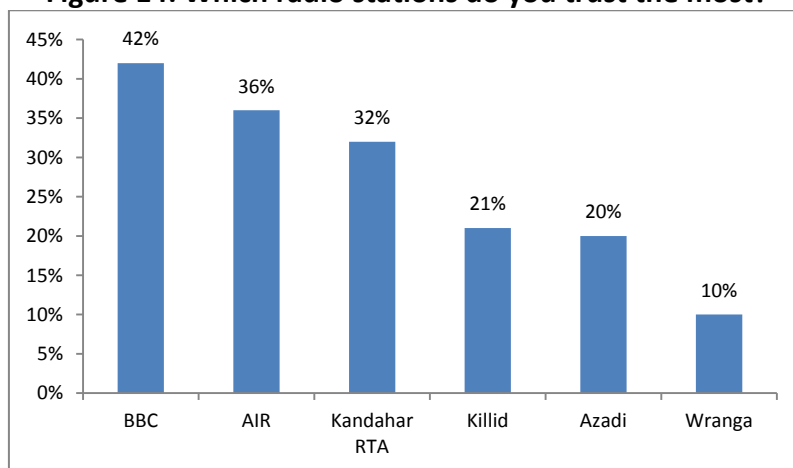


Interestingly, the local population takes part in interactive programming with outlets based in Kandahar, for instance, even though it costs them a certain amount of money in phone calls or text messages.

3.3.3 Trust

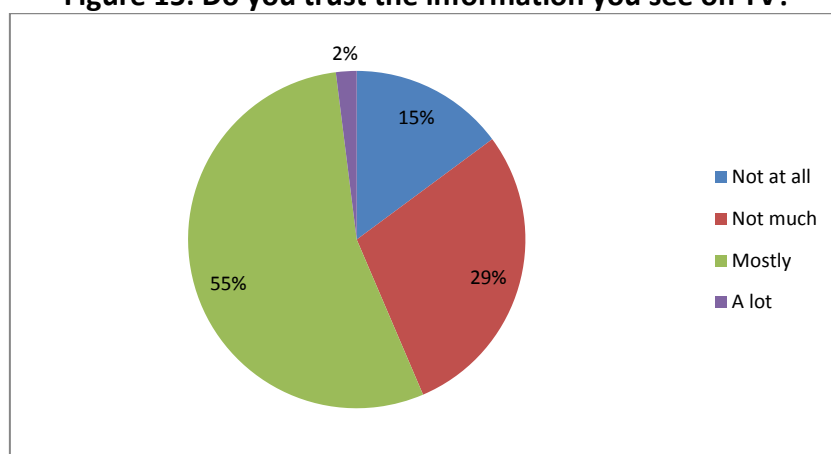
Despite ranking only third among preferred stations, the BBC is the most trusted radio station (42%) in Arghandab. The four other most trusted stations match the most preferred stations.

Figure 14: Which radio stations do you trust the most?



Information that comes from the media is not always trusted. Almost half (44%) of interviewees consider TV content not to be trustworthy. However, this includes the share of the sample that is not interested in TV. Trust among TV users is likely to be significantly higher.

Figure 15: Do you trust the information you see on TV?



3.3.4 Perception of local media

At the time of the field visit, no local media outlets were broadcasting in Arghandab.

3.3.5 Circulation and impact

Most interviewees in Arghandab agreed that the media had a positive impact. Although there are no media outlets in the district, respondents agreed with the general notion that local radio stations might have a positive impact on community life (88%). Most of them (88%) thought that a radio station could bring new ideas to change community life (95%). Some 93% of respondents stated that radio had changed their opinion on certain matters, and for half of them (48%) this had happened rather often.

The impact of TV was seen similarly. Over 90% of respondents admitted that it brought new ideas and almost all (98%) assessed these as good.

Figure 16: Does local radio have an impact on your community?

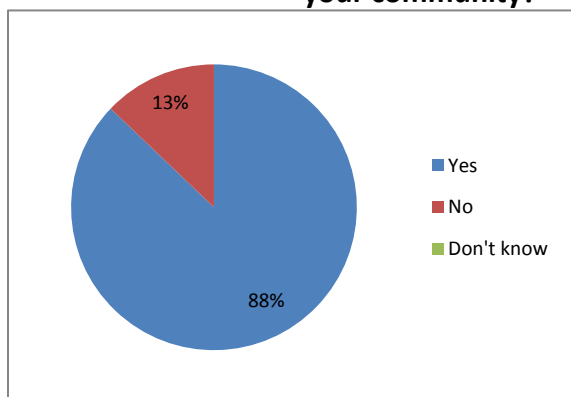
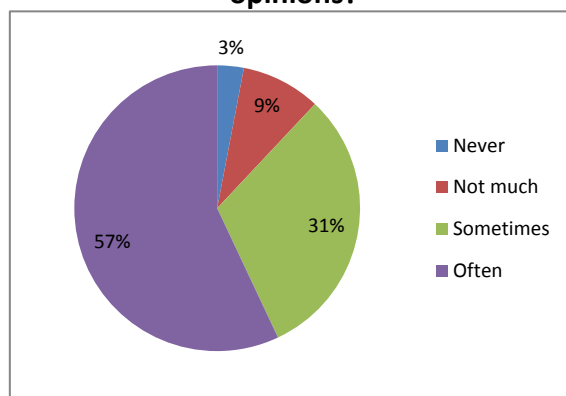


Figure 17: Can TV make you change your opinions?



The seemingly positive impact of the media may result from people discussing content with friends and family members. TV programs are significantly more commented on than radio programs (97% of respondents versus 89%). Sharing mobile content remains a marginal activity (2%).

3.3.6 Development project communication and educational campaigns

The only campaign mentioned was one conducted by international NGOs providing fertilizers to farmers a couple of times a year (usually in spring). No more details were available.

3.3.7 Insurgents

A total of 34% of respondents mentioned the presence of insurgents in the area, which is in line with other reports on the district. A total of 47% admitted they had received information from insurgents.

With no illegal radio station in the district, *shabnama* are the most popular form of communication (58%), although almost 23% of respondents are approached via calls on their mobile phones (quite high in comparison with other districts). A total of 18% reported having had face-to-face contact with the Taliban.

Insurgents seem to use every possible means of communication – from very traditional to modern. Nevertheless, the quality of their information was assessed as poor (64%).

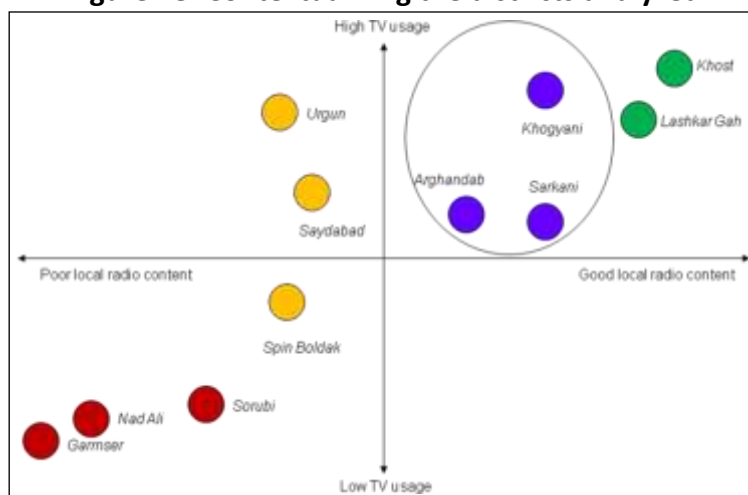
4 Conclusions and areas of opportunity

Despite the absence of local media in the district until very recently (June 2010), Arghandab benefits from the relatively dense media landscape of nearby Kandahar city, which provides local dwellers with a broad choice of TV channels and radio stations (two provincial TV channels and five provincial radio stations). Media usage is quite high, and Arghandab is not as isolated as some other districts assessed in this study, although limited electricity supply seems to significantly constrain TV penetration.

However, security issues mean that Arghandab remains relatively isolated from Kandahar, and it is likely that content related to the district is scarce on provincial radio stations. Arghandab Ghag, the only local radio station broadcasting from the district, might fill this gap in the near future. This station seems to be quite ambitious, and more involved in the local community than other military-run local stations in similar districts.

Figure 18, which classifies the districts analyzed into four groups on the basis of TV usage and quality of local radio content, illustrates Arghandab's positioning in relation to the others.

Figure 18: Contextualizing the districts analyzed



Discussions with community leaders suggested that local media are very much expected to develop, and that there is an eagerness to access improved content, in particular cultural, educational (health, livelihoods), and religious programs, as well as better information about security. Unlike most interviewees in our sample, who value entertainment programs, community leaders were very clear about the need for local programming that respects Islamic values.

Content of local media thus seems a key factor to prioritize in Arghandab. In this regard, conducting regular assessments of a representative sample of users of the newly established local (military) radio station, and then collecting reactions and bringing together expectations of traditional leaders as well as younger audience members (so as to adapt programs to different segments of the population), is worth looking into.

Establishing a network with other Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) radio stations to share content could make it possible to feed the radio station with alternative

programming, exponentially expanding the content available, while building on other radio stations' successes (our research suggests that a few of these PRT stations are relatively popular and trusted in their own districts).

Supporting other media, such as the internet, should also be considered. Since access to the government office in the district center has improved in recent months, this public space could be used to provide access to computers and the internet.