



Afghan Media in 2010

Priority District Report Kandahar City (Kandahar)

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1 Methodology

Ten key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted in Kandahar city with outlet managers of the following: Killid radio; Hewad TV/Afghan Independent Radio (AIR); Kandahar Radio Television Afghanistan (RTA) (radio and TV); Mashom Ghag magazine; Tolo-e-Afghan newspaper; Wranga radio; Talimul Islam radio and magazine; Islam Ghag radio and magazine; Surghar weekly newspaper; and Tatobay weekly newspaper. KIIs were also conducted with one journalist from Hewad TV and one from Tolo-e-Afghan newspaper.

Additionally, the following community leaders were interviewed: the head of the Department of Culture and Information; a professor of pedagogy at the teachers' college; the head of the Department of Agriculture and assistant dean at Kandahar University (Ghuara Serah, nominated for Hewad TV/AIR's "top person in education" award); the Kandahar Nye Express representative; and the head of the journalists' association.

Additionally, 190 close-ended interviews were conducted with both men and women in Kandahar city. Fieldwork took place in April and May 2010. Audience data were also collected for 61 individuals living in the province as a whole by means of a phone survey, which took place from July 9 to 23 and from August 22 to 28, 2010.

2 Media landscape

Kandahar city has a unique media landscape. As in other districts, it has seen an increase in the number of media outlets in the past few years: since 2006, at least one TV channel, three radio stations, and three new print outlets have been established. Yet the media scene is also characterized by a denser presence of religious-based, insurgent, and counterinsurgency outlets than elsewhere. The media is subject to a number of constraints, including high levels of insecurity (specifically nurtured by insurgents in Panjuai and Arghandab districts) and irregular electricity supply (electricity is generally provided every other day to government authorities and less regularly to the broader population, who are forced to rely on generators and gas).

There are over 200 public spaces, such as *chaikanas* (tea shops) and ice cream shops, in the city; most show videos on their TVs. There are a number of satellite dishes on roofs and there is comprehensive and a good quality mobile phone service by all major providers (AWCC, Roshan, MTN, Etisalat, and Afghan Telecom). An estimated 180 Public Call Offices (PCOs) are present, providing money exchange, sale of scratch cards, and calling services. There are roughly 30-40 computer shops (selling laptops, hardware, and flash disks). One market on the outskirts of the city (De Japan Zarashianu Market) sells second-hand computer devices from Japan and new devices from China: this is where retailers usually shop. There are approximately 60-70 video shops, each generating an average of \$400-500 monthly. Between 15 and 20 satellite equipment shops sell a range of products, including TV sets, dish antennas, decoders, videos, and cassettes. Kandahar has approximately 40-50 bookstores spread across the city, most of which do not sell newspapers. Selling newspapers generates an average daily income of \$20.

2.1 Media outlets

Kandahar district has access to nine terrestrial TV channels, two of which are local, and 13 radio stations, eight of which are local. A large number of newspapers and magazines are distributed in the district, as highlighted below.

2.1.1 Television

Besides satellite channels, nine TV channels are available in the district.

Name	Scope	Ownership	Antenna location	Broadcast radius
Kandahar RTA	Provincial	Government	Kandahar	60km
Hewad	Local	Private	Kandahar	35km
Saba	National	Private	Kandahar	40km
Ariana	National	Private	Kandahar	35-75km
Tolo	National	Private	Kandahar	50km
Lemar	National	Private	Kandahar	40km
Shamshad	National	Private	Kandahar	30-160km
Tamadon	National	Private	Kandahar	36-40km
Noor	National	Private	Kandahar	30km

Kandahar RTA

Kandahar RTA (TV) was established in 1984. The current head is Mr. Jaweed Ahmad Wafa, and he has an assistant, Mr. Hajii Ramatullah. Its 40m antenna is located in the RTA compound (in Ainomina neighborhood). It has a 500W transmitter with a 60km broadcast radius, covering, besides Kandahar city, Daman, Dand, and Panjuai districts, and a few parts of Arghandab district (said to be roughly 100,000 viewers). Kandahar RTA has asked its headquarters in Kabul to increase coverage to all parts of the province, requiring financial support of around \$500,000. The plan is to increase broadcasting to 18 hours a day – currently, Kandahar RTA broadcasts for 7 hours (4-11pm), airing 8 programs, 80% of which are in Pashto. Every day at 8:30pm, news is broadcast from Kabul for 30 minutes. Music is broadcast for a total of five hours a week. Live political debates (*Meze Medawar*) are broadcast a couple of times a week. These are popular, as are song request programs.

There are 8 journalists working for radio and TV, 30 non-journalists, 5 marketing officers, 10 technicians, and 3 guards and drivers. Of these staff, four are female (announcers). Mr. Abdul Kadir Afghan is a popular journalist on Kandahar RTA.

Advertising, including death announcements and commercials, is broadcast for 15 minutes every day at a price of \$30 a minute. Advertising on Kandahar RTA (both radio and TV) generates revenues of \$4,000 a month.

Hewad

Hewad was established in 2006. It is owned and managed by Mr. Khazi Mohammad Omar, who also owns AIR. His assistant, Mr. Nurullah Noor, was interviewed. Its 36-40m antenna is located in Shaedanu Chawk in Nawe Shar (“New City”), and its 2.5kW transmitter has a 35km broadcast radius. Through a more powerful transmitter, the plan is to increase both radio and TV coverage. Hewad’s technology is reported to be of a higher standard than that of Kandahar RTA. Hewad broadcasts 20 hours a day, mainly in Pashto (95%). Programming includes music (six hours a week) and local reporting (seven hours a week). Rural areas are not covered, owing to security constraints. Interactive programming includes *Shkulai Sahar* (“Nice Morning”) and *Defeker Tal* (“Quiz”). Advertising is broadcast for 20 minutes a day at a price of \$50 a minute. No information was disclosed on the costs of the outlet.

The TV station employs 15 journalists, 30 non-journalists (10 of whom are female), 12 marketing staff, and 20 technicians. Mr. Saied Sarwar Amoni was mentioned as a popular journalist working for Hewad TV. No major pressure or censorship issues were reported.

Cable networks

There are currently two private cable networks in Kandahar: Kandahar and Unistar. These are still operating, even though most private cable TV companies have shut down in the past couple of years (including Star, Kharir, and Safa). Increased insecurity has led to uneasiness among the local population, who often prefer (more discreet) dish antennas for watching Indian channels (said to be the most popular among cable TV viewers). Despite this, one Kandahar cable provider reported a total of 100-150 subscribers in the city (slightly more for Unistar). The average price of a subscription is \$5 per month.

Name	# channels	# subscribers	Location
Kandahar	-	100-150	-
Unistar	-	150-200	=

2.1.2 Radio

Besides the shortwave radio stations that are available throughout Afghanistan, there are 13 radio stations in the district, including eight local stations.

Name	Scope	Ownership	Frequency	Antenna location	Broadcast radius
Kandahar RTA	Local	Government	105.2 FM 1305 AM	Kandahar	300km
Killid	Local	Private	89.4 FM	Kandahar	100km
Talimul Islam	Local	Private	94.60 FM	Kandahar	35km
AIR	Local	Private	88FM	Kandahar	80km
Islam Ghag	Local	Private	88.9FM	Kandahar	6km
Wranga	Local	Private	95.2 FM	Kandahar	50km
Rana	Local	Military	99.9 FM	Kandahar	-
Shariat Ghag	Local	Insurgent	-	Kandahar	-
Arman FM	National	Private	98.1 FM	Kandahar	60km
BBC	International	Public (UK)	90 FM	Kandahar	20-25km
Nawa	National	Private	103.1 FM	Kandahar	75km
Azadi	International	Public (US)	100.5 FM	Kandahar	25km
VOA/Ashna	International	Public (US)	100.5 FM	Kandahar	25km

Kandahar RTA

Kandahar RTA (radio) was established in 1974. Its 30m antenna is located on the RTA compound in District 5, and its 10kW transmitter has a 300km broadcast range. Coverage is

greater than for other radio stations and includes all parts of Kandahar, Helmand, Uruzgan, and Zabul provinces (said to be a total of 2 million estimated listeners). The radio station broadcasts for 15 hours a day (7am-10pm) through 15 programs, and the plan is to boost this to 18 broadcast hours a day. Currently, only 10.5 hours a week come from Kabul (including news in the evening). Rural areas are not accessible for security reasons, so generally they are not covered by RTA radio and TV reporting. Music is broadcast for 10 hours a week. European music and Afghan dance music coverage has been significantly reduced, following complaints of excessive content. Every night, political debates (*Meze Medawar*) are broadcast. Call-in shows for song requests are also popular.

There are 8 journalists working for radio and TV, 30 non-journalists, 5 marketing officers, 10 technicians, and 3 guards and drivers. Of these staff, four are female (announcers). Mr. Abdul Kadir Afghan is a popular journalist on RTA.

Advertising, including death announcements and commercials, is broadcast for 15 minutes every day, at a price of \$8 a minute. Advertising on RTA (both radio and TV) generates revenues of \$4,000 a month (50% each). Major monthly costs include salaries (\$2,000), electricity and fuel (\$4,000), and other expenses (\$4,000).

Irregular electricity supply and limited facilities and equipment (i.e. computers, cameras, VCRs, mixers, proper studios, and training) were mentioned as challenges currently facing the outlet.

Killid

Killid was established in Kandahar in 2007 and is managed by Mr. Nisar Ahmad Azaad. Its 36m antenna is located on the roof and its 600W transmitter has a broadcast radius of 100km (said to reach 60% of the population in Kandahar province). The radio station broadcasts 24 hours a day through a total of 34 programs, mostly in Pashto (70%). A local board decides on 90% of the programming in Kandahar, with the rest decided in Kabul. Music is broadcast for 25 hours a week and local reporting for approximately 40 hours a week. The outlet relies on Pajhwok Afghan News (PNA) agency as its professional news feed. Advertising is broadcast for approximately two hours a week. Approximately 80% of programming is live, including *Da Sahar Killid* ("Morning Killid") and call-in and quiz shows. The radio station currently has branches in Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif, Herat, Nangarhar, Kandahar, and Khost (set up very recently), and plans to increase coordination among these locations so they can use each other's programming. Staff members include programming staff (16), who are also journalists if needed, and support staff (8). Of the programming staff, 5 are female. Training is usually conducted by headquarters, and they do not report a need for additional external training.

Costs were not disclosed. Commercial advertising on the radio costs \$20 a minute. Killid is supported by local non-governmental organization (NGO) Development and Humanitarian Services for Afghanistan (DHSA).

Talimul Islam

Talimul Islam was established 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 programming is exclusively religion based: the manager reported that “*music is not food for the soul.*” Its 40m antenna is located close to the stadium in Kandahar. It has a 200W transmitter and a broadcast radius of 35km, which covers Dand and Damon districts and a part of Arghandab district (said to have an estimated 600,000 listeners). The plan is to increase coverage further. Currently, the station broadcasts 17.5 hours a day (5.30am-11pm). There is advertising.

The outlet employs 3 journalists, 20 non-journalists (e.g. producers), 1 marketing/administrative officer, 2 technicians, and 4 guards and drivers. It employs no females. Monthly costs include salaries for journalists and technicians (\$460) (the rest of the staff are voluntary) and electricity and fuel (\$60). The radio (and magazine) is fully funded by the owner.

Azad Afghan (AIR)

Azad Afghan (AIR) was set up in 2002 and is owned by Mr. Khazi Mohammad Omar, who also owns Hewad TV. It broadcasts 24 hours a day, mainly in Pashto (80%) and the rest in Dari. Its 40m antenna is located in Shaedanu Chawk in Nawe Shar, and its 10kW transmitter has an 80km broadcast radius. The radio station estimates a total of 1.8 million listeners. Programming includes six hours of music and seven hours of local reporting a week. The latter is constrained by increased insecurity, especially in rural areas. Live programming includes *Da Sahar* (“This Morning”), Gharamanai Khabarei (“Lunchtime Talks”), and *Kheal Pasamandarke* (“Thoughts on the Sea”).

Advertising space is sold at \$50 a minute and is generally broadcast for 15 minutes a day. No information was disclosed relative to the costs of the outlet, which currently employs 15 journalists, 30 non-journalists (10 female), 12 marketing and administration staff, and 20 technicians.

Islam Ghag

Islam Ghag (“Voice of Islam”) is a state radio station managed by Mr. Mawlawi Hekmatullah Hekmat (who also manages the monthly magazine Islami Dewa), established in 2002 to counteract and report on insurgency. Its 20m antenna is located in the Afghan National Army (ANA) compound in the neighborhood of Kule Urdu. Its 50W transmitter has a 6km broadcast range reaching an estimated 200,000 listeners. The outlet is keen to increase coverage if extra funding is provided.

The station broadcasts four hours a day (8am-12pm). Almost all of its programming relates to the *Shura al Ulema* (Scholar Council) and explains Islam and how the insurgents do not comply with it. In addition to *Shura al Ulema* lessons, programming includes *Taronai Islami* (chants with no accompanying music) for 30 minutes a day. Local reporting is broadcast for 1.5 hours a week.

(30 minutes on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays). Live programming is also broadcast, and includes religion-based calling shows. The outlet employs two journalists, five non-journalists, and three technicians (no female staff). Additional voluntary work is provided by the *shura* (council).

There is no advertising, only public service announcements to counter poppy cultivation and suicide attacks. Major monthly costs include the following: salaries, electricity and fuel expenses for the generator (\$1,600), and miscellaneous (\$100). There is no internet access and an irregular electricity supply.

Wranga

Wranga was launched in June 2009. Its 600W transmitter has a 50km broadcast range (covering Kandahar city, Dand, Daman, Arghandab, Shega, and Spin Boldak districts, and some parts of Panjuai district). The station is managed by Mr. Mohammed Ibrahim and supported by a businessman (Mr. Haji Pashah Kakar), who runs a soap factory and funds the radio on an *ad hoc* basis.

The station broadcasts 15 hours a day (7am-11pm, with a break from 12pm-1pm for prayers). Programming includes news bulletins (five minutes per hour) and news reporting every evening at 8pm (for 15 minutes). Live programming includes *Kandahari Guluna*, *Dilandeiu Karwan*, *Islami Juant*, and a quiz show called *Sawghat* (“Gift”). All are entertainment programs except for *Islami Juant* (twice a week), which has an educational/religious aim. Music is broadcast for 40 hours a week (50% Afghan, 50% Indian); it is prioritized because people seem to like it. Local reporting is broadcast seven hours a week. No content is purchased.

There are three journalists working for Wranga, seven non-journalists, one staff member in charge of marketing and administration, two technicians, and two guards. There are no female staff members. Advertising prices range from \$8 a minute (with music) to \$4 (without music) and \$3 for death announcements. Total revenues generated from advertising amount to \$800 a month.

Monthly costs include salaries (\$2,000) and fuel, generally funded by Mr. Kakar. The outlet manager reported pressure from the authorities and insurgents when either of the two factions feels it has been depicted as in a weak position. The plan is to set up a magazine and a TV station in the near future.

Rana

Rana is a military radio station with extensive music programming. Managers of other outlets claimed the station had a lack of cultural sensitivity (i.e. in appropriate music, female announcers, and females making jokes) and limited listenership.

Shariat Ghag

Shariat Ghag was mentioned by Islam Ghag radio as an insurgency radio station, broadcasting irregularly – at 9pm on certain days of the week. Programming includes messages from Mullah Mohammed Omar Mujahhed and *Taronai Islami* (chants without music).

2.1.3 Newspapers

A number of newspapers and magazines were observed in the district, including local printed press. A few of the main local print outlets are looked at briefly in the paragraphs below.

The Nye Express office in Kandahar is currently distributing the following publications: Anis, Hewad, Eslah, Nangarhar, Jawzjan, and Herat (20-30 copies of each to the Department of Information and Culture), as well as Khidmatgar, Sada-e-Azadi, Killid, and Mursal.

Surghar

Surghar was the first weekly newspaper established in Kandahar (in 2005). It is currently managed by Mr. Abdul Kadir Afghan. It is a 16-page publication that publishes 50,000 copies a week at a unit price of \$0.20. It is mainly Pashto (85%) but also includes some English content (15%). Distribution takes place in Kandahar city and in the safe districts of Spin Boldak, Dand, Daman, and Arghandab, as well as in Kabul, Helmand, Uruzgan, Zabul, Paktia, and Nangarhar provinces and some parts of Laghman province. The newspaper has an estimated 1 million readers. The plan is to increase distribution further, especially in Pashtun provinces.

Staff members include five journalists, five non-journalists, two marketing and administration officers, six technicians (designers etc.), and two guards. All are salaried staff members and no females are employed. The newspaper is supported by an advertising company called Arakoziya based in Kandahar (run by Mr. Mohammad Naseem Pashto). Advertising represents a valuable source of revenue, to a total of \$1,000 every month (\$200 per half page).

Local people reportedly come to the outlet to inform them and complain about specific problems. The newspaper has received pressure from both the government and insurgents (mainly by phone).

Tolo-e-Afghan

Tolo-e-Afghan was the first daily newspaper established in Kandahar. It started back in 1921 as an irregular two-page publication and only in 2008 became a regular daily newspaper. It is currently managed by Mr. Abdul Kudus Baes, who has been employed at the magazine since 2001. The newspaper prints 1,000 copies a day. It is now a free, four-page newspaper written in Pashto (80%) and Dari (20%). The plan is to increase to eight pages and to include more educational and health articles. Distribution takes place in Uruzgan, Zabul, and Helmand provinces and in all districts of Kandahar, through informal networks.

Five journalists, four non-journalists (two part-time), seven marketing staff, and two technicians are employed (no females). In June 2010, two journalists attended a three-day training workshop on parliamentary election reporting, organized by Nai Supporting Open Media.

Major costs include the following: salaries (\$1,200), electricity expenses and fuel (\$140), freelance payments (\$400), and miscellaneous (\$120). Advertising generates an average \$300-400 a month (the average advertising price is \$10 per inch).

The newspaper was reportedly exposed to heavy pressure from commanders at the beginning of the Karzai government. Major needs include support to enhance distribution, such as a car or a motorcycle (they currently rely on a bicycle for distribution within Kandahar). Also, lack of financial support for overtime work was mentioned as an issue.

Tatobay

Tatobay is a weekly Pashto newspaper launched in 2009 and managed by Mr. Abdul Halim Almyar. Mr. Almyar also runs the Youth Educational Centre (YEC), which supports the newspaper financially. It publishes 1,500 copies a week sold at a unit price of \$0.10. It is currently an 8-page publication, with a plan to turn it into a 10-page newspaper covering all Pashtun provinces. Distribution currently takes place mainly in Kandahar; a few copies reach Helmand and Uruzgan provinces.

An informal editorial committee decides on the content of articles. Among the 15 staff members are 3 journalists, 5 non-journalists, and 3 technicians. Salaries are paid only to eight staff members; the rest are students from the YEC who work on a voluntary basis. No females are employed. Salaries fluctuate on a monthly basis depending on resources available. The price of advertising is \$100 per half page to a total of \$700 a month. Recently, the outlet manager was exposed to pressure from insurgents following an article's reference to the foreign military as "friends." The outlet regularly receives phone calls from callers claiming to be insurgents, although there is suspicion as to whether all these calls really come from them.

Mashom Ghag

Mashom Ghag ("Voice of the Child") is a quarterly magazine started in 2007, managed by Mr. Nazar Mohammad Samimi, who is also employed as a journalist at Kandahar RTA. It is a 32-page publication, written in Pashto (80%), Dari (10%), and English (10%). It prints 1,000 copies every three months and is supported by Save the Children. It is focused on child-related topics, especially children's rights. Distribution takes place in Uruzgan and Kabul and the plan is to expand to reach all Pashtun provinces.

The manager decides on 80% of the content and Save the Children determines the rest. There are 10 journalists working for the magazine, 6 of whom are students who work on a part-time and voluntary basis – the other 4 journalists are paid. It was reported that training is a particular need, given the staff's young age. Additionally, the outlet employs 3 non-journalists, 5 staff members in charge of marketing and administration, 2 technicians, and 2 guards.

Major monthly costs include the following: salaries (\$160), internet (\$40), transportation (\$60), and printing (\$200). Save the Children provides funding to a total of \$500 every month. There is no advertising, although they aim to sell space in the near future. Famous journalists giving their support to the magazine include Mr. Gulalai Khoshal and Mr. Malalai Likwal.

Islami Diwa

Islami Diwa is a monthly state magazine, established in 2002 and managed by Mr. Mawlawi Hekmatullah Hekmat (who also runs Islam Ghag radio). It prints 2,000 copies a month in Kandahar and is distributed for free in all provinces of the country (roughly 10 copies are distributed to government authorities in each province) by mail or through informal networks. The outlet is willing to increase coverage provided that additional funding can be found for this. There is no internet access and an irregular electricity supply. The staff includes two journalists, five non-journalists, and three technicians. There are no females employed. Additional voluntary work is provided by *shura* members. See Islam Ghag radio above for more details.

Islami Larshowana

Islami Larshowana is a quarterly magazine that began in 2009. It has published two issues so far (1,000 and 1,500 copies, respectively, although the plan is to increase the number of magazines printed). It is owned and managed by Mr. Mawlahi Mohammad Omar Khetabi, who also owns Talimul Islam radio. The radio station and the magazine are funded completely by the owner. Printing is carried out through local businesspersons, who are refunded by the magazine if it makes any revenue. See Talimul Islam radio above for more details.

Kandahar

Kandahar is a monthly state magazine that used to be run by “Bobi,” the former head of the Department of Culture and Information in Kandahar, who was reportedly killed by insurgents in April 2010. He has not been replaced yet in his capacity of manager of this outlet.

2.2 New media

2.2.1 Mobile media

As elsewhere in the country, mobile phones are not really used as a source of information. High levels of insecurity in the city make the local population uncomfortable with showing that they are accessing media. Hence, despite the presence of 30-40 computer shops, one market on the outskirts of the city, and approximately 60-70 video shops in the city, which could potentially sell ringtones and video clips to download onto mobile phones, the likelihood of such services being provided, and of videos and music being exchanged among the population, even among youth, is rather low in Kandahar.

2.2.2 Internet

As in all major cities in the country, internet in Kandahar is provided by internet service providers (ISPs) and telecom companies. Internet through optic fiber is not available in Kandahar. The plan to set up a 3,200km-long internet backbone across the country through Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, and Mazar, and then off to Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Pakistan, is significantly constrained by high levels of insecurity, especially along the route from Ghazni to Kandahar.

Public internet access in Kandahar is provided through 10-12 internet cafés spread across the city. Interviews with café managers suggested that an average internet café in Kandahar has 25-30 users a day and that the connection price is generally \$0.80 per hour. The connection is reportedly irregular and poor.

2.3 Media and information actors

2.3.1 Government

One Bakhtar News Agency (BNA) representative (Mr. Ahmad Ludeen) and one representative of the Ministry of Information and Culture (MoIC) (Mr. Abdulkadeem Patial) are based in Kandahar. There is no Faculty of Journalism at Kandahar University. One public library is located in the Department of Culture and Information and one in Kandahar University.

2.3.2 Outlet managers and journalists

There is a lively journalists' community in Kandahar, which includes journalists working for local outlets as well as a number of reporters based outside of the city (working for Voice of America (VOA), the BBC, the Associated Press (AP), the New York Times, Al Jazeera, Reuters, Agence France-Presse (AFP), Global, and Azadi radio).

Kandahar features one journalists' association, called Sap Ma, established in 2007. The association has an office in Ainomina, in front of Kandahar RTA. Mr. Fazul Rahman was elected head of the association by 126 journalist members from Zabul, Helmand, Uruzgan, and Kandahar (representatives of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Department of Information and Culture were reportedly present at the time of the election). According to Mr. Rahman, meetings are held regularly, and there is a generally positive perception of the role of the media in the district: *"The media in Kandahar has considerably improved people's lives, since 70-80% of the population's problems can be solved by it."*

Between 2009 and 2010, the Kandahar Press Club was established. This currently gathers 40 journalists from Kandahar, who meet on a monthly basis to discuss problems related to journalism, and also organizes roundtables and conferences. The two most popular journalists in Kandahar are said to be Mr. Rahman and Mr. Humayoun Shuaib (from Hewad TV).

Journalism quality in Kandahar is significantly constrained by insecurity. Particularly unsafe areas for journalists include Shurawaq, Nesh, and Panjuai districts and parts of Arghandab district: *“Because of insecurity, I haven’t visited Shurawaq and Nesh in the past eight years”* (Hewad TV/AIR journalist). Apart from this, journalistic independence seems to be an area in need of further support. *“Reports are always crosschecked by the manager and the editorial board. Also, when government authorities are interviewed, journalists are often asked not to report on specific issues”* (Hewad TV/AIR radio journalist).

Political affiliations can affect the cohesiveness of the journalist community. One Hewad TV/AIR journalist cited lack of freedom of speech as a major issue among journalists: *“They all have different political affiliations and do not talk openly about matters affecting them.”* Some pointed to the limited skills of journalists as a factor diluting concern over censorship: *“There is not much analytical capacity among journalists, so censorship is not really an issue”* (Mr. Rahman).

2.3.3 Other content providers

No other major content providers were reported.

2.3.4 Media NGOs

There are no major media NGOs in Kandahar. No NGO present in other urban areas (e.g. Mediothek, Nai Supporting Open Media, Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)) is active in the city.

2.3.5 Traditional information sources

No major information was reported in this respect.

2.3.6 Insurgents

Insurgent communication seems to be more intense in Kandahar than in other districts: *“The most experienced journalists are generally approached by insurgents by phone. Letters are received more rarely”* (Tolo-e-Afghan journalist on insurgent communication). The Department of Information and Culture also reported constant phone calls and *shabnama* (“night letters”) when reporting on numbers of casualties or corruption. Indeed, it was said that, *“insurgents approach journalists when they feel they have been portrayed as the weak side”* (Hewad TV/AIR journalist).

Occasionally, journalists in Kandahar approach insurgents. *“Journalists have fewer contacts of insurgents than insurgents have contacts of journalists”* (Hewad TV/AIR journalist), but follow-up on specific issues is sometimes needed. Reporting on electricity issues, for instance, has required interaction with insurgents. *“There is a very big dam in Lashkar Gah which could potentially serve all electricity needs in Kandahar. Government authorities reported that insurgents had destroyed the pillar connecting the two cities”* (Hewad TV/AIR journalist).

Mr. Shah Mahmoud Barai from the Department of Agriculture of Kandahar University reported that some students found a message from Mullah Mohammed Omar Mujahed at the university at the beginning of the semester. The message explained that the insurgents were in fact not against education, and that students were free to attend schools and teachers to teach. However, it said, Islam must be respected: journalists are not considered enemies as long as they report the truth. The letter also encouraged students to stay away from the military, as they might be attacked by insurgents.

2.3.7 Military

There is one local military radio station, Rana, and one state radio station, Islam Ghag, has its antenna located in the ANA compound. Respondents said that communication with the military takes time: *“ANA is more approachable, whereas interviews with ISAF [the International Security Assistance Force] take longer”* (Tolo-e-Afghan journalist).

2.3.8 Others

No other major interest groups were reported.

3 Audience

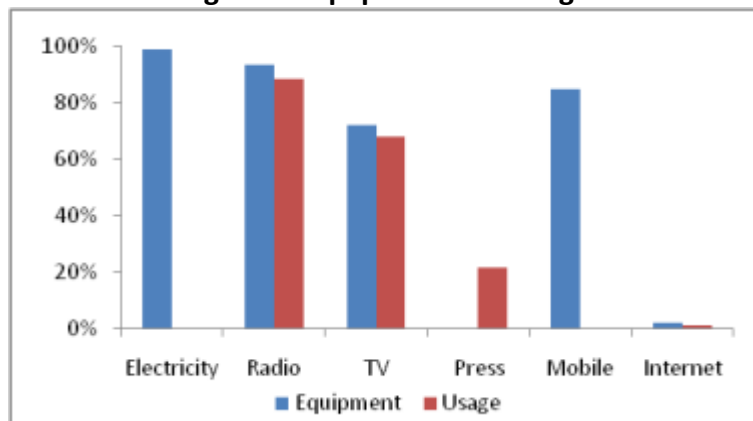
The following is a description of the audience in Kandahar city, based on data collected through 190 close-ended interviews and 435 phone interviews with 61 unique media users. Additional qualitative fieldwork was conducted in the city and the province through paired interviews and community case studies. Qualitative results in cities are the focus of a detailed analysis in the national survey report. Therefore, we present here only a brief insight into the city’s audience.

3.1 Equipment and usage

3.1.1 Household equipment

All interviewees in Kandahar city have access to electricity, and 72% of them have access to at least one TV set. Cultural issues, the price of equipment, and lack of time were reasons given equal weight with regard to why usage is not even more extensive.

Figure 1: Equipment and usage



Radio still plays an important role in Kandahar, with 93% of interviewed households declaring that they owned a radio set. A total of 85% of respondents have a mobile phone, but only 1% have internet at home.

3.1.2 Sources of information and media usage

Radio is the most popular source of information, and furthermore is the source most trusted by the vast majority of interviewees in relation to tested topics. TV is preferred to the radio only for movies.

Radio also comes above TV in terms of usage frequency: 78% of the sample said that they listened to the radio every day, whereas only 61% watched TV as often.

Figure 2: Radio usage frequency

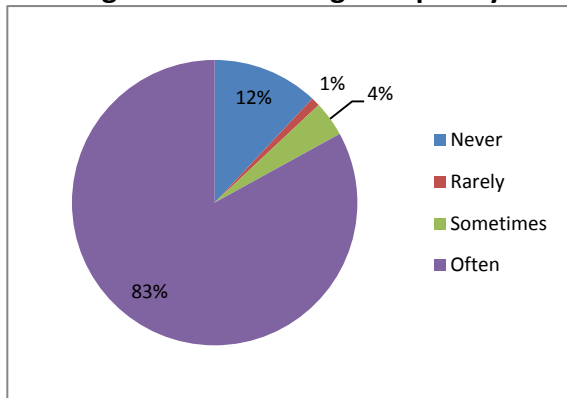
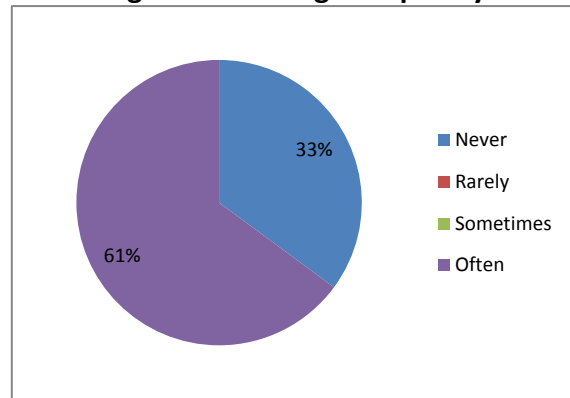


Figure 3: TV usage frequency



Although 22% of interviewees reported reading the printed press, only 2% read on a daily basis. An additional 17% read newspapers or magazines several times a week.

Only 1% of interviewees declared connecting to the internet occasionally.

3.1.3 Usage patterns

Radio is listened to during the whole day, with a slight preference for late evening (7-11pm) at home. Similarly, TV is watched most in the evening, from 7-11pm and at home.

Figure 4: Preferred times to listen to radio

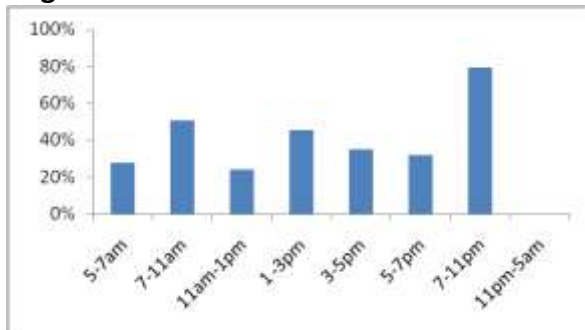
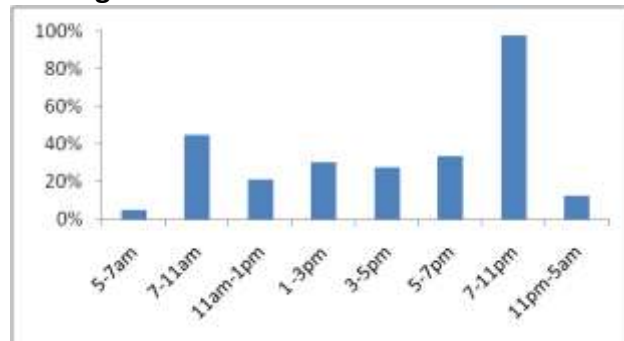


Figure 5: Preferred times to watch TV



3.2 Preferences

3.2.1 Television

Hewad TV is by far the preferred TV channel, mentioned by 64% of interviewees, followed by Ariana (44%), Tolo (35%), and Lemar TV (33%). Kandahar RTA is the interviewees' fifth preference (with 23% viewership). Audience survey data suggest that Tolo is the channel with the greatest share (34%), followed by Ariana (26%) and, together, Lemar and Hewad (13%).

Figure 6: Preferred TV channels (3 choices)

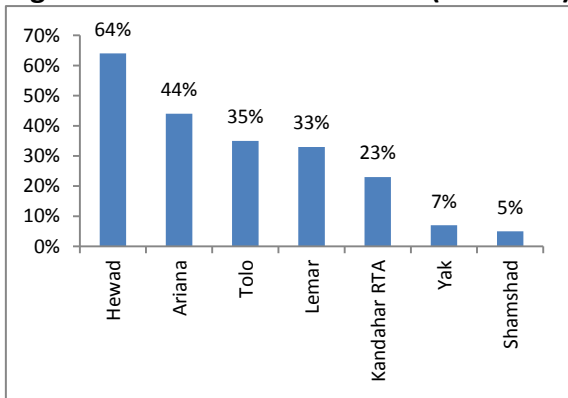


Figure 7: Preferred TV programs (3 choices)

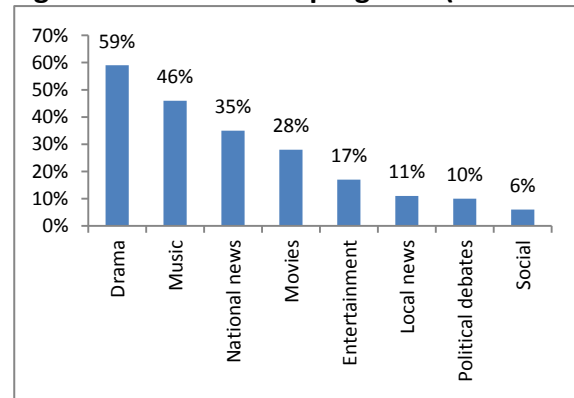
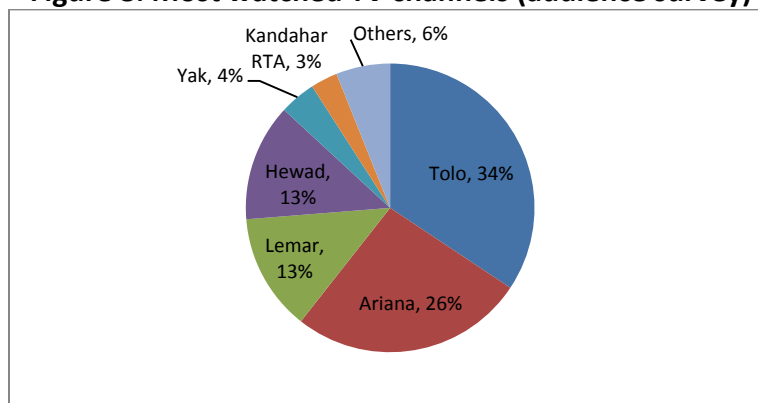


Figure 8: Most watched TV channels (audience survey)



There is a range of preferred programs in Kandahar, which reflects the multiplicity of profiles to be found in a large city. Entertainment (drama, music, movies, and others) was the most preferred. National news was the third choice. The popularity of local news is limited (mentioned by only 11% of the sample).

3.2.2 Radio

Kandahar radio users listen to a large variety of radio stations, but mostly local ones. Out of eight top preferences, two major national radio stations, Arman FM and the BBC, come in fifth and sixth, respectively. Most others are local radio stations (Wranga, AIR, Killid, Kandahar RTA, and Talimul Islam), with Wranga the favorite (42% of total listenership). Wranga also has largest audience share in the province (21%), followed by Arman FM and Kandahar RTA (both 15%). AIR, Azadi, and Killid follow as the fourth and fifth most listened to radio stations in the timeframe analyzed (Azadi and Killid tie, with a 10% share).

Figure 9: Preferred radio stations (3 choices)

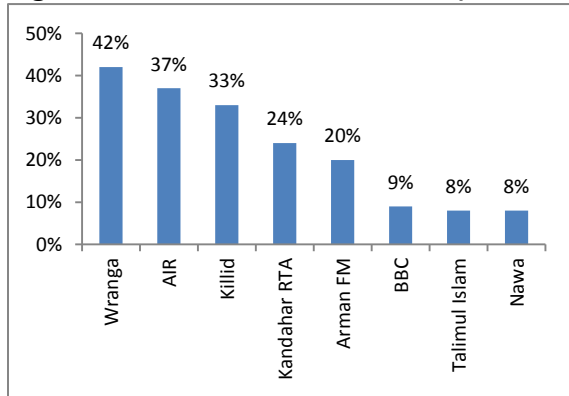


Figure 10: Preferred radio programs (3 choices)

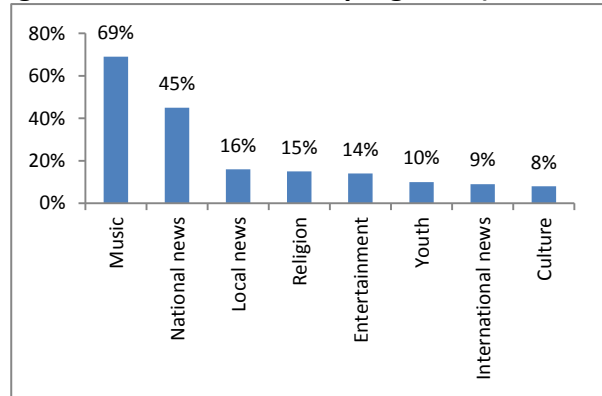
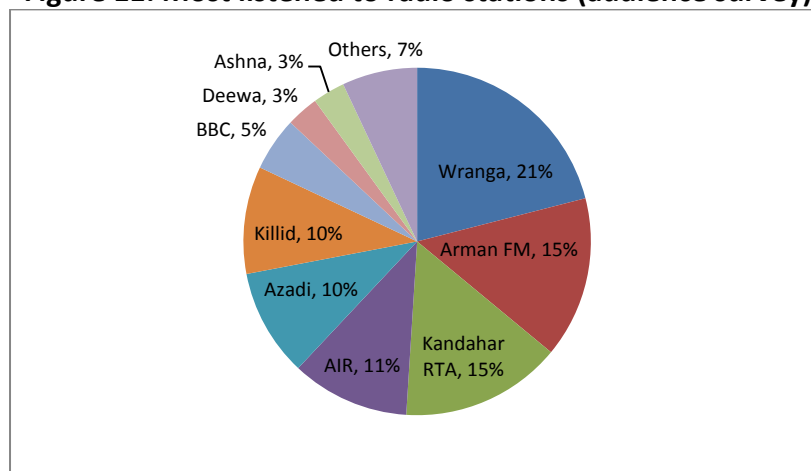


Figure 11: Most listened to radio stations (audience survey)

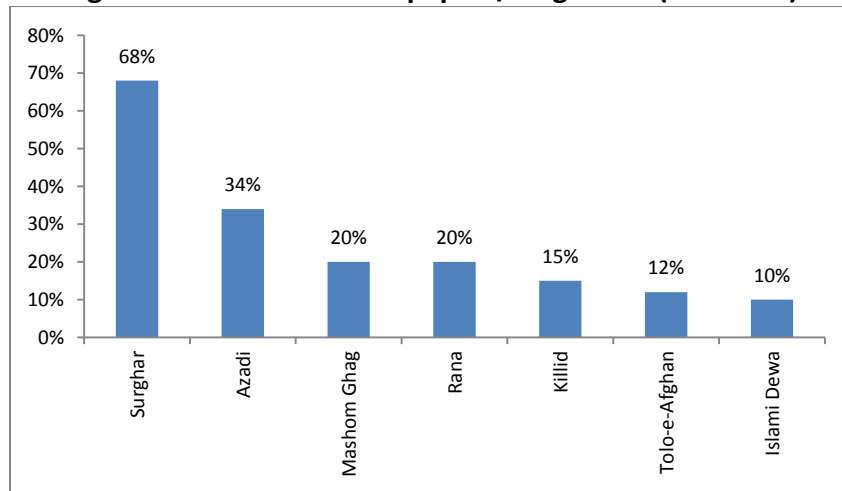


Two types of programs are clearly preferred over others, music (69%) and national news (45%), with all of the other programs mentioned by only 8-16% of the sample.

3.2.3 Printed press

Surghar is the most popular newspaper among Kandahar readers (68%), followed by Sada-e-Azadi (34%). Rana and Mashom Ghag are also relatively popular, read by 20% of respondents.

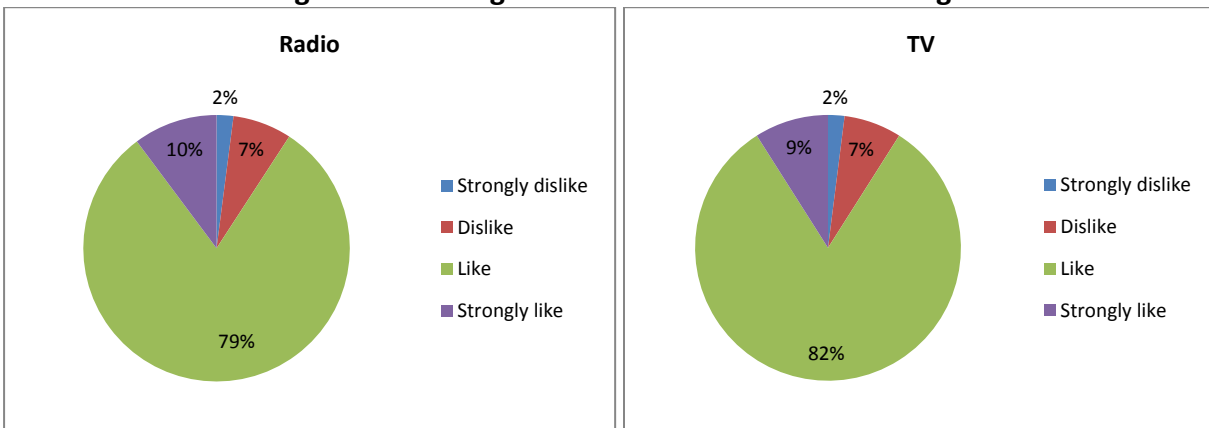
Figure 12: Preferred newspapers/magazines (3 choices)



3.2.4 Advertising

Kandahar interviewees are exposed to commercial advertising more through the radio than the TV. Approximately 80% of Kandahar interviewees reported liking media advertising on both radio and TV. Radio advertising is considered somewhat useful and TV advertising very useful. Nevertheless, there was a general feeling that there is enough advertising.

Figure 13: Feelings towards commercial advertising



3.2.5 Personalities

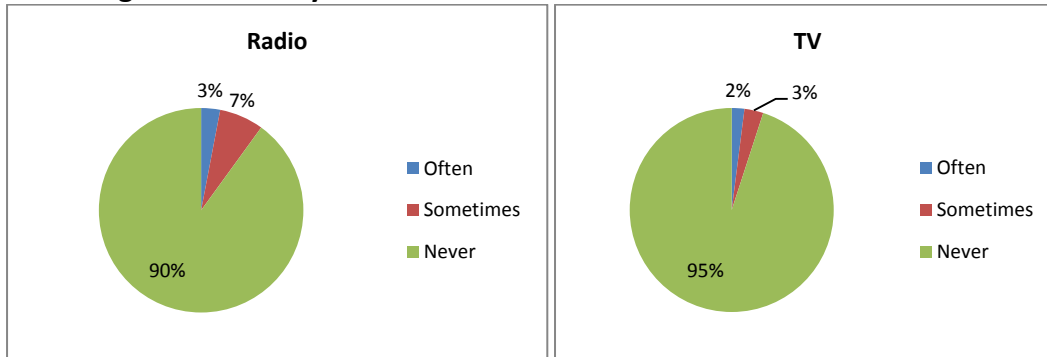
Respondents were not particularly interested in listening to or watching any personalities on the media. President Karzai was the only person mentioned by a significant proportion of interviewees (12%). Other personalities mentioned were Gulagha Sheerzay (current Nangarhar governor and ruler of Kandahar in the 1990s), local doctors (Dr. Ramazan Bashar Doost and Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmad Zay), Ahmad Wali Karzai (chairman of the provincial council in Kandahar), and Mullah Mohammad Omar Akhond (leader of the Taliban).

3.3 Perceptions and impact

3.3.1 Participation

Participation is very low in Kandahar, with only a very limited proportion of radio and TV users ever having contacted the media. The main reasons for interacting with the media are to request/dedicate songs and ask about specific programs.

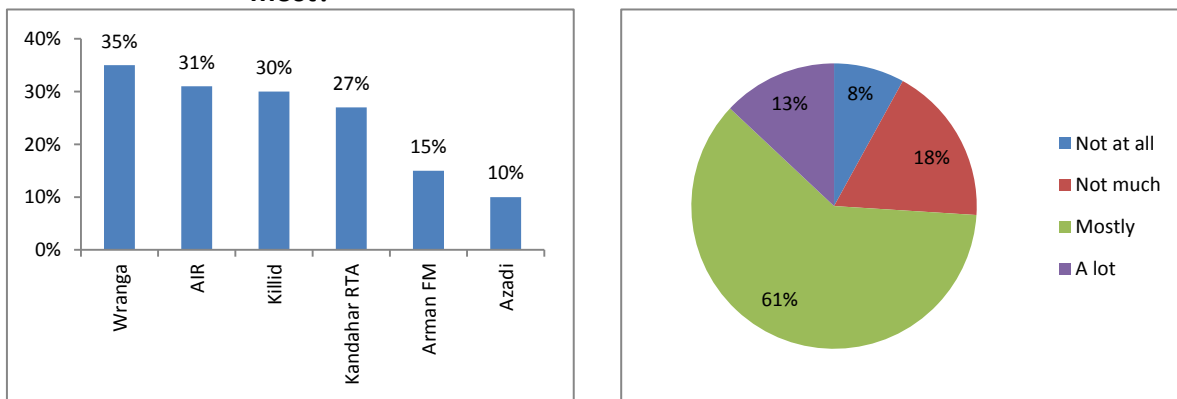
Figure 14: Have you ever contacted radio stations or TV channels?



3.3.2 Trust

In Kandahar, radio audience preferences are closely related to trust. Besides being the most popular source of information, local radio stations are also among the most trusted. Unlike in other districts, the BBC ranks very low in terms of trust (8%).

Figure 15: Which radio stations do you trust most? Figure 16: Do you trust what you see on TV?



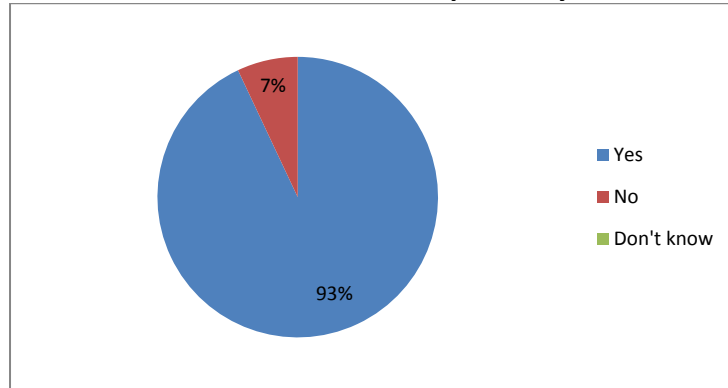
The research suggests that TV is generally trusted in Kandahar: 74% of interviewees mostly (61%) or considerably (13%) trust what is seen on TV.

3.3.3 Perceptions of the local media

Quality of local media in Kandahar is evidently of primary importance, given the strong preferences for local media. For most local stations, respondents are happy or very happy with

the quality. Talimul Islam represents an exception to such enthusiasm, with 13% of the sample keen on seeing improvements there.

Figure 17: Do local media have an impact on your community?



3.3.4 Circulation and impact

Most interviewees in Kandahar acknowledged that television brings new beneficial ideas to their community and helps them shape their opinions (with 49% of respondents feeling that TV content fosters opinion changes). Furthermore, approximately 60% of respondents were keen to discuss some of the ideas and the information they receive with friends and family.

Figure 18: Do you discuss what you see on TV?

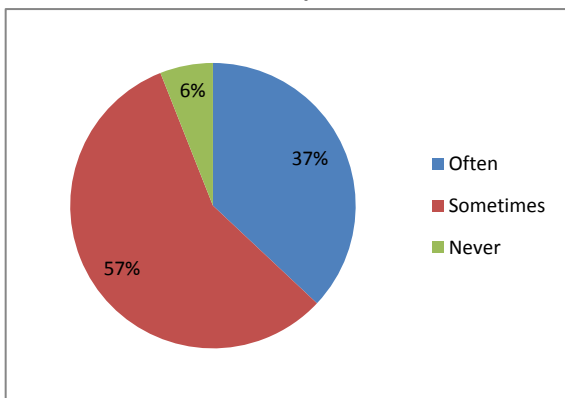
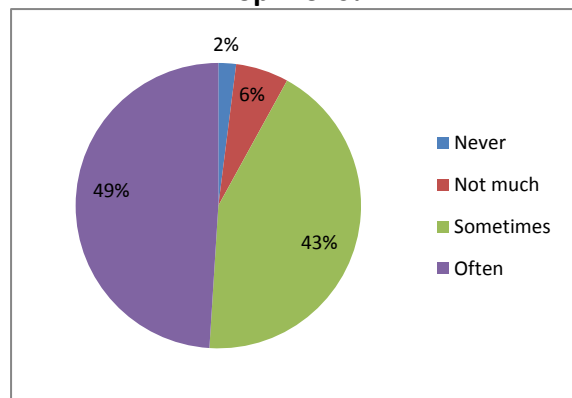


Figure 19: Can TV make you change your opinions?



4 Conclusions and areas of opportunity

As with other large cities in Afghanistan, Kandahar has been the scene of dynamic media development in the past five years. Yet Kandahar probably features the most individual media landscape when compared with other cities in Afghanistan. Of all major cities, including Kabul, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Jalalabad, it has the lowest exposure to terrestrial TV channels (below 10) and among the most limited exposure to radio, along with Jalalabad (approximately 13 stations). Furthermore, the development of the media landscape has taken a variety of forms: private progressive media cohabit with more conservative, religion-focused media, and even media managed by insurgents. Kandahar is also a major cultural center for the Pashtun community, which is reflected in the variety of newspapers and magazines produced locally.

The journalism community in Kandahar has some networking and solidarity structures in place, although cohesiveness and solidarity are still far from being reached. Specific factors, including very high levels of insecurity, the absence of media NGOs, and lack of a Faculty of Journalism in the city, certainly hamper full development here. Additionally, although the benefits of the internet optic fiber backbone plan remain to be seen in all parts of the country, the plan is hampered here particularly by regional fighting on the route to Kandahar.

In this context, any media development initiative should be carefully balanced, to build on existing networks and factor in the knowledge of local journalists, including their ability to develop educational and informative content in a more conservative environment, in order to respect local sensitivities.