# Afghanistan Five Years On: From the Security Transition to Today

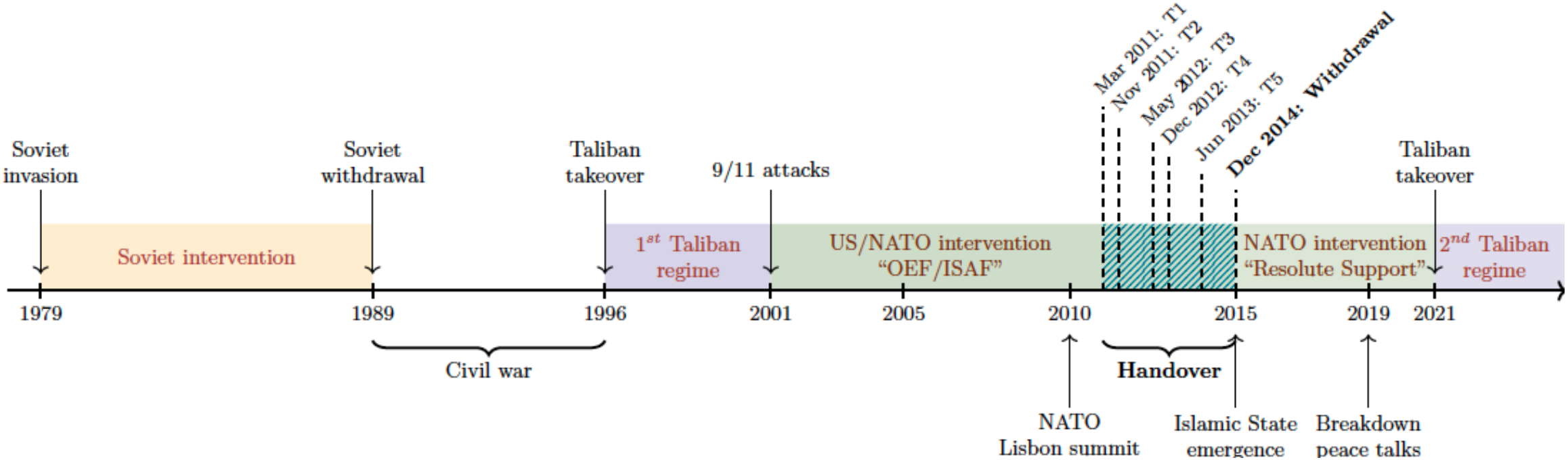
## Digital Development Dialogue – Autumn/Winter 2026/27

**Hosted by Göttingen School**

Organized by Sarah Langlotz & Lennart Kaplan in Cooperation with:

Funding from KfW is gratefully acknowledged.

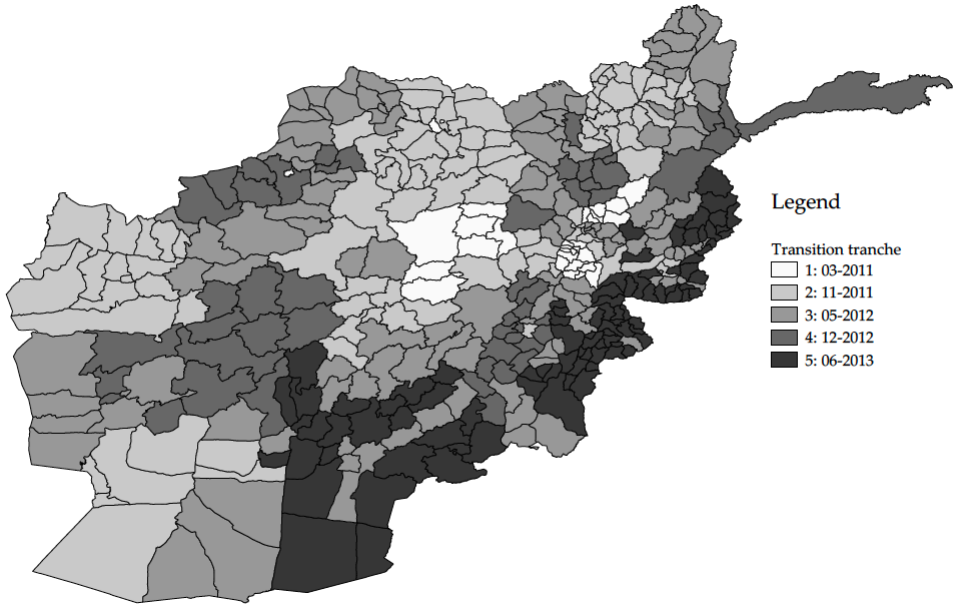
# Timeline of Transitions




Ongoing project with Lucero Carballo-Madrigal and Juliane Zenker

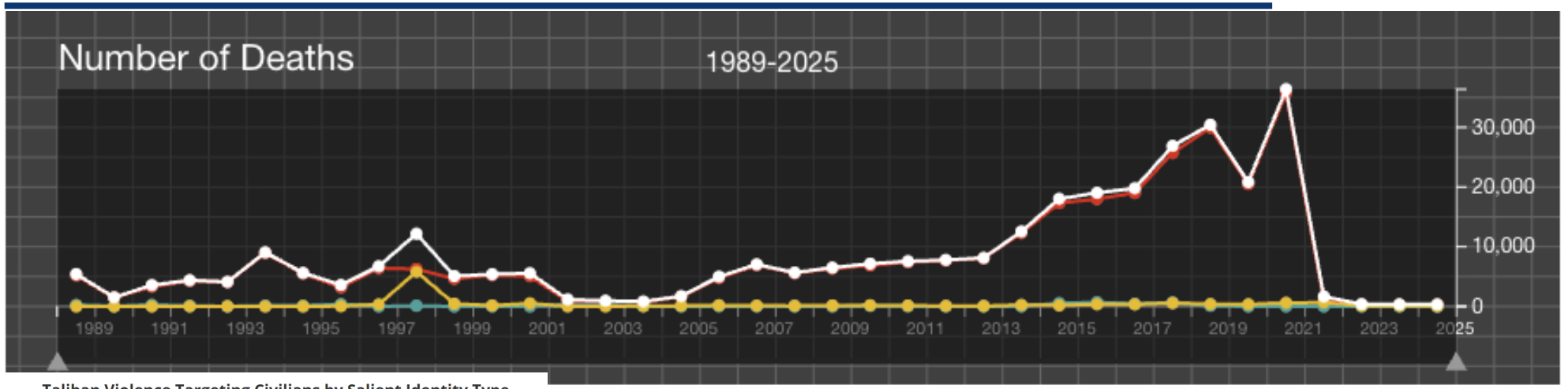
# Handover and Withdrawal

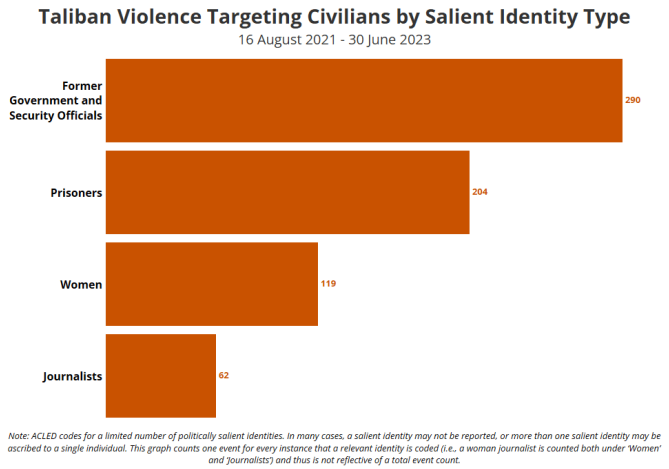
- **Question:** How does handing security responsibility from ISAF to Afghan forces and actual troop withdrawal affect insurgent violence?
- **Data:** geocoded combat events; transition tranches; surveys on perceived security
- **Design:** Staggered rollout of five tranches; instrumental-variables approach
- **Phase 1, handover to ANSF:** sharp drop in violence
- **Phase 2, physical withdrawal:** strong increase that reverses the phase-1 gains
- **Interpretation:** signaling: insurgents strategically reduce violence to facilitate the withdrawal




Fetzer, T., Souza, P., Vanden Eynde, O., Wright, A. L. (2021). Security Transitions. American Economic Review 111(7), 2275–2308.

# Security (UCDP Data)

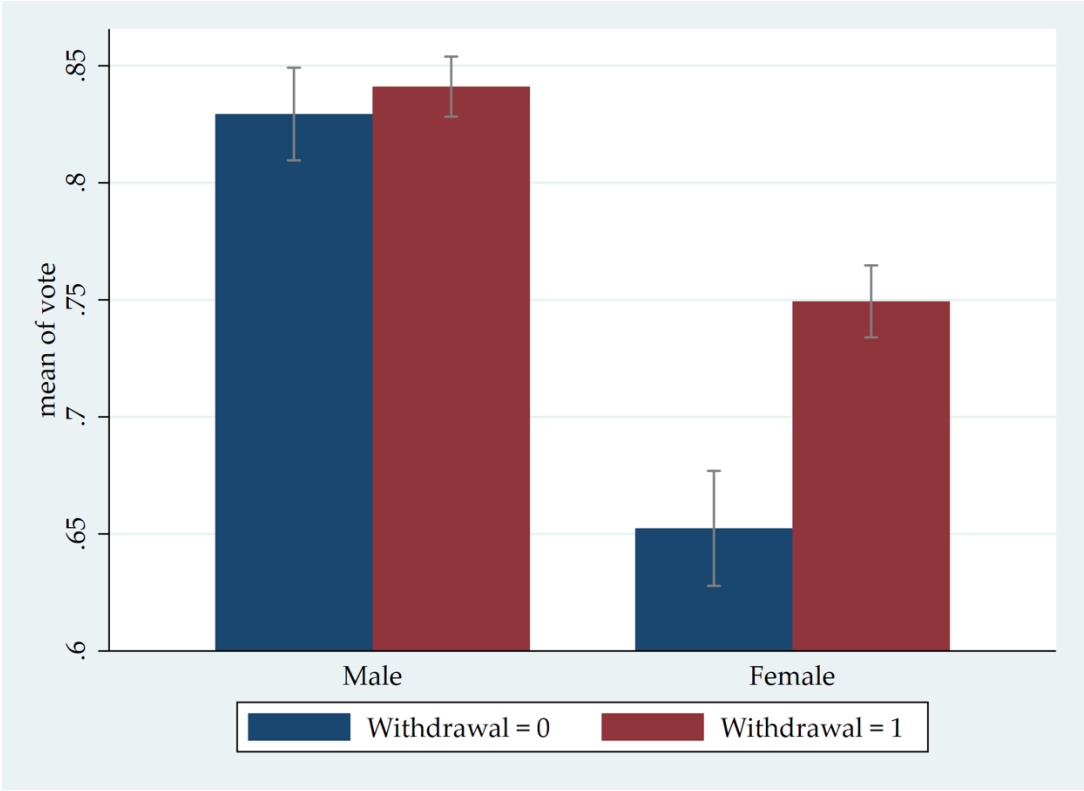



Sundberg, Ralph, and Erik Melander. (2013). "Introducing the UCDP Georeferenced Event Dataset." Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 50, No. 4, pp. 523–532.
https://acleddata.com/report/two-years-repression-mapping-taliban-violence-targeting-civilians-afghanistan

# Withdrawal and Women's Political Participation

- **Question:** How does the withdrawal of international troops change women's political participation?
- **Period:** 2006–2019
- **Data:** Asia Foundation; polling-station returns from three presidential elections
- **Multiple layers:** polling station voting results by gender, self-reported voting, beliefs about autonomy of voting and fears of voting and going outside




Based on self-reported survey data (Asia Foundation) on voting in 2014 election

Ongoing project with Lucero Carballo-Madrigal and Juliane Zenker

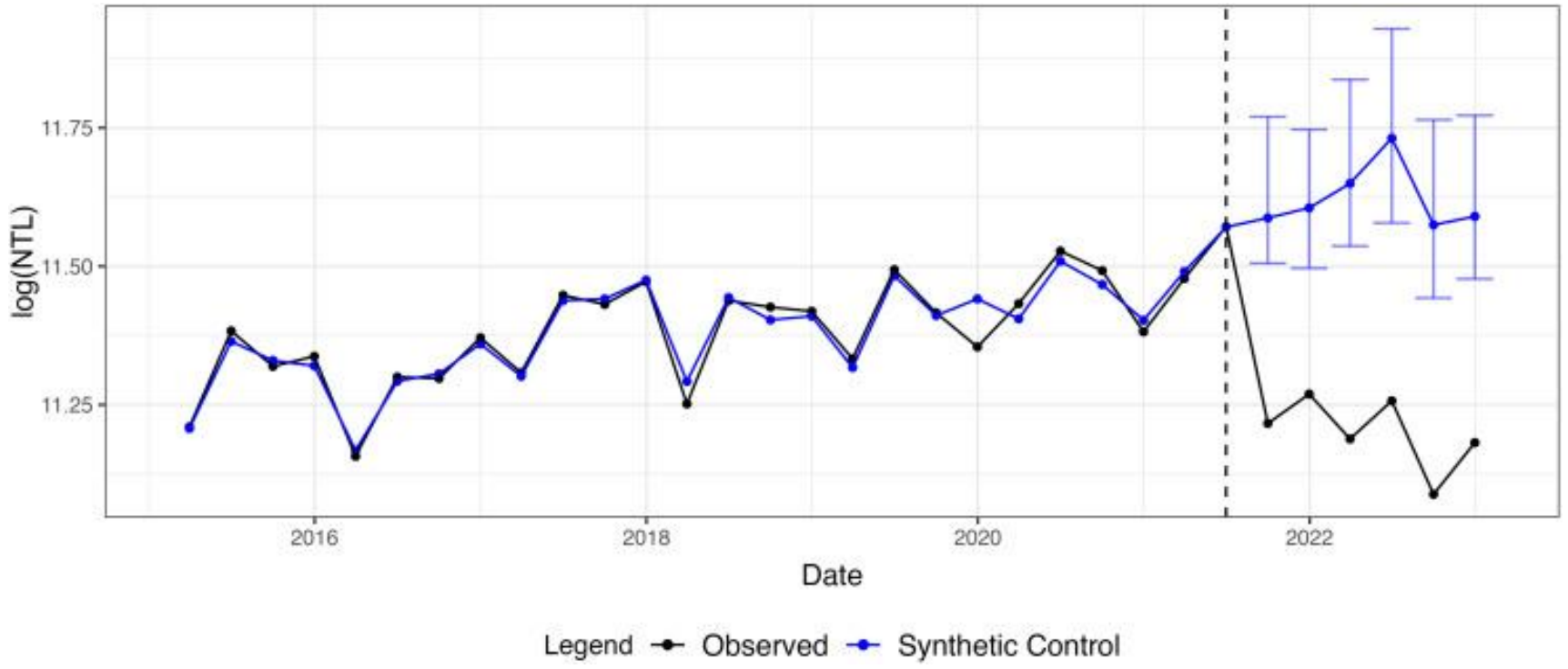
# Data Availability After Taliban Takeover

| Source | What is collected |
|---|---|
| WFP | High-frequency phone surveys |
| WFP/FAO | Face-to-face survey |
| WFP market prices | Monthly, all 34 provinces |
| FAO DIEM | Households, round 8 (2024), n ≈ 9,500 |
| UNICEF MICS; HMIS | MICS 2022–23; health-facility data |
| Single projects | SWEEP, digital aid |
| Satellite data | VIIRS nightlights; (poppy cultivation) |

**Gaps:** no official GDP statistics and phone surveys suffer from selection bias, especially for women.

# Nightlight Data

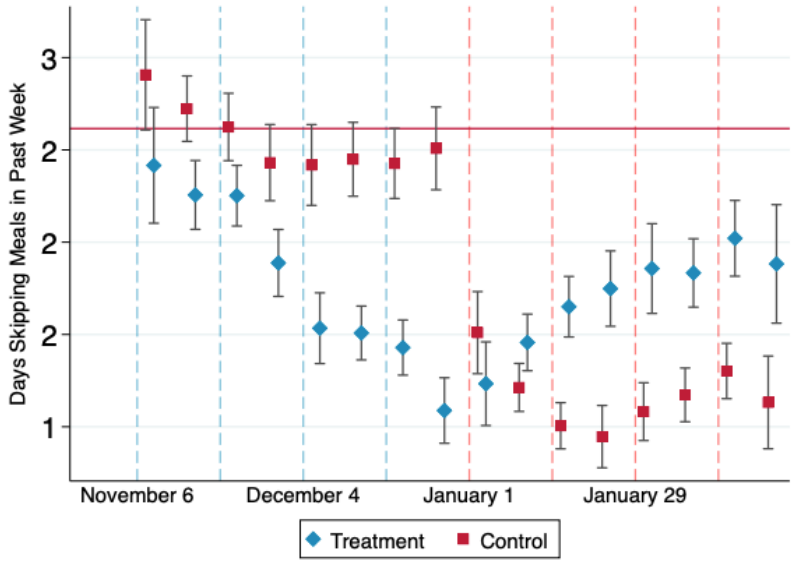
GDP based on nightlight estimates declined by 16% from 2020-2022




Saenger, T. R., Kapstein, E. B., & Sircar, R. (2024). Estimating the collapse of Afghanistan's economy using nightlights data. PloS one, 19(12), e0315337.

# Digital Aid for Female-Headed Households

- **Setting:** 2,409 extremely poor households in Kabul, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif; selected through CDCs
- **Intervention:** digital vouchers (HesabPay), AFN 4,000 ≈ USD 45 every two weeks, four times
- **Design:** staggered RCT (Nov–Dec 2022 vs. Jan–Feb 2023), phone surveys, transaction data
- **Take-up:** 99.75% (experts predicted 43%)
- **Effects:** food security +0.5 SD; well-being +1.5 SD, fades when payments stop; no effect on income or employment
- **Cost:** 6.7 cents per USD (WFP global: 17 cents)




(a) Skipped Meals

Callen, M., Fajardo-Steinhäuser, M., Findley, M. G., Ghani, T. (2025). Can Digital Aid Deliver During Humanitarian Crises? CESifo WP 11670.

# SWEEP: Clustering Women's Savings Groups

- **Intervention:** clusters of existing savings groups, revolving loan fund (USD 5,000 per cluster), soft and business skills, mentoring; implemented by AKF
- **Design:** cluster RCT, 90 clusters, 556 groups, 2,164 individuals; ~20% male groups
- **Timeline:** baseline 2018; endline Apr–Aug 2021 (~70% completed); Gender Monitoring Survey Jan–Feb 2022
- **Effects (preliminary):** more paid work (+8 pp.), higher savings, more household decision-making power
- **After 2021:** women remain mobile within villages and groups keep meeting; market visits less frequent, more often accompanied

World Bank SAR GIL, SWEEP presentation (May 2022), preliminary results; AEA RCT Registry 4035.