

CREDIBLE RESEARCH IN AFGHANISTAN

Presentation for the
WAPOR 62nd Annual Conference
Lausanne, Switzerland
Sep13, 2009



Authors

- Rafiq Ullah Kakar,
rkakar@orca.com.af

- Torpekai Habibzay,
thabibzay@orca.com.af

- Palwasha Kakar,
plkakar@orca.com.af



Executive Summary

- ORCA (Opinion Research Center of Afghanistan)
- Main challenges for conducting credible research in Afghanistan
- Solutions

ORCA was

- Established by 5 Afghans who possessed technical depth along with professional breadth, leadership and research skills to:
 - ❑ Establish a culture of research for demand driven development in Afghanistan.
 - ❑ Provide high quality and reliable research that informs decision makers in reconstruction and development of our war-torn country.

ORCA is

- Now the FIRST and the LARGEST full service AFGHAN Survey Research Company, consisting of:
 - ❑ 34 Field Supervisors + 34 Field Assistants
 - ❑ 34 Monitoring Supervisors + 78 Monitoring staff
 - ❑ 579 Field Interviewers (multi-ethnic and gender-balanced)
 - ❑ 64 permanent staff with equipped offices in all major cities of Afghanistan.
 - ❑ **Total: 823 employees**

Supervisors' Briefing Sessions



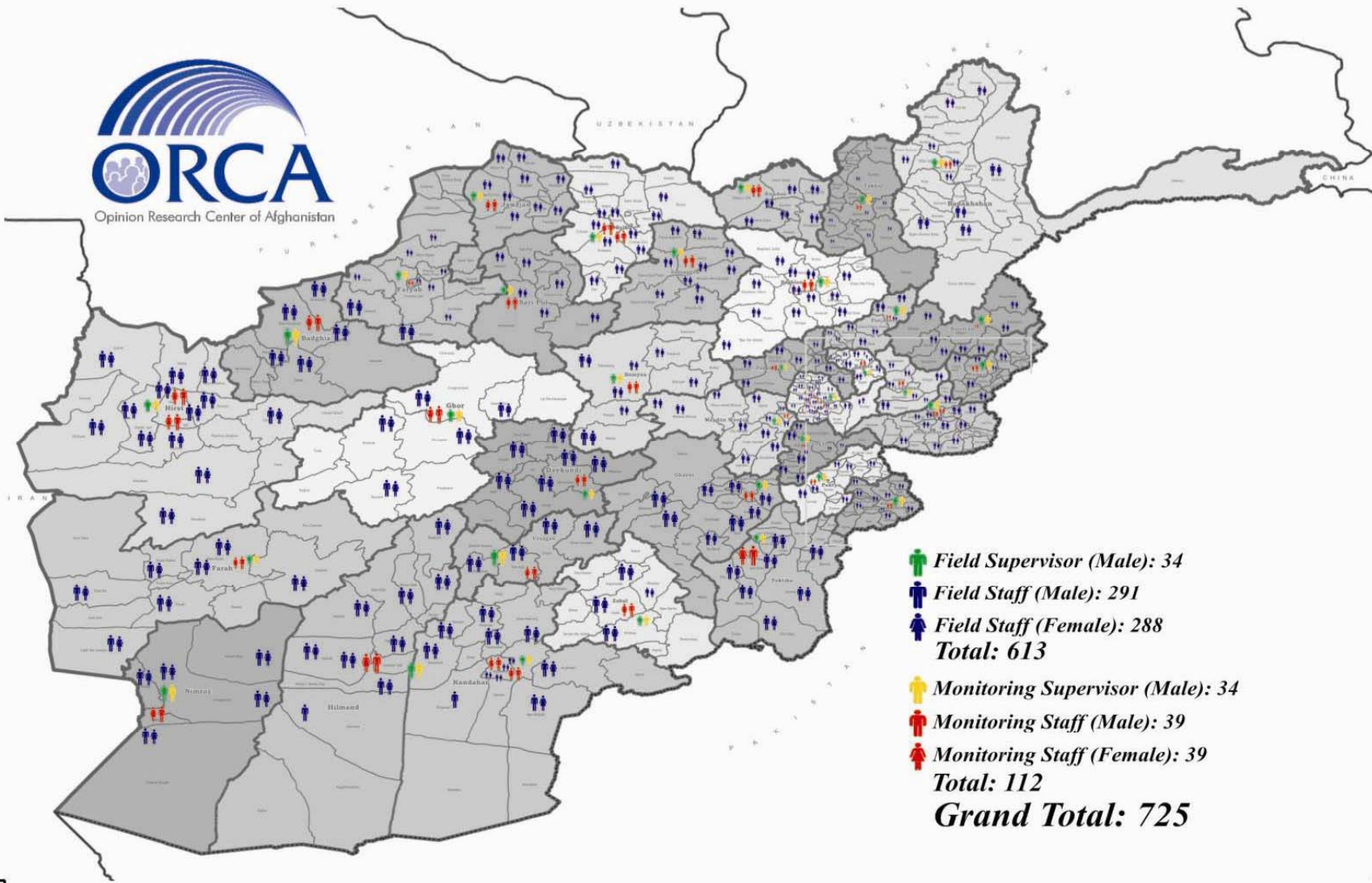
Quality Control

- Heavy investment in Field Monitoring and Control.
 - An independent team with no acquaintance/relation to field team
 - 34 Monitoring Supervisors + 78 Monitoring staff = **112**
 - They report to ORCA HQ directly with innovative video, photo and other documentations.
 - In-person supervision
 - 15% by a supervisor during the interviews
 - 10% back-check after the interviews
 - Standard Testing
 - Patterns of consistent responses by respondent/interviewer
 - Patterns of non-response
 - Interviewer Productivity

Quality Control - Direct Supervision



Field Staff Distribution 2008



ORCA is member of _____

- WAPOR (World Association for Public Opinion Research)
- AAPOR (American Association for Public Opinion Research)
- ESOMAR World Research
- CASRO (Council of American Survey Research Organizations)
- MRA (Marketing Research Association)
- The ARF (The Advertising Research Foundation)
- AIMRI (Alliance of International Market Research Institutes)

ORCA specializes in _____

- Public Opinion Polling
- Omnibus
- Tracking Studies

Quantitative and Qualitative

Fieldwork | Analysis | Consulting

ORCA covers _____

**ALL 34 of the 34 PROVINCES OF
AFGHANISTAN**

ORCA's methodology

Face-to-Face only

■ Stratified Random Sample

- ❑ Regions (7), Provinces (34), Districts (400), Villages(41,000)
- ❑ Urban (23%) / Rural (77%)
- ❑ Male (50%) / Female (50%)
- ❑ Cluster distribution of 5 or 10 by gender
- ❑ Settlements are selected at *random route method*
- ❑ The starting points are recognizable locations – such as a mosque, school, bazaar,
- ❑ Respondent selection randomly through Kish Grid

Challenges and Solutions



- Outdated Census
 - Annual updates by the Central Statistics Office are used by Govt. and international community.



- It is the only available official census.
- The Govt. is trying to conduct new census
- ORCA is trying to raise funds to conduct census

Challenges and Solutions



■ Lack of capacity

- ❑ Nearly 70% of the population is illiterate
- ❑ 80% of women are illiterate

- ❑ Recruited Afghan men and women who had at least 12 yrs of formal education
- ❑ Prepared standard interviewers' training manual in local languages
- ❑ Gaining experience with multiple nationwide surveys every month
- ❑ Questionnaire design and wording should be as simple as possible



Challenges and Solutions



- Violence in the Govt. influenced areas
 - We estimate that around 60% of the country is under Govt. control

- ORCA was granted an official letter by the Ministry of Interior to all Police HQ to support our field team

Challenges and Solutions



■ Violence in Taliban influenced areas

- We estimate that nearly 40% of the country is controlled by Taliban to much extent, mostly when it gets dark
- In some areas, Taliban use pass codes for entrance.
- Interviewing is considered a suspicious activity and armed Taliban discover it immediately through their local channels.

- ORCA has established contacts with tribal leaders who are respected by both the Govt. and Taliban
- ORCA implements small development projects (i.e. provision of education to disadvantaged children) out of the 10% of our profits and community contributions considering it necessary to give back to the communities we do research in.
- Being pleased by our social services, the tribal leaders obtain clearance from Taliban

ORCA's Social Services

Before



After



ORCA's Field Supervisor

Our supervisor is briefing the village elders in Wardak Province (current HQ of Taliban) at the mosque after the morning prayer and trying to receive clearance for the fieldwork



Challenges and Solutions



- Violence on highways and roads
 - Some parts of highways and roads to provinces and districts are also controlled by Taliban

- We have contracted local bus/truck drivers to carry the survey instruments.
- The bus/truck drivers pack the questionnaires in hidden areas (i.e. in grape's crate or in a mobile-oil carton)
- Our supervisors travel separately so that they have no document or proof.
- They erase their mobile phone's phonebook
- ORCA purchased golden serial phone numbers for all to be in touch with each other



Challenges and Solutions



■ Ethnicity/Language

- Very diverse country dominated by Pashtuns but non-Pashtuns are more powerful today
- Many ethnic rivalries and enmities within provinces and regions

- The field team is multi-ethnic and multi-lingual. They are local and belong to the same ethnicity as their respondents.
- Within a particular province, ethnic rivalries are taken into consideration.

Challenges and Solutions



■ Gender

- ❑ Serious cultural constraints on access to women
- ❑ Easy access to household (men)

- ❑ ORCA's field network includes nearly 300 experienced female interviewers.
- ❑ ORCA's interviewing is gender specific with female interviewers interviewing only females and males interviewing only males.

Matching interviewers,

Same language, same gender, same ethnicity, same accent, same costumes



Closing.....

We hope for a day to toss away the weapons of war and give our children the hope of a peaceful, loving and beautiful Afghanistan and to join hands together with the rest of the world and accept one another regardless of the skin color, ethnic divisions, religious or nationality.

Thank you very much for your attention