

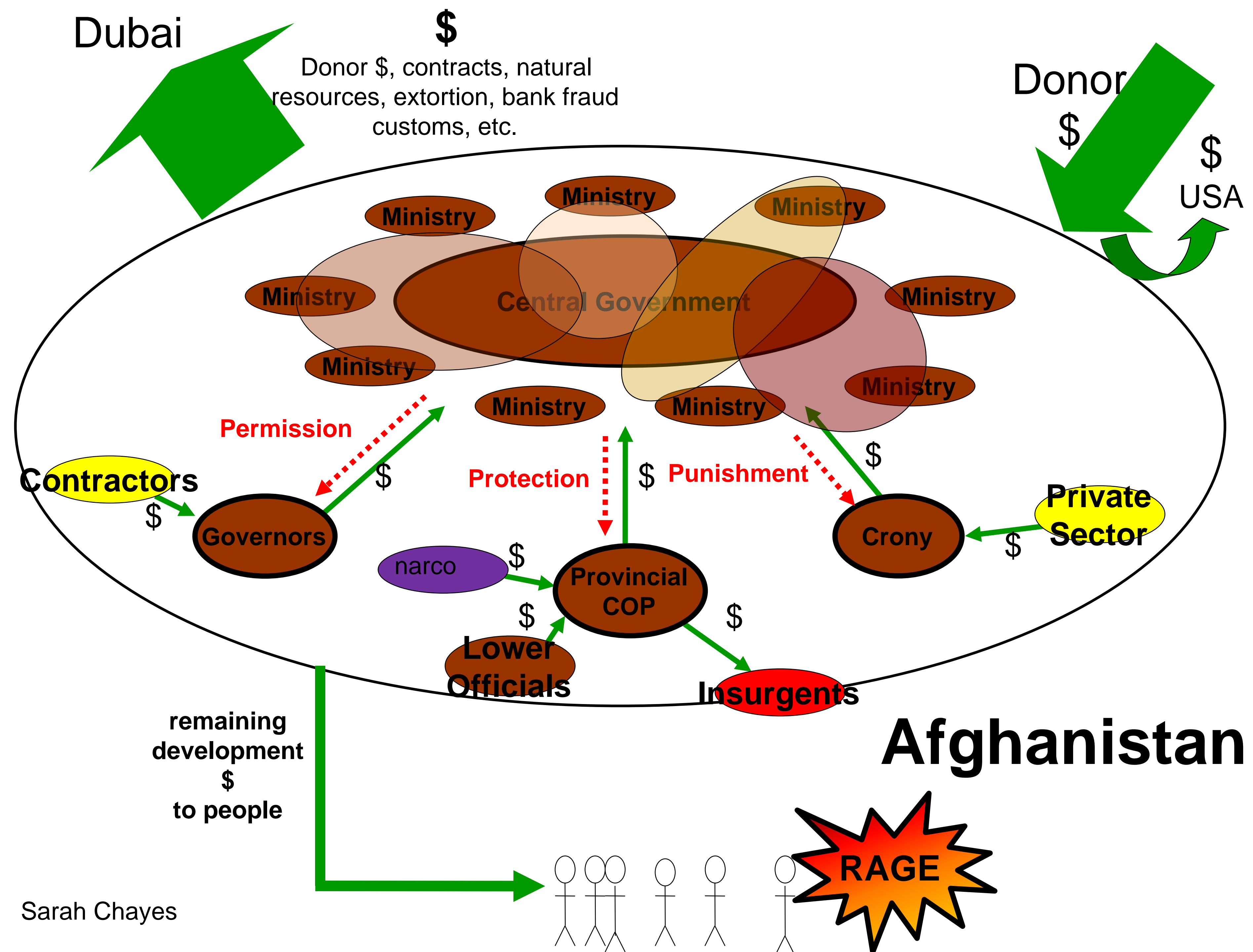
Kleptocracy and Global Security

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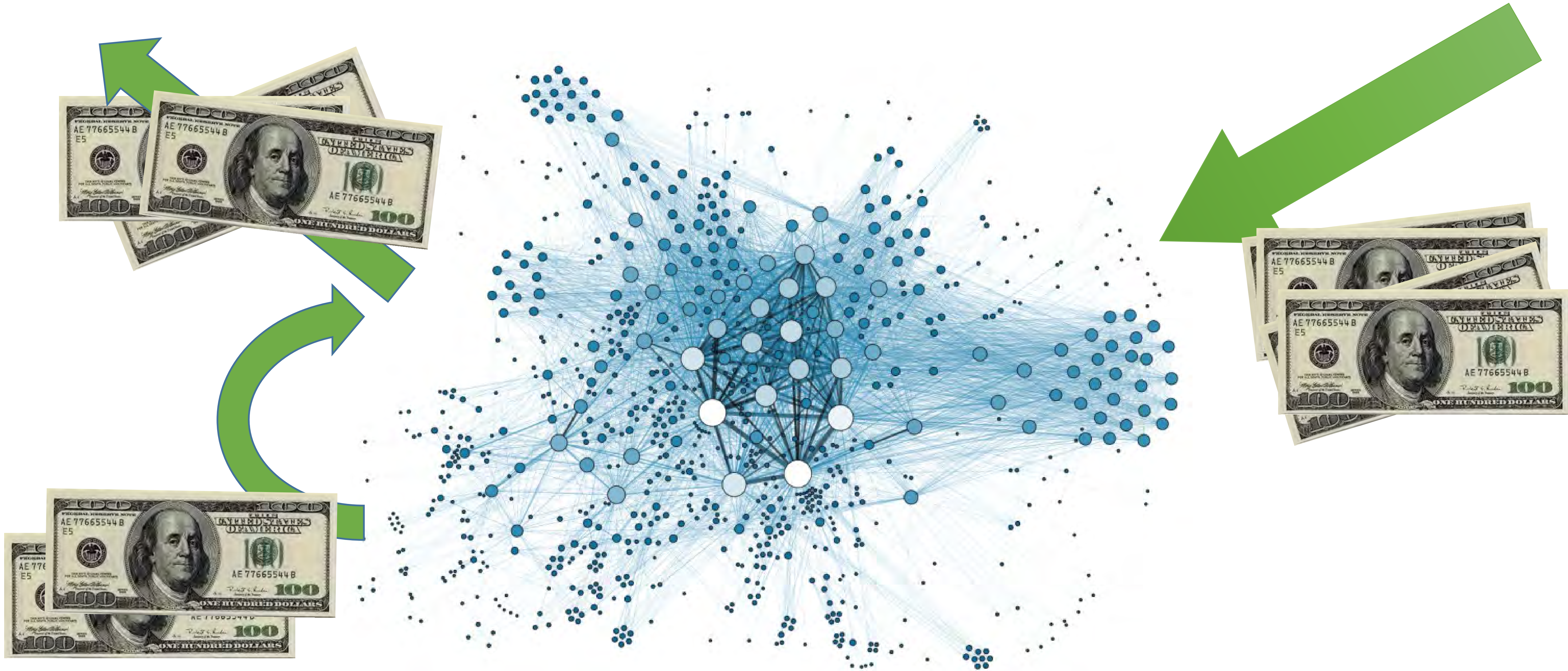
I. Afghanistan:

A Cautionary Tale



Sarah Chayes

**Corruption is the operating system of sophisticated, integrated networks
...that masquerade as governments.**



Government officials:

- * Ministers
- * Governors
- * Regional customs chiefs
- * Regional public health



Business leaders:

- * Military contractors
- * Logistics and supplies
- * Financial services

Criminals:

- * Narco-traffickers and facilitators
- * Consumer goods smugglers

Taliban

Instruments of state function repurposed

...to maximize \$ for the network at the expense of the public

- Justice

Karzai regularly phoned judges or prison officials to release suspects

Afghan central bank governor flees to US

- Central Bank

- Agencies unfunded

- Staff cut or sent to far-flung districts

AFGHANISTAN

ASIA / PACIFIC

Afghanistan central bank governor Abdul Qadir Fitrat (pictured) said Monday that he was forced to resign and flee to the US amid fears of reprisal for his role in investigating corruption at Kabul Bank, the country's biggest private lender.

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1 min

Reading time

By:

[NEWS WIRES](#)



Revenue streams diverted...

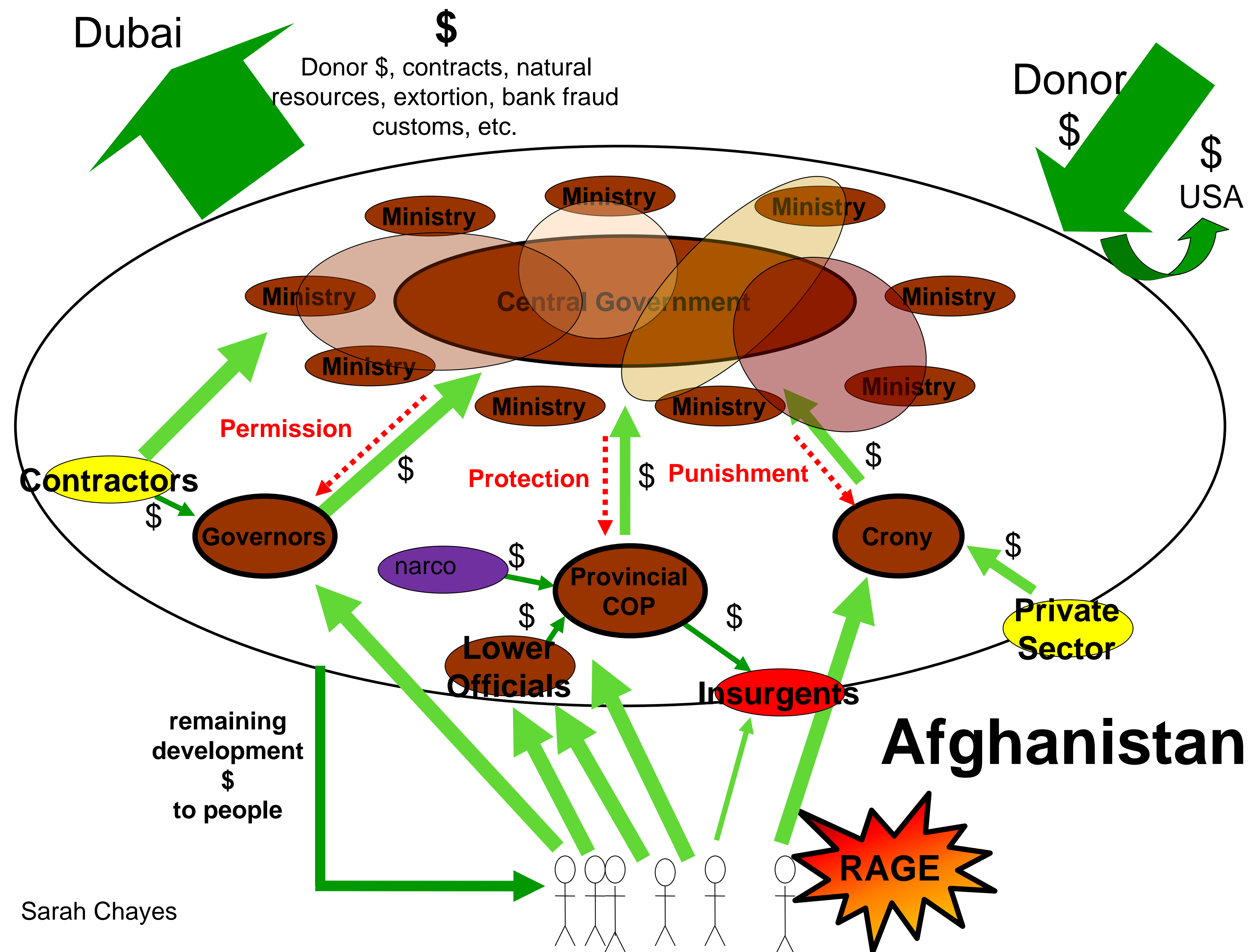
...into bank accounts of network members.

- Development assistance
- Banking system (Kabul Bank: \$24 m. lent to Karzai's brother via phony front businesses, total \$900 m. missing)
- Customs (= tariffs)
- Land grabs
- Military contracting

Vertical integration

(...contrast #1--with U.S.)

- Money moves upwards in the system, concentrating at the top.
- For citizens at the bottom, every interaction with a government official--teacher, doctor, traffic cop, administrative clerk--required a bribe.
- Shake-downs are not just costly. They are humiliating.
- Corruption is in your face, every day.



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Upshot:



August, 2021

II. 'Geo-Kleptocracy Swallows Geo-Strategy'

Contrast #2...between current context and developing countries I have studied.

Afghanistan--or Uzbekistan or Nepal or Tunisia or Honduras--did not have global ambitions.

These countries do:



Upshot:



Upshot:



Rationales

...for seizing or demanding control of these territories

- Counternarcotics
- Immigration
- National Security (protecting U.S. northeastern flank from Russia and China)
- Freedom of navigation
- ...

Other explanations:



AKA revenue streams, diverted...

III. Repercussions

Have you been hearing, discussing...

- U.N. Charter
- U.S. law
- Precedent (applicable to Ukraine? S. China Sea?)
- Future of NATO as a viable structure guaranteeing collective defense.
- Broader Transatlantic disarray, mutual hostility
- U.S. reputation (trustworthiness of commitments, etc.)?
- ?

Now.... Zoom out:

UK OFFICIAL



HM Government

Global biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and national security

A national security assessment



The graphic consists of two rows of overlapping circles. The top row has eight columns, each with two overlapping circles in shades of pink, purple, blue, and green. The bottom row also has eight columns, each with two overlapping circles in shades of orange, brown, green, yellow, and blue. The circles are semi-transparent and overlap in the center.

Critical ecosystems are at risk of collapsing (1)

If current rates of biodiversity loss continue, every critical ecosystem is on a pathway to collapse.

An ecosystem collapses when it passes beyond a critical threshold or tipping point, after which it can no longer maintain essential functions or structure, leading to extensive shifts to its size and composition. The ecosystem transitions irreversibly from one stable state to another. For instance, the Amazon basin collapse would see it shifting to a drier savannah state.

Collapse impairs an ecosystem's ability to provide vital services including clean water, food production, and climate regulation. This could accelerate climate change and biodiversity loss and have catastrophic implications, including the collapse of major food sources and fundamental changes to global weather patterns and the water cycle.

As biodiversity loss and degradation continue, impacts become more severe and the likelihood of ecosystems collapsing increases. It is likely that ecosystem collapses would happen concurrently given their shared drivers and feedback loops.

There is a high degree of uncertainty around the timing and pathways of ecosystem collapse. The drivers of ecosystem degradation are approaching the known thresholds for collapse - for example, the Amazon is likely to collapse at 20-25% deforestation when combined with temperature rises and forest fires; it is currently at 17%.⁹⁻¹³ But the thresholds for collapse could be higher or lower than the science has been able to identify: we could be closer to, or further away from, the thresholds than we think; and there could be additional thresholds that we do not know about yet. There is a realistic possibility that trends to date mean we have unknowingly crossed thresholds already and irreversible collapse of some ecosystems is inevitable (for example coral reefs), though we may not see the impacts for several years.

There is a realistic possibility some ecosystems start to collapse by 2030 or sooner, as a result of biodiversity loss from land use change, pollution, climate change and other drivers. There is a realistic possibility that coral reefs in SE Asia and boreal forests will start to collapse from 2030, and rainforests and mangroves from 2050.

Preventing ecological collapse would require the reduction of human impacts, alongside restoration of ecosystems. Restoration of some ecosystems (tropical forests) is more feasible than others (coral reefs, Himalayas).

Critical ecosystems are at risk of collapsing (2)

Six ecosystem regions are critical for UK national security given the likelihood and impact of their collapse. Severe degradation or collapse would drive displacement of millions, change global weather patterns, increase global food and water scarcity, and drive geopolitical competition for remaining resources. Although many other global ecosystems are important, these six meet at least three of the following ecological features.

Ecological features

- Scale of impact
- Speed of collapse
- Intactness
- Degradation to quality of life
- Irrecoverable carbon

6 critical ecosystem regions



The probabilistic language in these judgements is explained on pages 3-

Ecosystem collapse is highly likely to drive national security risk

National security risks from ecosystem collapse

Migration will rise as development gains begin to reverse and more people are pushed into poverty, food and water insecurity. A one percentage increase in food insecurity in a population compels 1.9 percent more people to migrate.³

Serious and Organised Crime will look to exploit and gain control over scarce resources. More people pushed into poverty will mean more opportunities for SOC to exploit (e.g. people trafficking and black markets in scarce food, pharmaceuticals, critical minerals).

Non-state actors including terrorist groups will have more opportunities resulting from political instability - e.g. acting as mercenaries or pseudo-governments. They may gain control over scarce resources.

State threats become more severe as some states become more exposed than others to food and water insecurity risks.

Pandemic risk will increase as biodiversity degrades, people move between countries and transfer of novel diseases between species becomes more likely.

Economic insecurity becomes more likely. Nature is a finite asset which underpins the global economy. It would take resources of 1.6 Earths to sustain the world's current levels of consumption.¹⁴ The total annual value of ecosystem services to the UK was £87 billion in 2022 (3% of GDP).¹⁵

Geopolitical competition will increase as countries compete for scarce resources including arable land, productive waters, safe transit routes, critical minerals.

Political polarisation and instability will grow in food and water insecure areas and as populations become more vulnerable to natural disasters. Disinformation will increase.

Conflict and military escalation will become more likely, both within and between states, as groups compete for arable land and food and water resources. Existing conflicts will be exacerbated.

Critical ecosystems

...for the overall health of the global environment:

- The Arctic,
 - Warming 2-3 times as fast as more temperate regions
 - Hosts 1/3 of marine life
 - Sea ice reflects sunlight
 - Impacts on ocean currents, rising sea-levels and global weather patterns
 - Thawing permafrost (carbon sink)
 - Inuit and other indigenous peoples' culture: reverence/protection
- The Amazon
 - Key regulator of global hydrological cycle, via transpiration/evaporation (20 b. tons water/day)
 - Hosts 1/10 of total species
 - Carbon sink
 - Indigenous peoples' culture: reverence/protection

Greenland



Venezuela



Please define:

'national security risk'