



## “We’ve Taken Your People!”

How the professionals handle kidnap situations

## Shining a Light on Mogadishu

## Afghanistan Open for Business

## Growth Economies for 2018

(Probably not the ones you imagine)

## Studying Orangutans in Indonesia

# From the Editor

For this issue we've been lucky enough to interview professionals working in fascinating roles in high-risk areas around the world.

**Chuck Regini** is an international consultant you hope you'll never have to meet. He coordinates hostage negotiations on behalf of companies who have had people snatched.

**Eric Sevrin's** NIS Foundation has been installing solar street lights in Mogadishu as part of the peace process there. Barrister, **David Frend**, helps companies avoid the many potential pitfalls of doing business in Kabul. **Professor Serge Wich** works in the remotest rainforests in Sumatra, studying Orangutans.

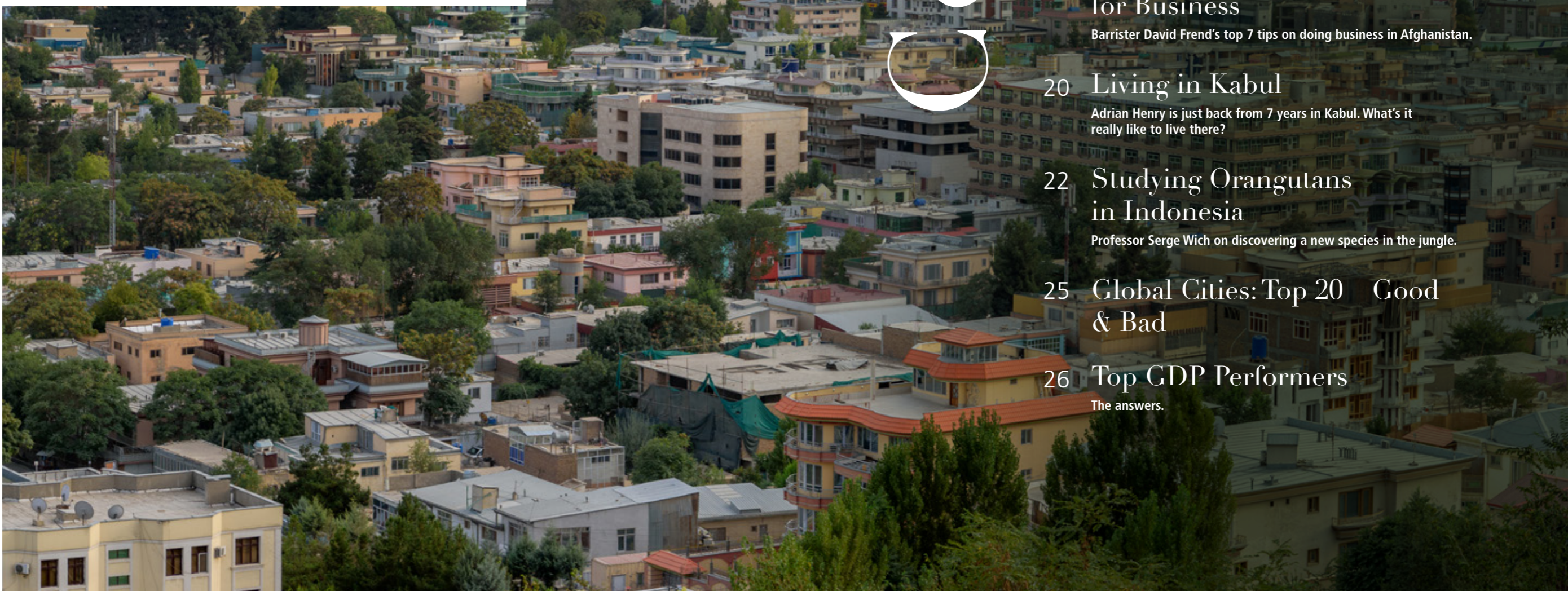
We also bring you some surprising data from the **World Bank** on the countries expected to grow fastest in 2018 and the **Good & Bad of Cities** – a lifestyle index of the places your people may love or hate.

Whoever said insurance is boring? If you would like to talk to us about bespoke high-risk insurance or you'd like to be considered for inclusion in our next issue, please do get in touch.

**Peter Bellwood**

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Cover picture © Gabriella Fredriksson



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# "We Have Taken Your People!"

Charles 'Chuck' Regini at Unity Resources Group, explains how the professionals move into action to protect your people when a kidnap and ransom demand arrives out of the blue.

Can you imagine that chilling phone call in the middle of the night? "We have your people! You must meet our demands!"

What would you do? How would you react? How would you protect your people, look after their families and manage your firm's international and local reputation?

If you have Kidnap and Ransom or 'Special Risks' insurance from Bellwood Prestbury, the one bit of good news in this nightmare scenario is that your policy will pay for a group of trained and experienced international crisis management consultants to work with you to reach the best possible outcome.

Chuck Regini, Director of Global Crisis Response at Unity Resources Group, is on the leadership team of professionals your insurance cover may provide. Unity has experienced consultants ready to support corporate clients for critical incidents like kidnaps, extortion and non-extortion threats, missing persons, and emergency evacuations.

We asked Chuck to take us behind the scenes of a recent incident, where his firm supported a client who had several employees snatched from their base in Africa.

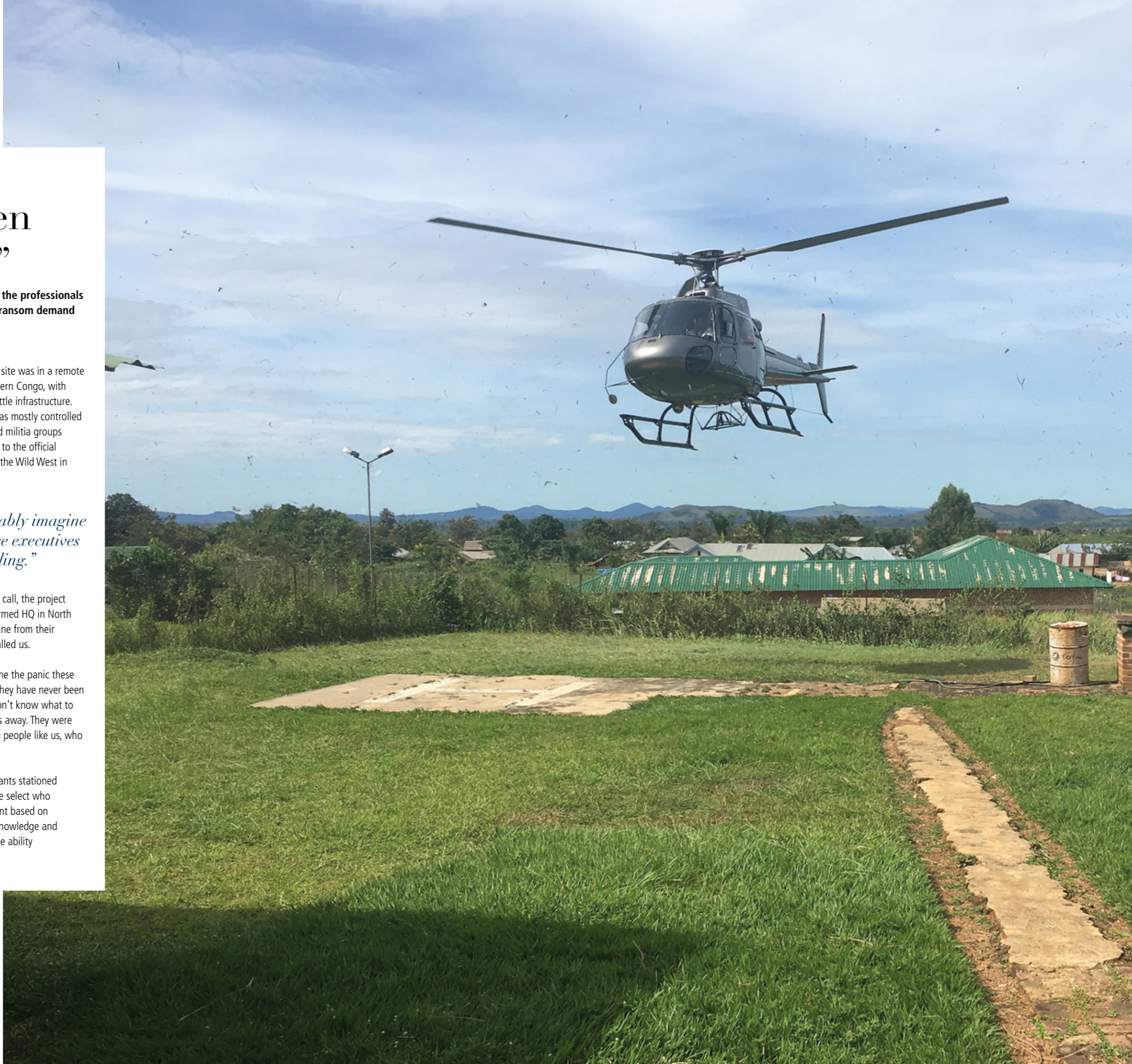
“ The project site was in a remote part of eastern Congo, with dense jungle and very little infrastructure. The surrounding area was mostly controlled by dozens of well-armed militia groups who were in opposition to the official government. It was like the Wild West in the jungle.

*"You can probably imagine the panic these executives are feeling."*

When our client got the call, the project office in DR Congo informed HQ in North America. Using the hotline from their insurance policy, they called us.

You can probably imagine the panic these executives are feeling. They have never been in this situation. They don't know what to do. They are 6,000 miles away. They were relieved to connect with people like us, who do this professionally.

We have skilled consultants stationed all around the world. We select who will support each incident based on their experience, local knowledge and languages, as well as the ability to deploy quickly.





In this case, given that French is the local international language, we sent an ex-French intelligence officer from Lyon in France, and a South African consultant. It was an arduous trip: Fly to Rwanda. Overland to DR Congo. Helicopter into the project site.

We had another of our consultants join the client's headquarters team. Both teams were then embedded for the duration – however long that might take.

Our first priority is to sort out the chain of command and organise the client to manage the incident. Who will make decisions at HQ? Who will coordinate actions on the ground?

Kidnappers may make contact with multiple sources. Someone in the local project. Perhaps a direct approach to the parent company. Another to family members. That can breed confusion and misunderstandings, which can jeopardise the safety of the hostages.

Another priority is to establish contact with family members and make sure they are properly informed and understand what to do if they are contacted. These situations can last weeks, months – even years. Doing the best to help family members cope and ensure they have the best information at all times is critical.

It's not necessarily the best idea to rush into negotiations. We recommend a more deliberate and careful approach. We talk through the options. Manage expectations. Provide ongoing assessments of the situation and continual recommendations on next steps. Reassuring them as best we can.

We also need to consider outside factors, like the local authorities and military, media coverage, other employees and the local community.

*"Who should communicate with the kidnappers? ... A low pulse rate is helpful."*

One of the key areas is to decide who will be the contact person for the kidnappers on the ground. Who should that be and how should communications be conducted?

We look for someone who is articulate. Mature. Someone who can handle stress and is open to advice. It is best that they volunteer for the role. It has to be someone who has the bandwidth and availability and wants to do it. A low pulse rate is helpful.

We then train and coach this communicator and support them throughout the process. Before contact is made, we will have a plan on what to say and goals for each stage.

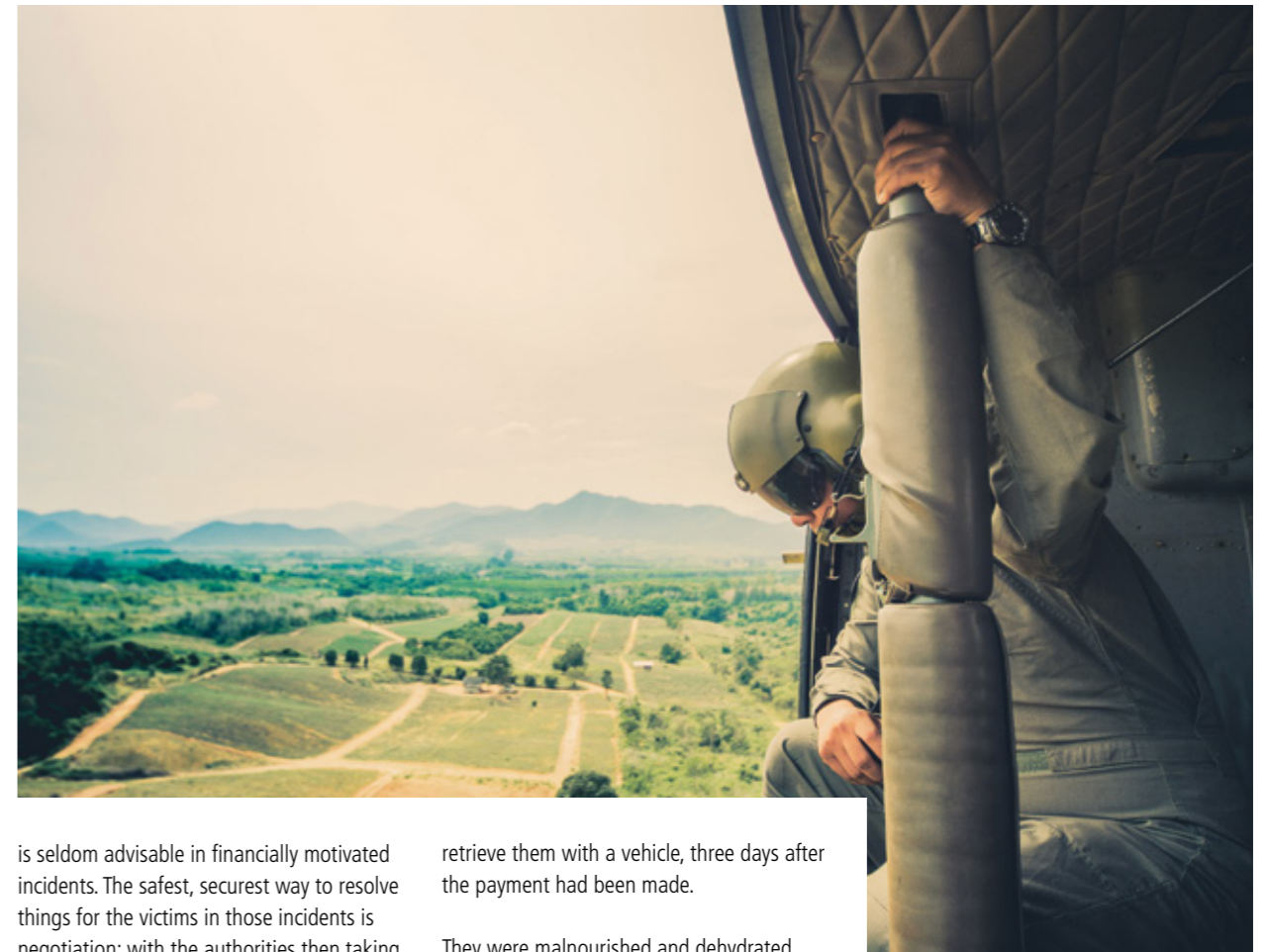
We will also look to provide advice to others that may be contacted by the hostage takers on how to redirect back to the primary line of communications. Our objective is always to manage the kidnappers' expectations about what is possible. We are always assessing and reassessing. Making recommendations on strategy.

We also continually check on the welfare of the hostages. We look to obtain proof of life. Ask for evidence that they are being properly taken care of.

*"It's always a concern that local authorities may go in guns-a-blazing; hostage rescue is seldom advisable..."*

We also advise on how to maintain a cooperative and collaborative relationship with the local law enforcement or military.

It's always a concern that local authorities may go in guns-a-blazing; hostage rescue



is seldom advisable in financially motivated incidents. The safest, securest way to resolve things for the victims in those incidents is negotiation; with the authorities then taking action to arrest the offenders once the hostage is safely home.

In this case, after nearly three months of negotiation around money, support for the local community and other social issues, a payment was agreed.

How to exchange money for hostages is always complicated. Sometimes we agree a 'drop' – a bag in a bin or a locker, like you see in the movies. Other times we use an intermediary. In this case, it was agreed that a local cleric, trusted by both sides, would make the delivery.

**This is a really tense part of the proceedings and we make it clear to clients that they should not expect an immediate release.**

The kidnappers need to feel secure, so they may not pick up the money straight away. They need to transport the hostages from their safe location to somewhere accessible. They may need to make escape plans. They may need to process money.

In this case, all the hostages were safely released in the jungle and we were able to

retrieve them with a vehicle, three days after the payment had been made.

They were malnourished and dehydrated from living in the jungle, but basically they were in good condition.

Of course psychologically they had been through a lot, never knowing when it might end; always worrying that other militia might get involved or there might be an armed rescue mission.

After the incident was resolved, we provided the client with recommendations on how to avoid an incident in the future. Some of this was about security. But in this case, finding ways to build better relationships with local communities was also an important issue.



**Charles 'Chuck' Regini is a Director at Unity Resources Group, the international advisory**

**consultancy that supports businesses, governments and organisations in challenging and high-risk environments.**

[www.unityresourcesgroup.com](http://www.unityresourcesgroup.com)

## What does your insurance cover?

*If you hold a Kidnap and Ransom or a Special Risks policy through Bellwood Prestbury you can be covered for all of the costs involved in the professional support described here. You can also be compensated for any payments that may be made, up to an agreed rate stated in the policy. 10% of premiums can also be used towards pre-incident professional crisis management training and prevention services.*

[www.bellwoodprestbury.com](http://www.bellwoodprestbury.com)

# Fleet Insurance:

New high-risk policy offers global cover

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Bellwood Prestbury's new bespoke International Motor Fleet Insurance is designed to meet the precise needs of each organisation, conveniently covering your entire fleet across multiple regions with a single policy.

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- Vehicle Accident Damage or Total Loss
- Fire & Theft
- Terrorism Third Party Liability
- Political Violence (for losses arising from terrorism, strikes and riots, malicious damage)
- Terrorism Employers' Liability.

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Each policy is underwritten at Lloyd's of London or with other reputable international insurers, offering quality protection with the convenience of a single point of contact for an entire fleet, anywhere in the world.

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# Becoming a Lloyd's Broker



Having been a Lloyd's Coverholder since 2010, Bellwood Prestbury has now successfully registered as a Lloyd's Broker.

Peter Bellwood, Managing Director says: "Clients come to us because they have operations in places like Iraq, Afghanistan or parts of Asia and Africa where standard insurance doesn't apply. Being a Lloyd's Broker now gives us even more flexibility in creating specialist cover with proper protection for their people, assets and liabilities.

"For things like terrorist threats, political violence, remote medical emergencies, kidnap and ransom, equipment, building, fleet insurance or business liabilities, bespoke cover ensures that our clients can fully meet their contractual agreements.

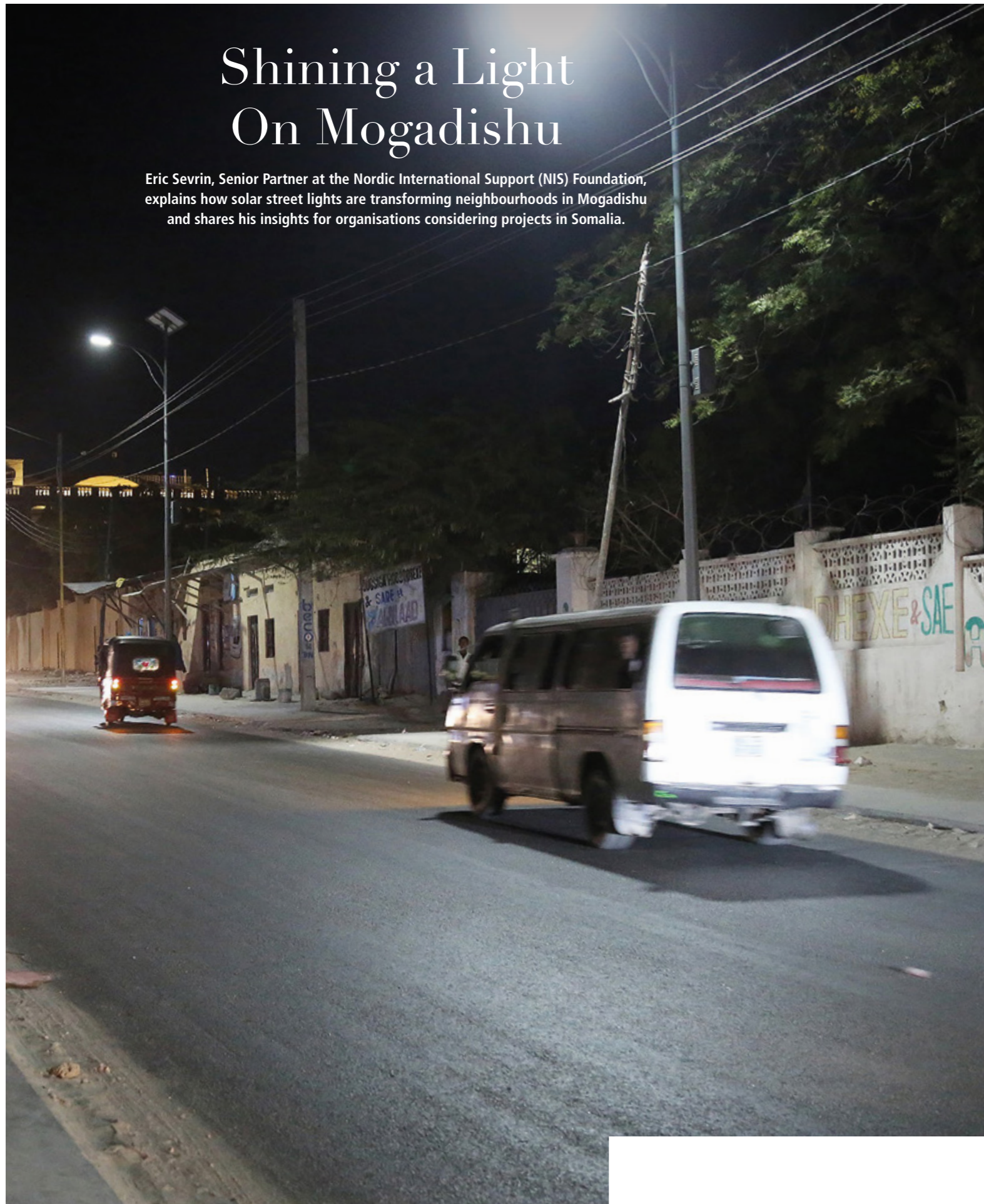
It can actually save them significant money too."

[pdb@bellwoodprestbury.com](mailto:pdb@bellwoodprestbury.com)

Broker at **LLOYD'S**

# Shining a Light On Mogadishu

Eric Sevrin, Senior Partner at the Nordic International Support (NIS) Foundation, explains how solar street lights are transforming neighbourhoods in Mogadishu and shares his insights for organisations considering projects in Somalia.



NIS is a Norwegian-based non-profit organisation that supports state-building and reconciliation processes in order to help stabilise conflict and post-conflict environments.

## Filling the post-conflict gap

Eric Sevrin, one of the founders, explains that he set up NIS to fill the gap that often exists between emergency relief work and longer-term development projects. For NIS, this represents what they term the “Stabilisation Gap”, when trust-building efforts between communities and weak public institutions are potentially most critical.

“Typically, after an area is liberated from conflict there is an immediate need for basic services and the rehabilitation of basic infrastructure. While many NGOs work to provide these things, few work closely with the local governments and attempt to give them a leading role in presenting the projects to the people.

*“We believe that a key to long lasting stability is strong institutions which are legitimate in the eyes of the people.”*

“This demonstration of intent is particularly important in areas where militants have provided some degree of governance and the government must prove it can also deliver something of value.

“We believe that a key to long lasting stability is strong institutions which are legitimate in the eyes of the people. In order to move towards this, visible projects that help authorities to quickly build trust are absolutely essential. These projects also need to develop local capacity and encourage community engagement to build a platform for peace and future development.”

**NIS uses this model in post-conflict regions all over the world, but one of the most illuminating projects has been the installation of solar street lights in Mogadishu, Somalia.**

## Why are street lights so important?

Eric explains that when they arrived in Mogadishu in late 2011, just a few months after significant areas of the city had been liberated from Al Shabab’s control, the mayor put street lights as one of his top three priorities.

“After 20 years of conflict, Mogadishu was a city in almost total darkness after 6pm. When it’s totally dark, people stay at home. The police and peace-keeping forces can’t operate efficiently and security risks are higher. The negative psychological impact of a darkened city adds another layer of complexity that is too often under-appreciated.

“We were the first international organisation to take up the challenge of working closely with the city government to install solar street lights and ensure the government was seen as the primary force behind the project, not NIS.

“Not only are the solar lights a wonderfully green solution in a city where the sun shines all day, but more importantly, it means you can install each street light independently without the need for large scale power infrastructure or expensive diesel-based electricity grids. You simply put up a pole and add the solar powered light on top and within hours it is already working.

## What was it like when the first lights were switched on?

“The immediate effect was incredible. I was in Mogadishu when we installed the first poles. The impact on each lighted neighbourhood was profound.

*“After so many years, it was striking to see a neighbourhood emerge and flourish”*

“The positive effects on security allowed for increased economic activity from shops being open longer, as well as new shops opening. It allowed for more socialising and play in the evenings. The lights allowed for the first semblance of normality during the night for many years.

“After so many years of civil unrest, it was striking to see a neighbourhood emerge and flourish – and all from something as simple as a street light.

“Today, there are 60 kilometres of lit roads in Mogadishu and although the city is far from secure, the authorities now have more trust and control. And while still fragile, I think it’s safe to say that ordinary people have more hope.”

## What should other organisations thinking about work in Mogadishu consider as a priority?

Although the current situation in Mogadishu is what Eric calls “fluid”, there are more and more big infrastructure projects being launched. This is attracting new business providers, contractors and professionals from all over the world.

Eric says, being established on the ground is perhaps the most important first step.

*“It’s essential ... to keep tendering and recruiting processes totally transparent.”*

“It’s a complex place which is hard to understand from the outside. Our model is to have strong capacity on the ground, which we accomplish through hiring the best national local staff. We’ve been really pleased with the quality and availability of local professionals.

“I think it’s essential in a place like Somalia to keep tendering and recruiting processes totally transparent and to have trusted locals on the ground. Rumours of bias or unfair treatment can be a death

knell for international organisations and greatly reduce the ability to deliver.

“Over the years we have seen the security situation evolve from one of knowing where the frontline was in Mogadishu, to a more asymmetrical conflict characterised by terrorist-style activity using suicide bombers, IEDs and complex attacks. In addition, there is a real risk of kidnapping for westerners.

“When we visit from Oslo, we still use armed vehicles with drivers. We are always prepared to postpone trips without question if we get information suggesting there could be a threat. My advice is to always be cautious and listen to trusted sources on the ground.

“I tell new people to be prepared for the fact that you won’t be able to have a planned programme. You’ll have a wish list of meetings and objectives, but nothing can be confirmed until the very last minute. Be prepared for cancellations because getting around is difficult and safety comes first.”

#### Does Eric look forward to his trips to Mogadishu?

After six years of flying in and out of Mogadishu, how does Eric feel about his trips now?

“I remember the first time I went. It’s a bit strange to hear the Captain say “we’ll be landing in Mogadishu in 10 minutes.” It’s an interesting feeling.

“There was a time, a few years ago, when the security situation was much better. We could have a wonderful lunch at restaurants on the beach, though still with some security precautions. Sadly the situation is too risky again right now for these types of outings.

*“...even my wife is quite relaxed about it.”*

“I’ve been so often now, it’s become quite routine; even my wife is relaxed about it. I have good friends there. We enjoy amazing fish. It’s not my thing, but one of my colleagues tells me that the camel liver for breakfast is excellent.

“Last time I was there, we were up on a rooftop with a breeze, enjoying a barbeque and I felt totally relaxed. Then I remembered there were armed guards surrounding the place. I guess there’s a little way to go yet!”



**Eric Sevrin is a Founder and Senior Partner at the Nordic International Support (NIS) Foundation, a Norwegian non-profit founded in 2011 that implements a large range of projects together with donors and key national stakeholders.**


[www.nis-foundation.org/](http://www.nis-foundation.org/)

Eric Sevrin’s Nordic International Support (NIS) Foundation applies their unique model of sustainable development projects all over the world.


 Over 2500 solar street lights installed in 16 towns in Somalia and Mali

 6 markets rehabilitated, built and/or electrified with solar energy in 5 towns in Somalia


 8 hospitals electrified with solar energy in 5 towns in Somalia

 3 stadiums rehabilitated and electrified with solar energy in 3 towns in Somalia

 8 government buildings rehabilitated in 6 towns in Somalia

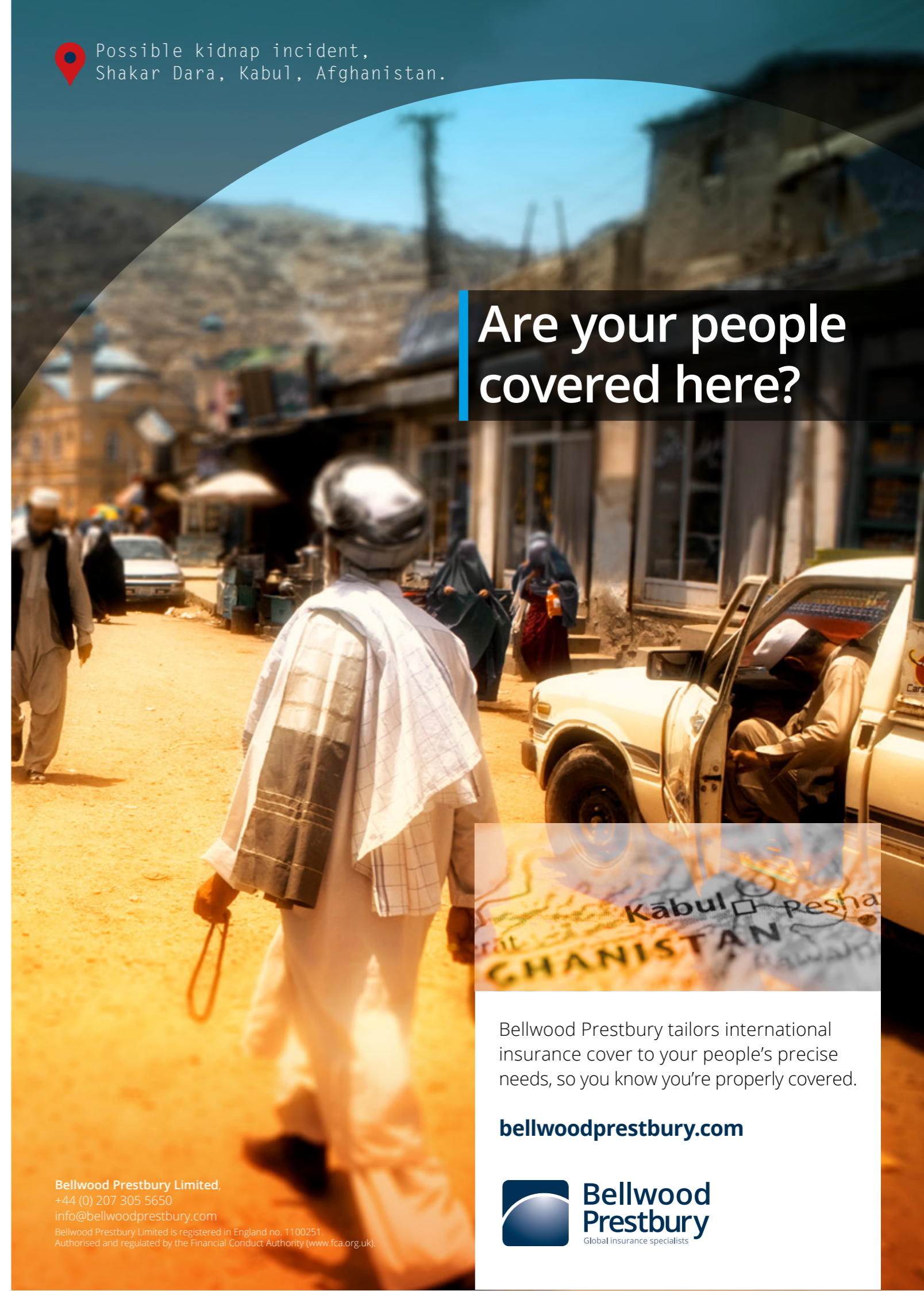
 2 shallow wells electrified with solar energy on Wajid, Somalia

 4 roads and 2 bridges rehabilitated in 4 towns in Somalia

 2 peace support funds established and running in Myanmar

 Possible kidnap incident, Shakar Dara, Kabul, Afghanistan.

# Are your people covered here?



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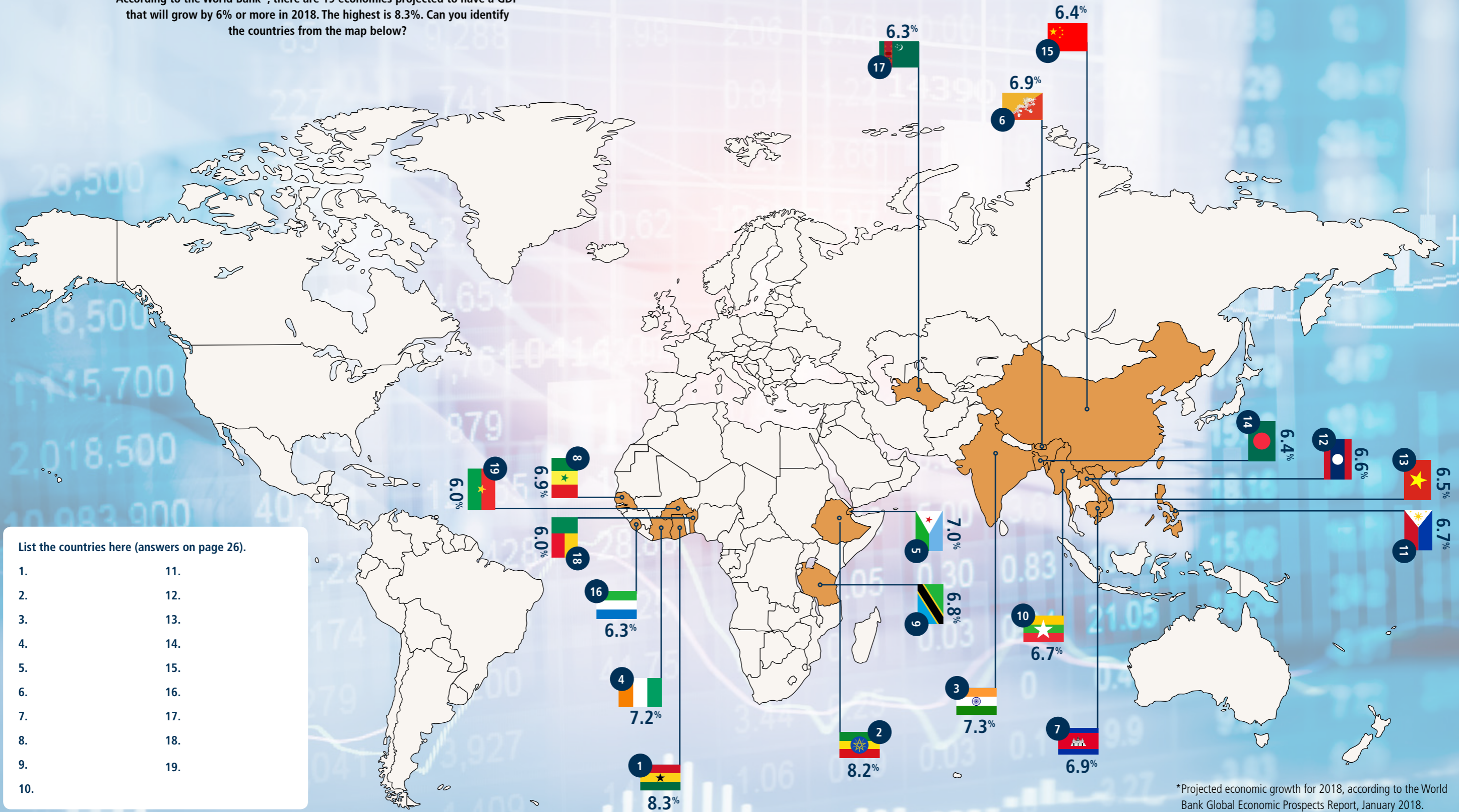


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# Can You Name the Top Growth Economies for 2018?

According to the World Bank\*, there are 19 economies projected to have a GDP that will grow by 6% or more in 2018. The highest is 8.3%. Can you identify the countries from the map below?



List the countries here (answers on page 26).

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\*Projected economic growth for 2018, according to the World Bank Global Economic Prospects Report, January 2018.

# Afghanistan – Open For Business

The top 7 tips for setting up a new venture in Afghanistan,  
from a barrister on the ground.



**David Frend, barrister, ex-military lawyer, consultant for Proelium Law LLP and private practitioner who has been working with the Anti-Corruption Justice Center in Kabul, explains the issues to consider when setting up an enterprise in Afghanistan.**

Afghanistan is primed for business. Extraction and mining is growing again. Kabul is playing its role in the revived Silk Road hub. Logistics, building and construction, infrastructure and ancillary businesses are all thriving. NGOs continue to run significant development projects.

At the same time, as Kabul continues to grow at an incredible rate, David says that an emerging middle-class is also creating more lifestyle business opportunities.

“In my private client work, I’ve seen a growth in consumer businesses: sophisticated clothes shops, upmarket restaurants, sports facilities, a high-end gym. As more and more Afghans who had moved away, return to the country of their birth to make a difference, so the opportunities for global brands and services grow.”

**So if you are tempted by UN or government contracts or private sector developments, what steps should you take to minimise risk and maximise your opportunities? These are David’s top 7 tips:**

## 1. Set yourself up securely in Kabul

“Obviously, security is your paramount concern. I personally would organise secure accommodation in one of the compounds, rather

than operate from one of the international hotels, which have proved to be serious terrorist targets in recent months.

“The compounds offer good security, accommodation, food and office space and are available on an hourly, daily, weekly, monthly or longer-term rent. This is a good place to manage meetings and a great way to connect with all kinds of potential services and people you may need.”

## 2. Organise secure transport

“You can use soft skin cars – indeed some people argue it makes you less of a target. But if you get caught in the wrong place you’ll have no protection.

“I prefer to use a classic armoured B6 Toyota Land Cruiser with a local driver. You are more likely to survive a roadside bomb or IED and the car is resistant to small arms fire.

“If you are operating outside Kabul, I would advise you to use a security company to make a detailed risk assessment. Moving around the east in places like Herat, and some places in the north are relatively benign. The west and south are more difficult environments.

“Of course, if you take sensible precautions like varying routine, being as unpredictable as possible and remaining vigilant at all times, there is no reason you should have problems. But caution is always advisable.”

## 3. Find a trusted ground agent or local partner

“To do business here, you need to understand the relatively complicated tribal, religious and ethnic make-up of the people you are working with.

“The only real way to do that is to find a local person you can trust.

“How to do that? Word of mouth and recommendations are key. Ask around. Get to know who you are dealing with. Build up a relationship. Be frank and open.

“Some companies rely heavily for security on British ex-military and that’s fine, but I think a combination of high-level international expertise and local knowledge is best.”

## 4. Carefully check contractual obligations

“Whether you are working directly with an organisation like the UN, sub-contracting to a major international firm or setting up your own enterprise, it’s vital you check the contractual obligations you are taking on.

“It’s relatively easy to check through organisations like the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or FinTRACA (Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Center of Afghanistan).

“Due diligence at the front end can save a whole heap of pain at the end. For example, there are certain restrictions on internationals conducting business to protect local employment. Does whoever is employing you have appropriate authority or exemptions? Do you need your own license to operate? Are you responsible for the tax of local employees?”

“Insurance is another key factor. Bellwood Prestbury, for example, will tell you that you need to be clear about your obligations to expats and locals from the start. They can help you manage that process of course.

## 5. Take care over recruitment

“Local recruitment is a key issue. It’s likely you will be employing local Afghans to work for you and you need to find good people you can trust.

“The first thing to do is to have policies in place that encourage best practice and transparency in recruitment.

“If you use a local agent or contact, you need to make sure that the person who is recruiting is doing it appropriately and not taking advantage. It’s not uncommon for people to take introducer fees, so a third of what you pay the new employee goes back to the recruiter. That can leave you open to future problems.

“Nepotism and cronyism is an issue here, but it is how things sometimes operate. For example, getting five employees from the same village may work, because you then have a circle of trust and a certain level of loyalty.

“What you need is an independent person observing the recruitment who you trust to maintain quality control.”





### 6. Be alert to anything unusual

"The Taliban and IS do target international firms and will sometimes do that through your employees, either through bribery or extortion – threatening family or livelihoods.

"How can you mitigate against this? Get to know what is normal and what is abnormal. Stay constantly alive to things that feel out of the ordinary. If you have contracted out your security, it makes sense to have your own security advisor in-house to monitor that everything is as you expect."

### 7. Stay on the right side of internationally applicable law

"As an international business, it's essential you stay on the right side of the UK Bribery Act 2010 or the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, amongst others.

"Afghanistan doesn't have the best reputation, but the current administration is committed to tackling corruption, fraud and money laundering. I have spent 12 months working as a legal advisor with the Anti-Corruption Justice Center in Kabul as part of an internationally funded mission designed to improve administration and law-enforcement, partly so legitimate business can thrive.

"My recommendation is to take legal advice on how you set-up the business. Keep a close eye on transactions, procurement and

recruitment. Do not pay bribes and report any attempt to solicit bribes, where it is safe to do so. Keep good financial records. If in doubt, take legal advice and make sure your own internal systems are set up to deal with this."

**It's quite an onerous list, but David insists that Afghanistan is a great place to live and work.**

"Afghanistan is open for business and is super-keen to encourage internal investment. The administration is working hard on reducing corruption, fraud and money laundering.

"I have lived in Kabul for 12 months mentoring the initiative at the Anti-Corruption Justice Center and I am planning to go back to work and live there again later this year to assist in establishing the Proelium Law Kabul office.

"If you do your due diligence, always put security first and spend time establishing trusted relationships, Afghanistan is a great place to do business."



**David is a Senior Consultant with Proelium Law, the law firm that specialises in advising clients in high-risk territories.**

[dfrend@proeliumlaw.com](mailto:dfrend@proeliumlaw.com)

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# What's It Like to Live in Kabul?

**Adrian Henry lived in Kabul for seven years before recently returning home to head up Bellwood Prestbury's London office. What's it really like to live there?**

“ I remember arriving. It was 19th March 2010 and my first thought was: I've made a terrible mistake!

There were guns everywhere. It was a windswept desolate airport. Driving to the accommodation I couldn't see anything you could insure. It was just rubble and broken roads. I couldn't envisage where an insurance company would do business.

Happily, once I got into central Kabul, things changed. There are relatively modern buildings. Lots of rebuilding was evident. I could see that there was a lot of business happening there.

The turning point for me was visiting a well-known UN compound where there were lots of expats relaxing and discussing business. That made a good platform to start from and became a hub for me over the coming years.

A surprising thing about Kabul is that it has a kind of Mediterranean climate. It's located at over 1,750 meters / 5,900 feet, so it's cooler than much of the region. You get a short, sharp winter from December to March or April. May to mid-October, it tends to be late 20's to 30 degrees, which is pleasant enough. It can get super-hot some days, but it seldom lasts too long.

Tremors and earthquakes were new to me and I never really got used to them. 2010 was my first time. It felt like I was attached to a jack-hammer. I was in a building that had been designed to 'give', but it's still really unsettling. That happened every year or so. I never got used to the ground moving.

The security situation does inevitably dominate, but it quickly becomes a part of your routine. I lived in a secure apartment complex and more latterly, in a property located in a residential neighbourhood. Each day would start with a breakfast security briefing. I would then be driven to the office in an armoured land cruiser.

Visiting clients, working with the Central Bank Governor or Minister of Finance for example, or visiting an evening reception at an embassy, you make sure you get in and out smoothly. The danger is more acute in the transfer from vehicle to building.

Yes you hear and see bombings. Occasionally expat hotels, restaurants or business districts are targeted and you could always be unlucky. Everyone knows someone who has been affected. But I took the necessary precautions and generally really enjoyed my time in Kabul.

I helped to build some of the insurance infrastructure that is making business easier today for both international companies and domestic Afghan businesses. That's something I will always be proud of.

Whilst I'm now safely based in London, I've just come back from a trip to Mogadishu in Somali to set up high-risk cover for a number of clients there. I really enjoyed it. I guess it's in my DNA. ”



**Adrian Henry is a senior broker for Bellwood Prestbury, creating bespoke high-risk insurance cover for organisations all around the world.**

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# Studying Orangutans in Indonesia

Discovering a new species – “every biologist’s dream”

**Professor Serge Wich from Liverpool John Moores University has been studying orangutans in Sumatra for over 25 years. Recently he helped to identify a new species.**

**IN:** Why did you choose to specialise in primates?

**Prof. Wich:** “My interest in orangutans began because of their close affinity to humans. To understand our own evolution, I believe it’s important to study great apes.

“In particular, I’ve been focused on how they communicate with calls and whether that can inform our understanding of the evolution of human language. I’ve been visiting the remote regions of Indonesia for over 25 years now.”

**IN:** How did your work lead to the discovery of a new species?

**Prof. Wich:** “As a result of work by many colleagues and myself in Sumatra, we were able to combine behavioural studies into the orangutans’ signature calls with genetic and morphology data. This enabled us to show that we had actually discovered a new species, as yet unknown.

**IN:** That sounds like a really exciting day at the office...

**Prof. Wich:** “There were only six great ape species – not including us. So adding one to that very small list is spectacular and brings it up to seven. It’s something I think many biologists dream of.”

**IN:** You’re also interested in conservation?

**Prof. Wich:** “Yes, very definitely. To study them, we have been mapping how many there are and where they are.

“For example, in a 2015 study in Borneo, we estimated that the orangutan population had declined by about 100,000 individuals compared to 1999. That leaves just 70,000 to 100,000 left.

“That’s why conservation has become an equally important part of my studies. As a scientist you ask yourself: what we can do to protect these wonderful creatures and their habitat?”

**IN:** Why is there such a steep decline in numbers?

**Prof. Wich:** “Our field studies show that there seems to be two key problems.

“The first, as you might expect, is deforestation. It’s not just the volume of forest lost but also the fragmentation caused by palm oil plantations and development.

“That means that orangutan populations are cut-off, with a few hundred here and a few hundred there and sometimes a few thousand in yet another forest area. That reduces the gene pool, and



Picture © Conservationdrones

Professor Serge Wich (behind) with colleague Lian Pin Koh.

makes them more susceptible to local extinction. It also means they are closer to human contact and that is our second big problem.

“Hunting. In remote regions of Borneo, local people go hunting for deer and wild boar for food. But if they run into an orangutan, they’ll often kill that too. It’s a large animal so hunters then obtain a feast for many mouths.

“At the same time, as farms and palm oil plantations encroach on the forest, they are closer to the orangutans. People who are afraid of them, or are protecting crops, will often kill them. Access for hunters is easier too.

**“In my estimation, hunting is a larger threat than deforestation.”**

**IN:** You carry high-risk insurance from Bellwood Prestbury. What are your main concerns on your expeditions?

**Prof. Wich:** “Our work is usually very remote. It could be a couple of days walk from any settlement. Sometimes a satellite phone will still work; sometimes we are totally isolated.

“Medical emergency is the main risk. An ugly fall for example, or being hit by a branch from a tree. Animals like snakes can be deadly too. A field assistant working with one of my colleagues in Sumatra was tragically killed recently.

“We have seen medical evacuations for people falling or being ill. You need to have insurance that will cover that and liability insurance to cover members of the team.

“Having said that we can be in the jungle for weeks or months at a time. My longest trip was nearly a year. When you consider how much time we spend in the forest, problems are rare.

“No-one has done all the calculations, but I’m pretty sure that walking the streets of London is much more dangerous than being in a rainforest. It’s just harder to treat people out there.”

**IN:** And I read that you are now using drones in your work?

**Prof. Wich:** “Yes, we used to just rely on pen and paper, returning year after year to estimate forest density and animal numbers by observation from the ground.

“Drones can be much more efficient in mapping the changes in habitat and can help us to get into really inaccessible areas.

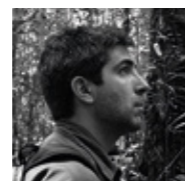
“They can help us to establish animal numbers too. We can identify orangutan nests for example and then compare with ground data to get a more accurate count.”

**IN:** What’s your next trip?

**Prof. Wich:** “My next trip is three weeks to Tanzania. I’m taking a group of masters students to a remote area to teach them drone flying.

“As founder of the not-for-profit Conservation Drones, I’ve now trained students from 25 different countries.

“I think using drones in combination with automatic image recognition and satellite data – together with ground studies – is the way forward for this kind of work.”



**Professor Serge Wich is a Professor in Primate Biology at Liverpool John Moores University and a Founding Director of the not-for-profit, ConservationDrones.org**

Picture © Perry van Duijnhoven

# Global Cities.

## The good, the bad and the “please don’t send me there!”

Where would your people choose to go?

AIRINC’s Global 150 Cities Index highlights the cities that have the ideal quality of life.

They research and evaluate each location against 60 hardship components, classified into 11 categories that represent Physical Threat and Safety (e.g., violence, crime, medical), Discomfort (e.g., climate, pollution, isolation), Inconvenience (e.g., availability of housing, recreation, goods and services, education facilities).

### The good

Zurich, Switzerland	1	130
Vienna, Austria	2	131
London, U.K.	3	132
Munich, Germany	4	133
Berlin, Germany	5	134
Copenhagen, Denmark	6	135
Geneva, Switzerland	7	136
Toronto ON, Canada	8	137
Melbourne, Australia	9	138
Dublin, Ireland	10	139
Amsterdam, Netherlands	11	140
Sydney, Australia	12	141
Paris, France	13	142
Prague, Czech Republic	14	143
Helsinki, Finland	15	144
Singapore	16	145
Brisbane, Australia	17	146
Montreal QC, Canada	18	147
Tokyo, Japan	19	148
Stockholm, Sweden	20	149

### The bad

Kingston, Jamaica	130
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania	131
Tehran, Iran	132
Tegucigalpa, Honduras	133
Douala, Cameroon	134
Nairobi, Kenya	135
Antananarivo, Madagascar	136
Maputo, Mozambique	137
Brazzaville, Congo	138
Banjul, Gambia	139
Dhaka, Bangladesh	140
Blantyre, Malawi	141
Abidjan, Ivory Coast	142
Port Moresby, P.N.G.	143
Lagos, Nigeria	144
Karachi, Pakistan	145
Luanda, Angola	146
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso	147
Port au Prince, Haiti	148
Freetown, Sierra Leone	149
Khartoum, Sudan	150

# Quiz Answers:

Answers to the quiz on page 14. How did you do?

This list shows the 19 countries with the highest projected economic growth for 2018, according to the World Bank Global Economic Prospects Report, January 2018:



1. Ghana 8.3%



2. Ethiopia 8.2%



3. India 7.3%



4. Côte d'Ivoire 7.2%



5. Djibouti 7.0%



6. Bhutan 6.9%



7. Cambodia 6.9%



8. Senegal 6.9%



9. Tanzania 6.8%



10. Myanmar 6.7%



11. Philippines 6.7%



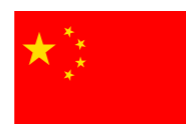
12. Laos 6.6%



13. Vietnam 6.5%



14. Bangladesh 6.4%



15. China 6.4%



16. Sierra Leone 6.3%



17. Turkmenistan 6.3%




18. Benin 6.0%



19. Burkina Faso 6.0%

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