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Vienna

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ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION UNIT

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IEU CONTACT DETAILS

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AD	Alternative Development
CARDIN	Caribbean Drug Information Network
CBT	Computer Based Training
CND	United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs
EADIS	East African Drug Information System
EXCOM	Executive Committee, UNODC
GAP	Global Assessment Program on Drug Abuse
IEU	Independent Evaluation Unit, UNODC
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PPC	Programme and Project Committee
RBM	Results Based Management
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session 1998
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOV	United Nations Office at Vienna

FOREWORD

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) evaluation policy framework is based on the twin pillars of accountability and learning. Therefore one of the key objectives of the evaluation function is to support UNODC's move toward becoming a better learning organization. In that vein, IEU continues to urge UNODC policy to focus on rigorous improvement aimed at enhancing performance. Performance improvement is an indicator of the organization's capacity to adapt to change through learning. Based on the analysis of evaluation findings in 2005, the Annual Evaluation Report lays emphasis on this pillar of learning.

Contemporary management theory and practice inform us that the main explanation for organizational success lies in its ability to learn to improve performance in critical areas. In other words, the key to success is putting a premium on learning by improving skills as a way to solve problems. Hence, one of the most critical aspects of a learning strategy is the generation and management of new knowledge from experience in programme implementation, research and evaluation. Evaluations assist an organization to capture lessons and best practices. The evaluation function must facilitate the process in which UNODC learns from its experiences and harnesses that knowledge for use in future programme development and management. Fortunately, there is a growing recognition in UNODC that the organization can strengthen its performance through the use of evaluation results.

Another critical element in the 'learning pillar' is the dissemination of lessons from evaluation as an essential part of Results-Based Management that should lead to improved performance. This Annual Evaluation Report is part of, and aims at fulfilling this key objective of the evaluation function. This report informs UNODC management and Member States on the performance of the organization and lessons learned, and also provides an independent accountability mechanism for funds and other resources entrusted to UNODC.

Charting a new direction for UNODC will require creative thinking – thinking outside the box – and risk taking, within the context of an organizational strategy and with sufficient planning. The current cautious approach inherent in UNODC programmes and projects is a result of rigidities in existing systems of accountability and limitations imposed by funding arrangements. All learning processes entail some degree of experimentation and risk taking.

What is critical is not simply assessing the final impact of specific programmes and projects, but creating an environment that promotes trust through continuous feedback. Conventional judgements about project 'failure' and 'success' must be replaced with a greater emphasis on lessons learned. As Einstein said "Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new".

FOREWORD

It is my conviction that while many challenges lie ahead of us, improvements in performance and programme delivery are possible if UNODC is willing to learn from experience and even from its mistakes. I present the 2005 Annual Evaluation Report with that optimism for the future.



Backson Sibanda
Chief
Independent Evaluation Unit

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2005 Annual Evaluation Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is an analysis and synthesis of the major work and evaluations conducted by the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) in 2005 as part of its work plan. The report reviewed results from the Project Cycle Management (PCM) exercise, three in-depth evaluations, and 17 independent project evaluation and three self-evaluation reports received in 2005. Results suggest that there is evidence that some of the UNODC programmes and projects have successfully achieved their intended results, contributing to the overall UNODC mandate to fight against drugs and crime.

The IEU designed the PCM project, as a four-phased exercise. IEU implemented phase one and produced a major deliverable of the Phase, “Project Cycle Management: Skills Development Programme – Findings and Recommendations of the Diagnostic Phase” (referred to as the “diagnostic report”). The report analysed the current UNODC PCM system from six perspectives: i) strategic guidance and decision-making ii) relationship with members states and donors iii) participatory management approach iv) organizational structure and responsibilities v) culture of evaluation, learning and knowledge sharing and vi) human resource development. Following the UNODC management decision of November 2005, the PCM exercise has moved to the Strategic Planning Unit (SPU) which now assumes responsibility for completion of the remaining phases of the exercise.

The three in-depth evaluations undertaken by IEU in 2005 were the evaluations of UNODC’s e-Learning initiative (with emphasis on Computer-based Training), UNODC Alternative Development Initiatives, and the Global Assessment Programme on Drug Abuse.

The evaluation of UNODC’s e-Learning initiative found that, since its inception in 1995, computer-based training (CBT) has delivered quality and effective training to thousands of law enforcement officers and staff from Member States. CBT was reported to have positively influenced the performance and productivity of the participants, and demand for such training appears to be growing. Some of the challenges identified were an unstable funding stream to the programme and lack of a clear, defined organizational place for the programme within UNODC.

The UNODC operations in Alternative Development (AD) have played a vital and positive role in the formulation of national drug policies in many countries, in the reduction of illicit drug crops, as well as in the improvement of the livelihoods of local populations who have given up production of illicit crops. However, the impact of AD is reported to have been reduced by its fragmented project approach,



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lack of sufficient financial resources and the limited capacity in development expertise within UNODC.

The Global Assessment Programme on Drug Abuse (GAP) has contributed to the establishment of and/or improvement to regional drug information networks, as well as the strengthening of data collection and analysis capacities in some Member States, notably through the work of GAP Regional Advisors. The programme has also facilitated Member States reporting of the magnitude and trends in illicit drug use to the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) by revising a survey format on demand reduction in the Annual Reports Questionnaire (ARQ). Critical issues to be resolved included lack of a clear global strategic plan, insufficient resources, overlapping mandates and lack of clarity on the division of data collection and analysis responsibilities in UNODC.

Findings from project evaluations conducted by external evaluators hired by local project teams (independent evaluations) as well as by project managers themselves (self-evaluations) suggested that UNODC projects have resulted primarily in fostering local coordination mechanisms (e.g. better cooperation between agencies, within a government and across countries), strengthening individual and institutional capacities and improving awareness among beneficiary countries of various topical objectives targeted by the projects. In some cases, increases in the number of arrests of criminal offenders and the level of drug seizures were reported as project impacts.

The major question posed by this report is how localized successes can contribute to the better and more efficient achievement of UNODC mandates, given that the linkages between individual projects and global targets are often not clear. How can local successes be measured in global terms in the absence of clearly defined performance indicators at the local and global levels? The report also notes that there are areas that require further improvements, such as knowledge management and a strategic approach in the planning and formulation of programmes and projects. Further more, duplication of efforts and lack of coordination within UNODC has been identified.

The report makes specific recommendations based on key findings and results of the exercises conducted in 2005. The report concludes that the work of UNODC takes place in complex international and national environments, which UNODC can influence, but not control. The report acknowledges the unique role played by UNODC as the voice of the United Nations and Member States in drugs and crime control.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE



UNITED NATIONS
Office on Drugs and Crime

Antonio Maria Costa
Executive Director

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

to the IEU's Annual Evaluation Report for 2005

UNODC's Executive Committee (ExCom) has reviewed the Independent Evaluation Unit's (IEU) Annual Evaluation Report for 2005. ExCom took note with appreciation of the work carried out by IEU, including the summary of findings and the recommendations.

It is not the purpose of this note to repeat the separate commentary on individual evaluations, which were provided directly to IEU and are now available on the UNODC Intranet, or to reiterate the points made by different UNODC units on the first draft of the report, some of which were taken into account and some not. The emphasis here will be on the report's broad findings.

To begin with, management is pleased that this second IEU annual report shows the extent to which IEU's work is gaining momentum. The Unit is gradually becoming better placed to provide constructive input on UNODC's activities. Management expects that the IEU will do more than just evaluate and will increasingly help UNODC learn from past activities, especially from those judged unsuccessful. This will help to improve the Office's best practices and hence enhance the quality of our delivery, to the benefit of the recipients of UNODC assistance.

We are pleased that the IEU's proposed review of UNODC project cycle management (PCM) has helped to identify current strengths and weaknesses. These findings have led to the launching of the final phase of PCM, including preparation of new guidelines and training material. This work is now being embedded in other initiatives, such as the finalization of strategic priorities and of result-based management. In this way, the work of UNODC field offices (country programmes) will be better aligned with the overall priorities of the Office.

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Another important point raised by the IEU's report deals with funding. In this regard, the Unit's starting point is fine, the concluding remark is not. Certainly, voluntary funding of UNODC's activities has shown remarkable growth in the last four years, especially in support of crime prevention, with much of the funding allocated to donor-specified objectives.

UNODC has tried very hard, in view of the reduced level of general purpose contributions, to reduce its dependency on this type of funding: the achieved savings have been well-recognized and appreciated by Member States. Because of this double success (a 30% increase in earmarked funding and 40% decrease in spending of general purpose resources) management finds IEU's comment under recommendation 3 ("*the decline of GP funding can be viewed as lack of confidence*") is inappropriate.

UNODC wants to be known for the quality of its development assistance to member states in crime, drugs and terrorism control. Significant progress was achieved over the past few years. As even more progress is needed, we hope that the IEU contribution to the work of UNODC will be further strengthened and consolidated. In its third year of operation, we expect IEU to provide, and be receptive to, ever more fruitful advice, thus becoming a constructive part of UNODC and a good partner to management.

28 July 2006

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This is the second Annual Evaluation Report produced by the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU). The report informs United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) management and Member States of the effectiveness of UNODC programmes and projects (accountability) and identifies programme and project achievements and improvements needed (learning). Further, the report presents the activities carried out by the IEU in 2005. This includes non-evaluation activities such as the Project Cycle Management exercise.

A. INDEPENDENT EVALUATION AT UNODC

2. Evaluation is a corporate responsibility shared between the IEU and the whole of UNODC. The Evaluation Strategic Framework encourages decentralization of evaluation responsibilities with the IEU managing in-depth thematic and global programme evaluations and the field offices managing project evaluations. The IEU however supports, backstops and ensures the quality of all project evaluations. Evaluation uses independent consultants in order to ensure independence and impartiality in the evaluation process. IEU has also promoted self-evaluation for smaller projects (with budgets less than \$500,000). While it is not yet widely used, the use of self-evaluation is growing and will in future significantly contribute to the number of evaluated projects.

3. The IEU objectives are:

- i. To ensure an independent evaluation service for UNODC management and Member States;
- ii. To support UNODC's move toward becoming a better learning organization;
- iii. To provide evaluation support to all programme and projects staff in the field offices and at the Vienna headquarters.

B. FOLLOW UP TO 2004 ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT

4. Following the presentation of the 2004 Annual Evaluation Report to the UNODC Executive Committee (ExCom) and Member States, ExCom decided it would be responsible for monitoring implementation of recommendations made in the report. IEU, therefore, cannot pronounce itself on the status of implementation of recommendations made in the report. IEU, however, welcomes some of the major initiatives taken by UNODC management since the release of the report, including the preparation of an organizational strategy, review of operational priorities, measures to improve knowledge management systems and project design and management, as well as active engagement with donors to explore ways to ensure stable and predictable funding.

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C. IEU ACTIVITIES IN 2005

5. The work plan of the Unit for 2005 included multiple evaluation exercises and other activities aimed at assisting UNODC to promote and facilitate evaluation activities within the organization. The work can be classified into the following six categories, each of which is summarized in the next section: i) in-depth thematic evaluations covering programmes such as UNODC's e-Learning initiative, Alternative Development and the Global Assessment Programme on Drug Abuse ii) Annual Evaluation Report iii) Project Cycle Management iv) support to project evaluations v) inter-agency collaboration and vi) strengthening of the evaluation system.

6. The work plan was designed to be forward looking and strategic, mostly shaped and reflected by the Unit's activities and operational experiences in 2004. The type of exercises carried out by the Unit in 2005 included the assessment of programmes which had been developed by UNODC in direct response to UNGASS, activities stemming from decisions of the Governing Bodies, as well as ad hoc technical services provided upon request. Some of the planned activities, unfortunately, were delayed or postponed due to the Unit's limited financial and human resources.

1. In-Depth Evaluations

I. e-Learning Initiative (Computer Based Training)

7. UNODC looks for innovative and cost effective ways of delivering programmes and providing technical cooperation to Member States. Computer-based training (CBT) is one of those initiatives that has been developed and is currently being utilized by many projects. The evaluation drew on some of the lessons provided by this experience, with a view to determining if the approach could be used more widely. The evaluation was carried out as planned and the report "Evaluation of UNODC's e-Learning initiative (with emphasis on computer-based training) as a modality of technical cooperation and delivery" was circulated to management and Member States in January 2006.

II. Alternative Development

8. The evaluation of Alternative Development (AD) was carried over from the 2004 work plan since the exercise was not completed in that year. This evaluation examined Alternative Development as a key component in the international strategy to reduce illicit supply of drugs. The aim was to review AD strategies and assess their appropriateness in addressing development issues in drug environments. The evaluation report "Thematic Evaluation of UNODC Alternative Development Initiatives" was completed in November 2005.

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III. Global Assessment Programme on Drug Abuse

9. In response to the action plans and measures to counter the world's drug problems given by UNGASS, UNODC has developed a number of programmes. The Global Assessment Programme on Drug Abuse (GAP) is one such programme. GAP was launched in 2000 for the purpose of assisting Member States to compile internationally comparable data on drug consumption and demand reduction responses. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the extent to which the programme had achieved its objectives and met the needs of Member States, as well as to identify best practices and options for improving the programme. The evaluation mission began in August 2005, three months later than initially envisaged, due to delays in securing funding. The evaluation report "Evaluation of The Global Assessment Programme on Drug Abuse" was completed in March 2006.

IV. Support Mechanism for Technical Cooperation

10. A common finding to most evaluations conducted in 2004 by the IEU was the need to enhance UNODC/UNOV administrative, financial and human resources support to core technical cooperation activities. The past evaluations established that weak administrative, managerial and backstopping support negatively impacted efficient programme implementation and delivery of technical cooperation to Member States. This evaluation aims at identifying the bottlenecks that impact on programme delivery and providing recommendations and solutions to enable more effective delivery of technical assistance to Member States. IEU was not able to carry out this evaluation in 2005, as funding was not available until October 2005. The evaluation is now scheduled for 2006.

2. Annual Evaluation Report

11. The first annual report of the IEU, the 2004 Annual Evaluation Report, was an analysis and synthesis of evaluation findings from various exercises carried out in 2004. The report was completed in March 2005 and was distributed to all Member States. The report provided a strategic overview of UNODC performance by providing information on what the organization had achieved against its mandate, priorities and themes. It also provided an independent accountability for resources entrusted to UNODC. Finally, it drew lessons for future programme planning, implementation and management as well as providing inputs for policy development. The 2004 Annual Evaluation Report generated a lot of debate in-house. The report was of great interest to Member States and was debated at the Major Donors Meeting in December 2005. The 2005 Annual Evaluation Report acknowledges that some major decisions have been made by UNODC management as a result of the recommendations made by the 2004 Annual Evaluation Report.

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3. Project Cycle Management

12. The UNODC Project Cycle Management (PCM) Skills Development Programme aims at developing and enhancing programme/project cycle management capacity and skills, with a view to improving the quality of programme/project design, monitoring and management. The Programme was launched in 2004 with the realization that “at the moment, within UNODC there is no common understanding of what precisely the UNODC-PC is, what stages it is composed of, and who assumes responsibility for what”. The Programme became fully operational in 2005.

13. The Programme is divided into four phases: diagnostic phase (Phase One), formulation of a clear PCM in UNODC (Phase Two), staff training (Phase Three) and the development of computer-based training (Phase Four). Phase One was completed in August 2005, and produced a report titled, “Project Cycle Management: Skills Development Programme – Findings and Recommendation of the Diagnostic Phase”. The report derived its data using open-ended interviews and discussions with staff, review of internal documents and a field staff survey. The findings are presented in Section II of the present Annual Report, grouped under six major areas of interest. During Phase One, a “Workshop on Logical Framework For Project Cycle Management (PCM) Focal Points”, a workshop for PPC members and selected senior managers, as well as a workshop for moderators were conducted.

14. In November 2005, UNODC management made a decision to shift the responsibility for managing the PCM project from IEU to the Strategic Planning Unit (SPU). Management felt that a potential conflict of interest might exist given IEU’s evaluation responsibilities over areas in the project cycle. The PCM project was transferred to SPU in February 2006.

4. Project Evaluations

15. A total of 20 project evaluations (led by Field Offices) were scheduled to be undertaken in 2005, many of which had been rescheduled from 2004. Of these scheduled evaluations, 11 were successfully carried out. IEU continued to support and backstop these evaluations in order to increase the independence of the exercises and improve their quality. IEU backstopped a total of 38 project evaluations during the year. These unexpected extra project evaluations placed a lot of strain on the limited resources of IEU.

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5. Inter-Agency Collaboration

16. UNODC is a member of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), which brings together all Evaluation Units and Offices of the United Nations System. The IEU actively participates in the work of UNEG which is outlined in the three paragraphs (69, 72 and 27) in General Assembly Resolution A/RES/59/250 that encourage the UN Evaluation System to “link evaluation to performance in the achievement of development goals [...],” “encourages the UN system to strengthen evaluation activities [...],” and “urges all UN organizations to intensify inter-agency information sharing at the system-wide level [...].”

17. In 2005 IEU served on the Board of UNEG, chaired the Task Force on Evaluation Capacity Development and was responsible for preparing an Evaluation Capacity Development Strategy for the UN system. IEU has also been involved in the development of the Evaluation Norms and Standards for the UN, which were adopted by the UNEG General Meeting, held in Rome in April 2005.

18. Further, IEU has maintained a close relationship with another Vienna-based evaluation office, the UNIDO Evaluation Group. Meetings were held every quarter for the purpose of sharing evaluation information, experiences, rosters of evaluators and developing common evaluation tools.

6. Evaluation System

19. The long-term goal of evaluation in UNODC is to develop and institute an evaluation system that will increase the objectivity of evaluations and enable field staff to take on more responsibility with quality evaluation exercises. In 2005 IEU continued to revamp the evaluation system, and successfully launched a new website. While there remains much to be done, efforts were hampered by a lack of financial and human resources. During 2005, progress on the development of an evaluation system was dependent on the recruitment of an Associate Expert. IEU was unable to secure an Associate Expert, and a number of planned activities could not be completed.

D. CHALLENGES

20. As in other offices within UNODC, much of the work of IEU in 2005 was constrained by a lack of human resources. The team of three professional staff was not sufficient to cope with the volume of work and expectations generated by some of the IEU products in 2004. Fortunately, in the case of the scheduled thematic evaluations, a number of donors generously provided needed funds and the Unit was able to undertake most of the planned in-depth evaluations. The only constraint was that some of the financial resources were secured later in the year, delaying the timing of some evaluations. Meeting the demand and expectations, with the available financial resources and human resources, remains a serious challenge to the Unit.

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21. Many of the challenges that the evaluation function faced in 2004 improved in 2005. In general there was a much better appreciation toward the value that evaluation can bring to the organization. This is clearly demonstrated by the increased number of requests from field offices asking IEU to support their project evaluations in 2005. The IEU believes that many of the recommendations made by various evaluation reports have been implemented by the project managers and considers this an indicator of increased awareness.

22. New challenges also emerged in 2005. The issue of how to handle and process evaluation reports, once finalized, surfaced when the 2004 Annual Evaluation Report was being prepared. A review of procedures was conducted to improve the process, thereby minimizing the perception that IEU was not adequately taking into consideration the views of stakeholders.

23. Bringing to the Executive Committee the agenda to expeditiously discuss results of the in-depth evaluations was also a challenge. Thematic evaluations conducted in 2004 were debated at the ExCom only in 2005.

24. IEU faced an additional challenge of not being able to distribute evaluation reports to Member States in a timely manner. Firstly, the new guidelines for processing evaluation reports in-house took longer than in 2004. Secondly, the delays in securing funding for individual evaluations caused repeated revision of delivery schedules. Finally, the internal peer review process of draft evaluation reports, which is intended to allow a thorough review of the findings and recommendations by staff in other UNODC offices, took a significant amount of time, often delaying the completion and distribution of the final reports.

E. METHODOLOGY

25. The Annual Evaluation Report is a comprehensive summary of results from the evaluation activities conducted by IEU in 2005. The review included the Unit's work with the PCM exercise, three in-depth evaluations, and the 17 independent project evaluation and three self-evaluation reports received in 2005 (See Annex 1).

26. The report was written based on a desk review of the individual evaluation reports produced by the activities. The content of the major analyses and findings of the present report, including outcomes, impacts, sustainability and other issues, was drawn from the similar corresponding sections of each individual evaluation report examined.

27. The information on the total number of ongoing/completed projects at UNODC in 2005, as well as the distribution of projects by region and thematic area

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was obtained from ProFi data collected by Information Management Unit, Information Technology Services of UNODC as of 6 March 2006. Project data obtained from ProFi are cross-tabulated and summarized in the report.

28. The figures of project evaluations, including the status of evaluations and the number of completed evaluation activities, were those collected by IEU in its database, as reported by project management staff, throughout the year. Results of the technical services provided by IEU to support the activities of project evaluations in the field offices and the headquarters are also tabulated and presented in the report.

F. LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY

29. The present report includes the following limitations:

- Different authors prepared the evaluation reports examined for the 2005 Annual Evaluation Report. Since the methodology used in each exercise varied, corresponding observations, findings and analyses reported were derived differently by the evaluators who conducted the independent assessments. The three thematic evaluations were led by a team of independent evaluators formed for each exercise, which consisted of external consultants (subject matter experts), as well as Evaluation Officers from the IEU. Project evaluation reports were produced by external consultants, who were locally recruited by the project managers, based on the qualifications they possessed. Self-evaluation reports were prepared by the project managers.
- The assessment made concerning project evaluations is based on those evaluation activities that had been completed and reported to IEU by project managers during 2005. That is, projects that were evaluated but not reported to IEU were not included in the assessment. As discussed in *Section III. Analysis of Project Evaluation Findings*, there was a considerable discrepancy between the initially expected number of evaluation activities for 2005 and the number of project evaluation reports submitted by projects by the end of the year. This suggested that the practice of project evaluations may be ad hoc in general, which makes it extremely difficult to know in advance, the volume of evaluation activities expected for a given year.

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G. STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

30. A summary of the 2005 Annual Evaluation Report is included in the Executive Summary.

31. Section I *Introduction* presents the major work of IEU in 2005 with a brief description of each of the exercises conducted. Challenges met by IEU, the methodology used for the Annual Evaluation Report and study limitations are also described.

32. Section II *Analysis of Thematic Evaluation Findings* is devoted to analysis of the findings of three in-depth thematic evaluations and the PCM diagnostic report. The section first presents brief summaries of results from each in-depth evaluation and discusses the overall outcomes, impact and sustainability, followed by some of the major issues highlighted and lessons learned.

33. Section III *Analysis of Project Evaluation Findings* focuses on project evaluations undertaken in 2005, including both independent and self-evaluations. The section begins with an overview of the thematic and regional distribution of projects in UNODC in 2005. It then discusses the implementation status of evaluation activities and the type of support provided by IEU, followed by the assessment of findings reported by the projects.

34. Based on the assessment of the major evaluation work conducted in 2005, some specific recommendations are made in Section IV *Recommendations*, followed by Section V *Conclusions*.

II. SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS OF PCM AND THEMATIC EVALUATION FINDINGS

35. A major portion of work at IEU in 2005 came from the UNODC's PCM project, for which IEU was tasked to lead and facilitate during the year, and the implementation of three in-depth thematic evaluations covering programmes that are of strategic importance to UNODC. The Unit produced a key output from the PCM project, the diagnostic report, whose major findings and recommendations were presented to ExCom.

36. As in 2004, the thematic evaluations were conducted to assess the extent to which major UNODC programmes have achieved their objectives. The Unit paid more attention to the preparation phase of the evaluations in 2005, by conducting numerous initial consultations with respective programme staff, ensuring that evaluation methodology and process was transparent, clear and mutually agreed, and that a close and trusting relationship between IEU and programme/project teams was maintained throughout the exercises. The Unit believes that the perceived value and actual utility of evaluation results by the programme/project teams was much more significant in the end, due to this approach.

A. PCM FINDINGS

37. The diagnostic report of the PCM exercise assessed the current UNODC practices with project cycle management from the following six aspects: i) strategic guidance and decision making ii) relationship with Member States and Donors iii) participatory management approach (guidelines and procedures) iv) organizational structure and responsibilities v) culture of evaluation, learning and knowledge sharing and vi) human resource development. Major findings are as follows.

1. Strategic Guidance and Decision Making

38. Feedback provided by the exercise participants indicated a lack of clear strategic guidance on project cycle management in UNODC. Various policy documents exist but are not operationalized enough, or sufficiently considered in many decisions about project approval. Policy decisions from the senior management are often characterized as ad hoc. The Programme and Project Committee (PPC) did not seem to function optimally and its role was not clear at that point. UNODC seemed to lack a universally agreed framework of how a project should be formulated, managed and executed.

2. Relationship with Member States and Donors

39. Many staff expressed that there is a mismatch between UNODC's mandates, operational strategy and available resources. Unclear organizational priorities lead to a lack of transparency from a donor's perspective, and the UNODC's inability to clearly report on its achievements has ultimately created a negative impact on the attitude of donors towards UNODC. Dialogue with stakeholders, particularly during

II. SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS OF PCM AND THEMATIC EVALUATION FINDINGS

project formulation, is in many cases reported as inadequate. Funding mechanisms and procedures with donors and Member States have produced many challenges and are not in harmony with current project planning and management.

3. Participatory Management Approach: Guidelines and Procedures

40. Staff found the current project “cycle” too complex. It involves too many stages and parties, and is generally not organized efficiently. Quality standards and the added value at each stage of the process are not clear. The attitude that UNODC is an organization that provides services to its clients (donors, national authorities, etc.) is missing. Cooperation among parties involved (within headquarters, field offices, etc.) is not organized efficiently and effectively. A clear, concise project document format that uses well defined, agreed upon terms and steps is missing. The quality of project documents is often weak – a clear logic derivation from identified needs to suggested interventions is missing.

4. Organizational Structure and Responsibilities

41. The cooperation among departments is sometimes governed by competition rather than a mutual willingness to work together constructively. Contributions from other departments are often seen as formalistic and bureaucratic. Some feel that competition arises due to scarce resources. Many staff are not clear whether the general management approach is one of decentralization or centralization.

5. Culture of Evaluation, Learning and Knowledge Sharing

42. A culture of evaluation and practice of learning from experiences is generally weak in UNODC. Evaluation mechanisms are not fully utilized and only recently strengthened. Knowledge sharing and provision of constructive feedback are not fully institutionalized nor sanctioned positively.

6. Human Resource Development

43. Many staff lack basic project planning and management skills. This is due to the fact that personnel development (training, coaching, peer review, working groups, etc.) has been insufficient. A business-minded, client-oriented culture is not visible.

44. The diagnostic report made several recommendations which were noted by management when the report was presented to ExCom. The remaining three phases of the PCM project will now be executed under the leadership of the Strategic Planning Unit (SPU), following an ExCom decision in November 2005 to move the PCM project from IEU to SPU.

II. SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS OF PCM AND THEMATIC EVALUATION FINDINGS

B. SUMMARY OF THEMATIC EVALUATIONS

1. Evaluation of UNODC's E-Learning Initiative (with Emphasis on Computer Based Training) as a Modality of Technical Cooperation Delivery and Capacity Building

45. The current e-Learning initiative began in 1995 with a regional thematic focus. The project was part of a larger law enforcement program between UNODC and six South East Asian countries – Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam. This project was designed to provide training to 'frontline' law enforcement staff responsible for defence against drugs trafficking. Training, aimed at enhancing basic skills and knowledge relevant to successful interdiction, was delivered through an interactive CBT system.

EVALUATION SUMMARY E-LEARNING (CBT)

Results from the evaluation show that UNODC's CBT is a highly regarded and effective method of delivering quality training. Students show a high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the training. As a result, great demand exists for this type of training and that demand seems to be growing. The CBT has also demonstrated its ability to adapt to a number of areas related to basic law enforcement techniques, such as human trafficking and money laundering, adding enormous potential to its training value. There is also strong evidence that the training enabled participants to become more proficient at their jobs.

The evaluation, however, concludes that the overall e-Learning programme faces some serious problems that limit its effectiveness. Two factors are identified as the most significant. An unstable funding stream may prevent this programme from achieving its maximum level and effectiveness. The present system of funding relies heavily on donors providing project specific contributions. This means activities can only last as long as the individual project and leaves no opportunity for building the support and infrastructure needed to grow the programme to meet rising demand. Further, the programme would also benefit from having a more defined position within UNODC. At present there is no clear organizational place for the programme within the structure of UNODC. The present location of CBT limits its ability to respond to demand that crosses organizational boundaries. Other areas noted as needing improvement at the operational level are follow-up training support for training site managers, lack of product documentation and limited use of the programme data and reporting system.

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2. Thematic Evaluation of UNODC's Alternative Development Initiatives

46. UNODC is mandated to take action against illicit drug production, trafficking and crime. For more than thirty years, the United Nations and other international agencies have undertaken various rural development initiatives aimed at reducing or eradicating the production of illicit drug crops. The mandate for UNODC and its predecessor agencies to undertake drug control measures and especially Alternative Development (AD) is articulated in the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) Resolution S-20/4E and United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND 45/14) document. A historical analysis reveals that AD has evolved over the past thirty years from crop substitution to the current Sustainable Livelihoods approach. AD aims at creating conditions for those who give up growing drug crops to participate in licit economic activities.

EVALUATION SUMMARY ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The evaluation found that UNODC has accumulated a considerable amount of experience, after decades of implementing AD projects. Therefore, under UNODC, AD could evolve from its current position as a marginally supported and little honoured social safety net into a progressive economic development programme with measurable, positive and cost-effective results. But AD planning and administration takes place within complex international and national political systems that UNODC can influence but not control. Given this complexity some question UNODC's ability to confidently take on AD as a drug suppression and development tool.

UNODC was at the forefront of AD initiatives in the early years, when the evolution of AD was still guided by trial and error. With ample experience in AD, UNODC should have a comparative advantage over other international actors. UNODC is the only actor whose authority is grounded in a body of conventions and international instruments emanating from CND. Further, UNODC is thought by many to have a successful track record and a history of success and 'brand recognition' in AD. UNODC is viewed positively as supporting the eradication of drugs, but in favour of development of the licit economy and for the rule of law as a precondition for sustainability.

Despite these positive views, the organization faces a series of challenges. The primary problem is that there is no commonly accepted definition of AD in the world community or within UNODC. While UNGASS provides a definition of AD, UNODC still does not have a strategic vision of AD. This means that AD can mean many things to different people and that is why fundamental questions still remain

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about the objectives of AD and why long term socio-economic development demands can be ignored by project designers and policy makers.

Even after more than thirty years of AD initiatives, and given the complexity of doing development in drug environments, there are still no simple answers to many questions. Should AD treat the causes of the ‘crime’ of drug cultivation or only the crime itself? Is the goal of AD the difficult one of ‘rural development’ or the simpler one of eliminating crop production in specific locations? Should projects stop abruptly when zero cultivation is achieved or is some kind of phased withdrawal indicated? Should AD be continued after cultivation ends to prevent reinvestment in drug production or be used in at-risk areas to prevent initial investment in drug crop cultivation? What measures should be used to determine the success of AD – reduction in drug crop production or improvement in people’s lives? Should AD work with those who cultivate drug crops, the good who never cultivated drug crops or those who have reformed and have stopped growing drug crops?

The evaluation found that there were no simple answers to these and many other questions. Those involved in AD had just as many different answers to the questions. In practice AD is also interpreted and implemented in many different ways.

The evaluation concluded that UNODC retains a unique role as the voice of the United Nations and Member States in drug crime control, whatever recommended option(s) is/are chosen. UNODC is at a crossroad regarding its AD initiatives and this challenge must be tackled appropriately and in a timely manner. As a possible way forward the evaluation proposed the following strategic options:

- UNODC continues to directly implement field projects on AD;
- UNODC continues to support AD projects but out-source implementation;
- UNODC shifts its focus on AD to research and knowledge management aspects and is established as a Centre of Excellence for AD;
- UNODC focuses on promoting policy dialogue while maintaining a repository of knowledge about AD best practices;
- UNODC expands AD activities to embrace the wider agenda of the Millennium Development Goals to address poverty as the root of crime.

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3. Evaluation of the Global Assessment Programme on Drug Abuse

47. The Global Assessment Programme on Drug Abuse (GAP) was launched in August 2000 as a component of UNODC's overall response to requests from UNGASS. The purpose of GAP is to assist Member States to compile internationally comparable data on drug consumption and demand reduction responses, in order to guide and evaluate national, regional and global drug abuse prevention policies and programmes. Over the past years, UNODC has developed, apart from GAP, projects at headquarters and in the field offices for the purposes of data collection and capacity development. While both GAP and other projects are useful in contributing to a response to UNGASS as regards data collection and analysis, the evaluation finds that they cannot be considered a comprehensive UNODC response.

EVALUATION SUMMARY GLOBAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME ON DRUG ABUSE

GAP, in collaboration with various regional and international agencies (e.g. European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addition), has developed and promoted standardized indicators of drug use, data collection methods and associated toolkits. The programme facilitated Member States reporting of data on the magnitude and trends in illicit drug use by revising the demand reduction section on epidemiological information in Part II of the Annual Reports Questionnaire (ARQ), reported annually to CND on the world situation regarding drug use and treatment demand using the results from ARQ, and biennially reported on the demand reduction activities in Member States toward UNGASS goals based on the Biennial Reports Questionnaire (BRQ).

GAP has also provided training and technical assistance to 62 countries to increase local capacities for the collection, processing and reporting of epidemiological data on the demand for illicit drugs. The programme has variously facilitated the implementation of separate field projects that have generated new information on the nature and prevalence of drug use in some countries (e.g. rapid assessment studies, focus studies, and school surveys).

At the country level, it is difficult to disentangle the influence of GAP from other projects, activities and events. There is, however, significant evidence that GAP's capacity development activities, particularly those facilitated by Regional Advisors, have been appreciated by recipients and have contributed to establishing and/or improving data collection systems and related networks in some countries. At the same time, the evaluation finds that the countries targeted differ in many respects and some need more assistance and resources before they can become self-sufficient with respect to data collection, processing, use and reporting of

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standardised drug abuse data. Under GAP five regional epidemiological networks were established and/or supported, but sustainability of these networks is a concern in all cases. Two networks established, the Caribbean Drug Information Network (CARDIN) and the East African Drug Information System (EADIS), for example, are no longer very active.

The programme lacks a global strategic plan and the main programme document needs to be revised with a clear logic model and with an updated vision of the programme that indicates objectives that are clear, achievable within specified time frames and measurable. Given overlapping mandates and lack of clarity on responsibilities for collecting drug demand data within UNODC, some problems have been experienced in relation to coordination, duplication of effort, hoarding of information and organizational friction. Further, funds available for GAP fell far short of expectations. However, the Programme, through the assignment of qualified Regional Advisors, capitalized on opportunities created by other data collection projects to provide technical support and guidance consistent with its capacity development objectives. This was a creative and appropriate approach that can be applicable to other UNODC programmes that face the same dilemma of funding constraints.

The evaluation concluded that there was a need for a new vision for UNODC's regional and country capacity development initiatives. This should recognise the essential roles of GAP Regional Advisors and include a strategic plan that ensures the greatest attention to regions and countries with the greatest need and where little is known about illicit drug use.

C. OUTCOMES, IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

1. Outcomes

48. Results of the three thematic evaluations suggest that some UNODC's technical cooperation efforts have produced positive outcomes at the national level. The technical cooperation involves, in the main, human and institutional development that would require a long time to produce positive results.

49. The overall outcomes of the CBT are positive. National governments and UNODC remain engaged and strongly committed to training in all countries where CBT has been introduced. There is evidence of increased interest for the training, demonstrated by the expansion of training centres to accommodate more participants. Feedback from participants and training managers indicate that the

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training largely increased participant's knowledge base and skills and led to improved performance at work.

50. The evaluation of AD shows that some AD interventions such as those aimed at establishing infrastructure or improving people's lives have produced positive outcomes in rural, remote areas. Further, AD has been able to adopt and adapt technologies and approaches to local situations, such as the use of gabion weir technology in South East Asia, used in the construction of irrigation dams, and the development of marketing skills in Latin America. These interventions have produced positive results that benefit communities who give up growing illicit drug crops.

51. GAP has contributed to the development of a global system for monitoring trends in illicit drug use. The GAP capacity development activities contributed to the establishment of standard core indicators on drug use and to improvement in data collection, analysis and reporting in Member States. Regional epidemiological networks were established and/or supported as part of its efforts to sustain local capacity in these areas.

52. However, various constraints such as lack of adequate funding and uneven level of development are likely to undermine some of the successful outcomes discussed above.

2. Impact

53. Measuring impact is difficult as UNODC's evaluations are, in most cases, undertaken when the programmes/projects are still on going, or soon after they have been completed. Also, UNODC is usually one of multiple agencies working together and contributing to producing the impact in the field. The three evaluations reported on the following issues that have implications to achieving long-term impact:

- The e-Learning evaluation concluded that participants who have received law enforcement training using computer-based instructions are learning effectively and acquiring new skills and knowledge. The participants' immediate supervisors reported that they have observed significant positive improvements in their staff's on the job performance after the training.
- In AD, the development of marketing skills in Latin America is starting to have favourable changes on people's lives as their incomes from the production of coffee and other products increases. In South East Asia, the adoption of low cost technologies is positively influencing people's lives

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as improvements in crop production have enabled farmers to become self-sufficient in food production. However, a system is needed that will monitor both reductions in the cultivation of illicit crops, as well as measure improvements in people's lives.

- The GAP evaluation concludes that the assignment of qualified Regional Advisors, who have provided direct technical and advisory support to local partners, has contributed to the improvement in regional and national capacities to deal with research and collection of drug abuse data in regions where such Advisors existed. In some countries, their efforts have contributed to policy development and programming in the national government.

54. The findings above suggest that UNODC is, in some areas, contributing to bringing about significant long-term positive changes in its direct beneficiaries through its interventions.

3. Sustainability

55. The issue of sustainability needs to be examined at both organizational and individual project levels. At the broader UNODC level, there is a need to address the problem of lack of predictable and stable funding, which has limited the UNODC's ability to effectively develop its major programme initiatives over a long span of duration. At the project level, in addition to funding, various other factors influence its implementation such as whether benefits continue beyond UNODC or donor support. The three programmes assessed in 2005 address some of these factors as discussed below.

56. The e-Learning evaluation found that, in many of the countries implementing CBT, the training has received strong in-country support for continuation of the training beyond UNODC/donor support. Governments have invested time, human and financial resources to the establishment and maintenance of CBT, for example, as reported in the case of Turkey. In some countries such as Turkey and Nigeria, CBT is entrenched in the larger national law enforcement training effort being offered within the governments. Similar experiences can be found in Cambodia and Thailand.

57. In some cases, however, lack of computers and human resources have threatened the sustainability of CBT operations. There are also cases where the CBT operation has placed a lot of extra burden and pressure on local CBT site managers, who are required to perform normal duties and responsibilities as law enforcement officers, in addition to the management of CBT.

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58. The AD initiatives have demonstrated that some benefits produced by the UNODC interventions are sustainable. Infrastructures, such as roads, have provided needed access to rural areas, made development possible and allowed communities to transport their produce to markets. The adoption of the low cost gabion weir technology is sustainable at the village level, given the skills and resources of villagers. This technology has introduced irrigation, making it possible for farmers to sustain their production and guaranteeing food self-sufficiency. The creation of successful farmer-owned enterprises in Colombia and Peru are also encouraging signs.

59. Sustainability will also be achieved if all those involved with AD look at development as a long-term endeavour. Sustainability can also be ensured if donors provide UNODC with the necessary resources and support the initiatives until their full completion.

60. The GAP evaluation reported that the sustainability of some of the regional networks that have been established or supported by the Programme has been compromised by a lack of resources. While funds are needed for the long-term support to network activities, the evaluation also recommended the wider use of advanced technology and the establishment of virtual support networks as a way of increasing its sustainability. Sustainability at country level will depend on the capacity and willingness of national governments and agencies to provide or secure the appropriate levels and types of resources.

61. As discussed in the 2004 Annual Evaluation Report, sustainability is a critical issue to UNODC's work. Particularly, a lack of proper funding to support its operations, including the global programmes noted above, remains the greatest threat. As described elsewhere in the present report, while direct programme/project funding is on the increase, this does not allow for long-term programme planning.

D. MAJOR ISSUES

62. The 2004 Annual Report raised a number of operational challenges that cut across multiple programmes and projects. These issues were highlighted in many of the evaluation activities undertaken in 2005. The 2005 Annual Evaluation Report discusses some of those major issues and reiterates the key messages below since they have been identified as having impacted programme delivery. This report, however, recognises the fact that some action is already underway by UNODC as per recommendations of the 2004 Annual Evaluation Report.

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1. Strategic Level Issues

63. The three thematic evaluations carried out in 2005 found that organizational strategies should have been the basis for planning, programming and implementation of the programmes. A clear linkage should have been established between individual programmes and the overall organizational goal. This alignment would make it easier to assess how individual programmes/projects contribute to UNODC global goals. Further, baseline data would also make measurement of achievement and impact possible.

64. UNODC has taken some actions and is currently developing an overarching strategy for the organization. An exercise to review organizational priorities has been launched and led by Strategic Planning Unit (SPU). It is encouraging that some evaluation recommendations from 2004 have been acted upon and utilised to improve UNODC performance.

2. Funding Mechanisms

65. The evaluations identified the issue of limited, unstable and unpredictable funding as the single most important factor that threatens UNODC programmes and undermines its ability to respond to growing operational needs and demands. The evaluations observe that this is one major factor that UNODC has no control over. This report takes note of the fact that there are currently discussions between UNODC and the donors with the aim of securing a more stable funding mechanism for UNODC programmes. The pattern of contributions in 2005 suggests that the budgets for actual programmes and projects are increasing, which can be considered as a positive sign for the future. The issue of decreasing General Purpose Fund, however, continues to be an obstacle to long-term planning.

3. Knowledge Management

66. Inadequate knowledge management was raised by all three evaluations. The evaluations reported that UNODC has produced numerous valuable knowledge products during the programme implementation processes. However, since there is no central system in place to manage these products as of yet, the potential benefits of having developed such products may have been significantly reduced. All intended users may not be aware of the existence of certain products. The products may not be readily available or accessible to all those who could benefit from using them. A knowledge management system goes beyond a repository of data and therefore UNODC must design a comprehensive system to address the gaps identified and others not mentioned by IEU.

67. Following the recommendations of the 2004 Annual Evaluation Report, UNODC has embarked on an exercise for creating a Knowledge Management System. This effort will be assessed for its coverage and effectiveness in the future.

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4. Programme/Project Design

68. The concerns regarding programme/project design raised by the evaluations carried out in 2005 are very similar to those raised in 2004. In response to the 2004 Annual Evaluation Report, UNODC did embark on the Project Cycle Management project to address the shortcomings with programme/project design. The work started on the use of the Logical Framework as a tool for project design should begin to yield benefits in the near future. Placing PCM and Results Based Management (RBM) under one umbrella, as has now been done, is expected to create a necessary synergy that would benefit UNODC in the medium to long term. As shown in the diagnostic report the PCM project is not a “stand alone”, but embedded in a broader context of various ongoing initiatives for change towards improved programme/project implementation, strengthening UNODC’s Project Cycle and strengthening related programme management skills. The impact of PCM and RBM will be evaluated in the future.

5. Focus on Learning and Best Practices

69. One of the fundamental guiding principles of evaluations is that the process of evaluation must provide the organization with an opportunity to learn from both its successes (best practices) and failures. Learning does not happen by accident, it can only be possible from cognizant efforts made by all those involved in the process. To date, no assessment has been done to demonstrate the contribution of evaluations to increasing the UNODC’s knowledge base and improving programmes and policy development. However, there is evidence that the organization is learning from evaluations as indicated by some of the actions taken in response to the 2004 Annual Evaluation Report. IEU will follow up more systematically on lessons learned by using a web-based application that will compile and disseminate lessons learned and best practices to make them more accessible to staff.

70. The following lessons learned and best practices are derived from the thematic evaluations. The identified lessons learned and best practices are those that have a broad organizational applicability.

LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

- Where resources are limited it is essential to capitalise on opportunities created by other initiatives. An excellent example is one observed in GAP. Many of the national assessment studies on drug abuse conducted with assistance from GAP Regional Advisors were primarily financed by non-GAP funding sources. GAP capitalised on these studies funded by other

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projects to work with local stakeholders and provide training and support consistent with GAP capacity building objectives. This creative approach can be replicated to other UNODC activities that may be experiencing funding constraints.

- Programmes and projects can be effective if they address felt needs, participants are involved at the planning stage and commitment from governments exists. CBT demonstrated that when training addressed the needs of beneficiary countries, participating governments committed financial and human resources to the programme and successfully integrated the training within their own broader training activities. These are crucial elements to ensuring programme sustainability.
- Programmes and projects have a greater chance of success if they are culturally appropriate and adaptable to local conditions. While this was demonstrated by the AD projects in South East Asia and in Latin America, the lesson is generally applicable to other situations.
- Knowledge management is key to improving organizational performance and learning. The AD projects in general did not ensure that lessons learned from pilot projects be used in mainstreaming AD into national development planning.

III. ANALYSIS OF PROJECT EVALUATION FINDINGS

A. OVERVIEW OF 2005 UNODC PROJECTS

71. The work of UNODC projects covered multiple thematic areas and regions. The internal project management system indicates that there were a total of 249 projects with the status of either ongoing or completed in 2005 (Table 1). The thematic areas with the largest number of projects were prevention treatment and rehabilitation (N=72 or 29 percent) and counter narcotics enforcement (N=69 or 28 percent). The projects are fairly equally distributed among Africa and the Middle East Section (AMES), Europe and West/Central Asia Section (EWCAS), Latin America and the Caribbean Section (LACS) and South/East Asia and the Pacific Section (SEAPS).

Table 1: ProFi Distribution of Projects by Thematic Area and Region in 2005

Thematic Area	Region						Total
	Global	Africa and Middle East	Central and Eastern Europe	Latin America and Caribbean	South and East Asia and the Pacific	West and Central Asia	
Advocacy	2	2	1			1	6
Anti Corruption		4		2	1		7
Anti Human Trafficking	2	7	2	2	4		17
Anti Money Laundering	1	1					2
Anti Organized Crime	1	2	1	1		1	6
Counter Narcotics Enforcement	4	14	4	11	13	23	69
Criminal Justice Reform	1	5				5	11
HIV AIDS	1	2	1	7	9	1	21
Information Technology	2						2
Laboratory and Scientific Services	2						2
Legal Advisory Services	1						1
Prevention Treatment and Rehab	7	21	1	20	15	8	72
Research and Trend Analysis (a)*	6	1					7
Research and Trend Analysis (b)*	1					1	2
Sustainable Livelihoods	1			12	8	2	23
Terrorism Prevention	1						1
Total	33	59	10	55	50	42	249

* Research and Trend Analysis (a) Illicit Drugs and Crime; (b) Illicit Crop Monitoring

72. The project duration of ongoing or completed projects in 2005 was on average 4.3 years, but widely varied between less than one year and 14 years. A summary table of project durations is shown in Table 2. Global projects were reported to have longer durations of activities than regional projects, perhaps because of their larger geographical coverage and the continuous and fundamental contributions

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deemed necessary to the core of the work of UNODC. Some of the regional projects were also reported to have longer durations. For example, projects with a duration of ten years are reported for two projects in LACS, one in AMES and one in SEAPS. While most projects have a duration of five years or shorter, half of the projects in the LACS region are planned for 6 years or longer.

Table 2: Project Duration by Region

<i>Duration</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Africa and Middle East</i>	<i>Central and Eastern Europe</i>	<i>Latin America and Caribbean</i>	<i>South and East Asia and the Pacific</i>	<i>West and Central Asia</i>	<i>Total</i>
2 yrs or below	9	25	6	11	17	11	79
3-5 yrs	7	21	3	16	22	24	93
6-8 yrs	5	12	1	20	8	5	51
9-11 yrs	8	0	0	8	3	2	21
Over 12 yrs	4	1	0	0	0	0	5
Total	33	59	10	55	50	42	249

B. STATUS OF PROJECT EVALUATIONS IN 2005

1. Planned vs. Actual Figures

73. At the beginning of 2005, based on then available information, IEU expected that 20 project evaluations and 6 self-evaluations would take place during the year. Over the year, however, it became clear that the plans submitted to IEU were not proceeding as anticipated. Of the expected evaluations, only 11 project evaluations and four self-evaluations proceeded as planned, while the remaining projects either decided to postpone their evaluations to 2006 or later (N=10), or cancelled the evaluation (N=1).

74. A total of 38 (scheduled and ad hoc) requests for assistance were received and processed by IEU in 2005. The assistance to these additional projects had not been anticipated at the beginning of the year, and the Unit had to work with the project teams outside of the IEU 2005 work plan. There may have been many reasons for the discrepancy in the planned vs. actual figures of evaluation plans, but this could have been avoided with more careful initial planning, and better communication between the Unit and the project teams. For the Unit to be able to prepare its work plan better and provide more efficient services, it is essential that the Unit receives information from project teams, well in advance, about the timing of their project evaluations.

III. ANALYSIS OF PROJECT EVALUATION FINDINGS

75. A total of 20 projects completed independent evaluations in 2005. There were two cases of joint evaluations, with each case involving two projects from the same country, making a total of 18 independent evaluations. Of the 18 independent evaluation reports that should have been produced in 2005, 17 final evaluation reports were made available to IEU for review. One report (project NIR/F22) was not received by IEU due to the report not being finalised. Four of the scheduled self-evaluations were completed, with a further two ad hoc self-evaluations conducted. Of this total of six self-evaluations, three reports were available (projects PAK/F51, RAF/E15 and RAF/B66).

2. Type of Assistance Provided by IEU

76. A total of 38 projects requested assistance for evaluations from IEU in 2005. This figure includes: projects whose evaluation activities had been completed in the previous year (2004) but required additional assistance from the Unit in completing the exercises (e.g. preparation of the final reports); projects that conducted exercises, but did not complete their evaluation, in 2005; and projects preparing for evaluations commencing in early 2006.

77. The type of assistance provided by the Unit can be classified into four major categories: i) review of the evaluation terms of reference (TORs) ii) review of the curricula vitae of proposed consultants (evaluators) for independent evaluations iii) review of the draft final evaluation reports iv) other advisory services (e.g. inquiries on general procedures, guidelines). Table 3 below summarises the total number of projects backstopped in each of the service category.

Table 3: Projects backstopped by IEU in 2005

Type of Assistance Provided	Number of Projects*
Review of TORs	17
Review of CVs of selected consultants	11
Review of draft final evaluation reports	22
Other	18

* A project may have received multiple categories of assistance

78. IEU's **level of involvement in project evaluations** varied across projects. For some projects, the Unit provided assistance during the entire process of their evaluations, i.e. from the time of the preparation of the TORs to the end of the finalization of the reports. In these cases, the Unit was well informed of the background and status of the evaluations and was able to provide timely guidance and assistance to the implementation of the exercises.

III. ANALYSIS OF PROJECT EVALUATION FINDINGS

79. Not all projects, however, requested assistance from IEU in all phases of their evaluation exercises. In some cases the project evaluations were conducted without the knowledge of the Unit and the draft evaluation reports were sent to the Unit for review only after the completion of the evaluation activities. In such cases, the Unit had not reviewed the TORs, and thus, potentially important opportunities to receive suggestions and guidance on methodology or implementation strategies may have been missed. It is highly recommended that the Unit be informed of the evaluations at the beginning of the exercises, and be involved in all phases of the exercises as much as possible.

80. Another important point to note is the **selection of consultants**. Currently, UNODC requires that independent evaluations (i.e. the use of external consultants) be conducted for large-scale projects. Self-evaluations (conducted by project managers) are recommended for smaller projects. In 2005, a large majority of projects were evaluated by independent evaluators (18 vs. six self-evaluations). For 2006, the Unit has been informed that 54 projects plan to conduct evaluations during the year, of which 46 projects (85 percent) are independent evaluations.

81. As the quality of the project evaluations (and the final reports) remain largely dependent on the quality of consultants hired for the evaluation work, it is critical that project teams choose qualified consultants. UNODC/UNOV Human Resource Management Services (HRMS) has established a consultant roster system that contains a list of all registered external consultants with their resumes. The system is accessible and used by all staff that seek a consultant for their projects. The IEU assists project managers with selection of qualified candidates as evaluators by reviewing the available resumes against the requirements specified in the project evaluation TORs. However this process of identifying qualified individuals, only through document reviews, is limited by the quality and currency of the source documents. It is strongly recommended that the internal consultant roster be regularly maintained and the quality of registered consultants ensured. Once the consultants are selected, it is also critical that the project teams work closely with the evaluators and provide necessary support during the evaluation exercises, so as to ensure the smooth conduct of the exercises.

C. ASSESSMENT OF PROJECTS

82. As noted earlier, a total of 18 independent and six self-evaluations were reported as completed. These evaluations covered a total of 26 projects. Of those completed, reports were available for 17 independent evaluations and three self-evaluations. Table 4 provides details of completed evaluations by region and thematic area.

III. ANALYSIS OF PROJECT EVALUATION FINDINGS

Table 4: 2005 Completed Evaluations by Region and Thematic Area

REGION	No. Projects	No. Project Evaluations			No. Final Evaluation Reports		
	Projects	Independent Evaluation	Self Evaluation	Total Evaluations	Independent Evaluation Reports	Self Evaluation Reports	Total Reports
AMES	15	8	5	13	7	2	9
EWCAS	4	3	1	4	3	1	4
LACS	3	3	0	3	3	0	3
SEAPS	4	4	0	4	4	0	4
TOTAL	26	18	6	24	17	3	20
THEMATIC AREA	Projects	Independent Evaluation	Self Evaluation	Total Evaluations	Independent Evaluation Reports	Self Evaluation Reports	Total Reports
Anti Corruption	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
Counter Narcotics Enforcement	10	8	1	9	8	0	8
Criminal Justice Reform	4	2	1	3	2	0	2
HIV/AIDS	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation	10	6	4	10	5	3	8
TOTAL	26	18	6	24	17	3	20

1. Outcomes, Impact and Sustainability

1. Outcomes

83. Projects were reported to have produced a number of positive outcomes in recipient countries. First, several project evaluations reported that UNODC projects had resulted in **strengthening of local coordination** mechanisms, e.g. better cooperation between agencies within a beneficiary State or region (COL/C81 and RAF/B66) and improved national or regional coordination of services in areas such as HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment (RER/E29, RER/F75, TUR/G36). Secondly, some projects reported strengthened **local capacity** and the establishment of mechanisms to directly counter drug problems, e.g. reduction in the supply of illicit drugs, or control supply of licit drugs (RAF/960, RAS/D91, RER/E29). Other report outcomes included **increased awareness** amongst beneficiaries of the dangers of drug abuse and the links between drug abuse and HIV/AIDS, and the need for a coordinated approach to prevention and treatment (e.g. CMB/F14, RER/F75, RAF/960, PAK/F51). One project (SAF/R72) reported an increase in awareness amongst the community and stakeholders of the issue of gender based

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violence. This project also provided an example of the importance of ‘localisation’, where wider impact could have been achieved if more posters and pamphlets had been produced in languages spoken by those within the geographic area of project site.

II. Impact

84. Project evaluations at UNODC have not yet employed a full-scale impact assessment in the past. Nonetheless, some of the impacts, as reported by the project evaluators, included the following: Four project evaluations reported that projects, through technical assistance such as training, strengthening of law enforcement agencies and law reform, had resulted in an **increase in arrests and/or seizure rates** (e.g. CMB/F14). Six project evaluations and two self-evaluations reported projects having had impact in the areas of **policy development, policy adoption or changes to legislation** (e.g. RER/E29, LEB/R30 & R72, CMB/F14, RER/F75).

85. The evaluations also reported problems with meeting objectives or a reduced impact due to outputs not being clearly defined, activities and outputs not matched to objectives, and/or lack of monitoring of outputs. Also, there were cases of projects, such as COL/C81 and NIR/G50 being too ambitious or wide in scope, or involving too many implementation partners, which resulted in objectives being partially met, not met at all, or having to be abandoned.

III. Sustainability

86. Factors influencing sustainability of UNODC interventions included the **financial ability** of the national government to take over a project, or components of a project. Another factor is the need to support projects for a long enough period to avoid loss in terms of capacity built or funds already spent. For example, where the objective is to foster and facilitate cooperation between countries in a region, enough time needs to be allowed in the project design for this cooperative spirit to develop. Another project (RER/F75) mentioned doubts about the sustainability of the project due to participating treatment organizations being only fragments of a bigger health care system.

87. **Lack of planning** for sustainability was also reported. One project (RAS/G44) had succeeded in providing core capacity within the six countries involved in the project. However, the design did not allow for the provision of tools such as training manuals, or training mentors, to promote long-term sustainability. Two evaluations mentioned the need for senior management of the recipient national authority to overtly support and participate in the training provided by the projects to assist sustainability (CMB/F14, RAS/D91).

88. Furthermore, the need for a clear **exit strategy**, particularly in cases where the project was reliant on one person to carry, or continue the project was an issue for

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some projects. The evaluations indicated a need for succession planning within UNODC to minimise disruption when programme or project staff leave, transfer, or their contract is completed. In addition, there is a need to plan for takeover by a national government or agency.

89. Examples where projects had attempted to address this issue include a law enforcement project from Turkey (TUR/G36), where a strategic plan is in place. Part of this plan is the handover over basic training, using the Train The Trainer method, to national law enforcement agencies. Projects also had an agreement in place with partners to take over training, employ project staff, or had established a body or committee as part of project design to manage the handover process (LEB/R30 & R72, SAF/R72).

D. MAJOR ISSUES

1. Strategic Level Issues

90. Some evaluations reported that there could have been better coordination, or collaboration within thematic areas, or within regional activities for better implementation or to increase the impact of projects (RER/E29, RER/F75, RAS/G44). In one case, there were two identical projects on drug abuse and HIV/AIDS prevention for youths running in different areas, but there was little communication between the project coordinators to share experiences, knowledge and problems (CAR/G41).

2. Funding Mechanisms

91. The main funding issues mentioned in project evaluations were delayed release of funds to commence projects, slow disbursement of funds to pay salaries, travel costs, or to reimburse staff (eight projects). Insufficient or late funding also resulted in modification or cancellation of project activities. The evaluation of project SAF/R72 mentions the demoralizing effect on staff due to late payment of salaries, plus, staff having incurred costs due to salary payments not being in their accounts to cover scheduled direct debits. There is also the difficulty of finding persons owed monies when disbursement of funds occurs months after the completion of events (CAR/G41).

92. The evaluation report for SAF/R72 raised the problem of financial procedures being in place to counter misuse of funds (i.e. the project document does not allow the Crisis Centre to handle petty cash), but the Crisis Centre manager needs access to petty cash to function effectively day-to-day. Also, project partners complained of the gap between submission of project work plans and the release of funds (CMB/F14).

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3. Knowledge Management

93. There is a lack of understanding about how data or results can be used to assist current and future projects, consequently collection and reporting is seen as low priority (SAF/R72, CMB/F14), or as an addition to regular or designated project tasks. For example with project CAR/G41 there was no collection, analysis or dissemination of project information. Stakeholders on the Steering Committee considered this to be an addition to project tasks, requiring some form of compensation or incentive to ensure participation. Without regular recording and reporting, project achievements, results, and lessons learned stand to be lost.

94. A further issue is compatibility of monitoring and recording systems, particularly where there are multiple project sites (RER/F75). Standardisation of recording and reporting system would enable better comparison, assessment and use of project data.

4. Programme/Project Design

95. The major design issue reported by the evaluations was a lack of consultation with, or participation of stakeholders during project planning and design (e.g. LEB/R71, NIR/G50, SAF/R72). This resulted in inappropriate project design, unrealistic objectives or targets, impacted on ownership or cooperation, or led to conflicts about implementation and ownership of outputs (LEB/R71). The lack of cooperation with other organisations at the planning stage made the project design weak and the project documents fell short on quality and logical coherence.

96. Another issue reported was projects being too ambitious. For example, one project (NIR/G50) was considered appropriate and relevant to needs of country, but in attempting to achieve a large spectrum of activities, the project missed several of them. A significant number of project evaluations mentioned that project designs had given insufficient attention to methods and tools for project monitoring and assessment. Outputs were also inappropriate or unclear. One evaluation (RAF/E13 & E14) reports that the performance indicators and measurement tools written into project design were not appropriate because the beneficiary countries did not have the capacity to collect the data required for assessment against the indicators.

97. Many projects had element of good design. However, these tended to be overshadowed by flaws in project design, due to the negative impact these design flaws had on implementation and results. For example, a project was reported as having had valid concept and design, but the expected results were unreasonable given the project time frame, base capacity level of participants, and the low level of government funding/support (CMB/F14).

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98. Examples of good design include RAF/960, where the evaluation reported that the design was effective and cost-efficient compared to alternative approaches to reach the same objectives. The implementation plan was specific, measurable and attainable within the time frame and stakeholders participated in project design and planning. Project VIE/G55 consulted relevant stakeholders during formulation and a sound logical framework was produced, resulting in a cost effective approach to a complicated issue.

5. Project Implementation Issues

99. Implementation issues included insufficient research, needs assessment and planning in general, prior to project start-up. In the case of one project (CAR/G41) a needs assessment was done, but not incorporated into the project by the Steering Committee before implementation. Delays due to recruitment or funding problems, or lack of necessary equipment, were mentioned in five project evaluations and two self-evaluations. Lack of clear guidelines, rules, and documentation regarding the roles, functions and responsibilities of project partners, or documentation being unclear with regard to decision-making and reporting lines, was also reported (CAR/G41, LEB/R71, NIC/D55, NIR/G50, RAS/G44, RER/F75).

100. Distances between the UNODC office and project site contributed to communication and management problems, particularly when project partners did not have email or telephone access. Given distances and travel costs, there is a need to utilise partners for implementation. This can be problematic when rules, roles, responsibilities and reporting for project partners are not clear in the project documentation. Monitoring is also more difficult. For example, the evaluation for project CMB/F14 reports that closer control would have meant earlier detection that time was being spent on activities outside the project scope.

101. Organizational issues included the separation of administration/management between two regional offices, which meant there was not a project focal point (RAF/E13 and E14); and disruption resulting from changes in UNODC staff/focal points without proper handover. There is a need to have alternate focal point for each project in case of staff leaving, illness, etc (RAF/960, RAF/E13 & E14).

6. Focus on Learning and Best Practices

LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

- Many of the evaluations mentioned successes of UNODC as a catalytic agent, facilitator or coordinator at national or regional levels (LEB/R30 & R71, RAF/960, RAS/D91, RAS/G44, VIE/G55 RAF/B66). However,



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insufficient planning or elements of the project design being inadequate or inappropriate reduced the number of successes. If the project is multi-faceted, involves partners, aims to coordinate agencies or service provision, or facilitate national or regional cooperation, the project design and documents need to adequately address the roles, responsibilities and relationships of all involved in the project. One evaluation report states “Involving a large number of partners...without clear lines of demarcation between them related to their respective roles and responsibilities, did not promote good relationships and collaboration and ... impeded the smooth flow of work” (NIR/G50).

- Collection and reporting of project information should be viewed as an essential project task and where possible, collection and reporting systems should be standardised. A better understanding how project data can be used and interpreted will assist in motivating staff to make data input more of a priority.



IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

102. Based on the major evaluation work carried out in 2005, the following recommendations are made.



RECOMMENDATION ONE — PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT

UNODC should continue to implement, and complete in full, the remaining phases of the PCM exercise. The diagnostic report from the first phase should be used as the basis for developing the detailed plan for each of the remaining three phases.

Rationale: The diagnostic report from the first phase of the PCM exercise made several major findings and presented specific recommendations based on the assessment of six critical areas that would require further reviews in order to improve the quality of project design, monitoring and management in UNODC. The new Project Cycle Management System and related training will provide UNODC with the much-needed improvements in project design and management.



RECOMMENDATION TWO— STRATEGY

Once the current exercise led by SPU to develop the organization's strategy has been completed, all UNODC programmes should carefully review their orientations and design. Due consideration should also be given to the alignment of programmes with existing instruments such as Strategic Programme Frameworks. The programmes should define a set of measurable performance indicators and formulate specific projects and activities that contribute to achievement of the programme objectives.

Rationale: The three thematic evaluations indicated that in each programme, clearly defined strategies should have been the basis for effective planning and implementation of the programme. The evaluations emphasised that clear linkages should have been established between the UNODC's organizational goals, individual programmes and corresponding projects.



IV. RECOMMENDATIONS



RECOMMENDATION THREE — FUNDING

The present efforts to improve the UNODC funding mechanism should be vigorously continued.

Rationale: The evaluations identified the current UNODC funding mechanism as one of the single most important factors that the organization has no control over and hence poses the greatest threat to its programmes and projects. The lack of a predictable and stable funding mechanism continues to undermine the organization's ability to respond effectively and in a timely manner to the needs and demands of the programmes and projects. The present report takes note of the efforts that are already under way in UNODC to address this problem. While significant increases in earmarked (programme/project) funding were reported in 2005, the level of General Purpose funds continues to decline. This can be viewed as lack of confidence in UNODC by donors with its ability to effectively use the flexible funds. However, some in UNODC view the increases in the earmarked funding as a demonstration that donors have confidence in the organization's ability to deliver.



RECOMMENDATION FOUR—KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

The organization-wide review of knowledge management should continue, and be completed in full, so as to ensure that all tools and products developed by UNODC become widely available and easily accessible to all those who can benefit from using them.

Rationale: The programmes and projects reviewed in 2005 suggested that UNODC continues to produce numerous, valuable knowledge products to meet the needs of end users. The organization, however, still lacks a central, holistic strategy to ensure the maximum benefits of these products are realised. This report acknowledges and recognizes that UNODC has recently launched an exercise to develop an integrated knowledge management system for the organization.



IV. RECOMMENDATIONS



RECOMMENDATION FIVE — PROGRAMME/PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

All programme and project managers should ensure that their programmes and projects address, and are formulated to minimize, the major design and implementation problems identified in the present report, including i) stakeholder participation in all stages of the programme and project cycle, and ii) inclusion of exit strategies. The peer review processes and PPC take rigorous action to ensure that proposed programme/project objectives are realistic and feasible within the timeframe and budget specified.

Rationale: The issues of inadequate programme/project conceptualization and formulation are raised in both the thematic and project evaluations. Major concerns identified included the programme/project design was too ambitious and the stated objectives simply not being achievable given the suggested financial and human resource inputs and/or operational environment. Many projects also did not have built-in exit strategies. The project evaluations emphasized the inadequate consultative process during the design phase as the major weakness that led to problems later on. The work is underway in UNODC to develop a new Project Cycle Management System. The exercise is however, still far from completion.



RECOMMENDATION SIX— LEARNING FROM OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCES

UNODC should systematically collect and disseminate lessons learned and best practices drawn from its programmes and projects to improve its operational delivery and effectiveness. The Division of Operations and IEU should work together to implement such an initiative.

Rationale: It has not yet been clearly documented in UNODC how, and to what degree, lessons and best practices identified through evaluation activities or by programme/project teams themselves have contributed to increasing the UNODC knowledge base and to the improvement of programme/project design, execution and management, and policy formulation.



IV. RECOMMENDATIONS



RECOMMENDATION SEVEN— MONITORING THE STATUS OF OPERATIONS

Programme and project managers should ensure that their planned activities are undertaken as initially expected, the appropriate budget for evaluation is secured and available, and their staff has sufficient capabilities to monitor the status of their operations and facilitate the evaluation activities. They should also ensure that information about the progress of programme/project implementation, particularly the timing of evaluation activities, be carefully communicated with IEU through the use of ProFi as well as an annual reporting of the planned activities at the beginning of each year.

Rationale: There was a significant discrepancy between the number of projects reported to be expecting evaluations in 2005 and the number of projects that in fact successfully completed evaluations. The number of completed project evaluations, which was reported to IEU with the final evaluation reports, was much higher than initially informed by project teams at the beginning of the year. This suggests there might have been an ad hoc approach in the practice of project evaluation.

V. CONCLUSION

103. The major thrust of the message from the evaluations conducted in 2005 is a positive one. The evaluations conclude that UNODC's work takes place in complex international and national environments that UNODC can influence, but not control. The evaluations acknowledge that UNODC has a unique role as the voice of the United Nations and Member States in drug and crime control.

104. Given the fact that there are multiple players and collaborating agencies working together in the field, in addition to the complex environment within which UNODC operates, it is often difficult to measure the effect of UNODC's interventions. However, it is evident that UNODC is a major contributor to the many changes that are taking place and the consequent impact in the areas of drug and crime control.

105. The evaluations also conclude that some of the constraints, such as funding mechanisms and weak project design that were raised in the 2004 Annual Evaluation Report are still an issue. The decision by management to implement many of the recommendations raised in the 2004 Annual Evaluation Report are bound to bear fruit in the future. Finally, this report concludes that UNODC's strength lies in its ability to learn from its vast experiences and replicate successes and best practices, but to avoid making the same mistakes.

ANNEX I. LIST OF THEMATIC, PROJECT AND SELF EVALUATIONS

A. Thematic Evaluations

Evaluation of UNODC's e-Learning Initiative (with emphasis on Computer-based Training) as a modality of technical cooperation delivery and capacity building

Thematic Evaluation of UNODC's Alternative Development Initiatives

Evaluation of the Global Assessment Programme on Drug Abuse

B. Project Evaluations

<i>Project Number</i>	<i>Project Title</i>
CAR/G41	Youth Centred Drug Abuse and HIV/AIDS Prevention in Antigua and Barbuda and Grenada
CMB/F14	Strengthening the Secretariat of the National Authority for Combating Drugs (NACD) and the National Drug Control Programme of Cambodia
COL/C81	Decentralization of the Master Plan in Drug Control in Colombia (Phase II)
LEB/R30 (Joint LEB/R72)	Strengthening legislative and institutional capacity for juvenile justice and support to the juvenile justice system in Lebanon
LEB/R72 (Joint LEB/R30)	Strengthening legislative and institutional capacity for juvenile justice and support to the juvenile justice system in Lebanon
LEB/R71	Support to anti-corruption strategy plan in Lebanon.
NIC/D55	Prevention for children and adolescents at risk of drug abuse and/or sexual exploitation
NIR/F22	Strengthening treatment and rehabilitation services offered by Government and NGOs
NIR/G50	Partnership for Drug Abuse and HIV/AIDS Prevention in Nigeria
NIR G73	Upgrading of the NDLEA Academy in Jos to a regional training centre

ANNEX I. LIST OF THEMATIC, PROJECT AND SELF EVALUATIONS

B. Project Evaluations

RAF/960	Control of Licit Drugs in Eastern Africa
RAF/E13 (Joint RAF/E14)	Judicial system training in drug related casework in Southern Africa.
RAF/E14 (Joint RAF/E13)	Judicial system training in drug related casework in East
RAS/D91	Development of Cross-Border Law Enforcement Cooperation in East Asia
RAS/G44	ODCCP participation in the ASEM anti-money laundering project
RER/E29	Precursors control in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan)
RER/F75	Diversification of HIV prevention and drug treatment services for injecting and other drug users in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
SAF/R72	Establishment of one stop centres to counteract violence against women in South Africa
TUR/G36	Strengthening of the Turkish International Academy against Drugs and Organised Crime
VIE/G55	Interdiction and seizure capacity building with special emphasis on ATS and precursors in Vietnam

C. Self Evaluations

PAK/F51	Mainstreaming and prevention
RAF/B66	Local expert networks for demand reduction programme in Africa
RAF/E15	Enhancing the capacity of Governments and NGOs in Drug Demand Reduction in Eastern Africa
