

Summary Report for the
Independent Project Cluster Evaluations of the:

Law Enforcement Cluster

- AFG/I77– Support for a Counter Narcotics Training Unit within the
Afghan Police Academy
AFG/I85–Regional Cooperation in Precursor Control between
Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries
AFG/J43–Strengthening the Operational Capability of Counter
Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA)
AFG/J55– Integrated Border Control Project in Western/South-Western
Afghanistan

Criminal Justice Cluster

- AFG/R86–Strengthening Anti-Corruption Measures in Afghanistan
AFG/R87 – Prison System reform in Afghanistan–Extension to the
Provinces
AFG/T03Criminal Justice Capacity Building–Extension to the
Provinces

Health and Livelihood Cluster

- AFG/187–Strengthening Provincial Capacity for Drug Control

Afghanistan
July 2013



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The Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) provides normative tools, guidelines and templates to be used in the evaluation process of projects. Please find the respective tools on the IEU web site: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/evaluation.html>

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Note – This evaluation report is the overarching summary document for the three cluster reports focused on (i) law enforcement, (ii) criminal justice, and (iii) alternative livelihood projects in Afghanistan. The three detailed cluster reports are available separately at:

<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/independent-project-evaluations-2013.html>

ACRONYMS AND SPECIAL TERMS

ABFO	Afghanistan Bright Future Organization (NGO)
AIHRC	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission
AL	Alternative Livelihoods
ALP	Afghanistan Local Police
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
ANP	Afghanistan National Police
ARD	Agriculture and Rural Development Cluster of Ministries (MCN is one)
ATI	Alternatives to Imprisonment
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CBM	Confidence Building Measure
CDC	Community Development Council (elected at village level through the NSP programme)
CDP	Community Development Plan (formulated by CDC)
CN	Counter Narcotics
CNPA	Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan
CNPI	Counter Narcotics
COAFG	Country Office Afghanistan (UNODC)
CP	Country Programme
CPD	Capacity Development
DACAAR	Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees
DEA	Drug Enforcement Agency (USA)
DDA	District Development Assembly (established under NABDP of MRRD but members of DDAs are derived from CDCs)
DDP	District Development Plan (formulated by DDA)
DM	Division of Management (UNODC)
DoJ	Department of Justice
DRAT	Demand Reduction Action Team
DSS	Department of Safety and Security (United Nations)
FO	Field Office (UNODC)
GPI	Good Performance Initiative (whereby each poppy-free province is given US\$1million per year by another donor for development activities)
HoO	High Office on Oversight and Anti Corruption
IEU	Independent Evaluation Unit
IDU	Injecting Drug Use
IOM	International Organisation on Migration
IP	Implementing Partner
ISCIC	International Institute of Higher Studies in Criminal Science
IT	Information Technology
JAM	Joint Action and Mobilization
JCMB	Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
MCN	Ministry of Counter Narcotics (official Government Counterpart of I87)
MCTF	Major Crimes Task Force
MoI	Ministry of the Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MEW	Ministry of Energy and Water (one of the ARD Cluster Ministries)
MRRD	Ministry for Rural Reconstruction and Development (one of the ARD Cluster Ministries)
NABDP	National Area Based Development Programme (UNDP)

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDCS	National Drug Control Strategy
NJSS	National Justice Sector Strategy
NPP	National Priority Programme
NSP	National Solidarity Programme (World Bank)
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights
PA	Public Awareness (in relation to Counter Narcotics)
PDC	Provincial Development Council (which approves the PDP)
PDCN	Provincial Department of Counter Narcotics
PDEW	Provincial Department of Energy and Water
PDP	Provincial Development Plan
PJCM	Provincial Justice Coordination Mechanism
ProFi	Programme and Financial Information Management System (UNODC)
PSE	Participatory Self-Evaluation
PVHT	People Vulnerable to Human Trafficking
PWG	Prison Working Group
RC	Regional Coordinators (senior UNODC national staff in the Provinces)
RS	Regional Section (UNODC)
RWDOA	Rehabilitation and Welfare Development Organisation for Afghanistan (NGO)
SPF	Strategic Programme Framework
TA	Technical Advisors (UNODC paid staff attached to MCN and PDCN offices).
TAB	Total approved budget
Taqnin	Legislative drafting department
Tashkil	(sometimes written Tashkeel), Organizational structure.
ToR	Terms of Reference
TWG	Technical Working Group (Coordinates meetings for specific thematic activities including representatives from relevant stakeholders)
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNCAC	United Nations Convention against Corruption
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Services
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women (now merged into UN Women)
UNICRI	United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Institute
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
US\$	United States Dollar (= approximately 50 Afghanis)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organisation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report contains the independent final evaluations of eight projects implemented by the UNODC Country Office of Afghanistan. Besides the summative level on which the individual projects are evaluated, there is a formative level, assessing UNODC's Afghanistan programme as a whole, which includes the support from Headquarters. This report takes into account the political, geographical, and cultural situation in Afghanistan when assessing the niche that UNODC has carved out for itself in the country.

This exercise was undertaken at a time when all the projects had either been completed and/or had been subsumed into the new Country Programme for Afghanistan 2012-2014. The evaluation covers all project components from UNODC project support in Headquarters in Vienna to the Country Office in Kabul and the activity sites in government offices as well as local communities. The evaluation was carried out in two phases (missions) from September until December 2012 by a team of four international evaluators including a team leader, and individual evaluators for each thematic cluster. The report was finalized in early-2013 with the useful assistance of UNODC's Independent Evaluation Unit.

The Evaluation Team made use of several research and evaluation techniques which varied slightly depending on the specifics of the activity's context. In general, the evaluation started with a comprehensive desk review followed by interviews, focus group discussions with relevant stakeholders, and field visits to project sites. To allow for triangulation and cross referencing, data was collected from as many sources as possible.

The projects were clustered in three thematic areas and were evaluated as such: Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, and Alternative Livelihoods.

Law Enforcement: total US\$28,803,484

- (a) AFG/I77–Support for a Counter Narcotics Training Unit within the Afghan Police
- (b) Academy (US\$6,235,360)
- (c) AFG/I85-Regional Cooperation in Precursor Control between Afghanistan and
- (d) Neighbouring Countries (US\$6,905,440)
- (e) AFG/I43-Strengthening the Operational Capability of Counter Narcotics Police of
- (f) Afghanistan (CNPA) (US\$7,922,184)
- (g) AFG/I55 Integrated Border Control Project in Western/South-Western Afghanistan (US\$7,740,500)

Criminal Justice: total US\$25,932,994

- (a) AFG/R86 Strengthening anti-corruption measures in Afghanistan (US\$8,943,947)
- (b) AFG/T03–Criminal justice capacity building–Extension to the provinces (US\$6,660,410)

(c) AFG/R87 Prison system reform in Afghanistan–Extension to the provinces (US\$10,328,637)

Alternative Livelihoods: total budget US\$17,629,025.

(a) AFG/187–Strengthening Provincial Capacity for Drug Control(US\$17,629,025)

The Country Office in Afghanistan and other relevant units of UNODC will use the findings and conclusions from this evaluation to assess its work, to learn lessons for the implementation of its Country Programme, to receive feedback, appraisal and recognition, as well as to mobilize resources by showing the possible attribution of achievements to the project/programme.

Key findings and conclusions

The report is structured into individual project evaluations for each of the eight projects. Each of the project evaluations can be extracted for use as a stand-alone document with all their annexes. Subsequent to these individual evaluations are sections analyzing the projects collectively by each thematic cluster. The following highlights key findings and conclusions for each of the three clusters and the projects evaluated within them.

Law Enforcement Cluster

The four projects in the Law Enforcement Cluster introduced new infrastructure, types of operations, and training in several areas, all related to increasing the capacity of the Afghan Counter Narcotics Police. These projects, however, were designed independently from each other which resulted in overlaps and redundancies, an issue that should be resolved under the new Country Programme when planning and implementation are synchronized.

All the projects, nonetheless, made significant contributions. The I77 Project set up a Counter Narcotics Police Academy that is now functioning properly. The facilities are in place and courses are being run. Afghan trainers have been asked by the DEA to run training for it in border areas that the international trainers cannot readily visit. In the I85 Project, UNODC supported the establishment of a Precursor Control Unit that is now functioning well. UNODC also worked through I85 to facilitate the exchange of precursor chemical-related intelligence with countries bordering Afghanistan. J43 was more general, aiming to increase the capacity of the CNPA. That it did is seen in that the number of operations and seizures from 2009-2012 more than equaled the total for the 2003-2009. J55 promoted border control through Border Liaison Outposts. Besides the outposts, a number of Mobile Interdiction Teams were set up. Through this Project, cross-border intelligence is beginning to be shared in a systematic way for the first time in Afghanistan.

Criminal Justice Cluster

The three projects evaluated in this Cluster supported different aspects of the justice system including human rights. UNODC's human rights intervention was spread through all three projects in the cluster, such as through improving conditions in jails and detention centres with special attention accorded the treatment of women and the drafting of a considerable body of balanced legislation. UNODC's anti-corruption also supported human rights in a more indirect manner.

UNODC promotes the rule of law as an alternative to incarceration. This is shown through including legal reform and assisting in drawing up a national law code. By the end of the Project, the HoO was functioning well, receiving complaints, investigating and validating them, and

referring cases to the Attorney General's Office for action. In R87, support was given to reforming the prison system including help in drafting 18 pieces of legislation, building or repairing existing prisons and detention centres, support alternatives to incarceration, and paying special attention to women detainees. T03 was more general, aiming for general capacity building. It focused on building Justice Support Centres and other structures in the provinces, assisting with new legislation, and training judges and other legal personnel. The CJ Cluster also worked with inter-agency units such as Criminal Law Reform Working Group which facilitated new partnerships and opened opportunities for expanded work.

Health and Livelihood Cluster

Only one Project, I87, was evaluated in this Cluster. The Project's first three objectives aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Counter Narcotics in several fields including improving the coverage and capacity of Provincial Directorates, managing CN information, and strengthening MCN's capacity in public awareness. The fourth objective helped the MCN initiate high impact alternative livelihood activities in cooperation with other agencies that actually implemented the work. The MCN now operates in 24 provinces, has a better-trained staff with more effective CN campaigns. In alternative livelihoods, several pilot projects were supported in present and former poppy-growing areas. Other projects in this Cluster, not in the mandate of this report, supported improved health through drug demand reduction.

Project Implementation

UNODC encountered difficulties in all the projects resulting in revisions for various reasons including challenges in operating in remote areas, security constraints, and sometimes poorly written project documents and reporting. Furthermore, as UNODC improved its implementation ability, new funding became available for the projects resulting in additional revisions. This resulted in projects that differed, sometimes significantly, from their original scope.

Nonetheless it was concluded by the evaluators based on the evidence collected that all the projects made satisfactory progress in achieving outputs (sometimes not those originally specified) and supporting counter narcotics work and crime prevention. As these projects were implemented, UNODC advocated continuously with the Government of Afghanistan to recognize narcotics as a serious issue that supported criminal activity, endangered the health of its people, and led to corruption. In so doing, UNODC carved out niche areas within the field of fighting drugs and crime in the country into which these eight projects fit.

By the end of the process, UNODC had grown in stature in the eyes of the Government, promoted counter narcotics and the rule of law as issues of regional concern, and taken steps to address it regionally. This has put UNODC in a strategically advantageous position from which it can play an important role through its new integrated Country Programme (2012-2014) as Afghanistan enters its own transitional phase.

UNODC Support for Project Implementation

Afghanistan is UNODC's biggest country office in terms of international staffing, the volume of programme and operations as well as dollars spent on implementing activities. Much has been accomplished through its projects and initiatives. However, and despite the successes achieved in operating in the difficult environment of Afghanistan and in assisting the country meet its obligations under the international conventions, project implementation suffered because of poor coordination with Headquarters, a subject addressed by an Inter-Divisional Mission (IDM) that was fielded in 2012 and the report disseminated in February 2013. The entire Evaluation Team agrees with the report of that mission that poor coordination impeded the implementation of all eight projects and needs to be resolved for UNODC's work to be effective.

The IDM report suggests measures for dealing with project support modalities (tendering, grants, and recruitment). The report advises the Division of Management to work more closely with COAFG and that “some work flows and application in Vienna...be introduced in COAFG to automate and streamline processes.” This Evaluation Report concurs and suggests that there should be a devolution of authorization powers to field offices. There are lessons to be learned from UNDP and other implementing agencies where such devolution to Country Offices to implement activities has occurred.

Sustainability

Two other issues are relevant to UNODC’s project implementation, and moreover, its sustainability: security in Afghanistan and the relatively small size of UNODC as an organization. For both these reasons, UNODC should work with more implementing partners and stress mentoring. In this way, the international staff of UNODC can provide initial training (as it did in several projects evaluated herein) and then have Afghan national staff or members of national NGOs carry out work in remote areas. This will also allow UNODC to operate in a more cost effective manner, reaching more people, and accomplishing more at a lower cost.

Future directions

Besides activities already in the new UNODC Country Programme (2012-2014), two areas that should be considered for extra attention are intelligence and alternative livelihoods. Intelligence gathering (for law enforcement) should be viewed as an over-arching system requiring multi-agency cooperation. With its Government partners, UNODC should collectively work with Afghan officials to draw up an overall intelligence plan (focused on counter narcotics) with connections to regional neighbours.

UNODC pioneered alternative livelihoods in Southeast Asia where, after decades of work in promoting a balanced approach encompassing law enforcement, drug demand reduction, and alternative development, opium poppy cultivation was significantly reduced in Thailand, Laos, and in parts of Myanmar. Given the productive start made in I87, as well as the enthusiasm shown by beneficiaries in target communities, similar efforts can be carried out in Afghanistan.

During the lifespan of the eight projects evaluated in this report, UNODC has devised a valuable approach in Afghanistan with widespread applicability. Further development of this portfolio will be useful to UNODC as a whole in expanding its scope, influence, and the benefits it can bring, not only to Afghanistan, but also in many other countries with weak government, high crime rates, and corruption.

SUMMARY MATRIX OF FINDINGS, EVIDENCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings ¹ : problems and issues identified	Evidence (sources that substantiate findings)	Recommendations ²
Critical		
<p>UNODC has elevated the issue of counter narcotics to being a cross-cutting issue in Afghanistan (which it was not in 2008 when this group of projects began to be implemented).</p>	<p>Discussions with UNODC staff and Government officials, various documents and reports. COAFG should expand its policy advocacy of counter narcotics, such as to related areas like corruption.</p>	<p>COAFG needs to continue mainstreaming initiatives with the Afghanistan Government to identify how to implement Programme effectively and to refine the niche in which it operates.</p>
<p>The eight projects were implemented in an essentially satisfactory manner (despite delays and inefficiencies).</p>	<p>Review of project documents, meetings with Government officials and UNODC staff, visits to activity sites, IDM 2012 Afghanistan mission report.</p>	<p>COAFG should continue oversight of the Programme similar to how these eight projects were administered. At the same time, UNODC Headquarters and the COAFG both need to find mutually acceptable ways to coordinate activities to reduce inefficiencies in implementation and project effectiveness.</p>
<p>As a result, UNODC in Afghanistan is strategically positioned for its new Country Programme to play an important role, well-accepted by the Government, donors, and others as well as to make a regional impact.</p>	<p>Discussions with COAFG staff, government officials, donors, and national experts.</p>	<p>COAFG expands mainstreaming to examine new ways, consistent with UNODC’s mission, to support the Afghan Government’s effort to reduce drugs and crime and improve its justice system. COAFG makes use of lessons learned to refine how the Country Programme will be implemented.</p>

¹ A finding uses evidence from data collection to allow for a factual statement.

² Recommendations are proposals aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, quality, or efficiency of a Project/programme; at redesigning the objectives; and/or at the reallocation of resources. For accuracy and credibility, recommendations should be the logical implications of the findings and conclusions.

<p>After withdrawal of many international forces in 2014, security in the country may deteriorate so that the Government will be unable to sustain work in certain areas where technical expertise is required.</p>	<p>Discussions with UNODC staff and Government officials, various documents and reports.</p>	<p>COAFG needs to expand partnerships to enable projects to operate in a more uncertain environment.</p> <p>Because of the security challenges, COAFG must continue supporting the Afghan Government's efforts to reduce drugs and crime to help make the country more stable and a safer place to operate.</p>
<p>Based on its achievements, UNODC has the capacity to assist weak governments in the world through projects in its niche sector of drugs, crime, and good governance.</p>	<p>Discussions with UNODC officials, UNODC documentation.</p>	<p>UNODC should realize its potential to address issues of drugs and crime by exploring how its operations can be extended countries facing problems within its mandate, especially of crime and good governance (such as Somalia and Chad).</p>
<p>UNODC is not well-positioned structurally to take advantage of such opportunities because its basic design is one of a normative organisation.</p>	<p>Discussions with UNODC officials, UNODC documentation</p>	<p>To take advantage of new opportunities in countries with weak governments, UNODC as a whole needs to assess whether it should be more of an implementing organisation.</p>
Important		
<p>UNODC's work with implementing partners and inter-agency groups such as the Criminal Law Reform Working Group has allowed it to reach areas and peoples it could not through direct implementation.</p>	<p>Discussions with UNODC staff and Government officials (especially in the provinces), various documents and reports.</p>	<p>COAFG continues to explore ways to expand its reach in problem areas, such as through local contacts, specific forms of technology, or in cooperation with other agencies.</p>
<p>UNODC's mentoring has contributed to the agency reaching remote areas and populations.</p>	<p>Discussions with UNODC staff and Government officials (especially in the provinces), various documents and reports.</p>	<p>UNODC should work with more implementing partners to expand the successful work it has initiated.</p>
<p>COAFG monitoring and evaluation is inadequate for the tasks before it. Furthermore, the increased work through expanding partnerships and mentoring recommended in this report require a substantial level of M&E.</p>	<p>Discussion with UNODC staff, project documents.</p>	<p>UNODC needs to introduce Country Office monitoring and evaluation for all its projects in Afghanistan.</p> <p>COAFG together Counter Narcotics and other Working Groups, begins monitoring and evaluation with national level</p>

		<p>(and with the electronic system under preparation) seminar to encourage collaboration in M&E with government staff.</p> <p>COAFG should continue using more national staff, especially those with mentoring experience, in responsible positions will contribute to overall sustainability of UNODC work in Afghanistan.</p>
<p>Intelligence gathering (for law enforcement purposes) is a system, requiring multi-agency cooperation.</p>	<p>Discussions with UNODC staff and Government officials.</p>	<p>With its Government partners, UNODC should collectively draw up an overall intelligence plan with connections to regional neighbours. UNODC should continue support for Mobile Detection Teams and the Forensic Laboratory in particular and other relevant areas as appropriate, being careful to minimize the culture of dependence.</p>
<p>UNODC has established a methodology allowing it to work productively despite challenging security constraints in Afghanistan. However, the situation may change after 2014 with the withdrawal of many international forces.</p>	<p>Discussions with UNODC officials, project documentation, World Bank and other reports.</p>	<p>COAFG should draw up contingency plans for various scenarios after 2014 when it is unclear what may happen. Increased use of national staff by COAFG (no matter what) is advisable.</p>
General		
<p>Problems of poorly written Project Documents, insufficient baseline data, inadequate reporting and donor management that impeded implementation and also impaired working relationship with Headquarters.</p>	<p>Review of project documentation and reports, discussions with donors.</p>	<p>Hold project cycle management workshops targeting new managerial staff as appropriate. Experienced Project Document writers should help ensure that the Prodocs are properly prepared, such as by insuring baselines data is</p>

		collected.
Evidence from other Asian countries indicates opium poppy production is a poverty indicator but this has not been tested in Afghanistan.	UNODC literature from Myanmar and Lao PDR.	Assist MCN initiative to investigate connection between poverty and poppy cultivation in Afghanistan and then make appropriate plans depending on findings (including the National Anti-Poverty Plan in this regard).
Kandahar is good place to expand work in multiple sectors because of its intensive poppy growing, capacity, the commitment of stakeholders, and a long history of UNODC operations there.	Discussions with UNODC staff, Kandahar and other Government officials, visits to Kandahar activity sites, UNODC documentation.	COAFG work with Kandahar officials and local people already engaged in implementing activities to find productive and effective ways to expand operations.

I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This evaluation assesses eight projects in three thematic areas: Criminal Justice, Law Enforcement, and Alternative Livelihoods. The evaluation was carried out from September until December 2012 by a team of four international evaluators including a team leader, and individual evaluators for the alternative livelihoods, criminal justice, and law enforcement clusters.³

The projects evaluated are as listed below:

Criminal Justice:

- (a) AFG/R86 Strengthening anti-corruption measures in Afghanistan
- (b) AFG/T03–Criminal justice capacity building–Extension to the provinces
- (c) AFG/R87 Prison system reform in Afghanistan–Extension to the provinces

Law Enforcement:

- (a) AFG/I77–Support for a Counter Narcotics Training Unit within the Afghan Police
- (b) Academy
- (c) AFG/I85–Regional Cooperation in Precursor Control between Afghanistan and
- (d) Neighbouring Countries
- (e) AFG/J43–Strengthening the Operational Capability of Counter Narcotics Police of
- (f) Afghanistan (CNPA)
- (g) AFG/J55 Integrated Border Control Project in Western/South-Western Afghanistan

Alternative Livelihoods:

- (a) AFG/187–Strengthening Provincial Capacity for Drug Control

The report is structured into individual project evaluations for each of the eight projects. Each of the project evaluations can be extracted for use as a stand-alone document with all their annexes. Subsequent to these individual evaluations are sections analyzing the projects collectively by each thematic cluster.

Besides the summative level on which the individual projects are evaluated, there is a formative level, assessing UNODC’s Afghanistan programme as a whole, including support from Headquarters. The simultaneous evaluation of eight projects was organized by the Independent External Unit (IEU) in conjunction with the FO and the Regional Section for the purpose of seeing how lessons learned from these projects can contribute to the Afghanistan Country Programme on drug control and crime prevention (and also for economies of scale).

³ In carrying out this assessment, the Evaluation Team was made up of four people, including specialists on each of the three clusters being evaluated as well as a Team Leader. The team members have had experience in conducting over a dozen UNODC evaluations in opium poppy producing countries as well as others elsewhere. They have worked in over a dozen countries (including Afghanistan) and include one member with three decades of experience of work in the agency dating the early-1970s and one of the first projects the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (a forerunner of UNODC) ever carried out anywhere. Another member has several years experience working in Afghanistan as a member of the UK military.

Beyond the individual project evaluation, the IEU (in consultation with the FO and the RS) called for the evaluation to take a wider perspective. All aspects of project formulation are discussed herein, from planning at the national, regional, and global level to working with donors, to implementation at the local level. The purpose of arranging the evaluation in this way is to see—in the country where UNODC’s presence is the largest in the world—how effective are its mechanisms, how and to what degree beneficiaries’ needs are met, and how improvements might be made.

It should be noted here that the evaluation was challenged by many obstacles. Not the least was bringing together a team of four international professionals in Kabul at the same time. Just two days prior to the scheduled arrival of the Law Enforcement evaluator, he notified the IEU that he would not be taking the job. This led to a rethinking of the evaluation process beginning with a preliminary evaluation report at the end of the consultancy for the three evaluators who participated in the first. A new recruitment process was initiated and completed for the new Law Enforcement Evaluator who came to Kabul in November and December. During this time (the “second mission”, the Team Leader returned to Kabul on an additional mission (previously unplanned) to consult with the Law Enforcement Evaluator and also to conduct further interviews and field visits. In addition, the Law Enforcement Evaluator met with the Criminal Justice Evaluator in the London area prior to his departure for Kabul. Furthermore, the Team Leader met and consulted with the AL Evaluator after he left Afghanistan. Although there never was a time when all four evaluators met in person, there were ample discussions between them. Also, the fortuitous way this evaluation took shape gave the team sufficient time to meet each other and to prepare a more profound assessment. It should also be noted that security constraints were minimal for the LE Evaluator and he could adhere to his schedule completely.

Background and context

Afghanistan

Map 1. Provinces of Afghanistan, 1996-2004



Afghanistan is a land-locked country in the heart of Asia. It borders Iran to the west, Pakistan to the east and south, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan to the north, and China, to a tiny frontier at the end of a narrow corridor from the northeast of Badakhshan Province.

For centuries peoples from East and West travelled along the Silk Road through what is now Afghanistan, contributing to its ethnic and cultural diversity. Three major traditions have mixed with the indigenous mountain cultures of Central Asia: the Islamic world of the Middle East and Persia, the Indian subcontinent, and East Asia.

Probably no country in the world has been invaded as often as Afghanistan, and this has left its mark on the country's demographics. The population numbers about 34 million people with the major ethnic group being Pashtu which comprises about 40 per cent of the population mainly located in the country's south. Other groups include Tajik, Hazara, and Uzbek, mostly in the north. There are two official languages, Dari (Afghan Persian) and Pashtu, that are mutually intelligible at a very basic level but require translation for discussions of more complex subjects.

The country is a land of extremes. There are arid deserts in the southwest where rainfall often is less than 100 mm per year. In the northeast, however, the area is well-watered with some places receiving over 1,000 mm annually. The Hindu Kush dominates the central and northeastern parts of the country. Fertile plains and valleys found in the southeast are sometimes subtropical. Historic irrigation and agricultural systems have largely been degraded because of the fighting.

The present era in the history of Afghanistan began in late-2001 when it, in the words of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) (2008-2013), the country "emerged as a State" but with its physical, institutional, human and social capital devastated. Through a series of international conferences, beginning in Bonn in December 2001, a strategy for building Afghanistan as a "pluralist Islamic State governed by the rule of law" emerged.

In October 2001, the United Nations Security Council authorized the creation of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, which then launched Operation Enduring Freedom to subdue the Taliban. For some years in the middle of the decade, the Taliban was suppressed but in recent years it has been regaining strength. However, so have the Afghan military and police. The conflicts in the country make it one of the most dangerous in the world. For years the country produced the largest number of refugees in the world although many are now returning.

The years of conflict prior to 2001 devastated the civil service and human capacity. Presented with such a situation, the donor countries that supported activities to rebuild the country wanted to make a quick impact to jump start the national development programs. In the absence (together with the all too common mistrust of many Afghan civil servants who remained or came back from exile) of trained nationals in the country, the aid agencies made ample use of international consultants. This did little to improve the capacity of the Afghan civil service and it also siphoned off a considerable amount of the development aid from the local economy.

Afghanistan now produces about two-thirds of the world's illicit opium and heroin. In the 2011-2012 poppy growing season, according to the UNODC 2012 Opium Survey, the net cultivation (after eradication) was 131,000 hectares. The total farm-gate value of opium production was US\$1.4 billion and represented 9 per cent of the country's GDP.

This is a relatively new development since poppy was not an important crop until after widespread organized violence overwhelmed the country starting in 1978. Provinces, such as Kandahar that are now major poppy hubs, formerly produced large quantities of horticultural crops such as pomegranates, raisins, and grapes much of which was exported to other provinces or to foreign

countries such as India and Pakistan. Poppy growing became widespread only in the unsettled conditions prevailing in the country during the decades of warfare since then. By 1985 poppy production in border areas soared with a concomitant increase in heroin addiction in the country.

Some users have turned to injecting. In 2005, UNODC estimated there were about 7,000 heroin injectors and 12,000 injectors of pharmaceutical drugs, the great majority of whom are male. Quite a few started injecting while refugees in Iran and Pakistan but there are also now younger injectors who started in Afghanistan. While this poses the threat of HIV/AIDS to Afghans, as of now, the disease has not spread far in the country. UNAIDS data from about 2010 indicates that less than 0.05 per cent of the general population is HIV positive and the prevalence among IDUs remains under 10 per cent. The high level of IDUs in Afghanistan constitutes a health threat that the government is taking seriously.

In the new cash cropping system of poppy that has developed, the farmers do not profit significantly. Rather, it is the merchants who trade in the substance and handle its processing into heroin that do. Drug profits are used “to conclude power deals, patronage, and forge alliances...weakening the efficiency of the state to deliver its services to those most in need...further alienating the wider population and weakening the resistance against the insurgency.”⁴ However, beneath the bleak situation at present is a historical tradition of Afghan peoples being self-sufficient, making productive use of indigenous wisdom, and practicing agricultural diversity.

The high level of international external assistance for development brings ample funds to the country. In 2011, this was about US\$15.7 billion or roughly equivalent to the nation’s GDP that year. The aid and the income generated by illicit drugs contribute to corruption at the local and national level, which is perceived both inside Afghanistan and elsewhere to be widespread. Because of this, according to UNODC national staff in Kandahar, many Afghans avoid contact with the Government, choosing (especially in rural areas), to continue their reliance on traditional institutions of informal justice. Transparency International has stated that Afghanistan is tied with Somalia as one of the two most corrupt countries in the world.⁵

After 2001, the Government of Afghanistan lacked the means to deal with the many problems facing it. The police force was decimated and the criminal justice system and its facilities were in ruins. The educational system had been dismantled and women excluded from formal learning. Many national experts and professionals had left the country. Although some training for the Afghan population in neighbouring countries was carried out, the formal educational level and literacy rate of the country’s population was among the lowest in the world.

Since then, progress has been made in some sectors and the annual GDP per capita has grown to US\$528 in 2010-2011 while inflation has remained under 10 per cent. While about 75 per cent of the population remains illiterate, literacy is increasing with school attendance increasing from 1 million to 8 million. This has included millions of girls who were not allowed to go to school under the Taliban. Access to health care has increased from about 10 per cent to approximately 85 per cent at present with the result that life expectancy is increasing and maternal mortality is decreasing.⁶

⁴ UNODC Country Programme for Afghanistan 2012-2014, p. 22.

⁵ Transparency International. 2013. cpi.transparency.org/cpi2012/results/. As an indication, the *Afghanistan Times* in an editorial on 11 September 2012 calling the country “corruptistan” stated that the chief of the High Office of Oversight and Anti-Corruption called on the government to disband the office if it would not support it.

⁶ The statistics in these two paragraphs is mainly from the World Bank website accessed 22 October 2012. <http://www.worldbank.org.af/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/SOUTHASIAEXT/AFGHANISTA>

Partly because of this progress, and after years of external military support, the Afghanistan Government agreed with NATO and the major Western countries to proceed with the reduction of troops in 2013 and 2014. Almost all the 130,000 foreign troops in Afghanistan will be withdrawn by the end of 2014. At that time a new NATO mission will continue the training of Afghan security forces. As a part of Afghanistan taking over security responsibilities, a target strength of 157,000 Afghan police officers and 195,000 army personnel was set for the end of 2012. As of September 2012 (latest report available) this process was on schedule (United Nations, September 2012).

To enhance police strength, the Government has established the Afghan National Police (ANP) to work in the provinces. The Government is obliged to make the ANP a functioning body because the ANP is currently transitioning from a para-military force to a community-based service. It will be essential for the organisation to be seen as protecting the community (national and international) and not merely serving as another armed group in the country.

This process is already underway. The third tranche of the transition of security responsibilities to the Afghan National Security Forces occurred in 2012 with Afghan forces taking over responsibility for Kapisa, Kunduz and Uruzgan Provinces, in addition to all of Kandahar Province, covering a total of 75 per cent of the Afghan population. As for the ANP, by mid-August, more than 16,266 personnel were operating at 71 validated sites. While the UN is satisfied that “these forces have contributed to security,” it remains concerned over “issues of impunity, vetting, lack of clear command and control, and the re-emergence of ethnically or politically biased militias” (United Nations September 2012).

Security incidents remain a major issue although the UN reported a 4 per cent decrease in civilian casualties between 1 May and 31 July compared to the same period in 2011. There was a “significant reduction in civilian casualties resulting from suicide attacks and ground engagements” during the same period. As this has been encouraging, insurgents have moved to other provinces previously considered safe. Overall, though, UN security officers remain cautiously optimistic that the Transition will go essentially as planned and that UN agencies can continue field operations.

The ANDS, to be implemented during this Transition, wants to address the remaining shortcomings and overcome challenges to national development. There are eight pillars: security, good governance, infrastructure and natural resources, education and culture, health and nutrition, agriculture and rural development, social protection, and economic governance and private sector development. Within these pillars are six cross-cutting issues comprising capacity building, gender equity, counter-narcotics, regional cooperation, anti-corruption, and environment.

UNODC

The United Nations framework in support of ANDS focuses on 1) Governance, Peace and Stability, 2) Sustainable Livelihoods, and 3) Basic Social Services, underpinned by cross-cutting issues including human rights, gender equality, environment, and counter-narcotics. UNODC’s work clearly falls within the scope of this framework.

Among the international agencies working in Afghanistan, UNODC is among the best positioned to help implement this strategy. With a mandate to work in areas of illicit drug control, crime prevention, and terrorism, UNODC’s work is relevant to some degree for all the pillars and almost all the cross-cutting issues.

UNODC already has considerable experience in Afghanistan. In 1996, UNODC (then known as UNDCP and operating out of Islamabad, Pakistan, with an additional office in the city of Peshawar) had designed a four-year pilot project for Afghanistan (1997-2000) made up of the following: Capacity Building for Drug Control (AFG/97/C26), Drug Control Monitoring System (AFG/97/C27), Poppy Crop Reduction (AFG/97/C28) and Drug Demand Reduction Support (AFG/97/C29). Through these projects over the years, national staff managed to retain some corporate knowledge that has been helpful in implementing the current projects under evaluation.

The poppy reduction component (AFG/C28) aimed to implement replicable and sustainable rural development to reduce poppy cultivation poppy in Ghorak, Khakrez and Maiwand districts in the southern province of Kandahar. The main activities encompassed rehabilitating infrastructure, supporting farmers in producing and marketing agricultural products, and other interventions that built sustainable non-poppy based livelihoods. However, due to lack of donor support, the project was closed down in December 2000. The Annual Opium Poppy Survey (AFG/F98) has continued. In 2001, UNODC began a three-year drug demand reduction project for Afghan refugee women in Pakistan (AFG/F55). A capacity building project (AFG/G24) began in 2002 to establish capacity in the Counter Narcotics Directorate (CND) within the Nation's Security Council. In 2005, the CND became part of the new and Ministry of Counter Narcotics with the wider mandate of coordinating all counter narcotic activities of the Government of Afghanistan.

During the first years of the decade, however, other countries and organizations took the lead in Afghanistan. The United Kingdom was the lead country for counter-narcotics and Italy took the lead in criminal justice. Under enormous pressure to achieve results, both countries moved quickly. Poppy eradication became a favoured approach in counter narcotics while Italy made liberal use of international consultants to write an entirely new law code that did not adequately take into account Afghanistan's traditions. During these years, UNODC played essentially a passive role.

UNODC became more active in 2006 following the London Conference which was seen as the conclusion of the process established in Bonn in 2001. By then a new constitution had been enacted and national elections held. The new approach, summarized in the "Afghanistan Compact" made Afghan institutions the base for reconstructing the country. A Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, composed of senior Government officials and ambassadorial-level members of the international community, oversaw implementation of the Compact.

Also in 2006, UNODC was appointed by the Government of Afghanistan to lead the Anti Corruption Working Group and the Anti Corruption Cross Cutting Thematic Group. The Working Group was mandated to monitor and implement the Anti-Corruption Benchmark in the Afghan Compact. The Anti CCTG was designed to focus on the development, implementation and monitoring of broader anti-corruption issues that would lead to mainstreaming anti-corruption into sector policies.

In 2006 as well, following input from UNODC (and others) on adopting a proactive approach to good governance, President Karzai established an Inter-Institutional Committee on Corruption known as the Aximi Committee (headed by Chief Justice Aximi). Following its report in 2008 proposing an anti-corruption agency, the President adopted a Decree establishing the High Office on Oversight (HoO) to monitor the country's anti-corruption strategy. The government set up the HoO partly because doing so was a major step towards fulfilling Article 6 of the UN Convention against Corruption.

The HoO's mandate is to provide oversight and to coordinate, supervise and support all anti-corruption efforts in the country. This mandate also includes oversight of measures against corruption that were to be implemented by all Afghan institutions as well as monitoring law enforcement and justice agencies to follow up complaints. A database was then set up to monitor yearly changes in the

assets held by Afghan officials. According to the HoO's website, it "shall be the focal point for overseeing policy development and implementation of anti corruption strategies... [It] will strive to bring agencies together rather than competing with them". When it found evidence of corruption, the evidence was reported to the Attorney General's Office for further action.

The Compact identifies drug control as cross-cutting and contains two related benchmarks, both for the end of 2010. The first was that the Government would "strengthen its law enforcement capacity at both central and provincial levels, resulting in a substantial annual increase in the amount of drugs seized or destroyed and processing facilities dismantled, and in effective measures, including targeted eradication as appropriate, that contribute to the elimination of poppy cultivation." The second was that the Government and neighbouring and regional governments would "work together to increase coordination and mutual sharing of intelligence, with the goal of an increase in the seizure and destruction of drugs being smuggled across Afghanistan's borders and effective action against drug traffickers."

The projects evaluated in this report were all linked to benchmarks of the Afghanistan Compact, which calls for "a sustained and significant reduction in the production and trafficking of narcotics with a view to complete elimination." Within this context, and also translating UNODC's global strategy into a country vision, UNODC Afghanistan together with the Afghanistan Ministry of Counter Narcotics aimed to devise a country strategy in the COAFG Strategic Programme Framework 2006-2010. Accordingly, "UNODC aims to assist the stability and development in Afghanistan by supporting the government to deliver effective counter-narcotics and criminal justice services."

UNODC supports alternative livelihood work including emergency poverty alleviation as well as the delivery of counter-narcotics, law enforcement, and criminal justice services. The projects being evaluated carry out these mandates at the regional, national, and local or provincial level.

In line with this and during the same year, UNODC devised a regional approach to drug control known as the Rainbow Strategy. Initiatives were planned to address financial flows, precursor supplies, drug demand reduction and HIV/AIDS treatment, heroin manufacturing, border control, as well as alternative livelihoods. The Strategy was approved in 2007 and became operational in 2008 but was not widely prioritized by donors.

That changed the following year when UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown, as part of his desire to move his country out of Afghanistan, signalled that the UK would no longer be taking the lead in counter-narcotics. Also in 2009, American diplomat Richard Holbrook announced that the counter-narcotics approach used in Afghanistan had failed. Instead, he suggested that alternative livelihoods should be promoted over poppy eradication. Holbrook also said that there was a need to focus on Pakistan in drug control.

In 2008-2009, UNODC began field work in the west of the country, namely Herat Province as part of its strategic positioning following the anticipated withdrawal of the UK. Besides this region having few internationally-sponsored projects work, working here denoted UNODC's alignment with the National Drug Control Strategy (NDCS), which stated that eliminating poppy cultivation had to be linked with "the broader stabilization effort," that is, not eradicating fields if possible but, in any case, focusing on the establishment of "sufficient legal livelihoods."

In Kabul, UNODC at about the same time took the lead in setting up an Interim Expert Counter-Narcotics Working Group. This Group recommended to the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board that a Counter Narcotics Monitoring Mechanism be set up for the National Priority Programmes, in

order to ensure genuine mainstreaming⁷ of counter-narcotics and that the Afghan Government delivers on its Kabul Conference commitments. In this and other ways, UNODC sought to raise the profile of Counter Narcotics work so that it was recognized as an issue relevant to all sectors of Government work.

From here, UNODC expanded to implement the projects being in this report. As they are coming to an end, the future for internationally-supported work in Afghanistan is unclear because many international donors may begin looking to assist countries elsewhere. The World Bank estimates that during the first decade following the drawdown, the financial gap for the Afghanistan national budget will reach or exceed 25 per cent (World Bank 2012 Vol. 1, Overview, p. 14).

The World Bank suggests that the capacity of the civil service must be improved. Additionally, the delivery of services must increasingly be delegated to the provinces, particularly regarding operating costs and maintenance of existing facilities such as roads, schools, and hospitals and clinics. During this transition, the World Bank notes that international agencies will have to continue subsidizing many security costs as well as salaries for a large number of civil servants. Finally, the Bank suggests that more financial assistance be channelled through the Afghan national budget, find ways to reduce the costs of providing security, and treat Afghanistan as part of an emerging Central Asian region (World Bank 2012 Vol. 1, Overview, p. 12-13).

The Government of Afghanistan had already begun planning for what it calls the Decade of Transformation (2015-2025) following the election of Hamid Karzai in 2009. In his inaugural address, he called for a Consultative Peace Jirga (Grand Assembly) to build national consensus. This was held, after some delays, in June 2010. Although invited, the Taliban did not attend, instead sending suicide bombers to disrupt the proceedings (which they did but no one attending the Jirga was hurt). President Karzai also supported the development of an Afghan-owned process to plot the way forward through the transitional phase.

Now known as the Kabul Process, this mechanism has, through several international conferences as well as national-level deliberations, established National Priority Programs (NPPs). Twenty-two were prepared in six clusters: Security, Governance, Human Resource Development, Agriculture and Rural Development, Infrastructure, and Private Sector Development. They were designed to operate with limited resources comprising specified activities and measurable goals. They were also designed to be mainstreamed in a relatively short period of time. The NPPs were also designed to carry the development of the country through 2025 in an Afghan-owned way.

Despite the impact poppy cultivation and drug use has on the people of Afghanistan and its economy, it was not identified as an NPP. However, it is considered a cross-cutting issue because of the negative impact drug production and use has on almost all the NPPs.

Two recent international conferences have set the tone for how donors and development agencies are responding to the Kabul Process. In November 2011, at the Istanbul “Heart of Asia” Conference, 43 Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) were adopted, including those in the field of economics and security and also including narcotics control. This was followed up in June 2012 in Kabul with a meeting that identified seven priority CBMs including counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics.

Another international conference on Afghanistan was held in July 2012 in Tokyo at which 14 NPPs were identified as important. A Drug Monitoring Mechanism was set up to examine how each NPP related to counter narcotics. After the Tokyo Conference, President Karzai issued a Presidential

⁷ UNODC intends that “genuine mainstreaming” be mainstreaming that is actually accomplished rather than the lip service routinely given to the term mainstreaming.

Decree to push the issues of mutual accountability and the accomplishment of IMF asset recovery benchmarks following the Kabul Bank scandal.⁸

As for UNODC, as it became apparent that there was going to be a transitional phase, the agency re-examined its own country strategy. Although already operating under a Country Programme (2012-2014), UNODC Afghanistan thought that future strategy should be crafted in a more unified, internally supportive way that would genuinely enable it to be considered a genuine Country Programme (without stand-alone projects).

This was to be devised so that it was intrinsically linked to the newly-approved Regional Programme comprising eight Central Asian countries: Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan. In December 2011 the Regional Programme was approved with permission to start that month. UNODC plans that by 2014 member countries will be “substantially strengthened and working together cooperatively to counter the destabilizing impact of illicit drugs and crime (UNODC Regional Programme, p. 5).

Of direct relevance to UNODC is the level of poppy production, which has been increasing in recent years. The UNODC Afghanistan Opium Survey for 2012 (regarding the 2011-2012 poppy cultivation season) shows that the net poppy cultivation (after eradication) increased from 123,000 to 131,000 hectares, an increase of 18 per cent from the previous year. Although the number of poppy-free provinces declined from 20 to 17 the number of provinces “affected by poppy cultivation” increased from 14 to 17. Given the fact that the yield per hectare increased from 29.2 to 44.5 kilograms, the potential production of opium increased significantly, from 3,600 to 5,800 metric tons. The major areas of cultivation were in the southwest. Helmand had more than 30,000 hectares under poppy while in the adjoining provinces of Farah, Uruzgan, and Kandahar poppy was grown on 12,000 to 28,000 hectares (UNODC *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2012*, pp. 3,7).

UNODC Country Programme for Afghanistan 2012-2014

Activities under the projects being evaluated in this report have been moved under the 2012-2014 Country Programme for Afghanistan. The objective of the Programme “is to strengthen the capacity of the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to impede the devastating consequences of drugs and crime.”

The Programme has four sub-programmes, each with outcomes, as follows:

Sub-Programme 1: Research, Policy, Advocacy

Outcomes:

- (a) 1. National illicit crop monitoring strengthened.
- (b) 2. Building Afghan narcotics analytical capacity for evidence-based policy and advocacy.
- (c) 3. Afghan capacity for delivery of counter-narcotics responses developed.

⁸In January 2011, it was discovered that approximately US\$900 billion in deposits in the Kabul Bank had gone missing through unsecured loans to political insiders. The IMF withdrew support and announced benchmarks for recovering the lost assets. President Karzai in April 2012 called for a special prosecutor to examine the issue and a special tribunal to try those involved in the case. International agencies are calling for the ultimate sale of the bank. The trial is being heard as this evaluation is being conducted. Three middle-level members of the former bank were met by a member of the Evaluation Team in the Kabul Male Detention Centre, all of whom strongly denied any wrongdoing while blaming certain influential individuals for all the trouble.

Sub-Programme 2: Law Enforcement

Outcomes:

- (a) 1. Operational capacity of the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan strengthened.
- (b) 2. Enhanced border law enforcement; including regional cross-border cooperation.

Sub-Programme 3: Criminal Justice

Outcomes:

- (a) 1. Afghan authorities reform the Criminal Justice system in line with international standards.
- (b) 2. Anti-corruption measures strengthened with UNCAC.
- (c) 3. Prison and juvenile justice systems reformed in line with international standards and norms, with an emphasis on alternatives to imprisonment and detention.

Sub-Programme 4: Health and Livelihood

Outcomes:

- (a) 1. Increased access to quality drug prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services.
- (b) 2. Increased access to quality HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care services for drug users (with a focus on IDUs, prisoners, and PVHT).
- (c) 3. Wider coverage of alternative livelihoods for drug affected communities.

The Country Programme is linked with the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries 2011-2014 which is an outgrowth of the Rainbow Strategy as discussed above. Within the Regional Programme are four sub-programmes, as follows:

- (a) 1. Regional Law Enforcement Cooperation.
- (b) 2. International/Regional Cooperation in Legal Matters.
- (c) 3. Prevention and Treatment of Addiction among Vulnerable Groups.
- (d) 4. Trends and Impacts (as a cross-cutting function).

The effectiveness of Regional Programme interventions is dependent upon the successful implementation of the Country Programme in a synergistic relationship where the Regional Programme adds a dedicated support facility to support regional cooperation initiatives, particularly focused towards confidence-building measures and jointly-organized activities in the region. The Regional Programme emphasizes law enforcement and legal matters, the latter with a focus on legislation as well as drug use and addiction. Alternative livelihoods, rather than a sub-programme in its own right, is dealt with under Sub-Programme 4, trends and impacts as a cross-cutting issue.

Through this last sub-programme, UNODC plans to support increased and more accurate data collection as well as to support research on “the impact of narcotics on socio-economic factors and visa-versa.” Through these initiatives UNODC hopes that Member States will be provided ‘with a clear picture of the situation in real time’ that will support a coordinated joint effort to reduce illicit drugs and crime.

The new UNODC Country Programme (2012-2014) was designed to fit the existing programme in a flexible manner so as to facilitate its fit in a regional context.

UNODC Fund-Raising, Donor Relations, Financial Management and Project Implementation

To properly understand how UNODC operates in Afghanistan it is necessary to know what support it receives from the agency's headquarters in Vienna. UNODC belongs to the UN Secretariat, the organization that carries out the day-to-day work of the UN. In 1979, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) was established as an amalgamation of three bodies: 1) the Division on Narcotic Drugs, 2) the International Narcotics Control Board, a quasi-judicial control and regulatory body that monitored implementation of the UN drug control conventions with the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the central policymaking body on drug-related measures, and 3) the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC). The last was mainly a fund-raising body but which also implemented alternative development projects in exceptional situations. UNFDAC's first project was in Thailand in 1972. In 2002, UNDCP merged with the Centre for International Crime Prevention, a policymaking and information exchange body, to establish the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Most of UNODC, including the corporate structure, was devoted to policymaking, information exchange, and normative tasks, but not project implementation.

However, since UNFDAC had been successfully implementing projects ever since the United States funded the first poppy replacement project in Thailand, UNDCP and then UNODC, continued to do so at a level beyond what its structure was designed to handle. This design mismatch manifests itself in UNODC having insufficient resources for project implementation which necessitates it seeking funds from donors. This puts the organization at the risk of having to follow priorities of donors rather than its own mandate. When donors change priorities or, for any reason, adjust their programme, UNODC has to adjust not only its own implementation but management structures in Vienna which depends on a percentage of project income for support.

More pertinent to the projects being evaluated in this report are "special" requests. During the course of the eight evaluated projects, UNODC has been approached by donors who have money left over at the end of a budget cycle and want to spend immediately so as not to lose the funds. In these and other cases, donors may have particular target topics or provinces where they want project activities implemented. Sometimes these requests come with very little time to carry them out putting severe strains on UNODC's ability to deliver acceptable outputs in a country with infrastructure and bureaucratic limitations. Not only does this strain project staff in Afghanistan but it overtaxes the Headquarters' support capacity (on which the organization is obliged to accept as much as possible for financial reasons).

This situation of depending on donor funding, while being tasked with sometimes difficult or inappropriate demands, puts stress on both Headquarters and Country Office staff. After the Evaluation began, the Team was asked to examine how Headquarters supports project implementation, a request that requires examining the issue of donor support and the structure of UNODC. To a certain degree, this affected the evaluation methodology that was drawn up at the start of the evaluation mission.

Partly in relation to the issue of the Headquarters-COAFG working relationship, an Inter-Divisional Mission went to the UNODC Country Office of Afghanistan from 29 September-5 October, 2012. While the mission was reviewing the Afghanistan as a whole (terming it "positive"), the IDM assessed aspects of the Country Programme relative to this Evaluation. Some of the implications of the sometimes incongruent situation of UNODC operating as an implementing agency were assessed.

After noting the problem of security on implementation and project delivery, the “mission took well note of the strong concerns raised in regard to the time consuming process to get grants for implementing partners cleared and authorized.” Furthermore, the IDM mission “pointed out the negative impact the lengthy grants procedure had indeed on the Programme’s delivery” resulting in several projects having “low implementation rates.” The report went on to say that “Grant and implementing partnership arrangement was a major concern... [the] processes are time-consuming and sometimes inconsistent.” The mission report’s “Summary of Findings” ends with “It is clear that communications between COAFG and relevant units in Vienna should be reinforced both in the form of an existing interdivisional task force, and bilateral consultations” (UNODC IDM “Mission Report” 2013).

Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation team undertook a first mission from 2-23 September 2012 to evaluate the both the criminal justice and the Alternative livelihoods clusters. The second mission took place from 24 November to 15 December 2012 date in order to evaluate the Law Enforcement Cluster. To allow for triangulation and cross referencing, data was collected from as many sources as possible.

During the first mission, extra attention and time was required to overcome the following obstacles to conducting a proper evaluation. Indeed, due to security constraints, the evaluation was only able to sample selected activities that represent indicators of the progress of the projects and the programme as a whole. Furthermore, because of the security requirements needed to operate in Afghanistan, the project areas and activity sites that the evaluators could visit were severely constrained by security concerns.

Key Evaluation Questions

As a framework for the evaluation, standard evaluation questions were developed. These questions were designed to link up with the indicators in the project documents. For the four projects (Criminal Justice and Alternative Livelihoods) being evaluated in the first mission, and then the four law enforcement projects evaluated in the second mission, the indicators emphasize enhancing the capacity of government facilities, staff, and activities. Also stressed is the integration of counter narcotics and crime prevention work into the agenda of government agencies, building public awareness, and contributing to the government’s commitment to counter narcotics activities.

These overall questions shaped the frame for the detailed evaluation of each project and their relationship to each other and are discussed in the final report.

- (a) How relevant is the cluster (and individual projects) under evaluation to the defined needs and priorities of the Afghanistan Government?
- (b) How effective have the clusters been in responding to these needs?
- (c) How appropriate are the cluster component design and performance assessment?
- (d) How efficient has the implementation of the cluster/projects been?
- (e) What are the likely cluster outcomes?
- (f) What is the likelihood of cluster sustainability?
- (g) How effective have the partnerships with Government and other agencies been?
- (h) What lessons have been learned and what best practices have been identified?

The framework questions were developed to seek opinion (including those on issues initiated by the respondents) and experience that were supported by evidence including baseline data as available.

Data Collection Methods and Sources

The Evaluation Team made use of several research and evaluation techniques to assess the Projects. The data collected instruments varied slightly by cluster depending on the specifics of the context. In general, these included a comprehensive desk review, interviews and focus groups with relevant stakeholders and field visits to relevant project sites.⁹ Furthermore, the evaluators were asked to review the relationship between UNODC headquarters in Vienna and UNODC Country Office in Afghanistan and what impact this had on project implementation. In this, the Evaluation Team was aided considerably by the Inter-Divisional Mission from Vienna to Afghanistan in September and October of 2012.

The following provides a brief overview of each data collection method; however, these methods are described in further detail within each cluster evaluation.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with UNODC staff (including all Kabul-based project staff and almost all provincial coordinators), government officials, and insofar as possible, project beneficiaries. Although it was intended that these interviews be conducted alone as much as possible to enable a full and frank expression of views, this was not always possible because of the need for translators (almost always provided by UNODC—and the three evaluators in the first part of the Evaluation agreed that they performed their task properly). This resulted in a range of stakeholders more than adequate to triangulate data and information so as to evaluate project work effectively. The evaluators met with UNODC staff involved in implementing every activity as well as similarly involved Government officials. The evaluators also met with beneficiaries of over 90 per cent of the activities. In a few cases, such as training activities for which the trainees were in remote areas or otherwise not tracked by UNODC, this was not possible. The Evaluation Team is nonetheless confident that it achieved a satisfactory (if not totally measurable) coverage of stakeholders through the overall work it conducted.

The individuals interviewed in the Evaluation are listed at the end of each report. These included all the relevant UNODC staff (sometimes on multiple occasions). Key government officials in Kabul and in the provinces were interviewed. Insofar as possible, project beneficiaries were interviewed. However, this was rarely possible for many provincial officials who had participated in training (and who had never been administered any kind of post-training evaluation form to complete). Cooperation in meeting officials and others was readily given by both UNODC staff and the Government officials as well.

For the Criminal Justice Cluster, the data collection strategy was to use a framework questionnaire (with several open-ended questions) through which semi-structured interviews were conducted. The framework questionnaire was designed to guide discussion to cover all questions as per section B, though depending upon the meetings, some questions were not relevant and others (more specific) were asked. Ample opportunity was provided to the respondents to share their experiences and to initiate discussion of issues not considered in advance by the evaluation team. These “leads” were pursued in discussions with other respondents in order to verify their veracity and to allow for further

⁹ Sites included government offices, such as from the Ministries of Interior, Justice, and Counter Narcotics as well Border Liaison Posts, prisons, and detention centers. Besides visiting sites in Kabul, the evaluators went to provinces with the most implementation of activities, such as Herat, Jalalabad, Kandahar, and Nangahar.

investigations and triangulation on pertinent issues. While this approach is technically sound and if implemented comprehensively, would yield reliable data which could be used for an accurate project evaluation.

When the Law Enforcement Evaluator came to Afghanistan, he followed a similar methodology to that followed in the Criminal Justice Cluster evaluation. At this time, security concerns were fewer for several reasons so he was able to adhere completely to the schedule originally prepared for him.

The Alternative Livelihoods Cluster evaluation followed much the same approach for objectives 1-3 which focused on capacity building, training, and the provision of buildings and equipment. For objective 4, which comprised pilot projects aimed at income generation or increasing agricultural production, reliance was made on baseline surveys and the memory of beneficiaries about the situation when project activities commenced). This enabled the evaluators to obtain indicative data that allowed them to gauge the accomplishment of the indicators.

Focus Groups

The Evaluation Team intended to collect data through Focus Groups. However, due to security and other constraints, shortage of time, and the busy schedule of intended group members, it was not possible to do so as much as planned. Some focus groups were held, such as in villages where AL interventions were carried out by I87 and with a saffron producing group at Kandahar University (also related to I87) comprising farmers, university professors, and at least one marketing expert. A kind of focus group arose spontaneously at the Justice Support Centre in Kandahar including the Chief Appellate Judge of the province, his staff, and a prosecutor, along with her staff, from the United States Embassy who happened to be visiting when the Evaluation Team Leader arrived for his meeting. In all cases where focus group discussions were held, they yielded excellent insights into project operations.

Field Visits

During the evaluation, visits were made to project sites both in Kabul and several other provinces. Key contextual information will be provided from interaction with COAFG staff and other international agencies including donors in Kabul.

Also included are the itineraries of the evaluators, copies of which are in the annexes of the reports. During the two missions for this Evaluation, all the major activity sites were visited by at least one member of the Team. During the first mission, when the Criminal Justice Evaluator could not visit Jalalabad after mechanical problems prevented the plane from flying, the Team Leader later visited all the sites on the original itinerary. He was accompanied by a female member of the COAFG staff (representing the IEU) who was also able to interview women in a way that neither the CJ Evaluator nor the Team Leader (both male) could have done.

In cases where it was not possible to visit village activities (such as in Kandahar where tight security rules were enforced when the evaluator visited),¹⁰ he met the national staff in the provincial centre as well as individuals involved in the implementation of an agricultural project. In Kandahar, the evaluator visited infrastructure sites as well as the University where saffron was being promoted as a replacement crop for opium poppy. Later, project beneficiaries from one village site met with the evaluator in the UNODC office.

¹⁰ The UNODC evaluator travelled in one vehicle with a driver and at least one staff member. A second armored UN vehicle followed it at all times. The evaluator could only visit certain sites, travel on a predetermined fixed route, and could not get out of the vehicle anywhere except at the fixed destinations.

This strategy had to be applied due to the context of the situation in Afghanistan where extraordinary security constraints and poor infrastructure necessitate a flexible long-term approach to project implementation. Travel to project sites, appointments, and delivery of materials were delayed several times, sometimes at the last instant, due to these constraints. One such impediment was the protests against a movie insulting to Islam that precluded all movement for 2-3 days during the first mission (further details will be found in the individual project evaluations).

Furthermore, there were activity sites in areas considered safe where productive work has been reported to have been carried but which were too distant (as in the case of Badakhshan for the I87 AL project) to be visited within the evaluation time frame.

Triangulation

To allow for triangulation and cross referencing in this very challenging situation, data was collected from as many sources as possible, including (but not limited to):

- (a) documentation from COAFG;
- (b) baseline data where available;
- (c) available Government documentation including statistical reports;
- (d) relevant reports from other international organizations;
- (e) other written reports and publications;
- (f) meetings with the Project Team;
- (g) focus group discussions;
- (h) meetings with Government officials;
- (i) meetings with officials and experts of other international agencies, including donors;
- (j) national experts; and
- (k) other sources identified in the course of the evaluation.

Ethical Considerations

Any discussions with those detained in prison facilities adhered to the principles of do no harm. The evaluator judged if engagement with those detained and the types of questions asked were appropriate and safe for the detainees and staff. The anonymity of the respondents were maintained and all participation in the evaluation was on a voluntary basis.

While all those met were listed in the annexes, interviewees were not identified by name.

Limitations to the Evaluation

A major limitation to the evaluation was that some Project Documents were written loosely and lacked indicators. For example, the R87 Prison Reform Project which had immediate objectives including “Enhancement of the operational capacities and professionalism of penitentiary staff...” The indicator for this (and, not incidentally, the same for all the other immediate objectives), “Reports from Central Prison System and other reports.” Such overly vague language of the Project Document and its logical framework made it impossible to follow the standard evaluation process of assessing such documentation.

This laxity contributed to many of the projects evaluated in this report having little baseline information. In some cases this was not so important, such as for I77 which comprised the setting up of a training unit, about which one may confidently assume there was no such institution prior to UNODC intervention. However, this was not the case for most of the projects. Without baseline data, or at least a detailed discussion in the Project Document or elsewhere, of baseline conditions, it was not possible for the Evaluation Team to measure progress statistically or to interpret how the project strategy was devised and what the implementation of activities did to move forward.

Government documentation and reports were used as much as possible. However, in the absence of a proper government monitoring and evaluation system or staff not well trained in data collection (rigorous or otherwise), there was not much useful information in government reports. Sometimes also, government officials, such as the High Office on Oversight and Anti Corruption (HoO) staff tasked with preparing cases for validation, declined requests by the Evaluation Team due to security regulations.

According to some of the UNODC international staff interviewed in Kabul (who do not need to be identified in greater detail so as to shield their identity) there was at the beginning of these eight projects (over a period from 2005-2009) a lack of sufficient understanding of Project Cycle Management. This explains to a certain degree why some Project Documents were written, albeit often in hasty response to donor interest, in ways that impeded detailed evaluation. A Project Cycle Management training course rectified some shortcomings but Project Documents remained weak overall despite improvements in the revisions.

Additionally, the projects being evaluated herein were implemented without sufficient internal monitoring and evaluation. Not only did this reduce the information on project achievements available to the Evaluation Team, but it left the Country Office with insufficient data to relay to donors.

In this regard, it was the Evaluation Team that was the first to report to the Canadian Embassy that one major activity in a project it funded, the Justice Support Centre in Kandahar was (at last) completed. So satisfactory was its construction that the American prosecutor, whose visit coincided with that of the Evaluation Team member, was effusive in praising how appropriate it was in meeting the needs of the province.

Lastly, as aforementioned, the evaluation team worked under tight security measures that restricted movement during the first mission, sometimes so severely that meetings and field visits, even those already planned, had to be cancelled.

In the end, the methodology described in the Inception Report was satisfactory but subject to some modifications that did not endanger the work of the Evaluation Team. While this situation of insufficient data on baseline conditions obstructed the evaluation, it by no means precluded the overall evaluation process. The lack of statistical data embedded in tables and charts, while regrettable, should not be seen as a major impediment.

Using a thorough review of documents, extensive interviews (including focus group discussions) with officials, UNODC staff, and villagers, the Evaluation Team could properly assess project achievements, identify deficiencies, and make recommendations for further action. Further, the Evaluation Team relied on the utilization of the other techniques and various sources of information described earlier to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected.

Linkages to former SPF/new Country Programme

UNODC began planning its new SPF/Country Programme at the time it was becoming clear that the Government of Afghanistan would be going through its own transitional phase with the pullout of most of the international security forces. The eight projects under evaluation in the fields of law enforcement, criminal justice, health and livelihoods, transition directly into three of the four sub-programmes in the Country Programme (2012-2014), the fourth being the Research, Policy, Advocacy sub-programme which is cross-cutting and touches on all the other three.

The advantage of this integrated programming approach is that, rather than having separate projects, each with its own project document, deadlines, staff, inputs, sets of donors, and outputs, everything in the Country Programme is subsumed into one whole operation. This is planned to eliminate overlaps between projects, staff responsibilities, and other areas while facilitating reporting and good donor relations. Thus, the experiences drawn from implementing these various projects linked with the new Country Programme in a structural way.

Furthermore, both the previous projects and the Country Programme (2012-2014) are linked to the UNODC Regional Programme comprising eight Central Asian countries: Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan. This Regional Programme was approved by the eight recipient countries in December 2011 and then endorsed at the Paris Pact Ministerial Meeting in 2012. The Regional Programme stresses law enforcement and criminal justice so the evaluated projects in these two clusters are particularly relevant, particularly AFG/I85– Regional Cooperation in Precursor Control between Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries, and AFG/J55– Integrated Border Control Project in Western/South-Western Afghanistan. The contacts across borders initiated by these two projects will contribute importantly to the implementation of the Regional Programme.

The timing of this evaluation is significant because, in the months during which this Evaluation was conducted and finalized, UNODC Afghanistan began moving from being project-based to being well on the way to running a comprehensive Country Programme. Furthermore, UNODC's work in Afghanistan will be pivotal to its new Regional Programme for Promoting Counter Narcotics Efforts in Afghanistan & Neighbouring Countries.

The timing is doubly significant because of Afghanistan entering its major transition with the reduction in the international forces in the country. The Government of Afghanistan will be obliged to make use of more of its own resources in providing security within the country and in running its administration.

As these transitions occur, UNODC will utilize lessons learned and experiences from these eight projects to benefit the Regional Programme such as in Regional sub-programmes covering cooperation in law enforcement and legal matters. The cross-cutting fourth sub-programme, "Trends and Impacts", will also draw from the report of this evaluation especially as the Programme moves forward. The third, prevention and treatment of addiction, will benefit less directly from the projects evaluated in this report.

Contributions to former SPF/new Country Programme

The eight projects evaluated increased both the capacity of the Afghan Government but also the ability of UNODC to implement projects in Afghanistan. The stature of the organization rose in both the eyes of the Government as in the eyes of other development agencies and the donor community. Through the overall and increasingly successful effort of UNODC to advocate for the recognition of counter narcotics as a priority issue for the country, the agency built a network of individuals in

Government and the private sectors with whom UNODC could cooperate and established a record of accomplishments in the niche area of drugs and crime it had created for itself.

Several of the projects evaluated encompassed an expansion of activities to the provinces. Through the work in such places as Herat, Jalalabad, and Kandahar, UNODC helped build up expertise and competency in agencies with which it worked including the Ministry of the Interior (MoI), the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA), and the Ministry of Counter Narcotics (MCN). Techniques in alternative livelihoods were introduced, training on a range of subjects expanded knowledge (as did publications in Dari and Pushtu on many topics) so that the capacity of the Afghan Government to deal with drug and crime issues was significantly augmented. Through the help of national staff, the work of UNODC went beyond these areas into sometimes remote border regions where international staff could not travel to provide training and ensure the mandate of UNODC was carried out in all the areas called for in the project documents.

Without these contributions by the projects under evaluation, it would have been impossible to create an effective Country Programme. Similarly, it would have also been impossible to set up the Regional Programme as quickly as it has been, especially one in which Afghanistan appears as one of the pivotal countries and where the Programme headquarters is located.

Analysis of Clusters

The Law Enforcement and the Criminal Justice Clusters are clearly defined and appropriate for the situation in Afghanistan. The projects to be evaluated were in three clusters. Individual evaluators were recruited to evaluate one cluster each. Each evaluator assessed what commonalities and synergies existed between the individual projects in each cluster (although only one project in the Health and Livelihood cluster was evaluated in this exercise).

However, the appropriateness for Afghanistan of the Health and Livelihoods Cluster was questioned by senior members of the Ministry of Counter Narcotics. Indeed, the one AL project evaluated, I87 only included actual alternative livelihoods in one project objective out of four. Furthermore, there were too few linkages between the DDR work carried out by COAFG and the alternative livelihood section (objective 4) in I87.

In light of UNODC's success in reducing poppy cultivation in Southeast Asia, and the progress in this regard made through the balanced approach of law enforcement, alternative development, and demand reduction in the Lao PDR, in which all three components were integrated into individual projects, it is surprising not to have followed this approach in I87 although this may have resulted from donors working in Afghanistan having more specific priorities.

Clearly, institutional memory (even regarding actively implemented and positively evaluated projects in the Lao PDR with continued donor support) was not utilized in I87. The Evaluation Team is aware that there are demand reduction projects in Afghanistan that are delivering results. However, there should be more directly integrated linkages between demand reduction and alternative livelihoods, all the more so because they are in the same Cluster and because this approach has been shown to work elsewhere in Asia. Lessons should be drawn from UNODC experience in Asia. Quite likely, coordination between DDR and AL will increase in the Country Programme. However, COAFG should consider how to inform donors that a wider approach to drug control has yielded results elsewhere in Asia in projects sometimes funded by the same donor agencies.

Among the reasons why this institutional memory was not used, was that many donors did not recognize UNODC as an implementing agency (as one senior member of an INTG actually working with I87 in alternative livelihoods told an Evaluation Team member). Furthermore, COAFG staff

placed more emphasis on advocacy and making drug control a cross-cutting issue than in promoting the idea that UNODC should implement AL projects in Afghanistan (especially when fund-raising for Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement was meeting with success). Whether UNODC should be implementing projects is discussed later in this report.

The projects evaluated went through several revisions. The main reasons for these multiple revisions included improperly written project documents in the first place, new requests by donors for the projects to implement more activities, changes in the focus of the project, and difficulties in completing activities in the difficult implementing environment of Afghanistan. The experience of working through these revisions, the staff learning how to prepare effective project documents, as well as to deliver outputs in Afghanistan all contributed to UNODC becoming better recognized as a capable development agency with a clearly defined operating niche. This amounted to a macro-level learning-by-doing initiative that, while not intended by the Country Office, nonetheless took place and contributed to UNODC adapting its experience gained in other countries for its operations in Afghanistan. At the end of the projects, other agencies, from the United States Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) to Afghan Government offices, were asking for help from UNODC in diverse areas, something they never did in 2008 when these projects began to be implemented.

This contributed to some projects, especially as noted by the Law Enforcement Evaluator (but not restricted to the LE sector), operating independently of one another. Although no major problems occurred as a result of this, it did impair implementation and should be noted.

At the same time, the process of project implementation had shortcomings besides those regarding the project documentation. Although designed to complement each other, the many revisions led to the scope of several overlapping. This created some confusion among the staff and also among the Evaluation Team as well as to what project and what activity they were actually evaluating. As noted in the IDM Report, described and discussed elsewhere in this report, relations between Headquarters and COAFG was inadequate. Although the projects eventually all made substantial contributions, had inter-agency relations been smoother, more could have been done, a greater amount of donor support would have been received, and UNODC's niche would have been larger.

To be sure, the Evaluation Team remains positive overall about the progress made by UNODC in implementing the eight projects evaluated here. Furthermore, except for some confusion over the Health and Livelihood Cluster, the configuration of which was out of COAFG's control, the Clusters were appropriately defined, the projects in them basically complementary, and that as a whole much was accomplished. All this has contributed to the efficient formulation of the new Strategic Framework as well as the new Country and the new Regional Programme.

II. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

This composite report contains evaluations of eight projects in three of UNODC's four thematic clusters, constituting a significant portion of the organisation's overall work in Afghanistan. Since these three clusters, of law enforcement, criminal justice, and health and livelihood, comprise the bulk of UNODC's work, this evaluation comes close to being an evaluation of the entire UNODC country office's activities in Afghanistan. Please see a summary of the eight project evaluations in annex. While the individual evaluation reports discuss the specific projects, this concluding section reviews the overall approach taken by UNODC in Afghanistan and how this fits into the situation in Afghanistan as a whole. Beginning with fund-raising and technical support from the organization's headquarters in Vienna, this section comprehensively assesses UNODC's methods of operating in Afghanistan. The Country Programme here is the biggest UNODC operation in the world. Lessons learned will have a global impact.

UNODC has earned respect from the Government of Afghanistan, much of the international community, as well as donors for how it addresses the issues of drugs and crime and how it operates in the challenging security environment of Afghanistan. UNODC has successfully elevated the niche area of drugs and crime to being a cross-cutting issue that must be dealt with for the country to develop economically and socially.

To do this effectively, it will be necessary for COAFG to tighten its project implementation processes and for the organisation as a whole to commit itself to more project implementation. The IDM 2013 report referenced in this report gives guidelines that will contribute to this process. However, UNODC may well want to launch a review of its structure to see if it is positioned to take advantage of the opportunities arising in Afghanistan for expanding its operations as well as how it can contribute to the welfare of other countries with weak governments and high levels of corruption.

UNODC in Afghanistan

Of the many agencies in the United Nations, the mandate of UNODC is among the most appropriate to the needs of Afghanistan. The Evaluation Team agrees that UNODC's work here has been a positive force in rebuilding the nation's administrative structure and in strengthening the people of Afghanistan's confidence in the government. UNODC's mandate, encompassing law enforcement, judicial reform, and alternative development, addresses needs critical to stabilizing the Government of Afghanistan and sustaining the rule of law.

These accomplishments have been achieved in an environment of insecurity and poverty. Although, as discussed before, security incidents such as suicide attacks seem to be levelling off, the insurgents have increased the number of provinces in which they operate. The result is that security restrictions are expanding with a greater number of delays now than just a few years ago. The poor infrastructure of the country exacerbates difficulties, making work in the country challenging even when the security risks are few. Without a dedicated and industrious staff, UNODC could not have accomplished its many achievements. The poor infrastructure of the country exacerbates difficulties, making work in the country challenging even when security risks are few.

Within the few weeks of the Evaluation Team's first mission, there were security-related bans on visiting government offices, travel cancellations because of malfunctioning aircraft, and one evacuation in the face of a disturbance in a provincial city. While these were inconvenient to the

evaluators, this does not compare with the constraints of working under these conditions on projects carrying on for years.¹¹

Nevertheless, COAFG's perseverance, project implementation, and mainstreaming the issue of counter narcotics have placed the agency in a strategically important position. Drugs are a major problem with Afghanistan the leading producer of opiates in the world by far. The income from the trade, estimated in 2010 to be US\$172,780,000 supports corruption and crime throughout the country. The trade in precursor chemicals brings in more income for those involved (UNODC 2012, p. 36). Without this income, corruption in the country would be lower and crime surely less. UNODC's projects directly address the major threats brought about by opium poppy cultivation and the trade in opiates and precursors. This is directly related to issues of law enforcement and criminal justice, the two other pillars for projects in the clusters evaluated.

UNODC has also created awareness that opium poppy cultivation is not a kind of aberration, as many development agencies believe, but also a development issue contributing to corruption, crime, addiction, and poverty. UNODC's work helped change the Government's perception of opium production that had often been overlooked in the past but which is now considered as a cross-cutting issue (if not a National Priority).

UNODC's work and advocacy with the Government to show the importance of drug issues to alleviating poverty and crime, and the Government's acceptance thereof, has elevated UNODC's image within the Government and with donors. As noted earlier, a representative of the Canadian Embassy insisted that the evaluators mention in the Evaluation Report that UNODC was a respected partner which accomplished its project objectives.

This is a timely development and places UNODC in a strategically strong position for the transition following the withdrawal of most international security forces and the simultaneous reduction in international funding in some sectors as of 2014. UNODC's own transition to a programme approach allows it to take innovative actions at this pivotal time.

UNODC should be planning to build on the accomplishments of the eight projects evaluated in this report which, as the reports herein show, were implemented satisfactorily. Despite obstacles in terms of security and remote activity sites, as well as sometimes weak project document formulation and reporting, the (usually revised) objectives were accomplished with positive outputs resulting from each.

However, two significant issues must be resolved before UNODC can move to take advantage of this strategic position. One is internal, regarding UNODC's structural make-up and orientation regarding project implementation. The other relates to the operating environment in Afghanistan.

Project Implementation

It is crucial to note, as all the eight evaluation reports indicate either explicitly or implicitly, that UNODC is not structurally organized to be an implementing agency. An example of this is the fact that, largely because UNODC Afghanistan did not expect sufficient timely support from Vienna to implement more projects, in the last five years COAFG turned down tens of millions of dollars of potential funding.¹² Headquarters' cumbersome procurement and grants processes impede field

¹¹ It should be noted that threats are not inevitable. During the second evaluation mission, admittedly during the winter when terrorist threats are reduced, the evaluation schedule was maintained with no security-related changes to the schedule.

¹² From a conversation between one evaluator and the COAFG official who said he turned down such a request.

operations so much that UNODC Afghanistan has felt obliged to refrain from starting more projects that would have enhanced the agency's position in the country as well as have earned more project support costs that would have benefitted the entire organization. At the same time, DM Vienna states that COAFG has a weak absorption capacity and made poor submissions which delayed approving grants.

Earlier in the preparation of this report, the Evaluation Team thought it might have to suggest that UNODC needed to decide whether to be an implementing or a normative agency. However, the report of the Inter-Divisional Mission (made available to the evaluators in early 2013) makes it clear that the agency will continue implementing projects.

The IDM Mission report also noted problems of coordination between Vienna and COAFG. The IDM report makes several recommendations on how COAFG and Headquarters can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation. These are summarized below:

- (a) COAFG should strengthen the current administrative structure in the office.
- (b) Clear guidelines on grants and implementing partnerships should be established and disseminated by the Division for Management.
- (c) Annual procurement plans should be submitted in a timely manner both in COAFG and the Procurement Section. Should necessary expertise not exist in COAFG, assistance from the Procurement Section or external consultants should be sought in a timely manner. In the future, consideration should be given to increase the delegation of procurement authority to the Procurement Officer of COAFG.
- (d) Liaise with UNDP to address the slow delivery of services.
- (e) An updated instruction on the authority and relevant administrative arrangements to recruit international consultants should be issued by the Division for Management.
- (f) There should be more regular and periodic communications between Vienna and COAFG.¹³

These recommendations support, to some degree, the devolution of authorization of powers to UNODC field offices under the direct authority of the country representatives. In addition, an online tracking system for procurement, grants, and recruitment should be developed to allow initiating officers to monitor activities online within a framework that will also allow it to report against indicators and the means of verification in the logframe. This will enable projects and programmes to facilitate and synthesize reporting.

Security in Afghanistan

The other major issue regarding UNODC's continued field work in Afghanistan stems from the reduction in international forces in 2014 that may well provide increased risks to projects implemented by UNODC and other agencies particularly those outside of Kabul. The Afghan police will be expected to play a much bigger role in providing internal security.

While this issue is not directly addressed (if even mentioned) in the main UNODC description of the Country Programme for Afghanistan 2012-2014 or in its booklet (for donors and other interested parties) on the Regional Programme, its relevance to the evaluation of future UNODC work in Afghanistan cannot be ignored.

¹³ There were quarterly VTCs between Kabul and Vienna with follow-up monitored. However, the Evaluation Team understands this suggestion to mean this level of direct contact was insufficient.

Related to the draw down by ISAF and others, several embassies are expected to reduce funding for a range of activities, counter narcotics included. There will be an expected reduction of MoI forces by 30 per cent which poses a risk to the CNPA as a whole and most definitely to the provincial forces.

However, there are also opportunities in the emerging situation. Less ISAF will not be all bad and reduced resources may not be all negative. Among potential positives is the fact that the intelligence community is growing more unified. Reduced resources may well will force greater cooperation. The Afghan police are much better trained and capable than in the past. UNODC law enforcement officials all believe the security situation will not collapse after 2014 and that project implementation can continue.

According to UNODC staff, there is a growing recognition in the country that military forces will no longer have primacy and that a bigger role will have to be played by the police. Until the present, there was little cooperation between the two but now elements of the police and army are now merging. This is expected to give the police more of the authority delegated under the constitution which the relevant COAFG staff members view as a positive.

While this does not mean that Afghanistan will be safer under the Transition, it does indicate that law enforcement experts expect that police forces will be taking over much of the responsibility for maintaining law and order which may well precede a reduction in armed conflict. Certainly UNODC Afghanistan believes this is likely or else it would either have discussed the issue to some degree in its reports on future activities or drafted future activities in a significantly scaled-down manner.

Looking to the future, all of this indicates that, because of UNODC's mandate, it is strategically well positioned for future activities in Afghanistan. As shall be discussed under the recommendations section, it would be prudent for UNODC to continue considering how to implement activities in a semi-direct manner, that is, through national partners, NGOs, and other agencies that will implement projects designed and monitored by UNODC.

III. OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

For UNODC Afghanistan to continue implementing projects and increasing its assistance to the Government, it must resolve the issue of headquarters support for field office authority and implementation. As the situation now stands, the process of implementing projects runs counter to the logic guiding the administration of UNODC in its Headquarters.

COAFG Needs to Continue Mainstreaming Initiatives and Advocacy with the Afghanistan Government

UNODC's work at the policy level has been successful in all three clusters evaluated. This has led to the Government according more importance to the issue of narcotics. From not even being the primary organization in counter narcotics and crime prevention work in Afghanistan in 2008, when some projects evaluated in this report began operations, UNODC now has taken over the lead, is the main institutional support for the Ministry of Counter Narcotics, and is supporting all the other Government agencies involved counter narcotics work.

Until now, UNODC's advocacy has focused on counter narcotics. As the Office shifts to a programme approach, it is appropriate that its advocacy expands in scope. For example, it could advocate more for good governance through the expanded authority of the High Office on Oversight to begin the prosecution of corruption cases rather than simply referring them to the Attorney General's Office. UNODC supported the growth in capacity of the High Office under R86 but, as it is, the job of fighting corruption is incomplete because the High Office only can refer cases to another agency over which it has no control. The scope of UNODC's advocacy can be expanded in other clusters as well.

As a part of mainstreaming, UNODC (especially COAFG) should expand its advocacy to public relations to the population of Afghanistan as a whole. At present COAFG's public relations is barely in operation. As an example, after CJ project R86 trained reporters on writing articles on corruption, not one story was published in local media. Even donors complained that they were not kept informed of the accomplishments of projects they funded. COAFG needs to reassess how its message is projected (and not projected) to the people of Afghanistan, to the Government, and to other stakeholders.

The format and presentation of the publicity needs also to be assessed. Some donors commented that they did not only need formal reports and ProFi data (which sometimes arrived later than the donors wanted). They told the Evaluation Team that sometimes, quick notices like Twitter feeds would be more than satisfactory in allowing them to stay abreast of project achievements (the Pope uses such feeds—(@Pontifex)—so COAFG should be able to also). Perhaps, as a way to begin using social media, COAFG could make feeds for the public with information on UNODC activities that could also be accessed by donors. This could then be refined further depending on the needs of COAFG, donors, and other stakeholders. In any case, social media should only be part of a broader effort to make UNODC's accomplishments in Afghanistan better known.

Similarly, COAFG has supported a considerable amount of research that has yielded useful information in multiple sectors. COAFG will do both its image a favour and further its cause by continuing such research and also organizing public forums, seminars, and training events on the results of these studies.

While Continuing Oversight of Programme Similar to How These Eight Projects Were Administered, UNODC Headquarters Needs to Coordinate with COAFG to Reduce Inefficiencies in Support of Project Implementation

There are also lessons to be learned from implementing agencies in the United Nations, such as UNDP, which has decentralized its operations to a certain degree while maintaining strict quality controls. One such mechanism is the Small Grants Committee which is based at the country office and holds the authority to approve substantial sums for projects—in Afghanistan up to US\$100,000.

One way to facilitate this devolution is to have an online tracking system for procurement, grants, and recruitment to allow initiating officer to monitor activities online. Not only will this supplement and backstop the monitoring and evaluation system (carried out under the direction of COAFG) recommended in this report, but it will help ensure (through reminders and notifications to multiple stakeholders) that required exercises, such as tripartite meetings, are held.

Through the proposed system's tracking function, activity implementation (and insofar as possible, procurement, grants, and recruitment) will be monitored so that project managers can report achievements against the indicators in the Project logframe. This proposed system, which will require some field testing before it will be satisfactory to all, will complement the automated lograme providing useful redundancy in recording the means of verification. This will also enable projects and programmes to synthesize reporting through enhanced communication between key personnel.

COAFG Expands Mainstreaming to Examine New Ways, Consistent with UNODC's Mission, to Support the Afghan Government's Effort to Reduce Drugs and Crime and Improve Its Justice System

COAFG is in a position to enhance albeit indirectly, the security situation in Afghanistan through the implementation of its Country Programme. By supporting the Government's efforts to reduce crime and control illegal drug use, COAFG will contribute to increased security in the country. Training law enforcement personnel (at a time when the police will be playing a larger role in maintaining the country's security) and providing related inputs will help the Government directly at points where it specifically needs the most help in controlling crime.

COAFG Needs to Expand Its Implementation Partners

As the scope of policy expands, it would be natural for the number of partners UNODC works with to grow as well. Such an expansion makes good sense because of uncertainty over the future security situation, possible shortages in funding, and also as a means to promote local involvement and project sustainability. UNODC should work in all sectors either with local agencies or in a training of trainer's modality. UNODC has done this in all three clusters evaluated. In Law Enforcement Project I77, the support given the Police Academy has enabled trainees to become empowered so as to provide the training in sensitive areas where international staff cannot operate freely. In both R87 and T03, entailing extension to the provinces, following training, it was the Government officials who carried out the bulk of the training in the provinces (sometimes under the supervision of international or national UNODC staff). All of this will help the Government provide better security for the country and, thus, enable the country of Afghanistan to develop economically and socially.

COAFG Needs to Establish a Satisfactory Monitoring and Evaluation System

In several cases, the impact of training could not be evaluated because there was no follow up with the trainees. In several Criminal Justice projects, the evaluator noted that the impact of training needs to be better understood.

There was an average of about five project revisions for the eight projects, so many that it was difficult for the evaluators to know what to evaluate.

UNODC needs to establish a monitoring and evaluation process to measure progress and facilitate reporting. Doing so will improve donor relations, an issue noted by some agencies supporting UNODC work. Furthermore, having sound statistical evidence of outputs will contribute to more accurate planning (and also help external evaluators being able to measure outputs effectively).

Enhanced monitoring and evaluation also will be more needed as UNODC expands its work with partners and through mentoring. Doing less direct implementation will require UNODC to stay aware of what the partners are doing so that it can report on activities, outputs, and outcomes properly and in a timely manner.

This process should be linked to the online tracking system which will allow UNODC to share relevant information with the stakeholders (while not allowing the system to be accessible to those outside of UNODC). Besides helping keep track of project status, this will also facilitate the mentoring process and the training of lower level staff who will also be able to track project implementation and disbursements.

As a part of this process, UNODC should begin to keep publications that it writes or sponsors in a secure centralized location. In particular the law codes, training manuals, and other materials in Dari or Pashtu need to be kept for future reference. Instead of having these items held by individual staff members they should be kept either as hard or digital copies or both because they could be useful in future work.

Having these on hand will help UNODC publicize its own work, something which the agency has not done well in Afghanistan. In R86, one activity was the training of journalists on reporting narcotics issues. However, no one could show the CJ evaluator any stories or articles published or broadcast as a result of the training.

Clearly, UNODC needs to improve publicizing its activities. UNODC should consider assisting the public relations department of the CNPA and other government agencies as a means to spread the word about its accomplishments. This will energize the expansion of its mainstreaming initiative, add to the credibility it has established with the Government, and, may well, prompt more project funding.

COAFG Should Work with Implementing Partners to Promote Intelligence Gathering as a System

Police (ANP) primacy will become a major issue as Afghanistan Transitions and UNODC is well placed to assist in this development. In order to improve information flow between and among Government agencies a comprehensive plan for developing intelligence must be drawn up. Importantly, this plan must be owned by the Afghans (although supported by international mentors) and must understand and take stock of cultural and developmental differences between their ways and those of the mentors.

Besides establishing a system within Afghanistan, through the new UNODC Regional Programme, UNODC can take the lead in exploring the sharing of intelligence with its regional neighbours. Although challenging, UNODC's work on precursor chemicals (project I85) in which intelligence was shared internationally, shows how this can be done.

Actionable intelligence is the key to counter narcotics law enforcement. Without it, enforcement agencies can do little more than wait for events to unfold. UNODC should make use of its strategic

position and good standing with the Government to promote devising a comprehensive intelligence gathering this plan and making it a reality. Furthermore, as UNODC supports this process, it will be placing itself in a position to keep abreast of situations that could threaten its own further project implementation.

COAFG Should Implement through Mentoring

As a part of working with local implementing partners, it is essential to make sure that senior officials learn the subject matter of what is being introduced. Early delays in I77, regarding training the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan, were caused by overlooking this. UNODC should start its training work by ensuring that senior officials understand the conceptual and technical background of what is being introduced in projects.

Additionally, UNODC should remember (as it often did in the projects evaluated) that the training goes most efficiently when Afghans do the training. UNODC should ensure that its training efforts are consistent with Afghan requirements. In a society that is often top-down, this is essential.

In Kandahar, one of the most dangerous sites for UNODC activity implementation in all three sectors is being carried out at an acceptable standard (although sometimes behind schedule). Security constraints have severely restricted visits by international staff and even kept the national staff Kandahar Office Manager from visiting more than once every couple of months. The local staff has been able to continue implementation of activities.

However, through the mentoring process, activities are being implemented and the beneficiaries (such as in Alternative Livelihoods) are so satisfied they are asking for expansion of assistance. The lower level national staff members, such as those in Kandahar, have played a key role in project implementation. This should be continued under the new Country Programme.

COAFG Should Continue Organizing Workshops and Providing Training for Project Managers on Project Cycle Management and Proper Reporting

At the same time, COAFG must ensure that the components of the new Country Programme are administered properly. Tripartite meetings and proactive communication with donors must be carried out regularly and as scheduled. A proper understanding of how to write project documents, establish indicators, and work for outputs and outcomes will reduce some of the inefficiencies in working with Headquarters. While the ability of the staff to produce useful documentation increased over the period under evaluation, much more could be done, especially with new staff coming into positions of responsibility. Within COAFG, attention should be given to enforcing/strongly encouraging the use of knowledge already acquired by COAFG staff so that the system works as designed.

COAFG Should Support More Alternative Livelihood Activities

Alternative livelihoods is another area where working with more partners will be productive. UNODC pioneered the concept of alternative livelihoods in Southeast Asia whereby it integrated drug control and dealing with addicts with crop replacement and the promotion of other ways to make a living. UNODC played a major, if not decisive role, in substantial reductions of poppy production in Thailand, Laos, and parts of Myanmar where it had a sufficiently significant level of project implementation.

The initial and positive steps taken in I87 are sufficient to show that there is potential for similar accomplishments in Afghanistan despite formidable challenges and an entrenched poppy-growing and marketing culture and widespread addiction. As the UNODC experience in countries like Thailand,

the Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam show, establishing conditions for a sustained reduction in opium production requires a decades-long commitment by donors to provide funds, implementers to carry out activities, and the national government to sustain political will. UNODC has built up a considerable amount of experience in Southeast Asia that can be drawn on productively in Afghanistan.

From all accounts, the farmers and also local officials and academics are eager to make use of more alternative livelihoods experience. They have responded well to the promotion of new economic activities for poppy growers and have often (as in the case of Kandahar with saffron) taken the lead in promoting such activities.

As one of the next steps, UNODC should determine whether opium poppy cultivation is a poverty indicator in Afghanistan for cultivators as it has been shown to be in such places as the Lao PDR and Myanmar. In those countries, despite the cash income the farmers receive, many also get addicted to the substance for a variety of reasons but often as an outgrowth of using opium for its powerful medicinal properties. Once addicted, farmers tend to work less energetically and less productively resulting in lower income.

The Ministry of Counter Narcotics will be conducting socio-economic research on alternative livelihoods, a certain amount of which with UNODC. One topic that should be studied is whether opium poppy cultivation worsens poverty among the growers. Some UNODC national staff believe this is the case, but this should be scientifically verified.

If this can be verified, it will add substance to UNODC's mainstreaming efforts by showing that poppy cultivation is not only illegal but harmful to the economy. If the findings confirm this link, UNODC should work with MCN to devise appropriate action plans.

The I87 project established good links with village groups. These groups are in many cases able to carry out small infrastructure work and other development activities. Until now it has been very difficult to complete contractual arrangements with them due to UNODC regulations. If this can be resolved so that village groups can sign contracts with UNODC (or with partner agencies such as INGOs), this will further the mentoring process in a positive, high-quality, and cost-effective way because when such groups work to develop their own community they almost always do operate in a highly efficient manner.

Allowing other organisations and/or contractors to deliver under UNODC approved training guidance should be considered. UNODC should review its security requirements and seek other means of delivery as security will be an ever present issue.

This approach should be built directly into UNODC project formulation. More time will be required at the start-up phase to accommodate the introduction of new methods to senior staff and to set up the mentoring process. However, when the project is done, probably fewer revisions will be required and the outputs can be expected to be delivered at an acceptable level within a satisfactory time frame.

COAFG Should Continue Technical Assistance in Certain Institutions

The two capabilities that have some sustainability issues are the Mobile Detection Teams and the Forensic Laboratory. The Teams utilize specialist vehicles and search equipment which is not durable and can be expected to wear following normal usage. Unless the MoI continues to receive funding for upkeep and/or replacements of these capabilities, they will degrade. Due to the high tech nature of the Forensic Laboratory, it will require assistance with the upkeep of specialist equipment and provision of chemicals. UNODC should seek to reduce its support over time but it will be necessary for the next

few years. Other areas where UNODC financial support may well be required in the short term are travel and subsistence payments, stationery, and IT. In the Justice Support Centre in Jalalabad, the Ministry had been provided with computers and Internet equipment as well as funding for the Internet connection for the initial phase. When the funds for the latter ran out, the Government did not provide funding for this purpose. UNODC is aware of these issues and should make sure that funding under the Country Programme remains continuous but at the same time take appropriate action to reduce the culture of dependency.

In Southeast Asia, UNODC introduced a balanced approach, which included law enforcement, to alternative livelihoods. While this sometimes has discouraged other development agencies from recognizing UNODC's alternative livelihoods work as suitable, it is necessary when criminal groups are actively encouraging growers to continue planting opium poppy and to ignore the introduction of alternatives to it.

In Conjunction with Continuing Some Technical Assistance, COAFG Should Draw Up a Plan for Collecting Intelligence Systematically

UNODC is in a position, because of the niche area it has created involving multiple partners, to play the lead role in drawing up an overall intelligence plan. Through the Regional Programme, Progress made through support for Mobile Detection Teams and the Border Liaison Posts in building up trust, developing law enforcement networks, and training Afghan police, facilitates UNODC's ability to develop a regional intelligence system with a focus on drug crimes.

Kandahar Is a Good Place to Expand UNODC's AL, LE, and CJ Work

One province that should be seriously considered for more intensive work in all sectors is Kandahar. In the south of the country near some of Afghanistan's largest poppy cultivation, Kandahar is also the centre of Pashtu culture. The province borders Pakistan, is the home of a university with about 5,000 students in seven colleges, agriculture included. There has been a UNODC (or UNDCP) office since the mid-1990s that has established networks with farmers' groups and the local government. It is a strategic location with relatively strong local capacity and commitment where sufficient inputs and UNODC resources could make a significant step against drug production and drug marketing. If UNODC can carry out work here it will be a signal to the rest of the country that if counter narcotic work can succeed in the Pashtu heartland it can succeed elsewhere in Afghanistan.

Other provinces where productive work could be carried out expeditiously are Herat and Jowzjam. UNODC is already implementing activities here with an NGO. Several other international agencies are likely to be willing to work in both based on discussions with UNODC staff as related to the evaluation team. Both provinces are safer than Kandahar but are at risk of reverting to control by anti-government forces and reverting to poppy growing.

UNODC Should Realize Its Potential To Address Issues of Drugs and Crime by Expanding Operations to Countries Facing Problems within Its Mandate, Especially of Crime and Good Governance (Such as Somalia and Chad).

Since UNDCP transitioned to UNODC and took on a mandate encompassing crime not related to drugs, many new possibilities for implementing projects have arisen. It is beyond the scope of this report to address to what degree these possibilities have been acted upon. However, the Evaluation Team believes that UNODC has opportunities in areas where it has not been active especially in the area of good governance and crime. The experience gained in Afghanistan (and perhaps will gain in some of the countries in the new Regional Programme) gives UNODC the wherewithal to (in the words of the "Strategy for the period 2008-2011" for UNODC) (UNODC 2007), "contribute to the

achievement of security and justice” not only in Afghanistan situations through reforming the law enforcement and criminal justice systems in so-called “failed states” such as Somalia and Chad. UNODC Headquarters should assess to what degree it could expand operations, how its niche expertise could complement ongoing operations in those states, and what risks UNODC would face by operating there (such as related to human rights issues).¹⁴

UNODC Needs to Decide Whether to Be More of an Implementing Agency which Will Facilitate Its Ability to Take Advantage of New Project Opportunities in Countries with Weak Governments

UNODC belongs to the UN Secretariat. As such, and strictly speaking, UNODC should be carrying out normative work rather than engaging in technical cooperation. However, ever since 1971, UNFDAC, UNDCP, and now UNODC, have achieved considerable success in implementing projects. Since transitioning from UNDCP to UNODC new opportunities have arisen to implement projects and programmes. The experience gained in working in Afghanistan and the networks the organization has developed put it in a position to grow as an agency and achieve positive results in new areas of the world.

Before doing this, UNODC as a whole should review its structure and its mandate. This review can build on the findings of the IDM mission to Afghanistan in late-2012 that suggest more effective ways for project implementation to take place. UNODC is positioned strategically to conduct projects in several countries where it does not now operate.

The Evaluators are not recommending that UNODC focus less on normative work in order to do more technical cooperation because that is an important component of its mandate that should be continued. However, UNODC has exhibited considerable expertise in technical cooperation by implementing projects that have been favorably evaluated (such as in this report) in difficult situations. The United Nations as a whole would benefit from UNODC finding away to make use of these assets as would the countries in which UNODC carries out projects.

Ten years after becoming UNODC, the time for a review of its role and its potential for achieving more is here. It may be advantageous for the organisation to consolidate its mandates in order to further develop its specialist expertise and examine how it can capitalize on this expertise within a technical cooperation ‘market’ that already has a number of much larger actors. However, this will require working how the Office might move closer to becoming a specialized agency while continuing to do normative work.

Summary

In short, UNODC should take advantage of its good standing with the Government to work at the policy and mentoring level, together with partners at various levels (national, regional and international), to promote a balanced approach to Counter Narcotics. UNODC should utilize its successful experience in reducing poppy cultivation in Southeast Asia to do the same in Afghanistan. This will build on its successful mainstreaming, reduce security risks, foster the growth of an enabling environment for good governance, introduce other agencies into counter narcotics work, and broaden both the niche in which UNODC operates and help reduce narcotics problems and do so in the cost-effective way in which it has already been operating.

¹⁴ In this regard, UNODC has worked in states with serious human rights issues, such as Colombia and Myanmar with appropriate tact and caution so that no severe damage to UNODC resulted. Although beyond the scope of this Evaluation, there is good reason to expect that suitable working relationships can be worked in other such countries.

IV. OVERALL LESSONS LEARNED

UNODC has an Established Niche in Afghanistan

From 2008 to the present, that is, during the life of the projects evaluated in this report, UNODC has established for itself a recognized area of expertise and competence. The importance of counter narcotics, although obvious to those within UNODC, came to be accepted by the Government as an issue that must be addressed if Afghanistan is to develop, continue to establish the rule of law, and for crime and corruption to be contained.

Although the importance of Alternative Livelihoods to solving these issues has not been completely established, UNODC's role in addressing the major issues confronting Afghanistan is much better established and recognized than before. Better publicity and reporting will be useful in increasing this recognition (and also awareness in Headquarters) of UNODC's work. It will also lead to a fuller use of the balanced approach to drug control that was pioneered in Southeast Asia.

The Indirect Implementation Process Used by UNODC Can Be Used in High-Risk Security Situations

For reasons partially related to security, UNODC developed over the course of several years an approach of working with partners, using national staff in remote areas, and subcontracting work to other agencies. While guidance from international staff is required, once the senior staff of the partner agency, such as a government office, learns what is to be done, then other members of the agency can be called on to implement the project, such as in training officials, usually quite effectively. These partners will well-understand cultural and linguistic factors that might interfere with an international staff member. Similarly, national staff or others from Afghanistan working on a project can operate in areas too sensitive for international staff members.

This approach is now recognized as the most appropriate way to operate in a situation where the security situation is not expected to improve any time soon. This approach strikes a balance between providing international mentoring and monitoring with national implementation. If this is introduced in the project formulation stage, the project timeline can be adhered to more closely, and the number of revisions will be reduced (noting of course that some revisions resulted from entirely different reasons).

Project Cycle Management and Proper Reporting is Essential

As noted in several of the individual reports, some project documents were poorly written that made evaluation difficult. Some of the reports referred to poor donor relations.

In some previous versions of the Independent Evaluation Unit template, there was a section on issues solved during the Evaluation. This is one such case.

At the first mission of the Evaluation Team, a representative of one important donor embassy complained about inadequate communication between it and UNODC. The embassy personnel complained that they did not know enough about the outputs of the project which made it difficult for them to report to their superiors about how the donor's money was spent and what impact it had.

On the second mission, about six weeks later, the Team visited the same embassy and met one of the same individuals who reported that everything had been cleared up and that in the previous month, UNODC had furnished an ample amount of information on project accomplishments so that the embassy was satisfied.

Also, over the years the projects under evaluation were implemented, UNODC made increasingly sure that new project managers became familiar with project cycle management, and knew how to prepare proper project documents. The quality of documentation at the end of the projects being evaluated had improved insofar as the Evaluation Team could see. The continued training of new managers in the project cycle will be advantageous in the implementation of activities under the new UNODC Country Programme.

It is not clear how much the Country Office has learned this lesson but the Evaluation Team believes that progress is being made in this regard.

The Need for and Benefits of Better Monitoring and Evaluation is Recognized

At the end-of-mission briefing following the first portion of the Evaluation, when it was suggested that UNODC Afghanistan needed better monitoring and evaluation, the response was positive. UNODC Afghanistan is aware that the activities it will be implementing in the new Country Programme need to be monitored and evaluated in order that the outputs be accomplished on schedule. More than under the present Country stand-alone projects, the new Programme will be interrelated and the activities linked. Monitoring will be necessary to achieve the goals of the overall Programme.

In line with the other lessons learned, the national staff will be the ones who must play an active role in monitoring. For linguistic reasons and due to the fact that international staff will not be able to visit all the project sites easily or readily, the national Afghan staff will be the primary implementers of this component.

In so doing, UNODC will be building national capacity. In helping the national staff become the chief monitors of Programme activities, this will be a step in preparing for time, most likely years in the future (but in the future for sure), when the people of Afghanistan manage their own affairs. Best practices acquired in the process of monitoring and evaluating UNODC activities will be shared with other agencies and with Government officials (with possibly some UNODC staff joining the Government).

Much remains to be done in Afghanistan regarding drugs and crime. UNODC has learned effective ways to operate and to achieve beneficial results. As it moves forward, creating a system that is sustainable with an Afghan lead will be the next big goal. Years off it may be, but planning for it cannot begin too early. The starting up of a monitoring and evaluation system with a local base is one beginning in the long process towards containing drug and crime problems in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

ANNEX I. SUMMARY OF THE EIGHT PROJECTS EVALUATED¹⁵

Law Enforcement: Project AFG/I77 (Support for a Counter Narcotics Training Unit within the Afghan Police Academy) - Final overall approved budget: US\$6,235,360.

The initial overall objective was “To enhance the capacity of Afghan drug law enforcement officials and allied Agencies involved in Country Narcotics in Afghanistan by establishing a permanent coordination/monitoring mechanism that will function to coordinate all offers of training from International partners or bodies.”

The initial outputs were as follows:

- Establishment of a dedicated CN Training Unit.
- The identification and training of dedicated master trainers
- Delivery of CN courses to all relevant staff.
- Number of personnel trained for counter narcotics.
- Quality of training material developed.
- Quality of training delivered.
- Increased number of illicit drug-related crime cases detected, investigated and prepared for prosecution.
- Development of recognized standardized curriculum.
- Increased levels of detection and seizure of illicit drugs.

Over the course of 48 months and 3 Project revisions these were reformulated to:

- *Recruit International and National Staff for the Project.*
- *Fully equip the dedicated CNTU.*
- *Identification, Recruitment and Training of Staff.*
- *Develop training material and National CN curriculum, Resource Centre and database of courses.*
- *Delivery of training courses and arranging of study tours.*

Because of issues with Afghan Tashkil amendments, implementation was delayed by 48 months. This led to the training of instructors being delayed until 2009. Only then could the staff be recruited and the CNTU equipped. Training material and the National CN curriculum, Resource Centre, and the course database were also completed. At present, training courses and study tours are being carried out. Afghan trainers are on the job with feedback that the students are learning better when Afghans do the training.

The Project has empowered the Afghanistan Ministry of Interior (MoI), through CNTA, to provide both basic counter narcotics training and specialized training, such as Precursor Control, Intelligence, Information Technology (IT) and Basic English in order to enhance the operational and administrative

¹⁵ Information for all projects taken from ProFi and the individual project documents.

capacity of CNPA. The CNTA is now a single focus Academy for all CN teaching and curriculum development in Afghanistan. To date the CNTA has provided Counter Narcotic training for approximately 4,600 individuals.

Project AFG/I85 (Regional Cooperation in Precursor Control between Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries) - Final overall approved budget: US\$6,905,440.

The overall objective was to develop a fully comprehensive precursor chemical control program that included identification of the key chemical entry points; development of both regional and international information analysis, and exchange systems designed to target and dismantle criminal operations as well as capacity building in terms of training and equipment for interdiction along key Afghan borders.

The outputs in the original Project Document were:

- Establishment of a dedicated precursor control unit (PCU) within Intelligence Department of the CNP-A. The PCU is to have the capacity to detect and arrest individuals involved in the trafficking of precursor chemicals.
- Development of national capacity (tools, skills, expertise, and awareness) in the region to identify and seize suspicious consignments of chemicals in targeted production areas.
- Development of the Afghan capacity through the CNP-A to raid remote illicit heroin laboratory and to safely and effectively dispose of the precursor chemicals.
- Development of a database to collect/analyse intelligence that will target trafficking organizations and identify key crossing points for enhanced interdiction.

There were three Project revisions in the Project life, and the outputs were altered to:

Phase I until Dec 2011

- *Ministry of Interior includes Precursor Control Unit (PCU) of the Counter Narcotics Police Afghanistan onto the Tashkil (Afghan National Police Program).*
- *Relevant Government of Afghanistan law enforcement agencies, in particular PCU – CNPA, Border Police and Customs, increase both the quantity and quality of operations designed to detect, seize, and/or dispose of illicit consignments of precursor chemicals.*
- *Relevant Government of Afghanistan law enforcement agencies, in particular PCU, effectively participate in national, regional and international efforts to gather and share information/intelligence on precursor chemicals.*
- *Drug Regulation Committee (DRC) of the Ministry of Counter Narcotics effectively regulates the licit trade with precursor Chemicals.*
- *Mobile Detection Teams deployed on Afghanistan's western border to identify and intercept consignments of smuggled chemicals.*

Phase II until Q3 2013

- *Advanced investigative techniques, including intelligence-led investigations and controlled deliveries utilised in the region.*
- *Methodologies and techniques used to detect, identify and dispose of chemicals seized in the region.*

- *Operational intelligence in the region enhanced.*

The Project delivered a fully trained and operational PCU. Implementation was delayed for three reasons: lack of an international subject matter expert, the inadequate capacity of many in the CNPA to absorb the Project, and Afghan structural issues. Once a Project Coordinator was hired, the Project progressed as designed. Secondly, the initial batch of Afghan officers was mostly incapable of undertaking the training. Only when a more rigorous selection mechanism was introduced could the PCU select officers with the capacity to improve their English, work with computers and undertake technical precursor training. Once trained, the best officers were taken onto the unit's Tashkil; this ability to down select is rare in Afghanistan and is a positive endorsement of the PCU. Thirdly, the PCU like many other Afghan organisations has structural issues that caused what is apparently a temporary decline in PCU staff that should be rectified in 2013.

The I85 Project allowed UNODC to channel its expertise into a niche area where few, if any, other organisations could deliver assistance. The Project not only increased capacity within Afghanistan, but assisted UNODC's regional precursor control initiative. The Project supported the UN Security Council's Resolution and was relevant in the wider fight against narcotics, and as a mechanism to support the CNPA.

The PCU became operational in 2009. Seizures of precursors increased between 2009 and 2011 to the extent whereby UNODC believes it has forced many narco-traffickers to export raw opium to process in other countries. This theory is supported by a reduction in precursor chemical seizures during 2012. Seizures rates have dropped, as some narco-traffickers see the risks of importing precursor chemicals into Afghanistan as too high compared to the risk of refining heroin in neighbouring countries.

Law Enforcement Project AFG/J43 (Strengthening the Operational Capability of Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) - Final overall approved budget :US\$7,922,184.

The overall objective was to enhance capacity of the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan, CNPA, to respond effectively to drug trafficking, diversion of precursors and related organized crime, including the utilization of special investigative techniques in the detection and investigation of organized crime and drug trafficking.

The outputs were:

- CNPA in Kabul and key provinces equipped and trained to perform effective drug law enforcement activities.
- CNPA offices in two provincial centres – Pule-Khumre in Baghlan and Kandahar Provinces as well as the drug forensic laboratory at CNPA-HQ Kabul province – designed, built and equipped for efficient drug law enforcement.
- Well functioning administrative support units able to provide all necessary services to operational units.
- Increased involvement of Afghanistan officials in regional and international cooperation law enforcement initiatives.
- Vetted units, comprising of approximately 40 officers, will be trained to conduct risk-led, dynamic operations focused on detecting narcotics and the illicit movement of criminally derived funds through canalized locations, primarily Kabul and Kandahar airports.

The Project provided both capacity building for the staff and the construction of CNPA facilities. In terms of the budget and the time allocated, the initial Project documentation was

too ambitious. The Project was beset by problems as it involved constructing multiple buildings which is not a UNODC core skill. The buildings were completed except in Kandahar where construction is ongoing and expected to be finished in 2013.

J43 was a relevant Project that sought to support to the CNPA, the primary organization fighting the narcotics trade in Afghanistan. In supporting the CNPA, the UNODC has placed itself in a position of influence and has the ability to bring together donors and actors to a neutral table to support the Afghans. UNODC has provided a useful forum for discussion, both externally with regional actors and internally with the Government and the international community.

Since J43 commenced in 2007, there has been a significant change in CNPA capability. It is now a much improved and making markedly more seizures. The real successes of J43 was the mentoring and assistance offered niche and specialist areas, particularly the development of the Forensic Laboratory. This state of the art facility is critical to the prosecution of suspects as it is sole authority for proving whether a substance is illegal or not. Where the Project experienced delays was in the construction of police facilities.

Law Enforcement Project AFG/J55 – Integrated Border Control Project in Western/South-Western Afghanistan - Final approved budget : US\$7,740,500.

The Overall Objective was to enhance and enable the capabilities and the capacity of the ABP and the allied agencies involved in CN efforts, by building a strategically located operating base in the most prolific smuggling area in Afghanistan. The police station will be located in the south of Nimroz province, bordering both Iran and Pakistan, and it will enforce the RoL with a fully manned, trained and equipped ABP Unit.

The immediate objectives were:

- The Regional Border Police Centre built and operational in Nimroz province. The Centre's police trained, equipped and the unit staffed with qualified officers, in order to perform effective policing and drug interdiction operations.
- Mobile Interdiction Teams established, equipped and trained, and effectively conducting drug interdiction operations.
- A compatible radio communication system is established, to link the Regional Centre to Area Border Posts, Brigade, Battalion and Company Headquarters.
- Establishment of required offices and facilities, located in Kabul and Nimroz.

Over the course of Project's life and numerous revisions the outputs were changed to:

To disrupt the drug flow and the flow of precursor chemicals between Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan by enhancing the capabilities and capacity of the Afghan Border Police to establish rule of law in Western/South-western Afghanistan.

- *An efficient Afghan Border Police established in west/south-western Nimroz through construction of an operating base, provision of equipment and training as well as cross-border cooperation.*
- Mobile Interdiction Teams are established, equipped and trained and effectively conduct drug interdiction operations.
- A compatible radio communication system is established, to link the Regional Centre to Area Border Posts, Brigade, Battalion and Company Headquarters.
- Establishment of required offices and facilities, located in Kabul and Nimroz.

- *Regular operational level meetings between Afghan Border Police and counterparts in neighbouring countries as appropriate.*
- *Enhancing and strengthening the operational capabilities of the Afghan Border Police at western/south-western borders of Afghanistan with Iran and Pakistan through provision of equipment, training and supplies.*
- *Fully functioning Border Liaison Offices are established and operational at the selected, approved and agreed upon locations between Afghanistan, I.R. of Iran and Pakistan i.e. Islam Qalah, Torkham, Spin Boldak, Nawa Pass, and Ghulam Khan.*
- *An ABP facility is up graded/refurbished and equipped in Kandahar to maximize the effectiveness of the ABP in accordance with the Border Management Task Force plans and UNODC Country Strategy.*

J55 was scheduled to run for 3 years and actually ran for over 5 years. It was originally budgeted for US\$3,893,000. The final approved budget was US\$7,740,500.

The initial focus of the Project was too tactical. Although the original concept envisaged fully equipped and trained ABP Regiments along the border, the Project instead focused on delivering tactical security infrastructure in a single location and training and equipping a small ABP Force. Given the security situation, the funding, staff and resource costs, even this limited objective was beyond UNODC's capabilities.

Afghanistan lacks a unified vision of how its borders should be secured and by whom. Until such a time that the Afghan Government can articulate a resource prioritised strategy, projects that seek to deliver tactical infrastructure risk being irrelevant or unsustainable.

In the end, however, the J55 Project delivered the Border Liaison Office concept for US\$7 million. This is a major achievement. UNODC managed to put in place not only the high level agreements between Afghanistan and its regional neighbours, but also deliver the tactical tools to ensure that liaison is possible. UNODC has promoted and facilitated numerous high level working groups and ministerial meetings that have not just promised greater cooperation, but have actually started to deliver.

Criminal Justice Project AFGR86 (Strengthening Anti-Corruption Measures in Afghanistan)

_ Overall approved budget : US\$8,943,947.

The Project's Overall Objective was to support the development of a sustainable broad-based National Anti-Corruption Strategy in line with the requirements of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). There four immediate four objectives were to:

- support the development of a sustainable broad-based National Anti-Corruption Strategy in line with the requirements of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), including the establishment of a Secretariat responsible for guiding and monitoring its effective implementation;
- support the review and drafting of key legislation in accordance with the requirements of the UNCAC;
- strengthen the basic capacity, professionalism, accountability and integrity of the Attorney General's Office, in particular the anticorruption unit, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the UNCAC; and
- enhance the skills and professional knowledge of judges and prosecutors in handling corruption cases.

This Project worked with the Attorney General's Office and the Supreme Court in support of a sustainable National Anti-Corruption Strategy, an approach integral to the Operational Targets as per the COAFG Strategic Programme Framework 2006-2010 which was in turn linked to benchmarks in the ANDS and National Priority Programmes.

UNODC was requested, through this Project, by the Government to lead the Anti-Corruption Working Group (WG) and the Anti-Corruption Cross Cutting Thematic Group (CCTG), both established within the framework of the Afghanistan Compact to "serve as the forum through which Government will establish and articulate national policies and through which donors will coordinate their activities and align with those policies." This Project supports the work of these groups.

Although the High Office of Oversight (HoO) was not mentioned in the original Project Document, UNODC supported the HoO through this Project. Then, when HoO became operational, supporting its work constituted the main reason for the Project's first revision. Through this Project UNODC supported capacity building within the High Office, provided technical and material support to set up a database system to monitor yearly changes in the assets held by Afghan officials, and to refine the methods of reporting cases of corruption so that, by the end of the Project, internally, the HoO was functioning well.

Two obstacles to the functioning of the HoO remained at the end of the Project. First, after cases were prepared by the HoO staff, higher level officials sometimes declined to send the evidence to be validated, a necessary precondition for accusing someone of corruption. Second, HoO can only refer cases to AGO offices which are responsible for prosecuting cases of internal alleged misconduct.

The Project commenced in 2007 and will end in December 2012. The Project underwent six revisions and was also extended from the original duration by 41 months for a total of 65 months. The original Project budget was US\$3,167,200 but with US\$5,776,747 additional funding, the overall approved budget was US\$8,943,947.

Criminal Justice Project AFG/R87 (Prison System Reform in Afghanistan–Extension to the Provinces) - Overall approved budget: US\$10,328,637.

The Overall Objective was "to reform and upgrade the functioning of the penitentiary system, including the promotion of rehabilitation of the prisoners, as a contribution toward peace building in Afghanistan."

The immediate objectives were as follows:

- Application of the national legislation, rules and regulations in the corrections' field at provincial and district level and implementation of the Central Prison Department new operational and managerial structure and policy across the country.;
- Rehabilitation of target prison facilities throughout Afghanistan;
- Enhancement of the operational capacities and professionalism of penitentiary staff working in selected correctional facilities and improvement of coordination within criminal justice system;
- Establishment of training programmes for correction officers and for social workers as well as development of vocational and educational programmes for prisoners, including alternatives to imprisonment programmes

- Development of programmes addressing the needs of detained women, especially those with children, and drug users.

The Project Document refers to the Justice Public Investment Programme elaborated by the Afghanistan Ministry of Finance in cooperation with donor countries, UNAMA and UN implementing agencies. The Project Document goes on to say that a three-phase strategy was developed to reform the penitentiary system and that sixteen out of thirty-two provinces were identified as priority areas.

There were limitations regarding indicators and means of verification in the logframe. In the R87 Project Document, all outputs have the same sources and means of verification: ‘Tripartite Review assessment and reports’. All Immediate Objectives have the same source and means of verification: ‘Reports from Central Prison System and other reports’. The indicators for objectives and outputs all lack quantifiable time bound features and many are simply a record of activities. Despite this weak planning, useful outputs were accomplished through the immediate objectives.

The Project commenced in January 2005 and ended in December 2012. It underwent 7 revisions. The original duration was 30 months. There were 53 months of extension for a final duration of 84 months. The overall approved budget was US\$10,328,637.

The Penitentiary Law and Prison Regulations were drafted at the request of Ministry of Justice by UNODC, coordination with key international and national stakeholders. The Law was adopted in 2005. UNODC was requested by the Legislative Department of the MoJ to help draft penitentiary regulations as a secondary legislative source in order to implement the principles stipulated in the Penitentiary Law (primary source) issued under a Presidential Decree in May 2005.

Given the high priority for completing the Priority Restructuring Reform (PRR) process quickly, UNODC participated in the Technical Working Group meetings twice weekly to finalize all 38 organizational charts and TORs for the associated positions. Implementation of the PRR process was completed in all provinces excluding Uruzgan.

The Project participated in improving conditions at the Kabul Female Prisoners Detention Centre, the Pol-e-Charkhi prison high security facility, the Mazar-e-sharif medium security new provincial prison, and the Gardez medium security new provincial prison

While significant, it should be noted that the construction of prisons was problematic, most notably in Mazar-e-Sharif. In the end, US\$800,000 was spent on construction which due to the lack of potable water had to be cancelled. All that resulted was an external wall. UNODC learned from this, hired an architect to oversee work, and at the same time is reducing if not eliminating sizeable construction projects in the future.

On the balance of reasonable probabilities, training has been an effective response to the needs to improve performance of CPD. The changing legislative framework and the commitment to improved practice in prisons requires knowledge to be delivered to CPD staff and those other agencies and civil society working with CPD or advocating for human rights standards in prisons.

The Project produced several manuals and training materials, including a basic training manual for prison workers, a book on religious rights and duties of prisoners, Islamic sanctions in Islamic society, and a report on responding to psycho-social needs of women detainees and prisoners.

Over 1,000 members of the staff have been trained on specialized topics. Vocational training has been provided to prisoners and detainees. Currently, vocational training programmes are

operating at different levels of efficiency in Helmand, Kabul, Balkh and Herat provinces for prisoners and also following their release.

Regarding women prisoners, in 2010, a post-release transition programme with houses in Balkh and Kabul provinces was established. The houses were designed to serve women coming out of prisons in these regions. Since inception, the programmes have served almost 80 women and their children who otherwise could not return to their communities. In addition to education and vocational offerings, both programmes also included family reunification and employment components.

Criminal Justice Project AFGT03 (Capacity Building Extension to the Provinces) - Overall approved budget : US\$6,660,410

The Overall Project Objective is defined loosely as “falls in the framework of the larger Criminal Justice Reform Programme of Afghanistan.” This leaves the Project with no strategic prioritization of target provinces structures to be constructed, training, and laws to be revised. While this impedes evaluating accomplishments in a literal sense, the Project implemented many activities under the following immediate objectives:

- to construct offices for members of the justice sector, to continue with the construction of justice support centres, and to equip these sites with necessary materials and furniture (Herat, Bamyan, Nangahar, Kunduz and Kandahar provinces);
- to strengthen the institutional capacity of prosecutors and judges in the provinces to arrest, investigate, prosecute and convict criminal offenders – in particular of drugs-related crimes – through specific training and mentoring courses on criminal law and procedure; and
- to assist the Legislative Department of the Ministry of Justice in the revision or formulation of selected criminal laws and procedures.

T03 commenced in August 2007, went through five revisions, and was scheduled to finish in December 2012. The original duration of the Project was 24 months, but was eventually extended for 40 months for a total final duration of 64 months. The original budget was US\$2,734,400; the overall approved budget was US\$6,660,410, an increase of US\$3,929,700.

The justice support centres were built. However, the cost of construction work under the Project was significantly higher than expected. Often these increases were caused by factors beyond the Project’s control, such as border closures increasing the costs of cement and petrol. The Project took on lessons learnt from other construction initiatives to improve efficiency. There were also unexpected extra costs in dealing with other UN agencies (such as OPS) that directly supervised the construction. However, the hiring of an architect by COAFG for the Project and the presence of an engineer in the Criminal Justice team reduced problems and inefficiencies which, by 2012, were far fewer than previously.

The Project conducted training in legal aid, counter narcotics, juvenile justice, justice management and justice in provinces in Kabul, Kandahar, Jalalabad, and Mazar-e-sharif for nearly 400 participants. New curricula and manuals were developed on many subjects for several beneficiaries. New laws have required publication and distribution. Training on these new laws is necessary for officials and civil society.

The perceived high level of corruption is a major roadblock to strengthening the capacity of prosecutors and judges. In Afghanistan a sense of corruption is pervasive, and actual corruption is widely reported. Training activities were carried out but the problem of corruption remains. The impact of training could not be effectively measured due to the lack of follow-up surveys and of proper monitoring and evaluation.

The Project helped draft and refine a total of 18 laws, amendments, and regulations to drug and crime legislation. Covering a range of areas from forensics, terrorism, violence against women, drugs, and crime, the contribution in this field was significant.

Alternative Livelihoods Project AFG/I87–Strengthening Provincial Capacity for Drug Control - US\$17.6 million

Project AFGI87 (Strengthening Provincial Capacity for Drug Control) commenced in October 2006 and will conclude in June 2013. The total pledged budget is US\$17.8 million. The overall approved budget is US\$17.6 million, of which US\$16.3 million was disbursed as of the end of September, 2012.

This Evaluation reviews the period from the Midterm Review of 2010 to September 2012. As a result of the Midterm Review, the Project was revised. The July 2010 Revision is now the current Project Document. The revised Overall Project Objective is “To support and enhance provincial MCN capacity by creating effective institutional structures for drug control and providing technical expertise on the National Drug Control Strategy implementation/coordination process in cooperation with relevant stakeholders including government line departments and international organizations.”

The Project has four objectives, as follows:

- To strengthen and enhance the coverage and operational capacity of the Provincial Directorates of the Ministry of Counter Narcotics in drug control;
- To provide technical support and mentoring to the MCN to build its capacity to manage information and provide analytical reports on its mandated specialist areas;
- Strengthen MCN’s capacity to lead coordinated national Government Counter Narcotics Public Awareness campaigns;
- High impact alternative livelihoods pilot project initiatives developed and implemented in partnership with provincial authorities and other partner agencies.

The Project has mostly achieved its objectives. The Project has assisted MCN to expand its provincial offices to 24 out of 34 Provinces and has built and equipped a Training Centre in Kabul; the Project has assisted with infrastructure, providing equipment and training for MCN and PDCN staff. The Project has also improved the capacity of MCN and PDCN staff by assigning Regional Coordinators and Technical Assistants to the provinces and Kabul. The donors are mainly satisfied with Project accomplishments. Promising small-scale alternative livelihood pilot projects have been started.

Through this Project, the MCN has developed an appropriate illicit drug reduction strategy and MCN has become the lead agency for the Government’s CN policy, strategy, coordination and monitoring. The mandated government agencies are more effective in implementing drug reduction strategies although room for improvement remains. Women’s activities have progressed well and are appreciated by both female and male villagers.

At the local level, the effects of Project interventions and of poppy eradication need to be better quantified. Training courses are appreciated but more work is needed to fine tune them for specific sector. When this is done it will be possible to identify the kinds of support that areas free of poppy cultivation need to remain drug free.

The main problems to effective implementation and accomplishment of Project outputs are delay in approvals and the inability to allow villages to directly implement AL activities.

The long period between submission of a proposal from the provinces to Kabul, to the awarding of tenders (up to 14 months) causes the following problems:¹⁶

- It destroys the trust of villagers in the Project and in the PDCN. Villagers are disenchanted with perceived promises that have not been met. It is reported, understandably, that villagers are suffering from ‘survey fatigue’, whereby village meetings are frequently held by Government and Agency Staff with the implied promise of development, but the villagers do not see any result.
- Some donors complained of the inordinate delay in implementing UNODC projects and the problems this causes with their budgeting. Donors generally require their funds to be spent within a specified time, often to fit in with their financial year.
- Project inefficiency. The bureaucracy is greatly increased by the long approval process; time which the Project could more profitably spend on extra development activities.

UNODC’s rules and procedures are overly restrictive in providing support to AL activities in villages where creative solutions are needed because of hardship conditions.

¹⁶ In the case of the 14 month case, UNODC Headquarters staff seem to have questioned the findings of the national staff and also the definition of acceptable quality. The point we are making is that this kind of delay confuses beneficiaries—both Government officials and villagers—as to what UNODC’s objectives are and what its capacity is. This can lead to a lack of trust or a disinterest in working with UNODC in the future. Assuming UNODC is really committed to project implementation, this kind of delay (and others like it heard at length and in multiple situations) during the missions undermines UNODC’s ability to function effectively, fulfill its mandate of combating drugs and crime, and to attract future donor support.