

October 2003

## TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT

AD/RAS/00/C96 Alternative Development Cooperation  
in East Asia

Thematic Area: Supply  
Reduction/Alternative Development

Countries: China (Yunnan), Thailand,  
Myanmar, Lao PDR, Vietnam

Evaluator

Dr. M. Amanullah (Mak) Khan

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*"The simplicity of drug industry makes it relatively easy to organise; its profitability makes it hard to stop....."*  
*"Moral outrage has proved a bad basis for policy on illegal drugs..... time for governments to go back to first principles".*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project Alternative Development Cooperation in East Asia (C96) began its activities in October 2000 covering five of the six countries which signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The project was funded by the Australian government in the value of US\$315,000. This project supports one of the three key areas of focus in the Subregional Action Plan (SAP); i.e., Alternative Development. The current phase of the project ends in October 2003. This terminal evaluation comes at the end of the project implementation, albeit in a restricted scale, and coincides with the final PCC meeting on 28 October 2003.

The purpose of this evaluation exercise is *"to assess the progress made towards achievement of the immediate objective."* More specifically, the evaluation has been conducted to review and evaluate a) project concept and design b) project implementation, and c) project outputs and any immediate impact. Given the shortage of funds, the scope of the evaluation was conducted in a restricted scale by excluding visits to the participating countries, except Thailand. The evaluation was conducted by a single evaluator between the period 16-30 October 2003. The evaluator realistically used the following methods to conduct this evaluation :

- ① Pre-visit desk review of documents;
- ① Visits to Thailand and attendance in the PCC meeting for consultation with some of the key stakeholders i.e., UNODC and AusAID staff, Government counterpart agencies, consultants, trainees and participants;
- ① Telephone interviews with representatives of NAs ; and
- ① Review and inspection of documents and records (budgets, Annual Plan, PCC minutes etc.)

This report, following the prescribed format of UNODC Vienna records the findings of the evaluation, records lessons learned and provides recommendation for UNODC for the future phase of the project.

The strength of this project design is the flexible approach in developing professional knowledge and skills amongst the policy makers and planners of the national drug control agencies on a wider multi-sectoral approach to Alternative Development interventions. The project was a very timely intervention against the backdrop of rising demand for drugs in East Asia. Drug control advocacy has been a major positive spill over outcome of the flexible design of the project. The project, notwithstanding the many challenges it faced, performed in an excellent manner and considering its small financial outlay, provided a 'good value for money', especially in the context of the following two strategic areas:

1. Advocacy, in influencing policy makers and attitudinal changes, as well as capacity building among the NAs in the five countries, and in the non-government sector. As a result of the opportunities this project offered to the participating countries to share experiences and policy choices, some countries, especially Vietnam undertook some adjustments to their AD policies to embrace wider participation of the private sector and communities in the AD activities, and to set new time targets for opium reduction in the country; and
  2. Establishing credible linkages between C96 and the national projects in AD through a genuine and proactive role played by the project. The inclusion of a wide range of actors beyond the national drug control agencies, such as agriculture, water resources, infrastructure, research institutions and non-governmental agencies in the planning, implementation and monitoring process is particularly noteworthy.
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The project was, however, not without challenges. Occasional delays have occurred in managing project activities, such as project publications, establishment of the website and organising study tours as per the agreed work plan. Responses from the NAs in nominating study tour participants and comments on Annual Plans and various reports have been often slow and inadequate owing to lack of spare administrative capacity in the NAs to respond to the project needs on a timely fashion. Also, inadequate attention was given to involve women in the various training and other activities, as well as including multi-sectoral agencies of the government, private sector entities and civil society organisations in the project activities as a matter of routine practice. These shortcomings, however, do not necessarily reflect the good intention of UNODC; these are rather the product of restricted funding and heavy work load of the PC as a regular staff member of UNODC Regional Centre, and over stretched absorptive capacity of the NAs. The following section provides description of the project achievements.

As part of the capacity building focus of the project, the project contributed to sharing good practices for AD and opium eradication in the region. A large number of policy makers, project managers, AD specialists and practitioners from China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam obtained additional knowledge and skills on innovative approaches to AD, balanced approach to drug control, AD marketing and micro finance, gender and development, project planning, management, and monitoring and evaluation through various kinds of training workshops, attachment programmes, seminars and study visits. Although each of the training activities were followed by a substantive evaluation of the training effectiveness and trainees' satisfaction, it was not clear to the evaluator if the results of these evaluations were fed into the design of subsequent training activities. A documentation of the feedback and their analysis in future would help the beneficiaries and the donor understand the effectiveness of the training activities although the perceptions of the trainees and the NA officials have been isolatedly recorded in various reports.

The national counterparts of the participating countries played significant roles in organising and implementing the project activities in cooperation with UNODC Regional Centre and the UNODC Country Offices. Certain circumstances have however impacted on the project implementation which can be summarised as follows:

- Absence of a dedicated full time Project Coordinator position placed heavy demand on the incumbent PC who is also responsible for his regular duties as a staff member of UNODC Regional Centre;

- Likewise, restricted selection of study tour participants owing to inadequate funding limited the participation of a wider beneficiary groups from the government and non-government sectors;

- The unexpected onset of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and the restriction of travel in the region caused some delay in the implementation of project activities in 2003. The work plan and time frame of the activities had to be adjusted to the second half of the year; and

- In certain instances, personnel trained by the project were transferred to other positions who are no longer available for the project activities. In the future phase, this aspect needs to be considered while selecting the trainees and firm commitment from the governments to retain trainees must be obtained as a prior obligation of the governments.

On the whole, the project was able to infuse confidence among the stakeholders and create an enabling environment for the beneficiaries to participate at each stage of the project. It is indeed difficult to assess what impact this project will have on the long-term sustainability of the project once UNODC/AusAID assistance ceases. The evaluator is mindful of the fact that the project operated in an extreme resource challenged and diverse capacity environment. Several lessons were learned from the project, both in terms of design and operations which forms the basis of various recommendations put forward in this report:

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The current phase undertakes a quick stocktaking (in October-November 2003) of the remaining activities and the available budget to complete some of the outstanding activities;

UNODC may consider a substantive project revision instead of undertaking a new design exercise to save resources. In doing so, it is recommended that UNODC take into consideration the following factors : 1. Absorptive capacity within the NAs; 2. Full commitment from donor(s); and 3. Risk Management and mitigation plan. If full funding is not available, the project should be scaled down leaving an option of adding new activities when further commitment from donors are available;

Specific strategies in terms of linkages between this subregional project and national projects must be clearly articulated in the design leaving no scope for ambiguity;

Project implementation strategies must include practical and realistic phasing of activities, including progressive engagement strategies, so that the absorptive potential of the line agencies can be appropriately addressed and developed. This will involve closely working with counterparts to facilitate the establishment, management and monitoring of clear structures and/or mechanisms for identifying and delivering activities in a framework consistent with the project design and work plan;

The extended phase should engage a dedicated full time Project Coordinator fully funded by the donor who will be accountable to plan and manage the project activities only;

The second phase should take into account priority areas of alternative development i. e. policy development, agricultural and non-farm alternative development, micro credit, product marketing, gender mainstreaming and social and physical infrastructure. In each of the priority areas, there should be specific activities for capacity building to ensure effective learning for knowledge and skill improvement;

Firm commitment should be obtained from the governments regarding the counterpart support provisions in the new phase, including retention of a core group of personnel trained under the project for a reasonable time;

The next phase of the project should support the development and harmonisation of national AD policies in all the participating countries and strategies for integration of AD into the main streaming national development agenda;

Training Needs Assessment and Analysis of Training Impact should be part of the project activities which should be recorded and followed in planning training activities. Hence, fewer but highly impact oriented training should be conducted taking into account the lessons learned in the first phase, capacities gained by NAs and availability of spare capacities in the NAs to absorb further training. Where appropriate, private sector, NGOs and local level beneficiaries must be involved in these activities, both as participants and trainers; and

Cambodia, as an important actor in AD within the Mekong subregion be included in the extended phase to share and learn good practices on AD and build relevant capacities within its policy makers.

In conclusion, the project offered a highly innovative but flexible approach that facilitated responses from multiple sectors standing on a wholistic platform. This approach must not be halted here ; rather it must be taken further, building on its initial success to strengthen a wider multi-sectoral collaboration involving demand reduction, law enforcement as well as social development agencies and civil society organisations on a regional cooperation basis. It goes beyond doubt that the most vulnerable East Asia region demands an integrated approach to transform the communities' economic and social relationship to drug crops to sustainable alternative sources of income.

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## **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

AD	Alternative Development
CCDAC	Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (Myanmar)
DDR	Drug Demand Reduction
LCDC	Lao Commission for Drug Abuse Control and Supervision
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAs	National Agencies of the MOU countries
NACD	National Authority for Combating Drugs (Cambodia)
NGO	Non Government Organisation (s)
NNCC	National Narcotic Control Commission ( PR China)
NPC	National Project Coordinator
ONCB	Office of Narcotics Control Board (Thailand)
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
Prodoc	Project Document
PCC	Project Coordination Committee
QA	Quality Assurance
SAP	Sub-regional Action Plan
SOC	The Senior Officials Committee of the Subregional Action Plan
SODC	Standing Office on Drug Control (Vietnam)
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNODC	United Nations Office On Drugs and Crime
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VNDCC	Vietnam National Drug Control Committee

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## INTRODUCTION

The economies of East Asia have shown impressive growth recovering from the economic crisis since 1999. This brought improvements to the physical and social infrastructure of many parts of the region, and increased investment made it possible to explore the benefits of extended subregional cooperation. This also led to rapid growth of trade within the subregion as well as with outside trading partners. This positive development, however, also created considerable challenges. With economic expansion mainly focusing on urban centres, rural migration increased and put heavy strains on the existing physical and social infrastructure. The rapid growth resulted in increased economic and social polarisation between expanding middle and high income groups in the cities and economically disadvantaged population in rural areas and urban slums. Changing social and cultural values, increasing materialism and increased dislocation and, pressure in most countries created growing threats to the social and economic fabric of society.

A key element of this is the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on collaboration in the field of drug control, signed only in 1993 by the Government of China, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand, and expanded to include Cambodia and Vietnam at a Meeting of Ministers from the six countries held in Beijing in May 1995. Even though drug control activities have been ongoing for over quarter of a century, the MOU marked a beginning in the development of subregional views on drug control in the region and serves as the foundation for ongoing and planned cross border cooperation in drug control between six countries.

Such cooperation and discussion is elaborated in two important fora : 1) the Joint Executive Committee (JEC) Meetings held yearly between the Government of Myanmar and Thailand, and China and Myanmar; and 2) the Annual Meetings of Senior Officials Committee (SOC) and Ministerial Level Meetings of the MOU countries every second year. The meetings of JEC, SOC and Ministers of the MOU countries provide fora for reviewing the drug situation, as well as guiding programme directions and monitoring programme development and implementation.

The 1995 Beijing Meeting approved the first Subregional Action Plan encompassing twelve subregional priority projects in the areas of demand reduction, supply reduction (including the subregional Alternative Development Project) and law enforcement. The Action Plan is the first 'programmatic' approach to drug control that has been launched in East Asia and as such is a key step towards subregional drug control cooperation.

The SOC meeting held in Yangon (2001) and the recent one in Hanoi (2003) are significant from a number of standpoints. First, the forum is increasingly recognising the need to integrate drug abuse prevention strategies into poverty alleviation programmes, especially targeting the ethnic minorities in the member countries. These meetings discussed another important issue – the progress of the

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recommendations of the International Congress “In pursuit of a drug-free ASEAN 2015” held in Bangkok on 11-13 October 2000. This ASEAN meeting was another milestone in subregional cooperation evolution process. Sponsored by UNODC and the ASEAN Secretariat, this meeting included all ASEAN countries and China which jointly endorsed the ACCORD Plan of Action – ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs. ACCORD was launched in pursuit of ASEAN’s commitment to a drug free ASEAN region by 2015, which balances well with the individual member countries’ respective national policies and targets. ACCORD rests on four principles which are:

Proactively advocating civic awareness on dangers of drugs and social response;  
Building consensus and sharing best practices on demand reduction;  
Strengthening the rule of law by an enhanced network of control measures and improved law enforcement cooperation and legislative review; and  
Eliminating the supply of illicit drugs by boosting alternative development programmes and community in the eradication of illicit crops.

In the area of ACCORD’s alternative development, two objectives are interrelated – i. advocacy on the dangers of drug production, consumption, and ii. alternative, sustainable economic and social development through community mobilisation. Advocacy remains at the core of ACCORD Plan of Action. Drug supply reduction strategies focus on the cultivator’s role in national and international drug supply. Alternative development is one of the three basic ways to restrict the supply of plant based drugs at source. The other two strategies are eradication and substitution. Alternative development has been a central pillar of drug eradication efforts by UNODC in the East Asia region. For alternative development to be successful it needs to be wholistic and balanced, spanning such areas as the provision of education and health facilities, and work outside hard core agricultural sector. In the East Asia region, current AD practices are aimed at the reduction of opium poppy by providing alternative sustainable livelihood for the producing communities. The main drugs produced in the region are opium, heroin, cannabis and more recently synthetic drugs particularly the amphetamine type stimulants. Southeast Asia continues to be the second largest source of opium and heroin production after Afghanistan. According to UNODC reports, the total opium poppy cultivation in 2003 in Southeast Asia was 74,275 hectares with total opium production of to 932 tons. The total production of raw opium in the region had the potential to supply over 90 tons of heroin to the world market. The main production in the region occurs in Myanmar (approximately 62,200 hectares), followed by Lao PDR (12,000 hectares) and to a smaller extent in Thailand (75 hectares). However, the overall opium production in the region was declining.

## **EVALUATION PURPOSE**

The purpose of this evaluation exercise, as stated in the Terms of Reference (TOR) provided to the evaluator is *“to assess the progress made towards achievement of the immediate objective.”* More specifically, the evaluation will review and evaluate a)

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project concept and design b) project implementation, and c) project outputs and any immediate impact. The evaluation should also provide recommendations and lessons learnt for future initiatives ". A copy of the TOR is attached to this report.

Given the shortage of funds, the scope of the evaluation was reduced by excluding visits to Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos and China to accommodate activities within a very restricted budget allocated for this purpose. Visit was limited to Thailand. The evaluation was conducted by a single evaluator between the period 16-30 October 2003. Within the allocated time frame and budget, the evaluator realistically used the following methods to conduct this evaluation :

- ① Pre-visit desk review of documents received from the project office and the Regional Centre UNDCP, Bangkok;
- ① Visits to Thailand and attendance in the PCC meeting for consultation with some of the key stakeholders i.e., UNODC and AusAID staff, Government counterpart agencies, consultants, trainees and participants in the PCC meeting;
- ① Informal interviews with stakeholders;
- ① Telephone interviews with representatives of NAs ; and
- ① Review and inspection of documents and records (budgets, Annual Plan, PCC minutes etc.)

The evaluator, as part of this exercise had a briefing meeting with the Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific. During the PCC meeting, the evaluator presented his key findings to the participants in order to reach a consensus on some of the key issues before preparing the final report.

## **CHAPTER I. PROJECT CONCEPT AND DESIGN**

### **A. Overall assessment**

The nature and scope of the design is consistent with the mandate of UNODC, the various formal policy pronouncements in the participating countries and most importantly with the MOU and the Subregional Action Plan. The continued relevance of the project purpose and design was reconfirmed by the participating countries in a number of meetings held in course of the project implementation, including the PCC meetings and the Senior Officials Committee meetings of the MOU countries.

The strength of this project design is the flexible approach in developing professional knowledge and skills amongst the policy makers and planners of the national drug control agencies on a wider multi-sectoral approach to Alternative Development interventions. This has allowed the project to be responsive to the emerging needs of the stakeholders; be participatory in understanding the needs and vulnerability character of the stakeholders, and plan interventions that are flexible, cost-effective and sustainable both within their own countries and in cross border settings. The project was a very timely intervention against the backdrop of rising demand for

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drugs in East Asia. Drug control advocacy has been a major positive spill over outcome of the flexible design of the project.

The overall rationale of the project and the design that followed were considered to be sound, logical and consistent with the issues that the project was envisaged to address. However, judging against the current context of project with regard to its implementation and the impact of the various activities on the overall capacity building goal, the evaluator feels that the design suffered from the following deficiencies:

Funding limitation and absence of a project funded Coordinator : one of the main shortcoming of the design was the absence of the provision for a full time Project Coordinator (PC) to manage the activities of this highly demanding project. The current arrangement placed enormous demand on an in-house staff member of UNODC (the Human Resources Specialist) who was entrusted to direct and manage this project alongside his original duties which he handled with utmost quality and dedication. With a different skills set and performance quality of another person, the project may not have met with the same level of success. Hence, in future this risk factor must be seriously weighed and appropriate support mechanism must be considered at the design stage, including the allocation of a fully dedicated PC.

Inadequate recognition to the diverse and over stretched absorptive capacity: the design falls short in recognising early the competing priorities within a complex demand driven environment that have subsequently placed significant pressure on the governments to devote the time required in this project in addition to their role in implementing their national projects in AD;

Resource vs Activities : the various activities envisaged in the project document were not matched by adequate level of inputs. The project indeed operated on a 'shoe string' budget and represented an example of good 'value for money' that was possible through judicious utilisation of resources and careful monitoring of project funds by UNODC;

Risk management issues: linked to the above is the weakness in the design in not addressing the four risks identified in the project document while designing the project. This directly links to the aspect of absorptive capacity within the NAs and sustainability of the project;

Log Frame : log frames are key design instruments to verify the progress and impact of projects lending itself to a practical assessment of project targets. The log frame contained as part of the design did not sufficiently reflect the verifiable indicators against each outputs in sufficient quantitative terms making the project difficult to remain within a certain financial and task parameter. It is however, understood that by keeping the activities somewhat open, the project could flexibly plan the activities according to the emerging priorities and needs;

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Long lead time for project commencement: designed in 1998 originally in consultation with the beneficiaries at the policy and operational level, the project had to wait for two years for funding commitment to be operationalised. The original requirement of the project was in the vicinity of \$500,000 which was reduced to its current level through prioritisation of activities and deletion of some equipment originally envisaged and the Project Coordinator position. This has been a major concern of the NAs participating in the project.

Subregional coordination and collaboration : While the project did support several study tours, meetings and publications that allowed the participants from the five countries to participate in these common activities, the design did not stipulate any major unified actions that could allow development of 'policy harmony' in the AD sector in the region, or some permanent and sustainable information sharing mechanisms on which future collaboration among the participating countries could rest; and

Special consideration/Gender issue: The design did not specifically reflect on gender issues and fell short of articulating any clear nexus between gender and AD activities, and how this critical dimension would be included in the project activities.

## **B. Problem analysis, objectives and achievement indicators**

The Project Document (PD) adequately described the problems and issues facing Alternative Development and related policies in the subregion as well as identified the broad drug control objective, and the single immediate objective (as a response to the issues identified). It also identified two intertwined outputs and a number of activities under each of the outputs. The log frame identified some specific achievement indicators linked to the activities of the project which are as follows:

Documented improvements in policies/procedures/decisions on AD;  
50% of training targets met in Year 2, 100% by the end of the project;  
100% of participants meet learning objectives for each training event including :  
improved understanding of link between drug production/drug use and development; improved skills in planning, management and M&E;  
National and subregional resources, people and data bases identified that can respond to emerging needs of the NAs and build on farmers' experience and that can be used.

From the design point of view, the logical linkages between the problems, objectives and achievement indicators have been well established and the PD provides a good understanding of the project's genesis and direction.

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### **C. Outputs, activities and inputs**

The project includes two main outputs in support of the identified immediate objective :

Output 1: National capacity building and lessons sharing programmes designed and conducted to strengthen knowledge and skills of practitioners and policy makers and to promote sharing of knowledge and experience on alternative development in this region; and

Output 2: A comprehensive and accessible pool of knowledge on alternative development approaches and farmer experiences established.

While the evaluator maintains that there was a scope to quantify, and in some cases qualify the activities<sup>1</sup>, the project by and large was able to identify the most relevant activities and outputs to support the achievement of the project's immediate objective. The evaluator feels that the nature of inputs proposed in the project document was largely consistent with the activities envisaged but not adequate in terms of supporting financial outlay. As a mark of good project management practice, the project undertook judicious planning of available resources and adjusted work plans periodically that allowed the project to make appropriate adjustment to the project priorities, as these evolved.

The evaluator was able to access periodic budget revisions and updated work plans to provide an analysis of the inputs proposed in the original document against the subsequent activities of the project.

### **D. Executing modality and managerial arrangements**

UNODC through its Regional Centre in Bangkok is the executing agency for the project, providing strategic direction and project management functions through the services of the in-house PC. This chosen modality was a better option than using UNOPS which also executes a number of UNODC projects globally. The chosen modality was effective from a number of reasons:

- UNODC's technical knowledge and access to best practices gained through its experience in other projects;
- Prompt certification of fund authorisation requests and payments; and
- One single entity in technical and administrative matters; and

There has been a general satisfaction by the beneficiaries over the prompt handling of administrative and financial issues by UNODC which greatly facilitated the work of

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<sup>1</sup> Such as nature and number of study tours; specific subcontracts etc.

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the project by avoiding a multi-tier approval process, a phenomenon often experienced by projects with external execution arrangements.

The project design provided an effective coordination mechanism, the Project Coordination Committee (PCC). Unlike many other projects of this nature, the committee process was kept to a minimum in this project and the recipient countries were not overwhelmed by the various, often overlapping committee system. The PCC, comprising representatives from the participating countries, AusAID and UNODC proved to be an effective mechanism in terms of providing strategic direction to the project implementation and bringing together the various policy makers from the participating countries in a common forum. This resulted in determining the common needs and responses to the AD and other related activities. It is recognised that the NAs made significant contribution to the direction of the PCC. The involvement of technical agencies, such as Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development, Water Resources, and Forestry was of extreme value to the project; however, within the countries, effectiveness of coordination between the PCC member agencies and the formal drug control focal points varied considerably. This may suggest a slightly wider membership in the PCC in future.

## **CHAPTER II. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

### **A. Overall assessment**

The project, notwithstanding the many challenges it faced over its life, performed in an excellent manner in the following two areas:

1. Advocacy, in influencing policy makers and attitudinal changes, as well as capacity building among the NAs in the five countries, and to a limited scope in the non-government sectors. As a result of the opportunities this project offered to the participating countries to share experiences and policy choices, some countries, especially Vietnam undertook some adjustments to their AD policies to embrace wider participation of the private sector and communities in the AD activities, and to set new time targets for opium reduction in the country; and
2. Establishing credible linkages between C96 and the national projects in AD through a genuine and proactive role played by the project. The inclusion of a wide range of actors beyond the national drug control agencies, such as agriculture, water resources, infrastructure, research institutions and non-governmental agencies in the planning, implementation and monitoring process is particularly noteworthy.

The evaluator's overall assessment of the quality of project implementation can be summarised in the following table <sup>2</sup>:

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<sup>2</sup>The evaluator while is mindful of the need to assess component wise achievements, analysis in this section reflects the broad issues, such as, *inter alia*, capacity building and advocacy while specific output achievements are discussed in subsequent sections.

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Endeavours	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Needs improvement
Advocacy	v			
Project promotion/visibility		v		
Donor Coordination		v		
Capacity Building		v		
Attention to gender issues by choice				v
Communication with Government	v			
Communication with the donor		v		
Planning of Resources/Work Plan/Strategic Adjustments	v			
Attention to sustainability			v	
Meeting deadlines and project goals		v		
Monitoring and Evaluation		v		
Risk Management			v	
Budget Control	v			
Subregional coordination	v			
Project Impact		v		
Overall Management	v			

The evaluator was convinced that the participating NAs were able to gain significant knowledge and skills as a direct outcome of the project. These relate to areas like : project planning, policy development, project design and management, monitoring and evaluation, and various options to pursue sustainable livelihoods such as micro-credit and product marketing. The involvement of multi-sectoral organisations and community groups in common training activities enhanced a wider participation and ownership of the stakeholders and allowed the government and non-government agencies to gain the required confidence and motivation to respond to the community needs in AD.

## **B. Delivery of inputs**

The original project document classified the inputs into the following categories<sup>3</sup> :

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<sup>3</sup> Project Financial Report, June 2003

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Project Personnel (short term inputs) :	\$73,229
Sub-contracts (studies etc) :	\$23,713
Study Tours/Training/Expert Group Meetings:	\$150,092
Equipment (mainly non-expandable):	\$12,190
Report Costs:	\$9,933
Miscellaneous :	\$10,342
Support Cost :	\$36,274
Total :	\$315,773

As per UNODC requirement, the Project had undergone regular (twice a year) budget revisions. Although no significant addition to the budget took place (except for some minor additional contribution from UNODC), the periodic budget revisions were prepared to comply with the procedural requirements of UNODC. This process, however, contributed to adjustment of resources through interline transfer of funds as the various activities evolved. The role of PCC is particularly noteworthy in terms of its involvement in setting priorities and providing general direction to the project.

The project had the benefit of occasional cost sharing by the national level AD projects in the form of travel and related expenses for the participants in various workshops and study tours organised by the C96 project. This has allowed cost savings by the C96 project. Government contributions were mostly in the nature of local transportation, allocating meeting venues and providing local support services as and when required.

### **C. Management and implementation of activities**

With a limited budget of US\$ 315,000 the project achieved significant outcomes, both in terms of quality and quantity. Occasional delays have occurred in managing project activities, such as project publications, establishment of the website and organising study tours as per the agreed work plan. Responses from the NAs in nominating study tour participants and comments on Annual Plans and various reports have been often slow and inadequate owing to lack of spare administrative capacity in the NAs to respond to the project needs on a timely fashion. Also, inadequate attention was given to involve women in the various training and other activities, as well as including multi-sectoral agencies of the government, private sector entities and civil society organisations in the project activities as a matter of routine practice. These shortcomings, however, do not necessarily reflect the good intention of UNODC; these are rather the product of restricted funding and heavy work load of the PC as a regular staff member of UNODC Regional Centre, and over stretched absorptive capacity of the NAs. The following section provides description of the project achievements : The following are some of the specific outcomes of the project :

#### ***Capacity building and sharing good practices :***

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The fundamental focus of the project has been capacity building and sharing good practices for AD and opium eradication. A total of 343 policy makers, project managers<sup>4</sup>, AD specialists and practitioners from China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam obtained additional knowledge and skills on innovative approaches to AD, balanced approach to drug control, AD marketing and micro finance, gender and development, project planning, management, and monitoring and evaluation through various kinds of training workshops, attachment programmes, seminars and study visits. Although each of the training activities were followed by a substantive evaluation of the training effectiveness and trainees' satisfaction, it was not clear to the evaluator if the results of these evaluations were fed into the design of subsequent training activities. A documentation of the feedback and their analysis in future would help the beneficiaries and the donor understand the effectiveness of the training activities although the perceptions of the trainees and the NA officials have been isolatedly recorded in various reports.

**Advocacy, Information sharing and collaboration among the participating countries :**

Another noteworthy outcome of the project was advocacy, improved interaction, collaboration and links between national AD agencies and projects. There were three specific achievements under this area:

A website was created by the project linked to the UNODC Regional Centre's main website. The purpose of this website is to provide information on regional drug crop production (including opium survey reports), AD policies, strategies and various inventions undertaken by the governments and the community, resource materials on AD, international conventions, and institutional profiles of NGOs and other agencies involved in AD globally. This activity was undertaken only recently with the help of an intern trainee with no significant cost to the project. Detailed discussion follows in the subsequent chapter.

The project prepared 13 research and technical publications on various aspects of AD. Approximately 800 copies of each publication were disseminated to concerned government and non-government agencies, practitioners and projects throughout the world. The cost of these publications were admirably low. However, these publications are in English and in the future phase of the project, selected publications could be translated in languages for wider circulation in the region. While the quality of publications varied, at least three of the publications were of high standard which may be replicated in other projects . These are : Study on Marketing, Community Participation Manual and the M&E Methodology. All these documents need consideration for translation in the local languages.

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<sup>4</sup> The make up of beneficiaries trained by the project includes : Practitioners (34%); Policy Makers (30%); Project Managers (22%) and sectoral specialists [agriculturalists, livestock experts, water resources specialists] (34%)..

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The project conducted several regional training workshops, planning meetings, seminars and study visits which provided platforms for the national agencies and isolated AD projects to interact and build further cooperation. Recent developments revealed that the MOU countries saw the need to work collectively on illicit drug eradication. The increasing bilateral cross border cooperation on alternative development between China- Myanmar-Lao PDR and Thailand-Myanmar-Lao PDR illustrate the cooperative spirit and the willingness to carry out a concerted effort in opium eradication. China reported to the MOU SOC and Ministerial meeting in September 2003 that she has exempted import tariff and tax of US\$ 18.3 million for AD products across the border and contributed RMB 300,000 (US\$ 37,500) to train local farmers in Kokang areas. Thailand also contributed 20 million Baht (US\$ 500,000) to launch an alternative development project in Barn Yawng Kar in Shan State. The overall collaboration of the MOU countries was well recognised at the Fedalting International Conference in Germany on the Role of Alternative Development in Drug Control and Development Cooperation which recommended *“National governments should establish or strengthen regional alliances to share information, to identify and address shared concerns arising from their national drug control and alternative development strategies,--- , the Memorandum of Understanding for Drug Control in East Asia and the ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs (ACCORD) are examples, which demonstrate the potential of regional cooperation”*.

**Promotion of AD practices in the region and bilateral collaboration :**

It is recognised that efforts in AD is a continuous process. Hence, alternative development projects to be effective and sustainable require regular and open dialogues and systematic evaluation, primarily by the beneficiary governments. On the basis of information available from the project, the evaluator could identify several changes and development in policy, planning and management of the AD projects in the participating countries.

In China , extensive rural development practices have been implemented to sustain opium eradication along the southwest borders. China has promoted local enterprises to invest in the alternative development activities in the country and across the borders. Due to the well established rural development infrastructure in the country, the contribution of the C96 project was more towards sharing lessons learned as well as the promotion and facilitation of China's efforts on AD across the borders. Under bilateral cooperation, China supported alternative development pilot projects in Myanmar and Lao PDR leading towards opium eradication in the Golden Triangle. China has indicated its willingness to offer further technical and financial assistance to Myanmar and Lao PDR for improvement of agricultural technology and its abundant quality seeds to substitute opium cultivation. China is planning to establish special AD funds to strengthen collaborative AD activities in the neighboring countries.

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In Lao PDR, with support of UNODC and the international community, has launched intensive alternative development efforts to provide socio-economic development and alternative livelihood to the opium growing farmers. The current national plan sets the target to eliminate opium production in the country by 2006 through a balanced approach incorporating alternative development, demand reduction and law enforcement. The establishment of the Programme Facilitation Unit jointly managed and implemented by UNODC and the Government has enhanced the effectiveness of AD planning, coordination and monitoring significantly. Most current AD projects in Lao PDR address a balanced approach and attach significant importance to sustainable development and innovative practices of AD including marketing strategies, micro credit and revolving funds to provide basic investment resources for the farmers. During the past 3 years, the C96 project provided various capacity building and lesson sharing activities to a total of 158 policy makers, AD specialists, project managers and field practitioners from PFU and concerned government agencies and ministries.

***The Government of Lao PDR expressed through the PCC meeting in 2002 that the regional experiences and lessons on good practices for AD should continue to be exchanged on regular basis. The AD Cooperation Project was a good initiative and provided many lessons for AD practitioners in the region.***

The Myanmar government has formulated the “15-Year Drug Elimination Plan” which aims to eradicate opium production throughout the country before 2014. The Plan places strong emphasis on multi-sectoral approach to drug eradication by implementing alternative development together with harmonious execution of demand reduction, treatment and rehabilitation, educating the students and youths, mass medial information and law enforcement in the targeted areas. As a component of this 15-Year Drug Elimination Plan, the “New Destiny” project has been developed by CCDAC, since April 2002, with an objective of eradicating opium cultivation by alternative development. The second phase of the project is in progress and opium substitute crop seeds to be cultivated in the cold seasons have been distributed. UNODC in cooperation with the government implemented the UNODC/Wa Project in the Wa region and the Support for Opium Eradication Programmes in Ko Kang region. Additional alternative development projects have been implemented under the support of UNDP, JICA, and other international agencies and NGOs. These AD projects have contributed to opium poppy reduction in the project areas by providing socio-economic development and alternative livelihood for the farmers.

Thailand has successfully reduced opium cultivation through sustainable development in the past 30 years. The country managed to mobilise efforts and resources to implement highland development and alternative livelihood activities for the ethnic minorities. The alternative development and opium elimination efforts have been sustained under the implementation of the Royal Projects, the Doi Tung Development Project of Mae Fah Laung Foundation and the main stream of national

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development. The Alternative Development Cooperation Project supported sharing of good practices and lessons learned from the Thai experiences and facilitated collaborative actions between Thailand and the neighbouring countries. Under the new national drug control plan (2002-2006), Thailand expects to extend more assistance to support AD activities cross the borders.

In Vietnam, opium cultivation was reported to be eliminated in 2001. This was found to be an over ambitious target which was subsequently revised a policy amendment by the Government of Vietnam. This was considered a direct result of the practical knowledge gained by the policy makers through C96. Under the current National Action Plan on Drug Control for 2001-2005, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in close coordination with the Standing Office on Drug Control, relevant national agencies and the local authorities has implemented AD efforts to sustain opium elimination by providing alternative income generation to the ethnic people who were depending on the illicit crop. The efforts attach importance to education, information and communication activities to promote awareness on illicit drugs and mobilise ethnic people to prevent the return of opium cultivation. With support of UNODC, the government of Vietnam has carried the second phase of the Ky Son Project to build local capacity for alternative development. In 2002, the Government of Vietnam has promulgated 6 decrees in guiding implementation of National Law on Narcotic Drugs Prevention and Suppression, which incorporated alternative development and opium poppy eradication as an important priority. A total of ---- policy makers, AD specialists and project personnel benefited from the capacity building and lessons sharing activities of the C96 project.

#### **D. Circumstances affecting the project**

The national counterparts of the participating countries played significant roles in organising and implementing the project activities in cooperation with UNODC Regional Centre and the UNODC Country Offices. Certain circumstances have however impacted on the project implementation which have featured in this report elsewhere also.

Absence of a dedicated full time Project Coordinator position placed heavy demand on the incumbent PC who is also responsible for his regular duties as a staff member of UNODC Regional Centre;

Likewise, restricted selection of study tour participants owing to inadequate funding limited the participation of a wider beneficiary groups from the government and non-government sectors;

The unexpected onset of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and the restriction of travel in the region caused some delay in the implementation of project activities in 2003. The work plan and time frame of the activities had to be adjusted to the second half of the year.

In certain instances, personnel trained by the project were transferred to other positions who are no longer available for the project activities. In the future phase, this aspect needs to be considered while selecting the trainees and firm

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commitment from the governments to retain trainees must be obtained as a prior obligation of the governments.

## **CHAPTER III. PROJECT RESULTS**

### **A. Outputs<sup>5</sup>**

This section highlights the key features of output results:

***Output 1 : National capacity building and lessons sharing programmes designed and conducted to strengthen knowledge and skills of practitioners and policy makers and to promote sharing of knowledge and experience on AD in this region.***

#### **Capacity building and sharing good practices**

The achievements of project implementation in this area include the following:

##### **Regional and national training programmes :**

The national workshop on “*Community Participation in Alternative Development Projects*” was conducted on 23-26 October 2001 in Phonsavan, Laos. The workshop had two primary goals: to train national project staff through exchange of experiences on community participation in the national AD projects and to try the newly produced guide on community participation in alternative development projects. The workshop trained 58 policy makers, project managers, field staff and community leaders.

For staff exchange and attachment programme, the project provided support to a training programme conducted by a GIS specialist from Myanmar on “*GIS development and management and opium survey technologies*” at the Northern Narcotics Control Centre in Chiang Mai from 26 November to 12 December.

A regional training workshop on “*Monitoring and Evaluation for Alternative Development*” was conducted on 11-17 November 2002 at the International Centre of Chiang Mai University, Thailand. The training course covered developing conceptual framework and indicators for alternative development, designing and implementing project monitoring and evaluation, developing methodologies and instruments, field data collection, data analysis and interpretation, writing and presentation of findings. As an output, the workshop trained 31 senior drug control personnel, project managers and coordinators from China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam responsible for monitoring and evaluation of alternative development projects.

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<sup>5</sup> Information source : Project Progress Reports, PCC Minutes, draft Terminal Report (October 2003) and consultation with beneficiaries.

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The national training workshop on *“Alternative Development Project Planning and Management”* was conducted in Lao PDR from 25-29 August 2003. The training course covered the whole cycle of project identification, formulation, appraisal, approval, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The workshop trained 35 AD policy makers, project planners managers from Vientiane and other 10 opium growing provinces.

The regional seminar on *“Alternative Development for Illicit Crop Eradication: Policies, Strategies and Actions”* was held on 16-19 July 2001 in Taunggyi, Myanmar. The objective was to broaden AD capacity and knowledge through sharing experiences, lessons learned and good practices. The 48 senior policy makers, AD specialists, project managers and practitioners received opportunity to learn different approaches to AD and opium eradication and to discuss future priorities and recommendations for effective alternative development and illicit crop eradication.

A regional seminar on *“Alternative Development: Sharing Experiences and Good Practices on Micro-credit, Revolving Funds and Marketing”* was organised on 12-16 March 2002 in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR. The seminar aimed to provide a regional forum for alternative development policy makers, practitioners, project managers and specialists to share their experiences and good practices on micro-credit, revolving funds and marketing. A total of 48 participants from China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam attended the seminar. Representatives of the Australian Government and the Asian Development Bank also participated in the seminar.

A regional seminar on *“Alternative Development: Information Networking and Sharing Good Practices on Gender and Development”* is scheduled for 29-31 October 2003. The seminar aims to provide a regional forum for sharing innovative approaches to data base development and information networking as well as good practices in the field gender and development. A total of 31 policy makers, planning officers, project managers, gender specialists and field personnel will participate in the seminar and discuss future implications and recommendations.

#### Study visits :

A study visit was organised from 26 November to 6 December 2001 for a group of 21 senior policy makers, AD specialists, project managers and practitioners to broaden their knowledge and skills and gain practical experiences on alternative development approaches. The group visited the Doi Tung Development Project, various sites of the Royal Development Projects and crop monitoring project in Thailand as well as alternative development projects in Lao PDR. The priority areas for the field study included agriculture and alternative crop cultivation, post harvest processing and packaging technologies, non farm/non agricultural alternative development, eco-tourism, marketing for AD products, community

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participation and mobilisation for opium eradication and illicit crop monitoring technologies and GIS development.

The second study visit was organised in China and Myanmar from 22 February to 2 March 2003 for a group of 27 policy makers, project managers and practitioners working in alternative development and drug control in China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. The group visited drug rehabilitation centres and AD projects in China and in Shan State of Myanmar to study cross border alternative development, drug treatment programmes, roles of local enterprises and private sector in AD and opium reduction programmes.

#### Project planning and management meetings :

The project organised three annual meetings for the Project Coordination Committee to review the progress of project implementation and to discuss future work plan of the project. The PCC meetings also provided direction to country programme activities and recommended future priorities for project implementation and regional collaboration.

#### Information sharing :

The second component of the project includes development and dissemination of alternative development studies and publications. During the past three years, the project has produced and disseminated several training manuals, research studies and technical publications. An Alternative Development Website has been established to create an electronic platform for information sharing and networking, currently linked to the UNODC Regional Centre website.

#### Alternative development research and studies :

A research on "*Opium Reduction in Thailand, 1970-2000: A Thirty-Year Journey*" was conducted to study the evolution of alternative development in the past thirty years and to assess the key success factors of sustainable alternative development and opium elimination in Thailand. The study was published and distributed by the project to relevant agencies and partners. The study is being translated and published in Thai language. The government of Thailand and Mae Fah Luang foundation are considering to support the distribution of the study to development agencies and educational institutions in the country. The Thai experience on sustainable alternative development is being replicated in Barn Yawng Kar in Shan State of Myanmar under a bilateral, cross border cooperation.

A study on "*Alternative Development Policies, Strategies, Key Success Indicators, Risks and Lessons learned in Phase I of the Wa Alternative Development Project*" was conducted in January 2001 to provide baseline data for the formulation of the new phase of the project. The study provided in-depth

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analysis of the project implementation and lessons learned in the first two years with recommendations for the future project planning and implementation.

An in-depth research on *“Opium Eradication in Vietnam: Achievements and Lessons from Alternative and Integrated Mountain Rural Development”* was conducted to study a different model and approach to opium elimination in Vietnam. The study analysed key determinant factors for opium elimination and shared good practices on opium eradication in Vietnam. The project expects to publish this study for dissemination to alternative development agencies and projects.

Another research on *“Social and Economic Impact of Illicit Drugs in Thailand”* was conducted to assess the social and economic impacts of illicit drugs with emphasis on opium, heroin and ATS which were the main drugs in Thailand and in the region. The study assessed the current threats of illicit drugs and their trends and the social impacts of the drugs on physical and mental health, family and community, employment, education, their relation to crime, violence, corruption and HIV/AIDS. For economic aspect, the study assessed the drug prices and determinants, consumption costs, extent of illegal drug money and drug money laundering and the impact of drugs on micro and macro economic development. The report of study is being finalised and will be published to share the findings to public.

Two more research papers were produced by the project. The first one was on *“Marketing- the Bottleneck of Opium Eradication? Experiences from East Asia in marketing Alternative Development Products”*. The study analysed the weak link between alternative development projects and marketing strategies. Practical recommendations were made for future planning and implementation of alternative development initiatives. The second research was on *“Engendering Women in Alternative Development: an Emerging Strategy for Sustainable Practice”*. The research compiled good practices on gender and development in the region, analysed determinant factors and provided recommendations for gender mainstreaming in alternative development projects.

A brochure on *“Alternative Development Cooperation in East Asia”* was produced to provide information to all alternative development agencies and projects on AD cooperation and also to serve as public information materials. The brochure aimed to enable potential partners to get an overview of what the project tried to achieve and how they and their alternative development efforts could benefit from engaging in the project activities.

The training manual and implementation guidelines on *“Community Participation in Alternative Development Projects”* were produced by the project reflecting explicit needs raised at a needs assessment session held at the PFU (Programme Facilitation Unit) in Laos. The guidelines explained the different steps of implementing participatory community development and introduced

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practical procedures and methods for needs assessment, rapid assessment surveys, project activity monitoring and evaluation and impact assessment.

In recognition of the role of private sector, a publication on *“The Private Sector is a Protagonist of the Community Response to the Drug Scourge in the East Asia and the Pacific Region”* was produced and distributed to the public and concerned agencies to share good practices on the roles of private sector in alternative development and drug control activities.

In response to the need for capacity building on monitoring and evaluation, the *“Manual on Monitoring and Evaluation for Alternative Development Projects”* was developed and published to strengthen knowledge and skills of AD personnel who are involved in project monitoring and evaluation. The publication was distributed to planners, project managers and personnel of AD projects in the region.

***Output 2 : A comprehensive and accessible pool of knowledge on alternative development approaches and farmer experiences established.***

Creation of an alternative development website for information sharing and networking :

As discussed above, the Alternative Development Website was created to provide an electronic platform for information sharing. The website contained a bulletin board showing some important events and news related to alternative development. The Website also served as a network to link with other regional and national websites on alternative development. Important aspects of the web site are:

Fact about the Region contains key statistical data, maps of the region, and a Regional Profile, outlining the current drug control situation in the region. Regional Policies, Strategies and Activities outline the regional AD strategy and provide information on a number of projects and activities.

Reports and Research contain all brochures, reports, manuals and research documents generated by the project as well as selected documents and reports from other sources.

AD Directory contains addresses, institutional profiles and other kinds of key information describing government agencies, research institutions, AD projects, NGOs and others involved in the regions AD efforts.

International Commitments describes the international drug control conventions as well as the regional framework for international drug control.

**B. Immediate objective outcomes**

The single immediate objective of the project as stated in the project document is: *To improve the effectiveness of alternative development projects through increased knowledge, skills and capabilities of practitioners and policy makers in national*

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agencies (NAs), sharing of lessons and experience and networking between alternative development agencies.

This, as discussed in the preceding sections of this report is a fairly broad agenda to be achieved within the scope and time of the project. If judged solely from the perspective of the range of outputs and activities this project has fulfilled, the project has been highly successful in achieving this immediate objective. Limitation in funding is to be taken into account in judging the outcomes of the immediate objective. The project was able to create a core competency among the various stakeholders, both within the government and non-government sectors in identifying key issues with regard to AD and identify the nature of vulnerability among the population at large.

**There is a general consensus among the government officials and other stakeholders consulted during the evaluation that the various government institutions, including the NAs now have an improved understanding of AD factors affecting rural and poor households and cross border cooperation in the subregional and national context. As one of the key officials consulted puts it ... "this project helped us to understand our neighbours better, talk on a common table as if we are one entity, and share our successes and failures without any inhibition". This statement sums up the key success of the project and reiterates the basic premise of the immediate objective.**

### **C. Drug control objective**

The Drug Control Objective was stated as : *To reduce drug crop cultivation in the Southeast Asia subregion.* This above broad drug control objective is a higher level goal that cannot be achieved through a single project of this nature but through the concerted efforts of several initiatives and the evolving advocacy that several institutions, donors and individuals are carrying out in the region. There are already some positive signs that this drug control objective is reaching fruition in a steady pace. The MOU and the Subregional Action Plan, ACCORD Plan of Action and the many catalytic interventions of UNDCP in the region are signs that institutions in East Asia are adopting effective policies and measures for the prevention and reduction of drug abuse. The individual country policies further testify to this conviction.

**Experience has shown that alternative development projects in the illicit crop production areas are effective towards breaking the area's isolation. They are directed at people who are cut off from the main stream of licit society and are left with illicit economy as their only option. Integrating isolated areas into mainstream economy is a complicated task. Sufficient financial resources can persuade villagers in one village to substitute illicit crops with licit ones. However, such substitution might create a balloon effect, i.e., spill over of illicit crops into other areas, resulting in an increase in production in other areas without however impacting on the total overall production. Essential to the success of alternative development is the need for institutional management capabilities relevant for understanding, planning and managing the integrated approaches required. Consistent with the objective of the project under evaluation, such approaches are being increasingly accepted and addressed in all institutions involved in planning,**

**implementation and, monitoring and evaluation. This summarises the impact this project has been able to generate.**

Any attempt to introduce alternative development interventions in new settings or under an untested framework of cooperation must be built on the lessons of 25 years of rural development endeavours by UNODC, NGOs and other donors and the key aspects of success of regional approaches to supply reduction. The following significant subject areas are germane: participatory community processes in development, gender in development, sustainability at the economic, social and environmental development, the need for responsive and responsible management system in government.

The project on Alternative Development Cooperation in East Asia aimed to contribute to the overall opium reduction effort in the region. An assessment by UNODC's Global Illicit Drug Trend 2003 of opium production in the region revealed that opium production in Southeast Asia declined from 113,187 hectares (1,029 tons) in 1999 to 74,275 hectares (932 tons) in 2003. More specifically, opium poppy cultivation in Myanmar has declined from 108,700 hectares in 2000 to 62,200 hectares (43%) in 2003 while Lao PDR managed to reduced opium poppy cultivation from 19,052 hectares to 12,000 hectares (37%) during the same period of time. Opium production in Thailand and Vietnam was reduced to insignificant amount.

It should be noted that there are many factors affecting the extent of opium production in each country. The commitment, political will and technical capacities of the government, concerned national and international agencies to carry out alternative development and opium eradication efforts are key factors. It would be difficult to say to what extent the C96 project contributed to these qualities. However, from a project planning point of view, it could be logically said that the project achieved main outputs in building national capacities, knowledge and skills as well as in sharing good practices and creating AD networking and collaboration which contributed to the immediate objective of improving effectiveness of AD projects in the participating countries. As a result, the improved effectiveness of the AD projects had a role to contribute to the opium reduction trend in the region.

While reaching poppy elimination target by six years seems a bit over ambitious at this stage, the good news is that the political will and commitment of the Government has been pronounced sufficiently loudly. As efforts are accelerated and a tougher approach against opium cultivation is encouraged, Government institutions will be locked into ownership of its national drug control programme. Such strategies will also move the countries towards compliance with the requirements of national drug control conventions, cross border cooperation and staunch the expansion of trans border crimes.

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## D. Sustainability

A challenge inherent in a project of this nature and complexity is to remain sustainable in the long run through creating a lasting impact and capacity building among the stakeholders.

**Despite some difficulties experienced in the implementation stage, the project has been able to infuse confidence among the stakeholders and create an enabling environment that allowed the beneficiaries to participate at each stage of the project. It is indeed difficult to assess what impact this project will have on the long-term sustainability of the project once UNODC/AusAID assistance ceases. The evaluator is mindful of the fact that the project operated in an extreme resource challenged and diverse capacity environment. Considering these factors, the project represented a 'good value for money' and served as a model for possible replication in other settings.**

### Ownership and Community Participation:

The project was able to sufficiently demonstrate that the activities envisaged in this project are to be planned, managed and owned by the governments and the communities. As called for in the Action Plan, *"participatory approaches that are based on dialogue and persuasion and that include the community as a whole"* have been UNODC and AusAID's favoured methodology and an indispensable instrument for sustainability. Encouraging the direct involvement and participation of community organisations, where possible has helped ensure that the project interventions and outcomes embody the aspirations of the local community and receive its active support and acceptance, particularly with respect to AD objectives.

### Capacity in the government:

The evaluator feels that some core capacity has indeed been developed within the NAs and other relevant agencies, such as agriculture, forestry and water resources.. However, this process was somewhat hindered by occasional transfer of staff trained under the project although this phenomenon is common in other projects. A specific recommendation has been made along this line in this report.

### Training sustainability:

**One of the key success areas of the project is that it was able to put in place some effective training with a view to developing technical and management skills in intervention planning and implementation. The various training tools prepared by the project, such as training manuals which the beneficiary institutions could be adapted by the governments and future projects with required flexibility in future. A measure of sustainability for this project is the degree to which participants engage in professional development activities in the identified areas. The evaluator recommends that in the future phase, attention should be given to develop core group of trainers and mentors within the NAs who could conduct in-country workshops for others on their return from regional study tours and training seminars. Also, in future, a rapid training needs**

**assessment needs to be conducted at an early stage as well as training results and perceptions of the trainees need to be analysed and recorded for use by the beneficiaries, UNODC and the donors.**

In short, there is a visible 'shared vision' emerging among the government and communities in these countries in addressing the issues of AD in a subregional context.

#### **IV. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS**

The project was designed as a subregional undertaking and remained so without concentrating on national projects. It has however, contributed to the integration of national capacities within a subregional framework and facilitated the five countries in East Asia to collaborate toward a common goal of developing mutual cooperation and understanding through enhanced capacity to plan and manage the AD activities. Judging from this angle, the project has achieved success in fulfilling its intent for subregional orientation.

The central role of subregional networking in reshaping attitudinal profiles among high-level policy makers and civil society groups was addressed with specific capacity building interventions for initiating and sustaining sub-regional dialogue. Subregional networking activities promoted by the project have reinforced the principle of 'shared vision' for the real needs of vulnerable groups and communities in addressing the illicit crop production problems confronting national authorities, especially those related to porous borders, social and economic disadvantage and common ethnicities.

While the project has effectively integrated the multiple government agencies through a number of strategic initiatives, a significant achievement in the context of political, social and cultural climate in the region, some more actions need to be initiated, especially involving the private sector and non-governmental agencies.

Addressing gender issues have not been a particular focus of the project. There are several areas of the project that are relevant to gender issues, such as involving women policy makers and establishing the much needed community linkages at the household levels in the context of national level AD projects. Following the PCC meeting in Chiang Rai, a seminar to address the gender issues will be held that may lead to determining various intervention avenues in gender dimensions in the second phase of the project. The future phase of the project needs to pay attention to gender issues by involving women and men in all aspects of the project activities and mainstreaming gender dimensions in various training activities.

The design of the project and the approach to implementation can be replicated in a variety of regional context elsewhere. It is well acknowledged that this project has indeed increased confidence of five governments in programme planning for AD in one of the most vulnerable regions of the world and contributed to influencing the ongoing dialogues towards better informed policies in the participating countries. It is

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recognised that the implementation of this complex project came at a cost in terms of heavy work schedules, complex logistics, high administrative costs and limited resources. The project was indeed able to cruise through this difficult process and has laid the foundation for future advocacy, policy reform and interventions in the area of drug control, specifically in AD practices in the region.

**The general perception of the participating country policy makers confirms that the project, within its limited budgetary parameters effectively addressed the issue of improved effectiveness in AD not only in the context of better cooperation between national entities, it also indirectly facilitated increase in the inter-ministerial and cross agency sharing of information within national borders. Hence, the project contributed to the understanding amongst the policy makers that alternative development needs to be looked further than isolated approaches involving small geographic areas or single sectoral planning. It also requires that the development programmes of NGOs, bilateral and multilateral agencies be encouraged to identify the synergies between the problem of illicit drugs and the objectives of their projects.**

**The project offered flexibility, interest and openness that resulted in greater cooperation amongst the various AD focal points within the region. The project offered a highly innovative but flexible approach that facilitated responses from multiple sectors standing on a holistic platform. This approach must not be halted here ; rather it must be taken further, building on its initial success to strengthen a wider multi-sectoral collaboration involving demand reduction, law enforcement as well as social development agencies and civil society organisations on a regional cooperation basis. It goes beyond doubt that the most vulnerable East Asia region demands an integrated approach to transform the communities' economic and social relationship to drug crops to sustainable alternative sources of income.**

The project ends in October and depending on the level of interest of potential donors and firm fund commitment, a follow up phase can realistically commence in early/mid 2004. There is neither any funding available for the formulation of the second phase, nor there is any resources available to fund the bridging period between November 2003 and the start of the second phase.

In the face of financial limitations and weak institutional capacity in the participating countries, project management competencies proved to be of high quality. The minor shortcomings of the project outweigh the benefits this project has been able to generate.

## **V. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The evaluator understands that the project may be considered for extension or a second phase and consultation between UNODC the current donor is underway in connection with the continuation of the project. The various beneficiaries consulted during the review have all unequivocally expressed support to the continuation of the

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project while momentum in activities are still alive. The following are specific recommendations of the evaluation mission:

**The current phase undertakes a quick stocktaking (in October-November 2003) of the remaining activities and the available budgets with a view to completing some of the outstanding activities. Some activities, such as printing of seminar report on gender, may be undertaken when new funding is available for the extended phase of the project;**

**In the interest of retaining the momentum alive and alleviate inordinate time lag between the closure of the current phase and the start of new activities, UNODC may consider a substantive project revision instead of a new design exercise. In doing so, it is recommended that UNODC take into consideration the following factors so that the new phase works within a realistic time and activity framework achievable with sustainable results: 1. Absorptive capacity within the NAs; 2. Full commitment from donor(s); and 3. Risk Management and mitigation plan. If full funding is not available, the project should be scaled down leaving an option of adding new activities when further commitment from donors are available;**

**Specific mechanisms and strategies in terms of linkages between this subregional project and national projects must be clearly articulated in the design leaving no scope for ambiguity. Show casing of best practices from within the region and also from elsewhere, exchange of experts and officials for a reasonable time, and policy/strategy harmonisation are just a few examples of subregional coordination elements;**

**Project implementation strategies must include practical and realistic phasing of activities, including progressing engagement strategies, so that the absorptive potential of the line agencies can be appropriately addressed and developed so that the project maintains its timelines and activity commitments. This will involve closely working with counterparts to facilitate the establishment, management and monitoring of clear structures and/or mechanisms for identifying and delivering activities in a framework consistent with the project design and work plan;**

**The extended phase should engage a dedicated full time Project Coordinator fully funded by the project who will be accountable to plan and manage the project activities only within the agreed financial and design parameters;**

**The project design (or revision) should take into account priority areas of alternative development i. e. policy development, agricultural and non-farm alternative development, micro credit, product marketing, gender mainstreaming and social and physical infrastructure. In each of the priority areas, there should be specific activities for capacity building to ensure effective learning for knowledge and skill improvement;**

**Firm commitment should be obtained from the governments regarding the counterpart support provisions in the new phase, including retention of a core group of personnel trained under the project for a reasonable time. In order for the project to be sustainable, these personnel should in turn serve the end beneficiaries (community leaders, villagers and farmers) as a result of their expanded capacities gained through the project.**

**The next phase of the project should support the development and harmonisation of national AD policies in all the participating countries and strategies for integration of AD into the main streaming national development agenda;**

**Training Needs Assessment and Analysis of Training Impact should be part of the project activities which should be recorded and followed in planning training activities. Hence, fewer but highly impact oriented training should be conducted taking into account the lessons learned in the first phase, capacities gained by NAs and availability of spare capacities in the NAs to absorb further training. Where appropriate, private sector, NGOs and local level beneficiaries must be involved in these activities, both as participants and trainers.**

**Cambodia, as an important actor in AD within the Mekong subregion is not a direct beneficiary of the current project as the country is not threatened by opium production of a significant magnitude. However, Cambodia has been a major source of cannabis cultivation in the region. It is recommended that Cambodia be included in the extended phase to share and learn good practices on AD and build relevant capacities within its policy makers.**

## **VI. LESSONS LEARNED**

### ***Design Issue:***

- ① Identifying, fostering and developing commitment and ownership of the project by the beneficiaries should be incorporated in all project activities.
- ① Project design should provide better understanding regarding the ways and means of mainstreaming participatory approach as well as gender dimensions toward the effectiveness and sustainability of projects.
- ① Verifiable indicators should be clearly related to project outputs and be measurable to the extent possible..
- ① Project design should identify milestones to facilitate project monitoring. In this project, project Work Plan and budget provided limited clarity in defining exact nature of inputs and was left for diverse interpretation by various actors.
- ① Project activities should be determined consistent with the available resources and based on realistic assessment of counterparts' absorptive capacities, and counterpart support.

### ***Implementation and project management:***

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- ① A project of this complex nature must be supported by adequate management structure, including the presence of a full-time Project Coordinator position.
  - ① A good working relationship between the Project Coordinator and the government implementing agencies is essential in implementing any project. This was a particular plus point of this project.
  - ① Risk assessment should be regularly conducted and appropriate response plans should be updated.
  - ① Risk assessment needs to take account of the counterpart issues (i.e., assigning full time counterparts and retention of trained personnel in the counterpart institutions.).
  - ① Systems for effective monitoring of the project need to be clearly identified in the project design.
  - ① PCC meetings must deal with emerging problems and provide solutions based on appropriate homework rather than leaving issues to be dealt outside the PCC framework at a later time.
  - ① A project of similar complexity and scope should be reviewed at least two times during its life time (mid term and terminal) and these review exercises should be linked to the PCC Meetings. Sufficient funds should be allocated for evaluation purpose before hand, preferably at the design stage and should not be used for any other purposes which was the case in this project; and
  - ① Care should be taken to ensure that the various consultants are good match in knowledge and skills with the government implementing agencies.
  - ① Gender dimensions should be integrated into the project to the extent this is appropriate.

## UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME

## PROJECT EVALUATION

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

Project Title: Alternative Development Cooperation in East Asia

Project Number: AD/RAS/00/C96

## BACKGROUND

1. The Supply Reduction Programme of the MOU Subregional Action Plan identified priority attention for developing national capacities to design and implement community-based alternative development and for disseminating good practices and lessons learnt in alternative development. As part of the Subregional Action Plan, the project for Alternative Development Cooperation in East Asia was formulated and funded under the Funding Agreement between UNODC and the Government of Australia. The immediate objective of the project is to improve the effectiveness of alternative development projects through increasing knowledge, skills and capabilities of practitioners and policy makers in national agencies (NAs), sharing of lessons and experience and networking between relevant alternative development agencies.

The project will also involve alternative development project managers/coordinators and project staff, alternative development specialists, and personnel of NGOs, UN agencies, bilateral and multilateral development and financial institutions that programme their technical and development assistance in areas having a significant drug crop problem. Lessons learned and good practices compiled by the project will also be shared with other alternative development agencies and projects outside the region who can benefit from the long experiences on illicit crop eradication in Southeast Asia. The project with a time frame of 3 years began its operation after the inception meeting of the Project Coordination Committee (PCC) in October 2000. The implementation of the project will be completed by October 2003. As indicated in the project document, an end-of-project evaluation is planned after the completion of the project activities. The findings and recommendations of the evaluation will be submitted to the final PCC meeting tentatively scheduled at the end of October.

## EVALUATION PURPOSE

2. The objective of the evaluation is to assess the progress made towards achievement of the immediate objective. More specifically, the evaluation will review and evaluate a) project concept and design b) project implementation and c) project outputs and any immediate impact. The evaluation should also provide recommendations and lessons learnt for future initiatives. Details are shown below:

### Project concept and design

3. The evaluator shall review the problem addressed by the project and the project strategy and evaluate the relevance and the appropriateness of the project objective, outputs, activities and resources. More specifically the evaluator will assess:

- whether the needs of relevant MOU Government counterpart agencies at the time of project formulation were properly reflected in the project document
- whether project activities and resources were allocated adequately
- whether the sub-regional approach has been appropriate

### Implementation

4. The evaluator shall assess the overall management and implementation of the project activities. The project management and coordination mechanisms should be reviewed to assess the strengths and weaknesses as well as effectiveness of the mechanisms. The evaluator shall consider how the project coordinated its activities with:

- the five national counterpart agencies in the sub-region
- ongoing alternative development projects in the countries of the sub-region
- UNODC alternative development initiatives (at HQ or elsewhere)
- relevant development agencies, research institutions, universities, etc.

### Project outputs, outcomes and impact

5. The evaluator shall assess the outputs, outcomes and any immediate impact achieved or expected to be achieved by the project as well as the likely sustainability of project results, when applicable. This should encompass an assessment of the achievement of the immediate objective (increased knowledge, skills and capabilities of practitioners and policy makers in national agencies) and the contribution to attaining the drug control objective and any unexpected results. The evaluator shall assess whether the publications produced by the project have contributed to achieving the project immediate objective (in terms of appropriateness of content, language, distribution etc.). Finally, the evaluator should explore whether the project contributed to other areas such as:

- increasing UNODC knowledge and capacities in the field of alternative development
- increased mainstreaming alternative development into national development plans and development assistance

### Recommendations

6. The evaluation will include recommendations for any future action. Recommendations may also be made in respect of issues related to the implementation or management of the project, as well as concerning replication of the project approach and strategy in other regions.

### Lessons learned

7. Lessons learned from the project which are valid beyond the project itself should be recorded in the evaluation report.

## EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

8. The evaluation will be based mainly on the review and study of existing documents and reports. This may be followed by interviews with selected beneficiaries and stakeholders if further information is needed to evaluate any specific components of the evaluation. The evaluator may also interview some of the PCC members (including AusAID the funding agency) who have participated in the annual review of progress and future work plan of the project. Project documents, work plans, progress reports, PCC/Tripartite reports and other publications resulted from the project implementation will be reviewed. Please see Annex 1: List of Documentation.

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR EVALUATION

9. The Alternative Development Cooperation in East Asia is considered a small subregional project with a total funding of US\$ 315,000. The evaluation of the project does not require a wide range of expertise and, therefore, will be carried out by one evaluator.

The evaluator should have solid experience in project evaluation and is well versed with technical cooperation project planning and management in the field of rural/alternative development. The evaluator should have ample working experience in the MOU sub-region. He/she should have a minimum of graduate degree in social science, rural development, evaluation or other related fields. Excellent command of English language is required. The evaluator should not have been directly involved in the design, appraisal or implementation of the project and should be able to use his/her independent judgment for the evaluation.

## BRIEFINGS, CONSULTATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

8. Prior to conducting evaluation, the evaluator will be briefed by the Representative on the overall policies and management of the Regional Centre. The details and status of the project will be briefed by the project coordinator. The project documents as indicated in Annex 1 will be provided to the evaluator as part of the input for the evaluation. The Regional Centre will be responsible for providing substantive and administrative support to the evaluator.

## EVALUATION REPORT AND FOLLOW-UP

9. At the end of the evaluation mission, a debriefing meeting will be held at the UNODC Regional Centre to present a summary of the evaluator's findings and recommendations. Any observations and comments received from UNODC and the national counterparts during the mission may be taken into account by the evaluator.

10. The evaluator will submit a draft report in English to the UNODC Regional Centre. This draft evaluation report will be discussed with the executing agency and other parties to the project as appropriate. Although the evaluator should take the views expressed by the concerned parties into account, he should use his independent judgement in preparing the final report.

11. It is intended that the evaluator will present the findings and recommendations of the evaluation mission to the final PCC Meeting, which is tentatively scheduled at the end of October. In that case the draft report should be submitted to the UNODC Regional Centre at least 3 days before the Meeting.

The evaluator should follow the UNODC standard format and guidelines for the preparation of project evaluation reports. He will provide the final report not exceeding 25 pages excluding annexes to the Regional Centre who will distribute the report to concerned parties including the Evaluation Section of UNODC Headquarter. The report should be typed in 1 ½ spacing and in A-4 format. An electronic copy of the evaluation report (annex 1), the evaluation summary (annex 2) and the summary assessment questionnaire (annex 3) will be made available and forwarded to [silvia.levissianos@unodc.org](mailto:silvia.levissianos@unodc.org).

#### TIMETABLE

10. The proposed timetable for the evaluation is as follows:

- Formulation of Project Evaluation Terms of reference	1-5 September
- Consultation and finalization of TOR	8-12 September
- Selection of evaluator	15-19 September
- Finalize SSA contract	22-24 September
- Forward initial literature and project documents to the evaluator	25-30 September
- Actual project evaluation	13-23 October
- Submission of draft report	24 October
- Presentation of findings to the PCC meeting	29-30 October
- Finalization of the report	31 October.

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**Annex 2 : Persons Consulted (by phone or in person)**

Mr. Wang Youmei (PCC member)  
Deputy Director, International Cooperation Division  
Office of the National Narcotics Control Commission (NNCC),  
Peoples Republic of China

Mr. Pornthep Iamprapai (PCC member)  
Deputy Director,  
Northern Narcotics Control Centre, Thailand

Mr U Nyi Nyi (PCC member)  
Director, Planning and Inspection Division,  
Progress of Border Areas and National Races Department, Myanmar

Mr. Leik Boonwaat  
AD Specialist,  
Programme Facilitation Unit (PFU)  
Lao PDR

Ms Tran Thi Lan Anh  
Dept. for Resettlement and Dev. of NEZs, Min. of Agriculture and Rural Dev.  
Hanoi, Vietnam

Dr. Sandro Calvani  
Representative  
UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific  
Bangkok, Thailand

Dr Sanong Chinnanon  
HR Specialist and Project Coordinator, C96  
UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific  
Bangkok, Thailand

Mr. Stephen Walker  
First Secretary, Australian Embassy, Technical and Economic Cooperation,  
AUSAID, Thailand

Mr. Sean Devine  
Programme Manager  
AusAID  
Bangkok, Thailand

(also met all participants in the PCC meeting, 28 October 2003, Chiang Rai)

List of Documents (AD/RAS/00/C96) (as of 9 September 2003)

Year 2000

1. Project Summary
2. Project Document
3. Workplan: Alternative Development Cooperation in East Asia (AD/RAS/98/C96)
4. Inception Meeting for the Project: Alternative Development Cooperation in East Asia, 26-27 October 2000, Chiang Rai, Thailand

Year 2001

5. Community Participation in Alternative Development Guidelines
6. Community Participation in Alternative Development Training Guide
7. Alternative Development Cooperation in East Asia Brochure
8. Opium Reduction in Thailand 1970-2000: A Thirty-Year Journey
9. Alternative Development: Sharing Good Practices Facing Common Problems

Year 2002

10. Progress Report 2001
11. Updated Workplan for 2002-2003
12. Report of the Project Coordination Committee (PCC) Meeting, the second Meeting of the PCC, 11 March 2002, Luang Prabang, Lao PDR
13. Opium Farming and Poverty as Market Failures: Experiences in the Mekong Region on Marketing and Micro-credit for Alternative Development

Year 2003

14. Progress Report 2002
15. Alternative Development Study Visit to China and Myanmar, 22 February – 2 March 2003
16. A Manual on Monitoring and Evaluation for Alternative Development Projects
17. Progress Report, January – June 2003
18. Opium Eradication in Vietnam: Achievements and Lessons from Alternative and Integrated Mountain Rural Development projects. (final draft)
19. Social and Economic Impact of Illegal Drugs in Thailand (Draft)

*United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*

**Project evaluation  
Summary assessment questionnaire**

**I. NUMBER AND TITLE OF PROJECT:**

AD/RAS/00/C96 “Alternative Development Cooperation in East Asia”

**II. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:**

1. Please provide an assessment for all categories listed (including categories constituting headings) by ticking one of the boxes ranging from 0 to 5. The ratings from 0 to 5 are based on the following standard favor-to-disfavor scale:

- 5 - Outstanding, highly appropriate, much more than planned/expected, certain to materialize
- 4 - Very good, very appropriate, more than planned/expected, highly likely to materialize
- 3 - Good, appropriate, as planned/expected, likely to materialize
- 2 - Fair, less appropriate, less than planned/expected, less likely to materialize
- 1 - Unsatisfactory, not appropriate, far below plans/expectations, unlikely to materialize
- 0 - Cannot determine, not applicable

2. If a category has been significant (as a cause or effect) in relation to the overall quality and/or performance of the project please tick the “S” column (if significant) or the “H” column (if highly significant).

	H	S	0	1	2	3	4	5
OVERALL QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE OF PROJECT:							4	
I. PROJECT CONCEPT AND DESIGN:						3		
1. Project document (overall clarity, logic and coherence).						3		
2. Identification/analysis of problem addressed by project:						3		
3. Project strategy (overall assessment):						3		
4. Drug control objective (s) (Appropriateness, obtainability):						3		
5. Immediate objective(s) (appropriateness, Obtainability):							4	
6. Achievement indicators:						3		
7. Base-line study/arrangements for base-line study:			0					
8. Outputs (compared to cost effective alternatives):						3		
9. Activities (compare to cost effective alternatives):						3		
10. Inputs (compared to cost effective alternatives):					2			
11. Executing modality and managerial arrangements:								5
12. Identification and assessment of risks					2			
13. Prior obligations and prerequisites:					2			
14. Workplan/planned project duration:						3		
15. Budget:				1				

	H	S	0	1	2	3	4	5
II. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION:		S				3		
1. Quality and timeliness of UNODC inputs:						3		
2. Quality and timelines of Government inputs:					2			
3. Quality and timeliness of inputs by third parties:			0					
4. Equipment: *inappropriate in the sense of being premature and generous			0					
5. Advisory/training services:						3		
6. Project personnel:				1				
7. Sub-contracting:					2			
8. Management of project:							4	
9. Project workplans:						3		
10. Implementation of activities:							4	
11. Monitoring and backstopping by ODCCP HQ:			0					
12. Monitoring and backstopping by ODCCP field Office:								5
13. Monitoring and backstopping by Executing Agency:								
14. Monitoring and backstopping by Government:						3		
15. Government fulfilment of prerequisites:					2			
III. PROJECT RESULTS:		S						
1. Timeliness of produced outputs;						3		
2. Quantity of produced outputs:							4	
3. Quality of produced outputs:						3		
4. Outcomes: achievement/likely achievement of immediate objective(s):							4	
5. Drug control impact achieved:						3		

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4

	H	S	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. Drug control impact to be expected						3		
7. Likely sustainability of project results:						3		

3. If external factors had an impact on project performance please tick the appropriate boxes: external factors impeded:  v  / promoted:  project performance. The effect on project performance of this influence was significant:  v  / highly significant: . Please provide a short description of the nature of the external factor(s):

Lack of adequate funding to cover a wide variety of activities;  
Absence of a dedicated Project Coordinator in the project design.

4. Did the evaluation recommend to:

- a)  abandon the project
- b)  continue/extend the project without modifications
- c)  continue/extend the project with minor modifications
- d)  continue/extend the project with some modifications
- e)  continue/extend the project with extensive modification
- f)  terminate the projects, as planned

(please tick the relevant category).

5. If a modification of the project was recommended did the evaluation recommend a revision of: the drug control objective(s): , the immediate objective(s): , the outputs: , the activities:  or the inputs: . Please tick as appropriate.

It is recommended that the project be redesigned into a new project.

6. If the evaluation recommended that the project or significant elements of it be replicate please tick as appropriate: yes:  / no: