

Mid-term Independent Project Evaluation of the

Countering the trafficking of Afghan opiates via the northern route by enhancing the capacity of key border crossing points and through the establishment of Border Liaison Offices

XACK22

The Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan and the
Republic of Uzbekistan

February 2015



UNITED NATIONS

New York, 2015

This evaluation report was prepared by Mr. Gary W. O'Hara, INC. The Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) provides normative tools, guidelines and templates to be used in the evaluation process of projects. Please find the respective tools on the IEU web site: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/evaluation.html>

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BCP	Border Crossing Point
BLO	Border Liaison Office
BGS	Border Guard Service
CA	Central Asia
CARICC	Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Centre
CLP	Core Learning Partner
CND	Convention on Narcotic Drugs
DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration/U.S. Dept. of Justice
IBM	Integrated Border Management
IEU	Independent Evaluation Unit
INL	U.S. Dept. of State/International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOI	Ministry of Interior
NDR	Northern Distribution Route
LEA	Law Enforcement Agency
ROCA	Regional Office for Central Asia
TOC	Transnational Organized Crime
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNODC project XACK22 “Countering the trafficking of Afghan opiates via the northern route by enhancing the capacity of key border crossing points and through the establishment of Border Liaison Offices” was initiated in response to the growing threat from the transporting of opiates (heroin) from northern Afghanistan onwards to Russia and Europe via the ‘Northern Distribution Route’ (NDR). UNODC estimates that 25% of the heroin leaving Afghanistan utilizes the NDR and tons of precursor chemicals which are needed to convert the opium into heroin transit back through Central Asia and into the hundreds of illicit conversion laboratories scattered throughout Afghanistan.¹ To accomplish this complex movement of drug distribution and the resupply of precursor chemicals, Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) groups operating in Central Asia deploy sophisticated smuggling methods which, for the most part, have allowed them to transit contraband unimpeded across multiple-international borders.

To counter these powerful trafficking groups and in cooperation with ‘UNODC Regional Programme for Promoting Counter Narcotics Efforts in Afghanistan & Neighbouring Countries’ XACK22 was initiated in 2009 and guided by the following themes: build capacities at Central Asia Border Crossing Points (BCPs); enhance the level of expertise of officers at crossings; establish intelligence sharing and communications mechanisms between state agencies’ within a Border Liaison Office (BLO); draft legal and binding documents for inter-agency and cross-border cooperation.

Project XACK22 was launched on October 16, 2009 and is scheduled to end on December 31, 2015. The project’s overall budget is \$5,056,932 (USD) with an approved budget of \$4,546,197 (USD). The International Project coordinator is based in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and reports directly to the Regional Representative based in the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia (ROCA) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. This regional project has national project officers and assistants represented in all participating countries.

The project was subject to three revisions amending its design and scope to the needs of the recipients as well as incorporating additional donor funding. Revision one (1) was initiated in response to the Republic of Turkmenistan officially withdrawing from the project in October 2010. Revision one (1) occurred in April 2011 and adjusted the projects outputs to establish (4) four BLOs along the Tajik-Uzbek border. Revision two (2) occurred in April 2012 and was initiated when the government of Japan donated \$1,270,000 (USD). This allowed for the Kyrgyz Republic to officially join the ongoing project. This project expansion called for four (4) additional BLOs to be placed on the Tajik-Kyrgyz border. Revision three (3) occurred in October 2013 when the government of Japan through the Japanese Agency for International Cooperation (JICA) pledged additional funding of \$1,389,265 (USD) and the U.S. Department of State/International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (I.N.L.) pledged additional funding of \$446,350 (USD). This revision called for the establishing of two (2) BLOs along the Uzbek-Kyrgyz border, one (1) BLO on the Uzbek-Afghan border, and two (2) BLOs on the Tajik-Afghan border.

¹ <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/pressrelease12nov12.html>

The scope and purpose of this independent mid-term evaluation being conducted by an Independent Evaluation Consultant (IEC) in cooperation with ROCA project personnel and the UNODC Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) as directed in the Terms of Reference (TOR) is to: ‘measure project achievements, lessons learned, as well as areas requiring improvements identified during the implementation of the project activities.’ This evaluation focused on evaluating activities within Components 1 and 2 as well as providing guidance to improve the expanded projects implementation. Accordingly, this evaluation covers the period from January 2011 to November 2014. This is the second independent evaluation of this project. The evaluation used OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability, and the specific criteria outlined in the TOR to include: partnership and cooperation, human rights and gender, and lessons learned/best practices. Multiple sources of data to include: desk review documents, interviews with the stakeholders, in-country site-inspections, and general observations were triangulated, analysed, and incorporated into the independent mid-term evaluation report.

Data gleaned from the desk review reports and information obtained in interviews with the CLPs concur the ongoing project as being relevant to the stakeholders and fully in line with UNODC counter-narcotics strategies for the Central Asian States. In interviews with the CLPs, they advised through the efforts of this project the countries’ law enforcement agencies were made aware of the need for a BLO program to be incorporated into their Integrated Border Management (IBM) plans. An integral part of the internationally recognized IBM approach to border security is the development of BLOs and their ability to communicate and cooperate both at the intra-agency level as well as the inter-agency level.

Prior to the implementation of this project there were limited law enforcement mechanism in place at the BCPs that authorized agencies to exchange information. Through the efforts of this project, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were ratified which now serve as a legal basis to establish law enforcement BLOs teams at BCPs. To function effectively and efficiently the newly established BLOs must have dedicated officers who are trained and equipped with the tools needed to communicate and detect smuggled narcotics. The project seeks to build the Core Learning Partners’ (CLPs) overall capacities through trainings, securing professional office space, and providing them the equipment needed to establish relevant and functioning BLOs. UNODC expertise in establishing BLOs throughout the world has brought awareness to the CLPs who now recognize that highly-trained and properly equipped officers are needed in their regional fight against international narcotics traffickers.

Based upon an analysis of the triangulated data XACK22 overall efficiency can now be documented as effectively meeting the needs of the stakeholders as the project’s designed inputs are now being converted to the expected outcomes. This was not always the case. The desk review documents revealed that the implementation of activities were delayed for approximately seven months while awaiting ratification from the Government of Turkmenistan, a participant which ultimately withdrew from the project. In addition, activities were originally planned for Afghanistan, which was not included as a target country participant. As documented within Project Revision I, an International Expert (IE) was recruited and recommended additional BLOs be located in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to compensate for Turkmenistan’s withdrawing from the project and the shifting of the planned activities away from the Afghan border. A Needs Assessment and Feasibility Report (NAFR) produced in cooperation with the proposed target countries should have been undertaken prior to the drafting of XACK2.

As documented in Revision 2, the project was revised to include the Kyrgyz Republic. Project implementation was delayed for the first seven months of 2012 due to the lack of formal ratification from the governments of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The project team and their CLPs

recognized that implementation delays hindered project efficiency and worked with their respective governments to obtain project ratifications. The project is now guided by Revision 3 which is properly designed and operates efficiently as all three participating countries secured official governmental project ratification.

During the field mission, the evaluator met with the members of Working Groups (WGs) and attended two equipment hand-over meetings/ceremonies. The current system of the CLPs working in close cooperation with the project management team in identifying and selecting effective technical equipment based upon equipment feasibility studies is well-organized. The equipment is distributed in an equitable manner to the respective BLOs/agencies. The project documents provided in the desk review outline in detail the process of equipment selection/distribution, the refurbishing or building of new BCP/BLO facilities, and the problems encountered. XACK22 carefully follows the UN “best practices” rules and regulations in procuring equipment and in establishing BLOs.

XACK22 has contributed to the overall effectiveness of the CLPs by establishing BLOs at selected BCPs which directly enhances their IBM efforts and promotes regional cooperation. BLOs scheduled to be built or refurbished within project Components 1&2 were completed and were professionally constructed. BLOs scheduled to receive equipment within project Components 1&2 to include IT-equipment, Nissan Patrol vehicles, x-ray machine, solar power systems, surveillance cameras, generators, software, and furniture were delivered. The ratified SOPs provide the legal framework needed to formalize the BLO initiative. BLOs are now staffed with law enforcement officers from Border Guards, Customs Service, Drug Control Agencies, and State Security agencies. BLO trainings, though limited, were conducted and did serve to bring an understanding of the functions of a BLO and the use of advanced technical equipment. A European study tour sponsored by the project touted the benefits of regional interdiction cooperation. The establishing of BLOs, the staffing and training of officers, and outfitting them with enhanced equipment provides the CLPs with the basic tools needed to effectively operate a BLO. It has also effectively created a demand from the CLPs for additional trainings and international support to further increase their interdiction capacities.

The one project output that has not yet been fully and effectively delivered is the exchange of information through the BLOs at the BCPs. In interviews with the stakeholders, it was learned that the implementation of cross-border cooperation could not be fully undertaken until all outputs supporting communications and cooperation are provided which, as documented, have now been completed within Components 1&2. In the evaluators meetings with the members of the Project Steering Committees (PSCs), they universally understood the need to exchange information and acknowledged that the project’s overall objective in establishing BLOs is to establish avenues of communications with their neighbouring border control agencies. In interviews with the members of PSCs, WGs and assigned BLO officers, it was generally agreed upon that cross-border cooperation must be implemented in phases with guidance provided from their respective agencies and governments.

Impact is the change, both positive and negative, produced or likely to be produced by the project. XACK22 is an ongoing project and all of the projected objectives have not yet been achieved. Some impacts can be measured statistically and some more subtle impacts can only be measured by observation. In this project, one notable subtle impact which was observed by the evaluator and pointed out through interviews with the CLPs is the positive relationships built between the stakeholders and the UNODC project management team. This partnership has greatly contributed to the project’s overall efficiency and effectiveness.

One method used in evaluating an operational BLO in regards to impact is the monitoring of interdiction efforts, contraband seizures, and arrests. In interviews conducted with the stakeholders, no substantial drug seizures (impact) at the established BCPs/BLO could be attributed to the project's capacity building outputs. When questioned about seizures at the BCP/BLO the assigned BLO officers were adamant in their reporting that as their interdiction capacities increased (direct result of project activities), smugglers altered their routes and avoid direct contact with the BCP/BLOs. Continuous monitoring of these statistics, as well as their interdiction efforts should continue so that in-time a clear picture develops on how this project impacts regional counter-narcotic efforts.

Relying on seizure statistics is too simplistic of an approach to gauge an ongoing project's overall impact. The project has contributed several notable impacts that can be evaluated to include the awareness that the BLO concept contributes to the participating countries' IBM strategy. The creation of PSCs and WGs which collectively come together to discuss implementation issues and the way forward. The coordinated effort of the project team and the CLPs in providing the legal framework needed to formalize the BLO initiative has strengthened intra-agency cooperation. The partnerships developed between the CLPs, the UNODC project team, and the international law enforcement community has strengthened the participants' understanding for continued international support. XACK22 has positively impacted the participating law enforcement agencies' efforts in regional border control.

According to UNODC Guidelines for an Evaluation Report, sustainability measures whether the benefits of the project will continue after the project is completed. As outlined in the original project document, it is envisioned that "project activities are designed to utilize existing resources and manpower and to be incorporated in the SOPs in effect at the respective crossings. Upon termination of project activities, practices will be therefore continued by the respective agencies with no sustainability issues arising." As documented in the desk review reports, the SOPs institutionalized the BLO concept, which shows a commitment from the host countries to support the project's planned activities. In the evaluators meetings with the PSCs, they agreed this regional project is directly related to border security issues and that continued support from their governmental agencies was necessary for the long-term success.

The BLO project has achieved many of its outputs but has yet to achieve the critical component of fully integrated cross-border cooperation which could determine the project's long-term sustainability. In the evaluators meetings with the CLPs, they expressed their support for cross-border cooperation and communication by acknowledging that the exchange of information with neighboring countries could directly impact on their ability to identify and interdict contraband. They concurred that the project has and will increase their respective border security efforts and verbalized that the BLO initiative is recognized by the international law enforcement community as a critical component for border interdiction/security. As documented, border issues within the Central Asia states are at time contentious over long-term issues of demarcation, water rights, and country access. Established and routine cross-border communications could assist in a wide-range of border issues and should be promoted by the project staff.

One major hurdle that must be overcome to obtain long-term sustainability is the training of dedicated BLO officers. BLO training efforts must become institutionalized within the host government's law enforcement training academies. The international community (donors) cannot sustain the training of hundreds of officers from a multitude of law enforcement agencies. Efforts must be made by the ROCA project staff in cooperation with Working Group-B to develop institutionalized BLO training conducted at the participating countries training academies. In interviews with operational officers at the BLOs it was documented that many of the officers have not received BLO training and trained BLO officers have been reassigned to other units.

As noted in the desk review documents, the project has a funding short-fall of approximately \$510,000 (USD). This short-fall must be addressed so that all stakeholders are made aware that adjustments to project activities are possible if this short-fall is not addressed through additional funding. In meetings with donor representatives from the Governments of Japan and the U.S., they expressed support for the ongoing project and were opened to the possibility of working with the ROCA staff in continued support for the ongoing project.

In regards to partnerships and cooperation, the ROCA project team works to coordinate its project activities with ongoing UNODC projects as well as projects coordinated by the international law enforcement community. The evaluator met with UNODC project coordinators who universally agreed that the ongoing BLO project presents no coordination problems and continuously works to promote efficiency and share in lessons learned. The project team has demonstrated international cooperation by inviting representatives from the European Union (EU)-Heroin Route Project to the PSC meetings, as well as briefing the projects outputs to representatives from the EU-Border Management for Central Asia (BOMCA), and the Office of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)-Border Initiative Group (BIG).

In interviews with members of PSCs and WGs, they confirmed that the establishing of the advisory teams has promoted cooperation and partnerships between all of the stakeholders. These partnership will become invaluable, as the difficult task of implementing avenues of cross-border cooperation will require CLPs support obtaining the necessary governmental authorizations and approvals. In interviews with representatives from the donor community they advised they are briefed on project activities, receive updated UNODC project documents, and project outputs represent their specific and identified requests.

As in all UNODC projects, Human Rights and Gender (HR&G) issues must significantly contribute to a project's overall goals. UNODC IEU documents this element as: HR&G considers the extent to which human rights concerns and the gender dimensions are taken into consideration during the design and implementation of the project. Gleaned from the desk review documents project XACK22 did not specifically address HR&G issues in its original design, but in interviews with the project team it was clear that these issues were recognized and promoted whenever applicable. Information gleaned from the desk review training documents reveal that approximately 4% of the nominated BLO trainees were female officers. The UNODC project staff working in cooperation with the CLPs recognize the importance of a diverse work force and must continuously support the selection and training of female officers (gender mainstreaming) who play a critical role in professional border interdiction. The project indirectly addresses Human Rights issues through its ongoing support in sponsoring international law enforcement conferences and trainings. In interviews with the stakeholders, it was universally agreed that the information provided at international conferences, regional working conferences, study tours, and trainings promotes professional law enforcement techniques, which in turn serves as a conduit for ongoing dialog on HR issues. No human rights issues were observed or reported during the evaluation.

There are a number of lessons learned that can be taken from XACK22. First and foremost all UNODC projects whenever possible should begin with a NAFR. XACK22 experienced extensive start-up delays as a direct result of design flaws in the original project document. If a NAFR was conducted, it may have eliminated or minimized many of the original project design flaws that delayed implication during the project's first 24 months. All UNODC regional projects, whenever possible, should seek to immediately establish PSCs and WGs in an attempt to get CLPs buy-in and expert advice at the commencement of the project. In the case of XACK22, the creating of PSCs and WGs was implemented within Project Revision 1, thus delaying needs assessment reports and invaluable support in ratifying the SOPs that legally establish the BLOs.

As part of the evaluation process, key recommendations can be put forward so as to strengthen the support to the CLPs, ensure sustainability, and to assist the ROCA project management team in future project implementation. The key recommendations are as follows.

- Project activities should continue to promote cross-border cooperation by supporting the BCPs and established BLOs within Components 1&2.
- The CLPs through meetings, conferences, and publications should raise both national and international awareness to the ongoing BLO initiative, so as to institutionalize the program into their respective countries counter-narcotics and smuggling efforts.
- The ROCA project team should continue to work closely with the three PSCs/WGs and collectively bring them together so they continue to develop professional working relationships.
- Interdiction efforts at the BCP/BLOs should be documented and analyzed so reliable data is developed to assist to CLPs in making adjustments in their interdiction efforts.
- The project team must continue to reaffirm that all new equipment requests must be authorized and approved through the WGs.
- Project activities must support and promote institutionalized BLO training sponsored by the host government(s) and opened to intra-agency participation.
- The project team must facilitate dialogue with the CLPs on the establishing of cross-border cooperation.
- The project team working in cooperation with ROCA senior management and the CLPs should consider seeking donor funds to support ongoing efforts by addressing the funding short-fall as well as for a project extension.

SUMMARY MATRIX OF FINDINGS, EVIDENCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings²	Evidence (sources that substantiate findings)	Recommendations³
Key recommendations		
The original project document was written without a NAFR, which contributed to a two year delay in project implementation.	Interviews and desk review documents.	To UNODC: All regional projects should be guided by a feasibility study/risk assessment with input from the proposed participating countries.
The project has established the legal foundation (SOPs) for the BLO initiative and provided modern facilities and equipment as directed with Components 1 & 2.	Interviews and desk review documents.	To UNODC/ROCA: Continue to monitor the SOPs to ensure sustainability. If a project extension is proposed, seek country ratification as part of the extension. Promote self-sufficient maintenance and IT support to ensure sustainability.
The project has established dedicated BLO operational officers through their respective HR departments, which has led to intra-agency cooperation as directed within Components 1&2.	Interviews and desk review documents.	To UNODC/ROCA: Promote and train intra-agency cooperation/operations with established BLOs utilizing training experts, who work in the field and are involved in intra-agency investigations as well as cross-border cooperation.
The project has not fully implemented cross-border cooperation to include the exchange of information with adjoining BLOs.	Interviews.	To UNODC/ROCA /CLPs: Through trainings, seminars, and workshops bring together the PSCs and WGs to promote dialog that will facilitate mechanisms that promote the exchange of information.

² A finding uses evidence from data collection to allow for a factual statement.

³ Recommendations are proposals aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, quality, or efficiency of a project/programme; at redesigning the objectives; and/or at the reallocation of resources. For accuracy and credibility, recommendations should be the logical implications of the findings and conclusions.

The project has a current short-fall of approximately \$510,000 USDs due to pledged funds not received within project Component 3.	Interviews and desk review documents.	To UNODC/ROCA: Project staff with input from the CLPs should prepare and present information on the projects outputs and accomplishments to perspective donors.
The project is properly managed by ROCA personnel and is in compliance with UN guidelines.	Interviews and desk review documents.	To UNODC/ROCA: Recruit and retain knowledgeable staff members who are dedicated to UNODC mandates.
Important recommendations		
Continued support to the BCPs and established BLOs must be provided to promote cross-border cooperation.	Interviews and desk review documents.	To UNODC/ROCA: Project activities must continue supporting the established BCPs/BLOs through trainings, work-shops, seminars, and site-visits. The project team needs to support and guide the CLPs to achieve cross-border cooperation.
The project has raised significant interest within the respective countries in regards to the BLO initiative.	Interviews	To UNODC/ROCA: Sustainability must be promoted by the project team by assisting the CLPs in developing presentations and publications that document the BLO achievements.
The project has provided basic BLO training as well as technical training.	Interviews and desk review documents	To UNODC/ROCA and CLPs: Work to establish institutionalized training utilizing courses designed to train-trainers as way to promote cost effectiveness and sustainability. All training should bring awareness to HR&G issues.
The CLPs universally agreed that the project was relevant to their needs, enhanced their border control efforts, and additional project assistance would support ongoing regional cooperation	Interviews and desk review documents	TO UNODC/ ROCA: The project is scheduled to end on December 31, 2015. It is recommended that UNODC with support from the stakeholders seek funds extending the project so that all planned outputs are fully achieved

I. INTRODUCTION

Background and context

Afghanistan which is geographically located directly south of the Central Asian states continues to lead the world in poppy cultivation and heroin production. According to the UNODC Afghanistan Opium Survey-2013, poppy cultivation increased 36% from 2012 and now encompasses 209,000 hectares.⁴ Opium yield went from 3,700 tons to 5,500 tons, an increase of 49%. The provinces of Balkh and Faryab, which border the Central Asian states of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, lost their poppy free status. The province of Badakshan which borders Tajikistan had an increase of 23% in poppy cultivation. UNODC 2014 Afghanistan Opium Survey documents that poppy cultivation in 2014 may potentially increase 7%, with yields (opium) estimated to reach 6,400 tons.⁵ On 12 November 2014 the Executive Director of UNODC, Yury Fedotov, stated:

“Afghanistan narcotics problem remained a global challenge and shared responsibility. We cannot afford to see the long-term stability of Afghanistan-and the wider region-derailed by the threat of opiates. What is needed is greater resolve towards addressing narcotics in a serious and tangible manner within the economic, development, and security agenda.”⁶

UNODC estimates that 25% of all the heroin leaving Afghanistan transits the NDR.⁷ With that said, the NDR has and will in all probability continue to be a major heroin/contraband distribution route that can directly affect the legitimate economic growth and stability of the countries of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. In an attempt to counter these powerful trafficking groups and in cooperation with ‘UNODC Regional Programme for Promoting Counter Narcotics Efforts in Afghanistan & Neighboring Countries’, the project was initiated and guided by the following themes: build capacities at Central Asia BCPs; enhance the level of expertise of officers at crossings (training); establish intelligence sharing and communications mechanisms between state agencies within a BLO; draft legal and binding documents for inter-agency and cross-border cooperation.

In 2009 in cooperation with the International Community, the project was initiated under the Rule of Law segment of the UNODC strategy with a focus area of ‘international cooperation in criminal justice matters.’ The project is an integral part of UNODC’s Rainbow Strategy, specifically the Yellow paper in which BLOs are linked to regional intelligence collection and sharing through the Central Asia Regional Information Coordination Center (CARICC) and Mobile interdiction units. It is also specifically supportive of Strategic Objective 5 ‘Strengthened Border Control & Cross-Border Cooperation’ of UNODC Strategic Program Framework for Central Asia.

⁴ <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/ed/drug-trafficking/central-asia.html>

⁵ <http://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/afghanistan/afghan-opium-survey.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/pressrelease12nov12.html>

⁷ <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/ed/drug-trafficking/central-asia.html>

XACK22 was launched on October 9, 2009 with funding provided by the government of Finland in the amount of \$1,300,000 (USD). The Project was planned to run for 26 months closing on December 31, 2011. In March 2011 based upon a project evaluation conducted in October 2010 the project was extended until December 31, 2012. In May 2012 the government of Japan provided additional project funding in the amount of \$1,270,007 (USD). The project was extended for additional 12 months and was projected to close on December 31, 2013. In October 2013 the project was again revised based upon additional funding in the amount of \$1,389,265 (USD) from the Japan International Cooperation Agency and \$446,350 (USD) from the U.S. INL. The project was extended for additional 12 months. The project has a revised overall budget of \$5,056,932 (USD) and is projected to close December 31, 2015.

The project's overall objectives have remained consistent and have not substantially changed based upon the three revisions. As documented in the original project document, the project seeks to: enhance border crossing facilities with established lines of communication and intelligence sharing across borders in order to detect and intercept contraband, including narcotics, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals, as well as facilitating international trade across these borders, bring long-term economic gains to both Afghanistan and its Central Asian neighbors thereby reducing poverty in border regions and promoting political and economic stability in the beneficiary countries.

The project's outcomes were identified as:

Outcome 1: Capacities at selected crossings enhanced both in terms of infrastructure, equipment, and training;

Outcome 2: Officers at these crossings establish intelligence-sharing and communications mechanisms between agencies employed there (BLOs):

Outcome 3: Targeted interventions by officers at crossing points conducted using advanced techniques such as risk analysis developed through interagency communication: Outcome

Outcome 4: Cargo searches facilitated due to access to specialized equipment by officers at crossings.

Purpose and scope of the evaluation

The independent mid-term evaluation of ongoing project XACK22 seeks to provide clarity and insight that will assist UNODC personnel, participating governmental agencies, international law enforcement, regional partners, and donors to form a clear understanding of past activities, as well as to serve as a guide for future project implementation. The evaluation was conducted by determining if the project's overall objectives are being achieved and if the resources (donor funding) are being efficiently and effectively utilized. The evaluation focused on the project's objectives (themes), design relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, lessons learned, best practices, and human rights and gender. This evaluation covers the period from January 2011 to November 2014. This is the first independent mid-term evaluation of this project.

The field mission for the evaluation was scheduled from 26 November to 7 December 2014. Meetings with stakeholders were conducted in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), Dushanbe (Tajikistan), and Tashkent (Uzbekistan). Site visits were arranged for the evaluator to meet with officials at

BCP/BLO Osh-BCP-Karamyk, Bor-Dobo in Kyrgyzstan, Dusti, Sary-Osiyo in Tajikistan, and Fotehabad, Oibek in Uzbekistan (Annex V).

The mid-term evaluation of XACK22 was carried out by an independent International Evaluation Expert.

Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation of the project was completed after meeting with the project's major stakeholders in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. High-Ranking governmental officials were made available through the scheduled 'steering committee meeting'(s) in all three (3) participating countries (Annex I). Site inspections at selected BCP were arranged, so that 'front line' officers were made available to provide operational insights into the project's overall effectiveness in all three participating countries (Annex V). Relevant participants were contacted to include: UNODC ROCA personnel, law enforcement officials in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, regional partners, donor representatives, and members of the International law enforcement community who provided insightful responses to the evaluation research questions in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact, partnership, and lessons learned/best practices can be found in Annex VI. Eighteen semi-structured interviews and eleven roundtable interviews were conducted and predictably became an integral part of the data collection process.

Desk Review:

The desk review sought information from a range of official UNODC documents that provided an understanding of both past accomplishments as well as the status of the project's current activities. The documents included: initial project document/revisions, annual/semi-annual reports, building/refurbishing activity reports, financial expenditure reports, donor reports, training records, and governmental statistical reports can be viewed in Annex III. Information gleaned from these reports assisted the evaluator in understanding the overall aim of the inspection as directed in the TOR found in Annex I that is, 'to ensure ownership, result-based orientation, cost-effectiveness, and quality of UNODC services.' The desk review assisted the evaluator in formulating the questions to be asked to specific stakeholders to include: UNODC ROCA staff, law enforcement officials, regional partners, and international donors. Information obtained through these interviews provided the evaluator with a 'working knowledge' of how the project directly impacts the stakeholders on how through lessons learned it can be better implemented in the coming year. The question(s) and response(s) provided the stakeholders with an opportunity to speak to an independent evaluator so that their knowledge and experiences could be shared (Annex II).

Interviews: Semi-structure and Roundtable

The evaluation questions were used as a guide and presented to each respective representative to ensure a standardized response from each of the participating countries to include: Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Questions were also presented that allowed for the respondents to provide their own observations, experiences, and comments in reference to the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact, partnerships, and lessons learned/best practices. The evaluator facilitated the questioning so that the respondents had the opportunity to express their views on whether the project achieved its intended overall objectives: project outcomes, and project outputs (Annex II). Based upon the group's involvement, location of interview, and rank of the participant(s) roundtable discussions or semi-structured interviews

were employed when interviewing the stakeholders. This technique allowed for the evaluator to gain a clear understanding of how effective and what ‘real’ impacts in regard to the BLO concept have come from this ongoing project.

The field mission for the evaluation was scheduled from 26 November to 7 December. Meetings with stakeholders were conducted in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), Dushanbe (Tajikistan), and Tashkent (Uzbekistan) (See Annex VI). Site visits were arranged for the evaluator to meet with officials at BCP/BLO Karamyk, Bor-Dobo in Kyrgyzstan, Dusti, Sary-Osiyo in Tajikistan, and Fotehabad, Oibek in Uzbekistan (See Annex V). The site-visit to Karamyk was cancelled due to extreme winter weather conditions.

Information obtained from the desk review, extensive interviews with the diverse group of stakeholders, and personal observations made while conducting site-inspections were triangulated to provide answers based upon the evaluation research questions. It should be noted that the questions were formulated (closed/open) to obtain quantitative data as well as qualitative analysis. A strong effort was made to engage selected participants in an open dialog so that they could relay through actual experiences the true impact of this project. As designed, the evaluator engaged the stakeholders in past outputs and outcomes as well as how ongoing (future) implementation could better serve the CLPs. This method was utilized in an attempt to get a clear understanding of how the participants viewed the project (identifiable changes) and to reduce any inherent biases that can creep into an evaluation report.

Sampling Strategy

All interviews were conducted by an independent evaluator recognized as a Subject Matter Expert (SME) in transnational counter-narcotics organizations with an extensive background in the smuggling of drugs/contraband within the Central Asia/Afghanistan countries. The UNODC ROCA project team members were responsible for identifying the CLPs to be interviewed as well as the logistical support for the field mission. The individuals selected to be interviewed were the appropriate officials, well prepared, and responsive. The meetings were properly scheduled and there were no logistical problems encountered by the evaluator.

The project design includes numerous law enforcement agencies from the Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan so an equal number of representatives from each respective country were interviewed. This number included High-Ranking officers (Decision makers) as well as operational officers at BCP/BLOs as listed in Annex V. A balanced cross-section of CLPs were interviewed so as to provide a sense of equality amongst the participating countries and to provide integrity into the mid-term evaluation. Prior to commencing the interview(s), the evaluator explained the right of confidentiality, purpose and scope of the evaluation, and requested that the stakeholders provide their role, experiences, judgments, and lessons learned on the ongoing project. Notes were taken during all interviews so as to accurately reflect the views of the stakeholders.

Limitations to the evaluation

Lack of time: To conduct a detailed evaluation and make informed recommendations, more time would have been needed to review the voluminous amount of documents provided in the desk review and to prepare the comprehensive inception report. This was overcome by continuing to review desk material during the field mission. Tight meeting schedules and extensive in-country

travel requirements prevented follow-up meetings that numerous participants requested. To some extent this was overcome by conducting working lunches and dinners.

Travel: The December scheduling for the field evaluation was problematic in that weather conditions in Central Asia are hazardous. As well known, the BCPs/BLO (site-visits) are located in remote, and in the some cases, isolated mountainous regions. Hazardous winter conditions prevented the evaluator from reaching Karamyk BLO due to extremely dangerous road conditions with the strong possibility for avalanches. In meeting with BLO representatives in Bor-Dobo and Kyzyl-Art, the interviews were conducted outside with temperatures at approximately -15C. Again, extreme weather conditions limited the evaluator's ability to get in-depth knowledge from the on-duty border guards at this location. This was partially overcome by conducting the interview in a vehicle.

Recommendation: More up front time to review desk material and to prepare the inception report. Conduct evaluations at the appropriate time of the year. Allow for more in-country time when conducting regional evaluations, so that unscheduled or side-bar meetings can be conducted.

II. EVALUATION FINDINGS

Design

The genesis of XACK22 is somewhat unknown in that there is no documentary evidence that a 'Needs Assessment and Feasibility Report (NAFR)' was produced to guide the project's design to include: overall objective, outcomes, and outputs. A clear and concise NARF answers many questions that should be transferred into the Project Idea document and thus incorporated into the original project design to include: technical expertise, legal feasibility, operational feasibility, risk, and time-frame feasibility.

XACK22 commenced in October 2009. Objective 2.2.1 in the original project document was: Enhanced border crossing facilities with established lines of communication and intelligence sharing in order to detect drugs/precursor chemicals across borders and to bring long-term economic gains in both Afghanistan and Central Asia thereby reducing poverty in border regions and promoting political and economic stability in the beneficiary country. The original project document outlined no outputs that would directly reduce poverty or develop long-term economic gains in Afghanistan and its CA neighbors. Afghanistan was not selected as a participant country within the project. Project outcome 2.2.2 documents: Capacities at selected crossings enhanced both in terms of infrastructure, equipment, and training. As documented within the original project, no mechanisms were put in place on who should select the BCP for BLO enhancement or where they should be located. In October 2010 the Republic of Turkmenistan an original project target country withdrew from the project advising they were already receiving substantial assistance in border control from other ongoing projects. If a NAFR was conducted, it may have minimized some of the original negative impacts that the project encountered.

In November 2010 an international expert was recruited to evaluate the ongoing project and to make recommendations which led to Project Revision 1 and referred to within the document as Component 1. The project's objectives shifted to include four (4) selected BLOs to be placed on the Tajik-Uzbek border. It was also within Revision 1 that the concept of forming PSCs and WGs was developed. As stated in the project document, "Steering committees will be formed separately in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in order to assist in obtaining national agreement and buy-in from the targets groups.' The PSCs are made up of senior governmental officials who represent the participating agencies. They meet on a quarterly basis and collectively once a year with the project management team to discuss ongoing implementation activities and issues. WGs consisting of operational officers representing their respective agencies were also formed and broken into two categories: WG-A provides input on training and equipment and WG-B provides input on legal issues (SOPs) and BLO staffing issues (HR). The WGs meet on a monthly basis or

bi-monthly, if necessary. The development and establishing of these working groups within the participating countries greatly enhanced efficiency and effectiveness.

Revision two (2) was orchestrated when the government of Japan pledged \$1,270,000 USD, which allowed for the government of Kyrgyzstan to officially join the ongoing project and referred to within the document as Component 2. This expansion called for four (4) additional BLOs to be placed on the Tajik-Kyrgyz border.

Revision three (3) in 2014 was orchestrated when the governments of Japan pledged an additional \$1,389,265 (USD) and the United States provided additional funding of \$446,350 (USD) which called for the establishing of two (2) BLOs along the Uzbek-Kyrgyz border, one (1) BLO on the Uzbek-Afghan border, and two (2) BLOs on the Tajik-Afghan border. The latest revision was completely ratified by all three (3) countries by June 2014.

The current project is now well written with realistic objectives, outcomes, and outputs that meet the needs of the stakeholders as reflected in this evaluation report. This was universally stated by PSCs and WGs members, UNODC staff, and the numerous governmental officials that the evaluator met with to obtain practical and first-hand information which was triangulated with the desk review documents and became the foundation of this evaluation report. The project seeks full transparency as reflected in the semi-annual and annual reports, which are shared with donors and all major stakeholders. In the evaluators meetings and interviews with donor representatives, they stated they are fully supportive of this project's structure and design and further advised that they are invited to attend the regularly scheduled PSC meetings and equipment hand-over ceremonies.

The project co-exists and supports UNODC Regional Program for Promoting Counter-Narcotics Efforts in Afghanistan & Neighboring Countries (2011-2014) by enhancing and supporting border control. It was gleaned from project documents and in interviews with UNODC national as well as regional project managers that XACK22 supports regional efforts by promoting professionally trained law enforcement officers, countering the smuggling of narcotics to include precursor chemicals, and supports intelligence sharing cooperation/centers.

The project complies with UNODC framework of results based management standards and procedures for evaluations, ensuring that the project is subjected to regular monitoring and in supporting this independent mid-term evaluation.

Relevance

Afghanistan which sits directly south of the Central Asian states continues to lead the world in poppy cultivation and heroin production. According to UNODC Afghanistan Opium Survey-2013 poppy cultivation increased a staggering 36% in 2013 and now encompasses 209,000 hectares. Opium yield went from 3,700 tons to 5,500 tons, an increase of 49%. The provinces of Balkh and Faryab which border the Central Asian states of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan lost their poppy free status. The province of Badakshan, which borders Tajikistan had an increase of 23% in poppy cultivation. UNODC Afghanistan Oium-2014 survey documents that poppy cultivation in

2014 may potentially increase 7% with opium yields estimated to reach 6,400 tons. With that said, the NDR in all probability will continue to be a major distribution route as heroin is transported towards Russia and Europe.

As outlined in the project document, the primary objective is to: ‘enhance facilities at the select border crossings with established lines of communication and intelligence sharing across borders in order to detect and intercept contraband, including narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemical.’ The evaluation focused on the following areas to determine if they are relevant to the overall objectives set forth above.

- Effects from the increase in capacity building at the selected BCPs;
- Type of training received by law enforcement personnel;
- Existing communications and intelligence sharing between law enforcement personnel at border crossings;
- Drafting of SOPs and memorandums between governments to facilitate cooperation.

The selection of the BCPs for project enhancement were determined by the PSCs/WGs in cooperation with the ROCA project management team and are in-line with the project overall objectives. As documented, interviews were conducted with the PSCs in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The committees were all strongly in agreement that the project was relevant to their border security needs and that the BLO initiative was laying the foundation for neighboring country cooperation. The PSCs were in agreement that the enhanced BCPs that now house the BLOs were innovative and progressive and were in-line with their respective IBM strategies.

Gleaned from the desk review documents and from interviews with the CLPs a great amount of effort was put into the drafting and ratifying the SOPs. The officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs worked closely with their respective CLPs and ROCA staff to obtain their governments approval. In interviews with the PSCs, they agreed that the ratifying of the SOPs was the critical step to the actual implementation of the BLO initiative. From this ratification, officers from the Customs Service, Border Guards, State Drug Control Agency, and National Security now have the authority to work together as a team in the established BCPs/BLOs. The PSCs expressed support for ongoing intra-agency cooperation as well as for finding avenues which promote cross-border cooperation.

As documented, site visits were scheduled for BCPs/BLOs in the countries of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Interviews were conducted with assigned BLO officers from the Customs Service, Border Guards, State Drug Control, and National Security agencies. These operational officers are located at remote BCPs and are now assigned to the BLO initiative. In general, the officers supported the ongoing project and stressed the need for continuous project support.

In September 2011 in order to identify effective trainings, a survey was devised for law enforcement officials and distributed to the participating countries. Using a statistical program survey method, an assessment report was compiled by the project staff identifying training needs and course content. When asked about the trainings received, the officers who did attend training concurred they were well planned, relevant, and professionally delivered. In a review of the desk materials, this was confirmed by training course evaluations conducted at the completion of specialized training.

Based upon an analysis of the triangulated data XACK22 is relevant to the stakeholders and supports the comprehensive UNODC counter-narcotics drug strategy for Central Asia.

Efficiency

According to UNODC Guidelines for Evaluations Reports, efficiency concerns how well inputs are converted to outputs delivered and how they contributed to the project's overall objectives. Initial delays caused by the Republic of Turkmenistan declining to participate in the original project and late ratification by the participating countries (legal grounds) limited major project implementations. The project commenced on October 16, 2009, however no national project staff were assigned to the project until March 2010. In October 2010 an independent consultant was recruited contributing to the first project revision approved in April 2011. In 2010 project activities were limited to (2) two trainings conducted in cooperation with UNODC project RER/E29-Drug Law Enforcement for intelligence, information, and data collection, analysis, and exchange. An international project coordinator was recruited in January of 2011. In August 2011 project activities commenced in the countries of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

In April 2012, the project was revised for a 2nd time, now to include activities within the country of Kyrgyzstan identified within the project as Component 2. Due to the delayed country ratifications which denied access to the projects budget, planned activities within Component 2 were delayed during the first 7 months of 2012. Gleaned from the desk review material there was the unforeseen delay, which has resulted from the legal complexities that the Governments of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan needed to overcome prior to ratification. In August of 2012 a launch ceremony was held and planned activities within Component 2 immediately commenced. At the time of this report all planned activities within Components 1 and 2 are completed or very near completion. In interviews with the members of the PSCs and representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it was universally agreed that the project extensions have strengthened the ongoing project.

In close cooperation with its implementing partners, the project staff worked through the delays and delivered the projected outputs that have significantly contributed to the project's overall objectives. Information gleaned from the desk review documents confirms XACK22 follows the UN 'Best Practices' guidelines in equipment procurement and in contracting for the refurbishing/constructing of the BLOs. In interviews with the CLPs respondents they advised that no unethical, illegal, or wantonly wasteful behavior in organizing trainings, procuring equipment, or in the building/ refurbishing of the BCP/BLOs facilities was observed.

Trainings Delivered: A critical output within Components 1&2 was for the providing of training. The following is the list of trainings delivered and the breakdown of the trainees from their respective countries. Gleaned from the desk review material was that training needs assessments were conducted prior to selecting and providing of trainings.

1. 26-29 October 2010 Precursor Control in Central Asia
2. 23-29 October 2011 Border Liaison Officers Basic Level Training
3. 24-28 October 2011 BLO Training
4. 31/10-28/11 BLO Training
5. 20 February 2012 Interactive Computer Training-1
6. 24 February 2012 Interactive Computer Training-1
7. 23 April 2012 Interactive Computer Training-2
8. 27 April 2012 Interactive Computer Training-2
9. 07 May 2012 Training on Search Kits CT30
10. 11 May 2013 Training on Search Kits CT 30
11. 28 May 2 June 2012 Basic BLO level training
12. 11-15 June 2012 Advanced BLO training
13. 5-15 October 2012 Study Tour in BLOs - European Countries

The total number of Law Enforcement officers trained: 272

- Kyrgyzstan: 70
- Uzbekistan: 109
- Tajikistan: 93

In addition, 8 more training courses were held in 2013 and 2014, where officers from the BLOs within Components 3 and 4 were involved. The provided courses included: 12 software training, BLO Basic level training, Advanced BLO training, and computer and software training.

1. 11-15 February 2013 I2 software advanced level training course
2. 3-8 June 2013 Additional I2 advance course
3. 16-27 September 2013 BLO Basic level course for new BLO officers
4. 21 Oct-1 Nov 2013 Computer training for Kyrgyz and Tajik officers
5. 24-29 March 2014 Advance level BLO course
6. 19-23 May 2014 BLO advanced level course
7. 16-27 June 2014 Computer and software training courses
8. 2-13 June 2014 Computer and software training course

In a review of the desk material and interviews with the PSC members, WG members, and the BLO operational officers, it was generally agreed that the provided training was relevant and efficiently delivered. The operational officers stressed the need for additional trainings from experienced BLO international officers. The PSCs know and understand the need to institutionalize BLO training within their respective academies, as this would be the most efficient way to continue training and promote long-term BLO sustainability. Selected training academies may be provided necessary technical support in consultation with WGs and PSCs.

In review of the project's disbursement history, a total of \$3,221,770 USD was expended as of January 2014 or approximately 53% of the overall budget. All expenditures were in accordance to UNODC administrative requirements and planned project activities.

UNODC project XACK22 consists of the following personnel:

- International Project Coordinator – Bishkek
- National Project Officer – Bishkek
- Administrative Finance Assistant – Bishkek
- UNODC Driver-Bishkek (Shared position - 15% charged to project)
- National Project Officer – Dushanbe
- Civil Engineer - Dushanbe (Shared position-50% charged to project)
- UNODC Driver - Dushanbe (Shared position-50% charged to project)
- Project Assistant – Tashkent

In reviewing of the financial documents obtained from the desk report there is a project short-fall of approximately \$510,000 (USD). In interviews with the ROCA project staff and in review of the desk material, it was determined that the short-fall was the result of the 2014 project revision in which activities were planned based upon receiving additional funding from U.S. INL which have not been officially received. This is an ongoing project so the funding short-fall must be addressed either through donor support or a project revision. This funding issue must be addressed, so that all stakeholders are made aware of a possible decrease in project activities.

The project which did start out in somewhat of an inefficient manner due to the project design issues is now efficiently run, which has greatly contributed to reaching the projects implementation objectives contained within Components 1&2.

Partnerships and cooperation

XACK22 supports the objectives of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (CND), 1961, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971 and the United Nations against Convention against the illicit Traffic in Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988 in countering the trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors. XACK22 supports the UNODC Regional Programme for Promoting Counter Narcotics Efforts in Afghanistan and Neighboring Countries (2011-2014) and UNODC Sub-Program 1 on Regional Law Enforcement Cooperation. It further supports UNODC's Strategic Program Framework for Central Asia and specifically supports Strategic Objective 5 - Strengthening Border Control & Cross-Border Cooperation. Gleaned from interviews with the project staff was their resolve to promote working relationships with regional/national project coordinators who manage ongoing projects with similar themes. In interviews with UNODC office heads, senior managers, and project managers, they concurred that the project staff seeks transparency, cooperation, joint planning, and follows UNODC rules and reporting requirements.

Regional project XACK22 fosters partnerships with several ongoing UNODC projects to include UNODC project REH22-Establishment of the Central Asia Regional Information and

Coordination Centre ‘CARRIC’ has played a key role by coordinating and hosting the projects PSCs and WGs. Using ‘CARRIC’ facilities reinforces the need for regional intelligence sharing. In addition, analyst from ‘CARRIC’ attended XACK22 sponsored trainings which again reinforces regional cooperation. Furthermore, XACK22 contributed to project RER/E29-Precursor Control in Central Asia by conducting joint training, which brings awareness to the BLO initiative that precursor chemicals transit through CA in support of the opium conversion laboratories located in Afghanistan.

XACK22 provides ongoing support towards UNODC project TAJ/H03-Tajikistan Drug Control Agency and UNODC project KYR/G64-Kyrgyzstan Drug Control Agency XACK22 by supporting and promoting intra-agency cooperation. The DCA officer’s participation within the projects PSC/WGs provides valuable insight and fosters intra-agency cooperation. In addition, XACK22 promotes regional training in cooperation with UNODC project SPI/V07-Regional Program for Afghanistan and Neighboring Countries by supporting training that provides senior officers from Tajik, Uzbek, Kyrgyz Republic, and Afghanistan an opportunity to train together on BLO implementation and CN efforts.

Gleaned from the desk review documents was the project team’s ongoing cooperation with the international law enforcement community. The European Union (EU) funded ‘Heroin Route Project’ initiative participates in XACK22 regional PSC/WGs meetings and the EU- Border Management Program in Central Asia (BOMCA) is regularly briefed on ongoing and proposed activities. In addition, the Office of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)-Border Interdiction Group (BIG) is regularly briefed on ongoing and proposed activities. This effort promotes regional and international cooperation which is the cornerstone in all projects/initiatives that support counter-narcotics efforts.

It was also very clear from the desk review documents and in interviews with the stakeholders that strong partnerships have developed within the project. In interviews with the PSC and WG members, observations made at two equipment hand-over ceremonies, and site-visits to the operational BLOs the XACK22 staff has formed professional working relationships with their implementing partners. In interviews with the donor representatives, they advised the project was professionally implemented, conformed to their requested inputs, and was responsive to information requests.

Effectiveness

Professional law enforcement agencies dedicated to border control should have modern facilities and specialized equipment to perform their duties. The building and refurbishing of selected BCPs/BLOs within Central Asian countries requires a tremendous expenditure of money and resources. The process of modernizing and equipping BCPs/BLOs with detection equipment is also necessary for the officers to effectively perform their duties to detect drugs concealed by sophisticated international smugglers. The training of officers in detecting sophisticated smuggling methods is also necessary to enhance border control. Training is expensive and must fit the needs of the law enforcement agencies.

In reviewing the provided documents, it is obvious that a lot of work and expenditures have occurred. Component 1 of the project called for the assisting and establishing of four (4) BLOs on the Tajik-Uzbek with funding provided by the country of Norway (\$1,440,575). Component 2 of the project called for the assisting and establishing of four (4) BLOs on the Tajik-Kyrgyz border with funding provided by the Government of Japan (\$1,270,007).

Project components 3 and 4 are ongoing and are scheduled to be completed by December 31, 2015. Funding in the amounts of \$1,389,265 (USD) from JICA and \$446,350 (USD) from the U.S. INL expanded the project (Revision 3) to include BLOs at Dustlyk/Dostuk (Uzbek-Kyrgyz), Ayritom (Uzbek-Afghan), and Nijniy Pyanj (Tajik-Afghan) borders.

Gleaned from the desk review documents is the refurbishing/construction of the BCPs/BLOs within Components 1 and 2 has recently been completed. The distribution of equipment to the selected BLOs included: IT-equipment, Nissan Patrol vehicles, X-Ray machines, solar power systems, video surveillance cameras, portable generators, software, and office furniture is nearly completed. In interviews with the UNODC staff and information gleaned from the desk review material, the project has followed all UN/UNODC contracting requirements during the refurbishing/construction of the BLOs and in the selecting and purchasing of equipment. Needs assessment reports were completed to ensure that equipment purchases fit the CLPs' needs. This practice must be carefully followed for the future selection of expensive computer software. Selection must be based on practicality, user friendliness, terms within licensing agreements, and sustainability.

As documented, the evaluator had the opportunity to visit the now established BLOs at Bor-Dobo (Kyrgyz)-Kyzyl-Art (Tajik), the BLO at Dusti (Tajik)-Saryosiyo (Uzbek), and the BLO at Fotekhobod (Tajik)-Oybek (Uzbek). The evaluator observed first-hand how planned and delivered activities effectively contributed to the ongoing projects overall outcome. It was evident when meeting and observing the BLO operational officers they feel a sense of pride of being connected to the BLO initiative. The officers are now assigned to modern BLO facilities and equipped with updated communications and technical equipment. The officers recognize that the SOPs establishing the BLOs effectively promotes intra-agency cooperation.

As previously documented, the exchange of information with the neighboring BLOs has not yet been implemented. In interviews with the operational officers they advised that exchanging information with the adjoined BLO would enhance their interdiction efforts. In round-table discussions with the officers, they responded that the added assistance from the project has greatly increased the local smugglers' awareness to their overall interdictions efforts and abilities. All respondents were generally pleased with the project's provided equipment, technical support, and with the overall assistance provided by UNODC staff.

In interviews with the operational officers, it was universally agreed upon that additional trainings were needed. In round-table meetings with the BLO officers it was shown by a hand-count that only a few of the officers per BLO attended the trainings. The officers who did attend stated the provided trainings were relevant and effective and that all assigned BLO officers should be given the opportunity to attend trainings. In addition, senior officers skillfully articulated that international support was needed to support training, the WGs, and the PSCs in developing a plan

of action that will lead to cross-border cooperation. When questioned on type of trainings, the officers proffered the need for trainings and seminars on how a functioning BLO establishes guidelines and policies to exchange information and strongly stressed the need for ‘experienced BLO trainers.’

In regards to the provided trainings, it was effectively delivered but more efforts must be made to get additional officers trained and the BLO training institutionalized into their countries’ training academies. In regards to cross-border cooperation and communication at this junction in the ongoing project this has not been fully achieved thus limiting the interdiction efforts a functioning BLO brings to the participating countries’ law enforcement agencies.

Impact

The Central Asian countries were formed in the early 1990s after the fall of the Soviet Union. Law enforcement agencies were established and charged with disrupting and dismantling powerful and entrenched criminal organizations. Central Asian law enforcement agencies can be described as ‘evolving and/or developing’ in their overall abilities to counter transnational criminal organizations. Impact, as defined by the UNODC Independent Evaluation Unit is, ‘the positive or negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a program, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.’

The establishing of the regional BLOs through SOPs has legally formalized the program within the participating countries. The projects established PSCs, WGs, and their countries representatives from MoFA have demonstrated commitment to the ongoing project in accomplishing this most difficult output. In interviews conducted with the (3) three PSCs, the evaluator learned that the CLPs were proud of this accomplishment and verbalized that the legal foundation supporting this project has fostered positive regional cooperation.

The establishing of the BLO initiative has promoted intra-agency cooperation. As documented, the evaluator had the opportunity to visit and meet with BLO operational officers within Components 1 and 2. The newly established BLOs are made up of officers from the Customs Service, Border Guards, Drug Control Agencies and State Security agencies. They are collocated in the established BLOs and share work-space. In a series of round-table interviews with these officers, it was confirmed that intra-agency cooperation has impacted their ability to communicate and exchange information. An indirect impact observed by the evaluator was that ‘senior and experienced officers’ vocally supported the project’s outputs and requested additional trainings/support for ‘junior officers’ who were inexperienced in interdiction techniques. This vocal support for the ‘junior officers’ who in-time will become ‘senior officers’ reaffirms to them that UNODC project assistance in cooperation with the international donor community is needed and necessary to fight criminal groups seeking to destabilize the region. The establishing of the BLOs and equipping them with technical equipment, communications equipment, and interdiction equipment has positively impacted on CLPs’ ability to interdict drugs and secure their respective borders. A critical element within the IBM structure is trained and equipped law

enforcement agencies. The project has delivered the basic components necessary to establish effective BLOs.

What has not been achieved as previously documented and is the cornerstone of this ongoing regional project is cross-border cooperation. As documented in the original project under output 2.2.2; ‘officers at these crossings establish working, intelligence-sharing and communications mechanisms between agencies employed at Border Liaison offices.’ Strong leadership from the members of the respective steering committees and ongoing governmental support will be needed to accomplish this project outcome. The UNODC project management team and donor community must also recognize that delays and/ or obstacles in cross-border cooperation are not unique to the Central Asian states but are problematic throughout the world and must be implemented carefully so as to not strain the participating countries evolving relationships (negative impact).

Gleaned from the original project document under indicator 2.2.4; ‘Enhanced interdiction capacity displayed through an increase in interdictions at the selected locations,’ an increase in interdiction capacity is a projected indicator for project impact. XACK22 is ongoing and evolving project, so the use of statistical drug seizure data to measure the project’s outcome through interdiction efforts is difficult. When questioned, CLPs proffered no significant investigations or provided statistical data documenting significant seizures or arrests at the established BLOs. In interviews with the BLO operational officers and in meetings with representatives from the state drug control agencies, reasons for non-impact interdiction ranged from the BLO is not fully operational, there has been a significant change in the drug routes leaving Afghanistan, and the smugglers avoid direct contact with BCP/BLOs based upon their increased interdiction capacities. Whatever the reason(s), it cannot be documented at this point in the project that drug seizures have increased (impact) based upon the project’s delivered activities within Components 1&2. The UNODC project team in cooperation with the PSCs and WGs must monitor this project indicator and adjust project activities/strategies, so that targeted interventions result in an increase of contraband seizures. It is recommended this effort be coordinated with ongoing UNODC project TAJ/H03-Tajikistan Drug Control Agency and KYR/G64-Kyrgyzstan Drug Control Agency and the National Center for Drug Control in Uzbekistan. Project outputs could address support to enhance the capacity at the National Center for Drug Control in Uzbekistan to assist the BLO initiative in the monitoring effort.

The project has contributed and achieved many positive impacts on the participating countries’ law enforcement agencies to include: their capacity to interdict contraband, intra-agency cooperation, regional cooperation, international recognition through enhanced IBM, and their overall ability to secure their respective borders.

Sustainability

Historically, the supporting of state law enforcement agencies from outside sources is difficult in that once the support (money, mentoring, equipment, organizing, licensing computer support, and training) is withdrawn the sponsored country does not have the resources or political will to sustain the program. The project has provided through Component 1&2 sophisticated technical

equipment, facilities, advanced trainings to a limited number of officers, and the organizational skills needed to establish BLOs. Through the PSCs/WGs they established SOPs which provide the legal basis for this ongoing project. As signatories to the original project document, the participating countries concurred with paragraph seven; 'Project activities are designed to utilize existing resources and manpower and to be incorporated in the SOPs in effect at the respective crossings. Upon termination of the project activities, practices will be therefore continued by the respective agencies with no sustainability issues arising.' It was universally agreed upon by all of the stakeholders that the delivered equipment is being properly and professionally maintained/utilized and is sustainable by the host governments as long as the BLO initiative is legally supported by the host government.

Information gleaned from project financial documents report a funding short-fall of approximately \$510,000 (USD). In interviews with UNODC staff it was determined that the short-fall was the result of the 2014 project revision in which activities were planned based upon receiving additional funding from U.S. INL which have not been officially received. This is an ongoing project so the funding short-fall must be addressed either through donor support or a project revision.

As documented, the project has been ratified by all three participating countries so in some regards the BLO project is sustainable by law for some years to come. It is unknown if the host countries would independently support the BLO project once the project comes to an end (December 31, 2015) and when asked that question by the evaluator, they universally responded that decision would be made by the high-level governmental officials. In interviews with CLPs, they concurred that this regional project needed UNODC ongoing support and would seek the necessary governmental approvals if a project extension was submitted by UNODC.

Another major hurdle that must be overcome is the training of BLO officers. In interviews with the BLO operational officers, they universally requested additional trainings for the newly assigned BLO officers, computer training, interdiction trainings, and guidance on establishing communications between adjoined BLOs. In interviews with members of the PSCs, they concurred that BLO trainings should be considered as becoming institutionalized into their respective training academies. Efforts must be made by the ROCA project staff to work closely with the respective Working Groups-B so that avenues are opened for the host countries training academies to take ownership of the training(s) program. Training feasibility studies should be undertaken to determine if train-the-trainer courses should be sponsored with the idea that the trained officers continue the basic BLO training at the host academies. Institutionalized training is one-way to ensure project sustainability.

Human Rights and Gender

The UNODC Independent Evaluation Unit documents this element as: HR&G considers the extent to which human rights concerns and the gender dimensions are taken into consideration during the design and implementation of the project.

As documented under project design, this ongoing project has no documented project outputs that directly relate to HR&G. With that said, any UNODC project that build and mentor professional law enforcement agencies is building awareness towards the issues of HR&G. During the course of this evaluation, the evaluator had numerous opportunities to observe first-hand the working relationships established between female ROCA project implementing officers and the CLPs. The relationship was professional, constructive, and respectful. As previously documented the PSC/WGs members, and the BLO operational officers universally agreed that the project staff was responsive and professional. Gender issues were not apparent and none were reported through the interview process.

Gleaned from training records was a total of 272 officers received trainings sponsored by XACK22 with Components 1 and 2. Of that total, only 11 were female officers or approximately 4%. Female participants included seven officers from Kyrgyzstan, three officers from Tajikistan, and one officer from Uzbekistan. The project team tracks the training nominees and through the interview process verbalized their support for additional female officers to be assigned to the established BLOs. It is recommended that through the PSCs meetings the gender issue be raised in support of the advancement of female offices within planned project activities.

The project currently addresses Human Rights issues through its ongoing support in sponsoring international law enforcement conferences and trainings. In interviews with the stakeholders, it was universally agreed that the information provided at international conferences, regional working conferences, study-tours, and trainings promotes professional law enforcement techniques which in-turn serves as a conduit for ongoing dialog on HR issues. The project through sponsored trainings seeks to build professional law enforcement border agencies who in-turn conduct lawful interactions with citizens thus mainstreaming professional law enforcement techniques into the CA region. No human rights issues were observed or reported during the evaluation.

It is recommended that all BLO training curriculums contain HR&G awareness training.

III. CONCLUSIONS

This ongoing project supports the strengthening of counter-narcotic efforts and the securing of international borders through the implementation of the BLO initiative. The participating countries of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have benefited from this project and by ratifying the legally supportive SOPs, confirm their continuing commitment.

As directed by the TOR this evaluation covered Components 1&2 within the ongoing project. As documented, the project has achieved the projected outputs of assisting in the creating of a legal framework to support the initiative, the building or refurbishing of BLOs at the selected sites, the supplying of equipment to support interdiction efforts, the supplying of communications equipment, and the staffing of the BLOs with officers from Customs Service, Border Guards, Ministry of Interior, Drug Control agencies, and State Security agencies. As far as UNODC ‘best practices’ go through numerous interviews with the stakeholders, it was agreed that the project is efficiently and effectively managed and when directly asked, no respondent advised that they observed mismanagement, fraud, or unethical behavior. In a review of the desk materials, it is apparent that all purchases/construction project activities within Components 1&2 complied with UN guidelines and procedures. It should also be noted that the project team utilized existing BCP office space when available and converted/refurbished the unused space into BLOs to save project money. This in-kind contribution from the host government through ‘best practice’ procedures also shows a commitment towards the project from the host government. The funds disbursed through the project for these achievements have been used as directed by the project documents.

Many international projects that seek to assist in the development or the introduction of new law enforcement method or techniques into maturing law enforcement agencies have difficulties in establishing effective and efficient trainings. The establishing of a new law enforcement concept (BLOs) requires experienced BLO trainers that are not be available within the host countries training academies. To date, the project has offered limited BLO trainings and it is unknown how many of the trained officers are still assigned to the BLO initiative. As recommended, the project staff working with the established and effective WGs and PSCs must seek to institutionalize BLO training into their respective training academies. If this can be accomplished, the project can efficiently and effectively deliver relevant training, as well as promote long-term sustainability.

Gleaned from the original project document the Overall objective is to: ‘enhance facilities at the select border crossings with established lines of communications and intelligence sharing across borders in order to detect and intercept contraband, including drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals.’ In interviews with the stakeholders, no appreciable amounts of drug seizures were reported or documented that can be directly attributed to the ongoing BLO project. Interdiction data must continuously be compiled and evaluated by the ROCA project staff in cooperation with the CLPs with input from the international law enforcement community, so this project as well as other related projects can adjust project inputs to thwart drug trafficking. If

trafficking routes have shifted, efforts must be made to counter the trafficker's new patterns thus reaffirming the projects overall relevancy.

The establishing of BLOs between adjoined countries greatly enhances the countries' abilities to detect and seize contraband. A true BLO is not a concrete building that can be easily built but as stated a law enforcement technique that opens the door for different law enforcement agencies from adjoined countries to openly communicate. At this point, the project has effectively promoted intra-agency cooperation - no small accomplishment. Now, the ROCA project team working with all of the stakeholders must begin to establish the cross-border cooperation. This takes time and continuous support from high-level governmental officials. Project support must be provided to the BCPs and established BLOs within Components 1&2 to ensure that the exchange of information from one BLO to the neighboring BLO begins to develop-the true concept of a BLO.

In conclusion, the stakeholders within this project are dedicated to supporting the project objectives. The project is professionally implemented and is supported by the participating countries. In close consultation with all stakeholders, UNODC should seek donor funds to support and extend this project which is set to close December 31, 2015.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of this mid-term evaluation, recommendations are being submitted for consideration by the ROCA project staff and the key stakeholders. The project within Components 1&2 has achieved a number of key planned outputs, but as documented several significant planned outputs have not been realized.

The project has raised awareness for the need to institutionalize the BLO concept into the participating countries' border security (IBM) overall enforcement plan. This must be reinforced through professionally developed presentations and state authorized publications developed by the participating countries, outlining their BLO efforts as part of their IBM strategy and presented to the international community. This promotes professional law enforcement and sustainability.

The ROCA project staff must continue to work closely with the PSCs and WGs in an effort to learn and understand the obstacles and hindrances in implementing cross-border cooperation. Care must be taken in developing cross-border cooperation knowing that this process slowly evolves and if pushed or demanded could have a negative impact on the neighboring relationships. Both the PSCs/WGs should be tasked with developing a comprehensive cross-border implementation plan tied to a proposed project extension. All avenues of communications to fit the laws and regulations of the countries should be explored to include direct communications (BLO to BLO) and indirect communication to include transfer of information through established intelligence centers such as CARRIC.

The ROCA project staff working in-close cooperation with the PSCs and WGs should seek to institutionalize BLO trainings into the established training academies. This accomplishes cost effective, relevant, and sustainable training. A training needs assessment report should be prepared by the PSCs/WGs on future trainings (train-the-trainer) that will lead to state sponsored and thus sustained BLO training. All nominated trainees for BLO training should be assigned to the BLO initiative or training academy staff. XACK22 project team must monitor the nominations and reinforce staff-rotations involving trained officers is detrimental the overall capacity building of the BLOs. The XACK22 project staff must also reinforce through the PSC/WGs the need for a diverse work force to include female officers assigned to a BLO.

Continue to work closely with the established WGs in the selecting and purchasing of expensive and sophisticated electronic equipment, interdiction equipment, and communications equipment. Documented inspections of the established BLOs should be made by ROCA project staff to determine if the purchased equipment is being properly utilized and maintained. Likewise advanced equipment requires specialized training. As recommended all training nominees and training curriculum should support the train-the-trainer concept. All additional purchases should be subjected to a needs assessment report.

The project management team in cooperation with the WGs should establish procedures to monitor interdiction efforts as well as seizure statistics at the established BLOs. An indicator of effective project outcomes as well as project relevancy is how enhanced and advanced interdiction efforts convert to measurable seizure statistics. The ROCA management team working in cooperation with the international law enforcement community (EU-Heroin Route Project) and UNODC (AOTP/RAB/SASS/STAS) must continuously evaluate the trafficking routes leading out of Afghanistan so projects can adjust strategies as part of project relevancy.

V. LESSONS LEARNED

As documented, many lessons have been learned from this ongoing project. All UNODC projects, whenever possible, should begin with a NAFR. As documented project implementation was hindered for approximately 24 months due to the Republic of Turkmenistan withdrawing from the project and from activities planned in Afghanistan, which was not considered for project participation. It is possibly these costly delays could have been avoided if a NAFR was prepared in cooperation with the targeted countries.

The development of the PSCs/WGs and adhering to their guidance was critical in getting the SOPs ratified which now serve as the legal foundation for BLOs. In interviews with the members of the WGs and the PSCs, it was obvious they felt empowered by the process which converted to project 'ownership'. This project would have been better served, if the original project design established the PSCs/WGs rather than waiting for the groups establishment within Project Revision I. As in all UNODC projects partnerships must be firmly established and fostered from beginning to end.

If a project extension is agreed upon by the stakeholders, the implementation must not be delayed based upon late country ratification(s). The ROCA project team must coordinate this effort with the host countries to ensure timely ratification. If additional countries within Central Asia seek to join this ongoing project, a feasibility study must be conducted and coordinated with the established stakeholders. Project funds are tied to country ratifications, so efforts must be made to coordinate the approvals to ensure project efficiency.

ANNEX I. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE EVALUATION

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME
Vienna

Terms of Reference of the Mid – Term Evaluation of XACK22 Project

“Countering the trafficking of Afghan opiates via the northern route by enhancing the capacity of key border crossings points (BCPs) and through the establishment of Border Liaison Offices (BLOs)”

The Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan and
the Republic of Uzbekistan

September 2014



UNITED NATIONS

New York, 2014

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I. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Project number:	XACK22
Project title:	Countering the trafficking of Afghan opiates via the northern route by enhancing the capacity of key border crossings points (BCPs) and through the establishment of Border Liaison Offices (BLOs)
Duration:	October 2009- December 2015
Location:	SubRegion - Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan)
Linkages to Country Programme:	N/A
Linkages to Regional Programme:	The project supports the “UNODC Regional Programme for Promoting Counter Narcotics Efforts in Afghanistan & Neighbouring Countries (2011-2014)” and Sub-Programme 1 on Regional Law Enforcement Cooperation
Linkages to Thematic Programme:	Sub Programme 1: Countering transnational organized crime and illicit trafficking, including drug trafficking”.
Executing Agency:	

	UNODC ROCA
Partner Organizations:	N/A
Total Approved Budget:	\$4,546,197
Donors:	Norway, Japan, USA
Project Manager/Coordinator:	Mr. Yusuf Kurbonov
Type of evaluation (mid-term or final):	Mid-term evaluation
Time period covered by the evaluation:	January 2011- October 2014
Geographical coverage of the evaluation:	The Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan
Core Learning Partners ⁸ (entities):	<p>The Kyrgyz Republic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of International Organization and Security of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic; • The State Service on Drug Control under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic; • Ministry of Interior of the Kyrgyz Republic; • The State Customs Service under the

⁸ The Core Learning Partnership (CLP are the key stakeholders of the subject evaluated (project, programme, policy etc.) who have an interest in the evaluation. The CLP works closely with the Evaluation Manager to guide the evaluation process.

	<p>Government of the Kyrgyz Republic;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State Border Service of the Kyrgyz Republic. <p>The Republic of Tajikistan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug Control Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan • Ministry of Internal affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan • Main Department of Border Guard Forces of the State Committee for National Security of the Republic of Tajikistan • Customs Service under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan • Ministry of Foreign affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan <p>The Republic of Uzbekistan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Drug Control Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan • Department of Main Department on fight against smuggling, State Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan • Committee on State Border Protection of the National • Security Service of the Republic of Uzbekistan • Department on fight against Illicit Drug Trafficking, Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Uzbekistan
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Project overview and historical context in which the project is implemented

The total volume of opiates smuggled from Afghanistan along the so called “Northern Route” encompassing Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, has soared since 1999. Today, UNODC estimates that 25 percent of all heroin smuggled from Afghanistan transits the “Northern Route”, posing a particular threat to Europe and the Russian Federation.

The international community has acknowledged that, as a bastion of moderate Islam and straddling key land routes between East Asia and Europe, Central Asia presents itself as a key strategic region from a security perspective. Central Asia’s borders present a unique opportunity for intercepting trade, foremost illicit drug trafficking but equally, secondary activities such as the trafficking of precursor chemicals and weapons. Currently, the risk of detection for smugglers is not high through most of the Central Asian-Afghan crossings and irregular crossings of the Afghan border present various smuggling options. Concerted efforts are required to build

capacities at the Central Asian Border Crossing Points (BCPs), enhance the level of expertise of officers at these crossings and to establish working, intelligence-sharing and communications mechanisms between agencies employed there (Border Liaison Offices-BLOs).

The project supports the “UNODC Regional Programme for Promoting Counter Narcotics Efforts in Afghanistan & Neighbouring Countries (2011-2014)” and Sub-Programme 1 on Regional Law Enforcement Cooperation. It is designed under the Rule of Law segment of the UNODC 2008-2011 strategy with a focus on result area of “International cooperation in criminal justice matters”. Specific results focus on enhancing the capacity for international cooperation against crime, organized crime, corruption, drug trafficking and terrorism and enhancing the capacity for law enforcement cooperation against crime, organized crime, corruption, drug trafficking, diversion of precursors and terrorism. It is also specifically supportive of Strategic Objective 5 of UNODC’s Strategic Programme Framework for Central Asia for 2008-2011.

The primary objective of the project is to enhance facilities at the selected border crossings with establishing lines of communication and intelligence-sharing across borders in order to detect and intercept contraband, including narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals while facilitating legitimate international trade.

The project XAC/K22 aims to establish a quite new system in countering narcotics by means of enhancing the capacity of the border crossing points (BCPs) as well as establishing Border Liaison Offices (BLOs) in Central Asia. It sets grounds for inter-agency and also cross-border communication, coordination and cooperation at the selected BCPs. The project framework comprises 4 pillars: training, infrastructure, equipment, and drafting legal documents for inter-agency and cross-border cooperation

Ultimately, all actions carried out under this project support the objectives of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971, and the United Nations Convention against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988, in countering the trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors.

Beneficiaries of the project are Customs Services, Ministries of Interior, Drug Control Agencies, and Border Guard Departments of the Republics of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

Justification of the project and main experiences / challenges during implementation

The international community has acknowledged that, as a bastion of moderate Islam and straddling key land routes between East Asia and Europe, Central Asia presents itself as a key strategic region from a security perspective. Central Asia’s borders present a unique opportunity for intercepting trade, foremost illicit drug trafficking but equally, secondary activities such as the trafficking of precursor chemicals and weapons. Currently, the risk of detection for smugglers is not high through most of the Central Asian-Afghan crossings and irregular crossings of the

Afghan border present various smuggling options. Concerted efforts are required to build capacities at the Central Asian Border Crossing Points (BCPs), enhance the level of expertise of officers at these crossings and to establish working, intelligence-sharing and communications mechanisms between agencies employed there (Border Liaison Offices-BLOs). Strengthening the border crossing points presents a unique opportunity for intercepting contraband such as drugs, precursor chemicals as well as commodities, persons, weapons and ammunition. Hence, a concerted effort is required to build capacity, enhance the level of expertise of law enforcement, and to establish working intelligence-sharing and means of communications among law enforcement officers from different agencies and establish coordination against drug trafficking. Within this framework, the BLO mechanism is considered a regional solution enabling direct means of communication, coordination and cooperation mechanisms

After three years of project implementation, it has become clear that to border liaison offices for enhanced cross-border communication and intelligence-sharing would require much more time than envisaged. This is due to the fact that the agencies involved in border control in Central Asian countries are often ill-equipped to identify and interdict illegal movements of people, narcotic drugs and migrants in a comprehensive manner. Although the capacity of each country's law enforcement agencies varies considerably within the region, most of the agencies working on the border generally lack clear mechanisms of information sharing in relation to criminal activities occurring at specific checkpoints. Moreover, the level of cooperation among enforcement agencies across the border has always been very limited.

Concerted efforts are required to build capacities at the Central Asian BCPs, enhance the level of expertise of officers at these crossings and to establish working, intelligence-sharing and communications mechanisms between agencies employed there. The BLO concept is seen as being a cornerstone to achieve this objective within the Central Asian Republics.

The approval of SOPs as a legal basis for the operation of the BLOs has been a critical issue requiring tremendous efforts during this reporting period. As reported previously, Uzbekistan has approved the SOP for the BLO in general without a reference number, with no dates and no names of people who signed it. As for Tajikistan, the draft SOPs remained under continuous review of the project counterparts due to ongoing discussion in relation to location of the offices and defining a leading agency for the overall coordination of activities while finally being approved at the time of this reporting.

Project documents and revisions of the original project document

The project XAC/K22 has been revised three times:

Revision 1.

The project started in 2009, and at that time it was designed to establish a total of 3 BLOs along the Afghan border with the 3 Central Asian countries including Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, within the 27 month period and a budget of US\$1,300,000, solely funded by the Government of Norway. The project was ratified in 2010 by Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, but

unfortunately it was declined by Turkmenistan in October 2010. This late decision obstructed access to the budget, thus, there was almost no project activity in 2009 and 2010. To assure project implementation, an independent assessment of the project was by an International Consultant in November 2010, and the project document was revised in April 2011 based on the recommendations in the Assessment Report. Since the original project document referred to “selected” border crossings without identifying that selection, a shift in target border crossings was found to be applicable. Consequently, the revised project document was designed to establish 4 BLOs along the Tajik - Uzbek border, which was ratified by these two countries in July 2011 as Component 1 of the project. Thereby, the project activities started in August 2011 in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

Revision 2.

To ensure the sustainability of the BLO mechanism, project scope expansion proposals were shared with the donor community and Tajik-Kyrgyz border was proposed for the BLO establishment which resulted in Component 2 of the project. In 2012, the Government of Japan donated US\$1,270,007 to the project which enabled the scope expansion to Tajik-Kyrgyz border. After the additional funding was received, the project was revised for the second time in April, 2012, so as to expand the project scope and cover 4 BLOs along the Tajik-Kyrgyz border as Project Component 2. The second revision was ratified by the Governments of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan in July 2012 and project activities were launched in August 2012. Within Project Component 2 (Tajik –Kyrgyz border), the revised project document was ratified by the Government of Tajikistan on 10 July 2012, and later by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic on 31 July 2012. Hence, due to lack of ratification and accordingly obstruction in access to the project budget, it was impossible to conduct any activity within Component 2 during the first 7 months of 2012.

Revision 3

In 2013, a project scope expansion proposal was developed, reflecting the additional funding from the Government of Japan and the US Department of State Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), as well as setting grounds for further expansions in scope throughout Central Asia. The document also includes expected funding support from INL in 2014.

The proposed changes were as follows: to establish two BLOs along the Uzbek-Kyrgyz border (Dostuk-Dustlik BCPs), one BLO along the Uzbek-Afghan (Ayritom BCP) border and two BLOs along the Tajik-Afghan (Nijniy Pyanj and Ishkashim BCP) border in addition to the current work on the establishment of eight BLOs at eight BCPs along Uzbek-Tajik and Kyrgyz-Tajik borders. The latest project revision was signed by the Government of Tajikistan on 30 April 2014, by the Government of Kyrgyzstan on 19 May 2014 and by the Uzbek Government on 27 June 2014 respectively. The project is currently in line with the original implementation schedule, as most of the project activities have been initiated earlier while PR was under consideration of the Governments.

UNODC strategy context, including the project’s main objectives and outcomes and project’s contribution to UNODC country, regional or thematic programme

The project is designed under the Rule of Law segment of the UNODC 2008-2011 strategy with a focus on result area of “International cooperation in criminal justice matters”. Specific results focus on enhancing the capacity for international cooperation against crime, organized crime, corruption, drug trafficking and terrorism and enhancing the capacity for law enforcement cooperation against crime, organized crime, corruption, drug trafficking, diversion of precursors and terrorism. It is also specifically supportive of Strategic Objective 5 of UNODC’s Strategic Programme Framework for Central Asia for 2008-2011.

The project supports the “UNODC Regional Programme for Promoting Counter Narcotics Efforts in Afghanistan & Neighbouring Countries (2011-2014)” and Sub-Programme 1 on Regional Law Enforcement Cooperation.

The objective of the project is to enhance facilities at the selected border crossings with establishing lines of communication and intelligence-sharing across borders in order to detect and intercept contraband, including narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals while facilitating legitimate international trade.

Outcome 1: Capacities at selected crossings enhanced in terms of infrastructure, equipment and training.

Outcome 2: Officers at these crossing points- establish working, intelligence-sharing and communications mechanisms between agencies employed there (Border Liaison Offices-BLOs).

Outcome 3: Targeted interventions by officers at crossing points conducted using advanced techniques such as risk analysis developed through enhanced coordination and interagency communication.

Outcome 4: Agencies conduct cargo searches on targeted consignments using specialized equipment and appropriate training.

Beneficiaries of the project are Customs Services, Ministries of Interior, Drug Control Agencies, and Border Guard Departments of the Republics of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

II. DISBURSEMENT HISTORY

<i>Overall Budget (as of 01.09.2014)</i>	<i>Total Approved Budget (as of 01.09.2014)</i>	<i>Expenditure (as of 01.09.2014)</i>	<i>Expenditure in % (as of 01.09.2014)</i>
USD \$5,056,932	USD 4,546,197	USD 3,221,770	53%

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III. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

Reasons behind the evaluation taking place

The evaluation of the project has been foreseen in the project document. It will be carried out by an Independent Evaluation Consultant, with logistical arrangements provided by the Regional Office for Central Asia (ROCA) and with support of the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU). The purpose of this mid-term evaluation is to measure project achievements, lessons learned as well as areas requiring improvements identified during the implementation of the project activities in the Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. This evaluation exercise is meant to ensure ownership, result-based orientation, cost-effectiveness and quality of UNODC services.

The results of this formative evaluation are intended for use by the project team and the Regional Office in Tashkent to learn from and make desirable adjustments to ongoing implementation. It will also inform stakeholders (beneficiary law enforcement agencies in the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia, Project Team and Donor Countries (Norway, Japan, USA) of project accomplishments.

The main stakeholders will get the possibility to provide comments on the Terms of Reference, take note of the selection of consultants; be interviewed and briefed as part of the evaluation process and shall receive the key findings. Their comments, opinions and ideas shall be reflected in the report where appropriate. Please see attached the list of the Core Learning Partners in Annex 3.

Assumed accomplishment of the evaluation

Through this evaluation, UNODC ROCA should obtain a frank assessment on the effectiveness of the activities conducted in this specific area and draw on recommendation and lessons learned to inform future programming. This evaluation will also offer an opportunity to increase accountability for all stakeholders involved and identify problems that may have to be addressed differently in the future.

Specific questions, among others, that are expected to be answered include; To what extent have the resources available converted to output in a timely and cost-effective manner for the knowledge products?; To what extent has the Project improved the capacity of the key Border Crossing Points of Member States?; And To what extent are the project results (outcomes and impact, if any) likely to continue / be sustained after the project has finished?

This evaluation will give an opportunity to learn lessons for a possible extension of project; to provide accountability to donors by determining whether project objectives were met and

resources were wisely utilized; to identify areas of improvement in a project; to get feedback, appraisal and recognition; to attract resources toward a project.

The main evaluation users

The main users and benefactors of this evaluation will be the UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia and Project management, Core Learning Partners (see Annex 3) and the project donors and law enforcement agencies of the Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

IV. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The unit of analysis to be covered by the evaluation

The evaluation will cover Component One and Component Two of the project activities in the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan during January 2011 – the end of the field mission of this evaluation (tentatively October 2014). The evaluation will also assess the extent to which the project contributes to the UNODC Thematic Programmes (e.g. design, efficiency, appropriateness to/support to thematic objectives etc.) as well as to the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries.

The time period to be covered by the evaluation

Activities conducted over the period January 2011 until the end of the evaluation field mission (tentatively end November 2014) at national and regional levels.

The geographical coverage of the evaluation

The scope for the geographical coverage of the project will be Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Three field missions are planned to Bishkek (Kyrgyz Republic), Tashkent (Uzbekistan) and Dushanbe (Tajikistan).

V. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation will be conducted based on the following DAC criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, as well as partnerships and cooperation, gender and human rights and lesson learned, and, will respond to the following below questions (2-4 recommended), however, provided as indicative only, and required to be further refined by the Evaluation Team.

<i>Relevance</i>

1. To what extent are the project outputs and activities consistent with the expected outcomes and objectives?
2. How well was the project planned in advance?
3. To what extent do the objectives, outcomes and outputs from the new project revisions respond to present circumstances and stakeholder expectations?
4. How relevant are the project activities to the recipient governments?
5. How relevant are the project outputs to the recipient governments?
6. To what extent is the project relevant to the respective Law enforcement's agencies needs and priorities?
<i>Efficiency</i>
1. To what extent is the project implemented in the most efficient and cost-effective way compared to alternatives?
2. To what extent was the structure and profile of the project management team appropriate?
3. To what extent is project reporting accurate, timely and satisfactory?
4. How cost-efficient were project activities?
5. Are there any good practices regarding efficiency, e.g. are certain aspects or arrangements of the portfolio particularly efficient?
6. How could efficiency be further improved in the next years of implementation?
<i>Effectiveness</i>
1. To what degree were the programme's objectives achieved, or are anticipated to be achieved? What chief factors were responsible for the achievement or failure of the objectives?
2. How could project planning have been improved?
3. How could the procurement of equipment and the delivery of training be made more effective?
4. How could the effectiveness of the project be further increased in the next years of implementation?
<i>Impact</i>
1. What is the anticipated long term impact of this project? Is the project likely to achieve that impact?
2. Have there been any positive or negative unintended results?
3. Has the project contributed or is likely to contribute to effective inter-agency and also cross-border communication, coordination and cooperation at the selected BCPs
<i>Sustainability</i>
1. What measures are in place to ensure future maintenance and repair of the equipment provided?
2. To what extent are project interventions sustainable in the long term? If not, what is needed to ensure their continued resilience and viability in the future?

<i>Partnerships and cooperation</i>
1. To what extent were stakeholders properly engaged and informed?
2. How was the project conducive to the development of partnerships at the bilateral and regional level?
3. To what extent have partnerships been sought with national and international partners, including UN-agencies, UNODC-internally, Civil Society Organisations, private sector, etc.?
<i>Human rights and gender</i>
1. To what extent are human rights considerations included in the project development and implementation?
2. To what extent are gender considerations included in the project development and implementation?
<i>Lessons learned</i>
1. What are the lessons learnt for future project implementation?
2. What are the best practices that could be applied in the future activities and similar projects

VI. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The methods used to collect and analyse data

The evaluation will be undertaken through a triangulation exercise of data stemming from desk review, structured interviews, as well as other sources to be established by the evaluator. These could be primary data coming from questionnaires, surveys, or secondary data stemming from other entities.

1. A desk review of relevant documents. These documents will include but not limited to the following:

- the project document; all project revision documents; semi-annual and annual project progress reports and
- mission reports (a final list will be provided to the evaluator and further material can be requested by the evaluator at any time).

2. Field missions to Bishkek(Kyrgyzstan), Dushanbe (Tajikistan) and Tashkent (Uzbekistan), consisting of:

- Briefing and individual interviews with UNODC Programme Managers, including Regional Representative, Senior Law Enforcement Advisor, Procurement Officer and Financial Officer (a final list will be provided by an evaluator);

- Telephonic interviews are suggested to be made with: 1) Regional Section in Vienna; 2) RP colleagues etc.
- Individual interviews with officials of the project beneficiary agencies: National Drug Control Center of the Republic of Uzbekistan; Department of Main Department on fight against smuggling; State Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan; Committee on State Border Protection of the National Security Service of the Republic of Uzbekistan; and Department on fight against Illicit Drug Trafficking, Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Uzbekistan; Drug Control Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan; Department of Border Control of Border Guard Troops of the State Committee of National Security of the Republic of Tajikistan; Department on combating smuggling and violation of customs regulations of the Customs Service under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan; Department on Combating Drug Trafficking of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan. Department of International Organization and Security of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, Information protection and special equipment sector, the State Drug Control Service under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, Counter Narcotic Department, Ministry of Interior of the Kyrgyz Republic, Counter Narcotic Department, the State Customs Service under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, Operations Department, The State Border Service of the Kyrgyz Republic.
- Site visits to the selected project target border crossing points: Oybek and Sariosiyo BCPs (Uzbekistan) and Fotehobod, Dusti, Karamyk, Kyzyl-art BCPs (Tajikistan), Karamyk, Bor-Dobo BCPs (the Kyrgyz Republic) for physical inspection and discussions with beneficiaries.

The evaluator can request further interviews, as needed.

The sources of data

Interviews with CLP's and donors and relevant stakeholders outlined in Annex 3, as well as further interviews with stakeholders as proposed by the evaluator. Briefing and individual interviews with Regional Representative, Senior Law Enforcement Advisor, Project Coordinator, Project Component Managers and Programme Assistant

Field missions to Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

The evaluation will be undertaken through a triangulation exercise of data stemming from desk review, structured interviews, field missions, questionnaires, surveys, observations and other sources to be established by the evaluator.

The independent project evaluation is to be conducted following UNODC/IEU's evaluation policy, handbook, guidelines and templates, (to be found on the IEU website, <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/index.html>), as well as UNEG Norms and Standards.

A list of materials to be used by the evaluator for the desk review can be found in the Annex II.

VII. TIMEFRAME AND DELIVERABLES

Time frame for the evaluation

16 November 2014 – 21 December 2014

Time frame for the field mission

It is anticipated that the evaluation will involve visits to Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and UNODC field offices.

Tentative time-frame for mission is 26 November -7 December 2014.

When? (Tentative dates)	Evaluator's working days	What tasks?	Results	Where?
26-29 November 2014	4 days	Site inspection and meeting with stakeholders the Kyrgyz Republic Participation in Steering Committee Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief interview and site visit reports 	Kyrgyz Republic, Osh region (Karamyk-BCP)
30 November – 3 December 2014	3 days	Site inspection and meeting with stakeholders in Tajikistan Participation in Steering Committee Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief interview and site visit reports 	Tajikistan, Dushanbe, (Tursunzoda, district, Dusti BCP, Jirgatal district Karamyk BCP, Soghd region Fotehabd BCP)

3-7 December 2014	4 days	Site inspection and meeting with stakeholders in Tashkent Participation in Steering Committee Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief interview and site visit reports 	Tashkent, Tashkent region (Oybek BCP), Surkhandarya region, Sariosiyo BCP)
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Expected deliverables and time frame

The Evaluator will have the overall responsibility for the quality and timely

Submission of all deliverables, as specified below:

- Inception Report, in line with UNODC evaluation guidelines, handbook, policy and templates⁹ containing a refined work plan, methodology and evaluation tools (to be reviewed and cleared by IEU);
- Draft Evaluation Report in line with UNODC evaluation guidelines, handbook, policy and templates¹⁰(to be reviewed and cleared by IEU)
- Final Evaluation Report, in line with UNODC evaluation guidelines, handbook, policy and templates¹¹, including annex with management response (if needed), to be cleared by IEU
- Presentation of evaluation findings and recommendations to CLP and other key stakeholders;

<i>Duties)</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Deliverables</i>
Desk review; Inception Report(including review by IEU)	16 November -25 November 2014	Home base	List of evaluation questions; Evaluation tools;

⁹ To be found here: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/independent-project-evaluations-step-by-step.html>

¹⁰ To be found here: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/independent-project-evaluations-step-by-step.html>

¹¹ To be found here: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/independent-project-evaluations-step-by-step.html>

			Inception Report with refined work plan, etc. – to be reviewed and cleared by IEU
Field mission: Interviews with UNODC staff; Evaluation mission: briefing, interviews; presentation of preliminary findings	26 November -7 December 2014	UNODC/HQ; Countries/Cities	Presentation of preliminary findings
Drafting of the evaluation report; submission to IEU and Project Management, as well as CLPs for comments (by 16 December); incorporation of comments (by 21 December 2014)	7 December – 21 December 2014	Home base	Draft evaluation report in line with UNODC evaluation guidelines, handbook, templates, etc. – to be reviewed and commented on by IEU, Project Management and Core Learning Partners.
Finalization of report incl. Management response (if necessary)	2 working days by 20 January 2015	Home base; UNODC/HQ	Final evaluation report to be cleared by IEU; Presentation of final evaluation findings and recommendations

VIII. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION

Number of evaluators needed

The mid-term evaluation of the project will be carried out by one International Independent Evaluation Expert identified by UNODC through a competitive selection process and supported by the Project staff. The Evaluation Expert Evaluator will be an expert in reviewing law enforcement structures or border management, and have experience of evaluating technical assistance projects. Costs associated with the evaluator will be borne by the project. The expert Evaluator shall act independently, in line with UNODC evaluation policy, handbook and guidelines and UNEG Ethical Guidelines and in his individual capacity and not as a representative of any government or organisation that may present a conflict of interest. In his individual capacity and not as representative of the government or organization which appointed them. She/he will have no previous experience of working with project RER/E29 or of working in any capacity linked with it.

The Evaluator shall act independently in his/her individual capacity and must not have been involved in the development, implementation or monitoring of the project neither will be not be rendering any service to UNODC in the near future, to avoid conflicts of interests. He/she should adhere to the independence and impartiality of the evaluation process discussed in the UN Evaluation Group's Norms and Standards.

The role of the Evaluator

Carry out the desk review; develop the inception report, including sample size and sampling technique; draft and finalize the inception report and evaluation methodology, incorporating relevant comments, in line with the guidelines and template on the IEU website <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/evaluation-step-by-step.html>; lead and coordinate the evaluation process and the oversee the tasks of the evaluators; implement quantitative tools and analyze data; triangulate data and test rival explanations; ensure that all aspects of the terms of reference are fulfilled; draft an evaluation report in line with UNODC evaluation policy and the guidelines and template on the IEU website <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/evaluation-step-by-step.html>; finalize the evaluation report on the basis of comments received; include a management response in the final report; present the final evaluation findings and recommendations to stakeholders.

More details will be provided in the respective job descriptions in Annex I.

Conflict of interest

According to UNODC rules, the consultant must not have been involved in the design and/or implementation, supervision and coordination of and/or have benefited from the programme/project or theme under evaluation.

Reference to job description detailing qualifications and responsibilities

The Evaluation Expert/Evaluator should have the following qualifications and experience:

- An academic degree in project management, business administration or international development and/or graduation from a recognised national law enforcement academy both with at least 7 years professional experience;
- Substantial experience in evaluating & monitoring technical assistance projects;
- Experience in evaluating the design and implementation of organisational structures at a senior level, preferably in a law enforcement context;
- Previous experience of law enforcement in an operational capacity is highly desirable.
- Experience in conducting outcome and impact evaluations of projects and programmes in international development and preferably regarding counter-narcotics enforcement;
- Experience of having applied recognised quality management and assessment methodologies (such as the Balanced Scorecard or the Business Excellence Model of the EFQM) is desirable;
- Recognised project management training and/or accreditation skills. Membership of a professional body related to project management will be an advantage;

- Familiarity with the precursor chemical situation in the region will be an asset;
- Technical knowledge of human rights and gender issues;
- Fluency in spoken and written English required, with proven drafting skills, working knowledge of Russian is an asset.

The evaluator will be responsible for drafting the evaluation report, ensuring the report meets the necessary standards and for submitting the drafts as described in a timely manner.

IX. MANAGEMENT OF EVALUATION PROCESS

Roles and responsibilities of the Project Manager

The Project Manager is responsible for managing the evaluation, drafting and finalizing the ToR, selecting Core Learning Partners and informing them of their role, recruiting evaluators, providing desk review materials to the evaluation team, reviewing the inception report as well as the evaluation methodology, liaising with the Core Learning Partners, reviewing the draft report, assessing the quality of the final report by using the Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports, as well as developing an implementation plan for the evaluation recommendations as well as follow-up action.

The evaluation should be planned and conducted in close consultation with UNODC ROCA. The evaluation tools and methodology must be agreed with ROCA and cleared by IEU.

Project Management

Management is responsible for drafting and finalizing the ToR, selecting Core Learning Partners and informing them of their role, recruiting evaluators, providing desk review materials to the evaluation team, reviewing the inception report as well as the evaluation methodology, liaising with the Core Learning Partners, reviewing the draft report, assessing the quality of the final report by using the Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports, disseminating the final evaluation report, as well as developing an implementation plan for the evaluation recommendations.

UNODC ROCA will be responsible for the meeting schedule, arranging the interviews, providing translation and coordinating all administrative matters.

Interpretation will be arranged as needed.

Roles and responsibilities of the evaluation stakeholders

Members of the Core Learning Partnership (CLP) are selected by the project managers. Members of the CLP are selected from the key stakeholder groups, including UNODC management, mentors, beneficiaries, partner organizations and donor Member States. The CLPs are asked to comment on key steps of the evaluation (Terms of Reference; Selection of evaluators; Draft

Evaluation Report) and act as facilitators with respect to the dissemination and application of the results and other follow-up action.

Roles and responsibilities of the Independent Evaluation Unit

The Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) provides mandatory normative tools, guidelines and templates to be used in the evaluation process. Please find the respective tools on the IEU web site <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/evaluation.html>. All deliverables of this evaluation (Terms of Reference; Inception Report; Draft Evaluation Report; Final Evaluation Report) are to be commented on and cleared by IEU.

The independent evaluation will be conducted by the evaluator following UNODC/IEU's evaluation policy, handbook, guidelines and templates, as well as UNEG Norms and Standards Norms and Standards of the UNEG and UNODC guidelines by providing comments on evaluation tools and methods, the draft report and clearance of the final report.

The evaluator will submit a draft report to the Evaluation Manager, the UNODC IEU, and to ROCA, before submitting the draft evaluation report to "Core Learning Partners". The report will contain the draft findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation team. The report should be no longer than 20 pages, excluding annexes and the executive summary. The report will be distributed by UNODC as required to the governmental authorities and respective donors, and will be discussed at a Tripartite Meeting by the parties to the project.

Logistical support responsibilities

The Project Manager will be in charge of providing logistical support to the evaluation team including arranging the field missions of the evaluation team. For the field missions, the evaluation team liaises with the UNODC Regional/Field Offices and mentors as appropriate

UNODC will provide office space, an internet connection and use of a desktop computer where appropriate as well as assistance with interpretation. The evaluator will need to provide his/her own laptop, cameras or other equipment. UNODC will assist with transport within the region and support international travel arrangements and the issuance of visa (where necessary).

X. PAYMENT MODALITIES

Consultants will be issued consultancy contracts and paid in accordance with UNODC rules and regulations. The contract is a legally binding document in which the consultant agrees to complete the deliverables by the set deadlines. It is the responsibility of the requesting office to carefully consider and determine the estimated time period that the consultant would need, to be able to produce quality work and fully complete all the expected deliverables on time. It is particularly essential that sufficient time is planned for the drafting and finalizing of the report, including the process of consultation and incorporation of comments and changes. Payment is

correlated to deliverables and three installments are typically are foreseen (25%, 25% and 50% of total fees):

- The first payment (25 per cent of the consultancy fee) upon receipt and clearance of the Inception Report (by IEU);
- The second payment (25 per cent of the consultancy fee) upon receipt and clearance of the Draft Evaluation Report (by IEU);
- The third and final payment (50 percent of the consultancy fee, i.e. the remainder of the fee) only after completion of the respective tasks, receipt of the final report and clearance by UNODC/IEU, as well as presentation of final evaluation findings and recommendations.

75 percent of the daily subsistence allowance and terminals is paid in advance, before travelling. The balance is paid after the travel has taken place, upon presentation of boarding passes and the completed travel claim forms

Terms of Reference

Title: International Evaluation Consultant/Team Leader
Development of draft and final evaluation Report

Organisational Section/Unit: UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia

Duty Station: Home base

Proposed period: 03 February – 28 February 2015

Actual work time: 22.5 working days

1. Background of the assignment:

The Regional Office for Central Asia (ROCA) in close coordination with the UNODC Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) will undertake an independent mid-term project evaluation of the UNODC Regional project XAC/K22 Countering the trafficking of Afghan opiates via the northern route by enhancing the capacity of key border crossings points (BCPs) and through the establishment of Border Liaison Offices (BLOs).

The evaluation scope will cover the project activities under Component One and Component Two in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan during January 2011 - August 2014. The overall aim of this evaluation is to ensure ownership, result-based orientation, cost-effectiveness and quality of UNODC services. The evaluation will also assess the extent to which the project contributes to the UNODC Thematic Programmes (e.g. design, efficiency, appropriateness to/support to thematic objectives etc.) as well as to the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighboring Countries. Further details can be found in the Evaluation Terms of Reference.

2. Purpose of the assignment:

The evaluation of the project has been foreseen in the project document. It will be carried out by the Regional Office for Central Asia (ROCA) with the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU). The purpose of this mid-term evaluation is to measure project achievements, lessons learned as well as areas requiring improvements identified during the implementation of the project activities in the Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. This evaluation exercise is meant to ensure ownership, result-based orientation, cost-effectiveness and quality of UNODC services.

The results of the evaluation are intended for use by the project team and the Regional Office in Tashkent to learn from and make desirable adjustments to ongoing implementation. It will also inform stakeholders (beneficiary law enforcement agencies in the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia, Project Team and Donor Countries (Norway, Japan, USA) of project accomplishments.

3. Specific tasks to be performed by the consultant:

The International Evaluation Expert will within the framework of the XAC/K22 Project be responsible for the following tasks:

- Ensure quality and timely delivery of all activities;
- Carry out the desk review;
- Provide methodological evaluation quality assurance throughout the evaluation process and inputs;
- Implement appropriate quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis tools and methods;
- Triangulate data and test rival explanations;
- Ensure that all aspects of the evaluation terms of reference are fulfilled;
- Prepare and submit an Aide Memoire which includes preliminary findings;
- Present findings to the project implementation team and CLPs (as possible/appropriate);
- Draft an evaluation report in line with UNODC and IEU evaluation policy, handbook, guidelines and templates and requirements to be reviewed by the project manager and cleared by IEU;

- Finalise the evaluation report on the basis of feedback received, incorporating all requested changes in accordance. To be cleared by IEU;
- Apply ethical evaluation standards in line with international best practice (UNEG Ethical Guidelines);

4. Expected tangible and measurable output(s)/deliverable(s):

(Tangible and measurable outputs, objectives and targets of the work assignment, as well as specific activities to achieve the required outputs and targets. As per ST/AI/2013/4, Section 3.2

(a))

The evaluator will be responsible for the quality and timely submission of his/her specific deliverables, as specified below. All products should be well written, inclusive and have a clear analysis process.

The evaluator will have the overall responsibility for the quality and timely submission of all deliverables, as specified below. All products should be well written, inclusive and have a clear analysis process.

- Prepare a draft evaluation report in line with UNODC evaluation policy, handbook, guidelines and templates.
- Deliver a revised draft report based on comments received from the various consultative processes (IEU, internal and external).
- Submit a final evaluation report before 07 February 2015, in line with UNODC evaluation policy, handbook, guidelines and templates
- Final PowerPoint presentation to stakeholders.

The evaluator will be responsible for the quality and timely submission of his/her specific deliverables, as specified below. All products should be well written, inclusive and have a clear analysis process.

5. Dates and details of deliverables/payments:

	<i>Duties)</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Deliverables</i>
A.	Drafting of the evaluation report; submission to IEU and Project Management, as well as CLPs for comments (incorporation of comments	15 – 31 January 2015	Home base	Draft evaluation report in line with UNODC evaluation guidelines, handbook, templates, etc. – to be reviewed and

				commented on by IEU, Project Management and Core Learning Partners.
B.	Finalization of report incl. Management response (if necessary)	2 working days by 07 February 2015	Home base; UNODC/HQ	Final evaluation report to be cleared by IEU; Presentation of final evaluation findings and recommendations

Payments will be made upon satisfactory completion and/or submission of outputs/deliverables:

1. Final Evaluation Report is submitted and cleared by UNODC HQ IEU.

6. Indicators to evaluate the consultant's performance:

Timely and satisfactory delivery of the above mentioned outputs as assessed by IEU (in line with UNODC evaluation policy, handbook, guidelines and templates as well as UNEG Standards and Norms).

7. Qualifications/expertise sought (required educational background, years of relevant work experience, other special skills or knowledge required):

Required experience, knowledge, skills and qualifications:

The consultant should demonstrate:

- A strong professional record in designing and leading independent reviews and evaluations (at least 7 years)
- Extensive knowledge of, and experience in applying, qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods
- Previous work experience with undertaking project design, management and/or evaluation exercises with criminal justice projects / agencies, particularly those involving the police
- Experience of working on / with donor funded development projects in the Central Asian region
- Experience of working with UN agencies, and ideally with UNODC
- Excellent communication, facilitation and report writing / production skills

- Post graduate educational qualifications

Languages:

The consultant must have excellent English spoken, reading and proven drafting skills. Knowledge of another language relevant to the evaluation might be an advantage.

Absence of Conflict of Interest:

According to UNODC rules, the consultant must not have been involved in the design and/or implementation, supervision and coordination of and/or have benefited from the programme/project or theme under evaluation.

Ethics:

The evaluator shall respect and apply the UNEG Ethical Guidelines.

ANNEX II. EVALUATION TOOLS: QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEW GUIDES

General

- What is your overall understanding of the project?
- Describe in general terms the current effort your country is undertaking to interdict drugs/precursor chemicals/illegal contraband at BCPs.
- Is drug interdiction a law enforcement priority at BCPs?
- Is cooperation with neighbouring countries a law enforcement priority within your agency?
- What type of cooperation and interaction have you received from the UNODC project staff?

Relevance

- Are the projects main objectives in line with the needs of your countries effort in Border Control/Interdiction?
- To what extent are the projects outputs and activities consistent with expected outcomes and objectives?
- Have the project revisions met your countries needs in enhancing BCPs/BLOs?
- Are there any significant changes you would like to see incorporated into the project?

Efficiency

- In that the project supports Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, do you feel your country is receiving its fair share of support from the project funds?
- Has the UNODC project management team efficiently supported your countries efforts in this project?
- Are you aware of any activities that your agency classified as wasteful, excessive, or unnecessary?
- In the building or refurbishing of BCPs have you actively participated in the progress?
- Have the projects delivered trainings met the needs of your agency?
- How could efficiency be further improved in the next years of implementation?

Effectiveness

- Have the building/refurbishing of BCPs assisted in your countries interdiction efforts?
How?

- Has the equipment your agency received assisted in your countries interdiction efforts? How?
- Has the computer support/programs/databases assisted in your countries interdiction efforts? How?
- Has the training your officers received assisted in your countries interdiction efforts? How?
- Are you communicating and exchanging information with your counterparts in the adjoined countries? (BLO) Are contacts formalized? Scheduled daily, weekly?
- Are the Steering Committee/Working Group meetings organized and do they achieve results?
- How could the effectiveness of the project be increased in the next years of implementation?

Impact

- Have Border Control operational plans (interdiction efforts) at selected BCPs changed as a result of this project?
- How successful has this project been in promoting law enforcement cooperation? Both inter-agency as well as with agencies from adjoined/neighbouring countries (cross-border cooperation).
- Based on official law enforcement statistical reports have drug seizures/arrests increased/decreased as a result of this project?
- Based on intelligence reports have traffickers altered their smuggling routes/techniques?
- Have there been any positive or negative unintended outcomes as a result of this project?

Sustainability

- Does the project promote communication and exchange of information with neighbouring countries? Do you believe the cooperation will become institutionalized as a result of this project?
- What measures are in place to ensure future maintenance and replacement of provided buildings/equipment?
- Has the training provided by the project become standardized training within your agencies training programs?
- Based upon your knowledge and experience what is needed to ensure your countries continued participation?
- Will the BLO coordinating agencies continue to provide guidance and make recommendations in regards to future project activities?

Partnerships and cooperation

- Has this UNODC project coordinated both at the bilateral and regional level to promote working partnerships?

- Has this UNODC project coordinated the exchange of project strategy and promoted cooperation with the international community/partners, etc.? (Meetings, work-shops, conferences)

Human rights and gender

- To what extent are gender considerations included in the project development and implementation?
- Are the selection of law enforcement officers for training events based upon gender?

Lessons Learned

- As part of the implementing team what have you learned and how can those lessons apply to future implementation?
- Is the UNODC project management team receptive to implementing new techniques and open to suggestions?
- What ‘best practices’ could be applied to future project implementation?

Note: Select questions will be asked to the appropriate officials.

Follow-up questions will be presented when appropriate.

ANNEX III. DESK REVIEW LIST

Terms of Reference for Independent Mid-Term Evaluation for the project.

Project Plan

Project Document 14.10 2009

Project Revision Documents

Project Revision Document 5.04.2011
Project Revision Document 29.05.2012
Project Revision Document 16.01.2014

Project annual and semi-annual progress reports

Annual Project Progress Report 2009
Annual Project Progress Report 2010
Annual Project Progress Report 2011
Annual Project Progress Report 2012
Annual Project Progress Report 2013
Semi-Annual Project Progress Report 2010
Semi-Annual Project Progress Report 2011
Semi-Annual Project Progress Report 2012
Semi-Annual Project Progress Report 2013
Semi-Annual Project Progress Report 2014

Project Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

Border Liaison Office Assessment/2010

Project Expenditure Reports

Expenditure Report 2009
Expenditure Report 2010
Expenditure Report 2011
Expenditure Report 2012
Expenditure Report 2013

ANNEX IV. ASSOCIATED PROJECTS AND PARTNERS

1. GLO/105 The Paris Pact Initiative-Regional Coordination of Programme development for Countries Affected by Afghan Heroin Trafficking
2. REH/H22 Establishment of the Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Center (CARICC)
3. TAJ/E24 Strengthening control along the Tajik/Afghan Border
4. RER/F23 Drug Law Enforcement for intelligence, information and data collection, analysis and exchange
5. AFG/185 Regional cooperation in Precursor Control between Afghanistan and the Neighboring Countries
6. TAJ/H03 Tajikistan Drug Control Agency
7. KGZ/K50 Strengthening the capacity of the State Service on Drug Control of the Kyrgyz Republic
8. KGZ/T90 Prison Reform Project in the Kyrgyz Republic
9. GLO/G80 Global Container Control Project
10. XAC/197 The NATO-Russian Council Project
11. SPI/V07 Regional Program for Afghanistan and Neighboring Countries
12. RER/E29 Precursor Control in Central Asia

Note: There maybe additional developing or ongoing projects that will be reviewed if appropriate.

ANNEX V. SITE-VISITS TO THE BCP/BLO

1. Bor-Dobo-Kyrgyzstan and Kyzyl-Art-Tajikistan
2. Karamyk-Kyrgyzstan and Karamyk-Tajikistan (Cancelled-Extreme Weather)
3. Dusti-Tajikistan and Saryosiyo-Uzbekistan
4. Fotekhobod-Tajikistan and Oybek-Uzbekistan

ANNEX VI. LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Kyrgyzstan Steering Committee

1. 1 State Service on Drug Control
2. 1 MoFA
3. 1 State Border Service
4. 1 Counter Narcotics Division, State Customs Service

Tajikistan Steering Committee

1. 1 Drug Control Agency
2. 1 Counter Narcotics, MOI
3. 1 Legal and Treaties, Main Border Guards
4. 1 Border Guard Troops under National Security
5. 1 Territorial Issues under MoFA

Uzbekistan Steering Committee

1. 1 Department in National Information Analytical Centre on Drug Control
2. 2 State Customs Service
3. 1 Minister of Internal Affairs
4. 1 Border Guard Troops under National Security Service
5. 1 Division Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Site Visits

BLO Bor-Dobo-Kyrgyzstan and Kyzyl-Art-Tajikistan

Bor-Dobo BCP/BLO: 4 State Border Service; 1 DCA, 1 State Customs Service

Kyzyl-Art BCP/BLO: 2 Border Guard Troops

BLO Dusti-Tajikistan and Saryosiyo-Uzbekistan

Dusti BCP/BLO: 2 Customs Service; 1 Drug Control Agency; 3 Border Guard Troops; 1 MOI, 1 Committee of the National Security Service.

BLO Saryosiy BCP/BLO: 4 State Customs Service; 3 Border Service.

BLO Fotekhobod-Tajikistan and Oybek-Uzbekistan

Fotekhobod BCP/BLO: 2 Customs Service, 1 MoIA, 2 Border Guard Troops, 1 DCA.

Oybek BCP/BLO: 1 Dept.to Combat Drug Trafficking, 4 State Border Guards, 2 State Customs Service.

Central Asian State Drug Agencies:

1 Drug Control Agency-Tajikistan

1 Mobile Interdiction Team, Osh, Kyrgyzstan

Donors:

Japan representatives from the Embassies in:

2 representatives in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan,

2 representatives Dushanbe, Tajikistan,

2 representatives Tashkent, Uzbekistan

U.S. INL representatives from the U.S. Embassies in:

1 representative Tajikistan.

1 representative from Uzbekistan.

1 representative from U.S. Dept. of State/INL Washington D.C.

U.S. DEA representatives from the U.S. Embassies Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

ROCA Representatives in:

4 representatives in Bishkek

3 representatives in Dushanbe

6 representatives in Tashkent