INDEPENDENT IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF UNODC PROGRAMMING IN WEST AND CENTRAL ASIA

COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR AFGHANISTAN, COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR PAKISTAN, COUNTRY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME IN THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, PROGRAMME FOR CENTRAL ASIA AND, THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR AFGHANISTAN AND NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES
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This publication has not been formally edited.
## CONTENTS

- CONTENTS .................................................................................................................................................................................. II
- ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.................................................................................................................................................. III
- MANAGEMENT RESPONSE ............................................................................................................................................................... V
- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..................................................................................................................................................................... IX
- SUMMARY MATRIX OF FINDINGS, EVIDENCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS ................................................................................ XVII
- I. INTRODUCTION ....................................................................................................................................................................... 1
- II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION ........................................................................................................................ 3
- III. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY.............................................................................................................................................. 6
- IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS ...................................................................................................................................................... 13
- V. CONCLUSIONS ...................................................................................................................................................................... 33
- VI. RECOMMENDATIONS ......................................................................................................................................................... 36
- VII. LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES ........................................................................................................................ 40
- CASE STUDY 1 - IMPROVING LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY LITERACY AND CAPACITIES ON HIV AND DRUG USE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT IN PAKISTAN .......................................................................................................................... 43
- CASE STUDY 2 - RULE OF LAW ROADMAPS IN PAKISTAN .......................................................................................................... 50
- CASE STUDY 3 - UNODC SUPPORT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRENGTHENING FAMILIES PROGRAMME (SFP) IN WEST AND CENTRAL ASIA ......................................................................................................................... 53
- CASE STUDY 4 - UNODC’S ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN AFGHANISTAN ................................................. 60

Note: the individual programmatic assessments are available in separate documents. All other Annexes are also compiled in one dedicated, separate document.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation or Acronym</th>
<th>Full name</th>
<th>Abbreviation or Acronym</th>
<th>Full name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACJC</td>
<td>Anti-Corruption Justice Centre</td>
<td>DDR</td>
<td>Drug demand reduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>AD</td>
<td>Alternative development</td>
<td>FAST</td>
<td>Families and Schools Together</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIU</td>
<td>Airport Interdiction Unit</td>
<td>FATF</td>
<td>Financial Action Task Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>Alternative livelihoods</td>
<td>FCR</td>
<td>Full Cost Recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AML</td>
<td>Anti Money Laundering</td>
<td>FIU</td>
<td>Financial Investigation Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOTP</td>
<td>Afghan Opiate Trade Programme</td>
<td>GBD</td>
<td>Gender Based Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>APICC</td>
<td>Asia Pacific Intelligence Chiefs Conference</td>
<td>GCIC</td>
<td>Gulf Criminal Intelligence Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BADILL</td>
<td>Boost Alternative Development Interventions Through Licit Livelihoods project</td>
<td>GLO-ACT</td>
<td>The Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BENATOC</td>
<td>Programme on Building Effective Networks Against Transnational Organized Crime</td>
<td>GMCP</td>
<td>Global Maritime Crime Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLO</td>
<td>Border Liaison Officer</td>
<td>GPDPD</td>
<td>Global Partnership on Drug Policies and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARICC</td>
<td>Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre</td>
<td>GPML</td>
<td>Global Program Against Money Laundering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASC initiative</td>
<td>Network of Prosecutors and Central Authorities from Source, Transit and Destination Countries in response to Transnational Organized Crime in Central Asia and Southern Caucasus</td>
<td>HARP</td>
<td>Harmonized Approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>Global Container Control Programme</td>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Human immunodeficiency virus / acquired immune deficiency syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
<td>HQ</td>
<td>Headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFT</td>
<td>Counter Financing of Terrorism</td>
<td>HRGV</td>
<td>Human Rights Gender and Vulnerable People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLP</td>
<td>Core Learning Partner</td>
<td>HTMS</td>
<td>Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN</td>
<td>Counter-narcotics</td>
<td>IBBS</td>
<td>Integrated Biological and Behavioural Surveillance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CND</td>
<td>Commission on Narcotic Drugs</td>
<td>IES</td>
<td>Independent Evaluation Service of UNODC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNPA lab</td>
<td>Counter Narcotic Police Agency</td>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Country Office</td>
<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organisation on Migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COAFG</td>
<td>Country Office for Afghanistan</td>
<td>IRDC</td>
<td>Interregional Drug Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COIRA</td>
<td>Country Office for the Islamic Republic of Iran</td>
<td>JPC</td>
<td>Joint Planning Cell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPAK</td>
<td>Country Office for Pakistan</td>
<td>JUNTA</td>
<td>Joint UN Team on Aids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organizations</td>
<td>K9</td>
<td>Trained Police Dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Counterterrorism</td>
<td>LEA</td>
<td>Law Enforcement Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCA</td>
<td>Dutch Committee for Afghanistan</td>
<td>MAIL</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock in Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCHQ</td>
<td>Drug Control Headquarters</td>
<td>MCN</td>
<td>Ministry of Counter-Narcotics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation or Acronym</td>
<td>Full name</td>
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<tr>
<td>MLA</td>
<td>Mutual legal assistance</td>
<td>SPTC</td>
<td>Sub-programme technical committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoI</td>
<td>Ministry of the Interior</td>
<td>TI</td>
<td>Triangular Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOFA</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Pakistan</td>
<td>TIP</td>
<td>Trafficking in Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoPH</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Health in Afghanistan</td>
<td>TOC</td>
<td>Transnational Crime</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOWA</td>
<td>Ministry of Women’s Affairs in Afghanistan</td>
<td>ToR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>Member States</td>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDCS</td>
<td>National Drug Control Strategy</td>
<td>UNAMA</td>
<td>United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organisation</td>
<td>UNCAC</td>
<td>UN Convention Against Corruption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD DAC</td>
<td>The Development Assistance Committee at the OECD</td>
<td>UNCT</td>
<td>United Nations Country Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OST</td>
<td>Opioid substitution therapy</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACT</td>
<td>Pakistan’s Action to Counter Terrorism</td>
<td>UNDAF</td>
<td>UN Development Assistance Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCA</td>
<td>Programme for Central Asia</td>
<td>UNEG</td>
<td>United Nations Evaluation Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLHIV</td>
<td>People Living with HIV</td>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPI</td>
<td>Paris Pact Initiative</td>
<td>UNFAO</td>
<td>United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>Programme Steering Committee</td>
<td>UN Habitat</td>
<td>United Nations Human Settlements Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSEA</td>
<td>Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse</td>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWID</td>
<td>People who inject drugs</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCA</td>
<td>Regional Office for Central Asia</td>
<td>UNIDO</td>
<td>United Nations Industrial Development Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RoL</td>
<td>Rule of Law</td>
<td>UNODC</td>
<td>United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP or RPANC</td>
<td>Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries</td>
<td>UNSDCF</td>
<td>UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSEWCA</td>
<td>Regional Section for Europe West and Central Asia (RSEWCA).</td>
<td>UNTOC</td>
<td>UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goal</td>
<td>UNWFP</td>
<td>UN World Food Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELEC</td>
<td>Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre</td>
<td>VEP</td>
<td>Violent Extremist Prisoners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFP</td>
<td>Strengthening Families Programme</td>
<td>VTC</td>
<td>Video Tele Conferencing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMART</td>
<td>Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Results-oriented, Time-bound</td>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOM</td>
<td>Smuggling of Migrants</td>
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</table>
The in-depth cluster evaluation is the first joint evaluation involving concomitantly the UNODC Country Programme for Afghanistan, the Country Partnership Programme for the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Country Programme for Pakistan, the Programme for Central Asia and the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries. In the assessment of the managers of these Programmes, the evaluation report is of good quality with clearly articulated findings and feasible recommendations.

It is important to note that the joint evaluation of the Regional/Country Programmes allowed for a strategic review and assessment of UNODC’s technical assistance in West and Central Asia as a whole, including interlinkages between the Programmes and how they contribute to and reinforce each other’s objectives. It also revealed challenges in coherence and overlaps that require to be addressed.

Besides having significant strategic and substantive advantages, the newly piloted joint evaluation exercise resulted in a cost-effective approach with considerable savings made with less than US$ 170,000 being spent. According to UNODC estimates the same exercise would have costed more than US$ 400,000, if done individually for the five Programmes and would not have allowed for the overall strategic evaluation results.

The evaluation was conducted by one independent lead evaluator and three independent experts, as well as a number of national evaluators (all external). Despite the complex context and COVID-19 related restrictions, the evaluation team succeeded to conduct the evaluation in full and produced written reports that reflect the views of a broad range of stakeholders in a balanced and well-analyzed manner with sufficient level of granularity for the use by each individual Regional and Country Programme.

The evaluation process was well managed and with a quality process assured by the IES. The findings and recommendations are valid and practical, recognizing the added value of identified good practices in the implementation of the current Programmes, and outlining important elements to be taken into account in the development of their next cycles. It is important to note that some recommendations, while important and feasible, are going beyond the purview of the evaluated Programmes and are rather to be addressed at the institutional level. These recommendations were relayed to the relevant organizational units.

Findings and recommendations

Relevance: the evaluation noted the relevance of programming to the needs and priorities of the key programme stakeholders and the flexibility of UNODC to the changing needs, priorities and circumstances. At the same time, it also indicated the need to consider longer-term impact in programming, monitoring and reporting. This finding and relevant recommendation will be taken into account in the development of the next phases of the Programmes for the period 2022-2025.

Coherence: the evaluation referred to the lack of strategic and operational coherence between the programmes in West and Central Asia, indicating the need for clarification and detailing of a strategic and operational framework for the coming programming phase. To respond to this finding, a revised management and governance structure has been devised to allow for more flexible position and responses to a rapidly evolving situation on drugs and crime trends but also security related in some countries of the region.

Effectiveness: the evaluation identified a number of important results visible across the region, in particular partnership development both within countries and across borders. The programmes will further expand on these results in the new phases of the programmes.

Sustainability: the evaluation highlighted numerous examples of national ownership of programme initiatives from across the region, indicating, however, that national ownership and sustainability of change can be
negatively impacted by staff turnover in government (counterpart) agencies. The Programmes will build on achievements as relates to sustainability of initiatives, while noting that staff turnover is often beyond UNODC control.

*Human rights, gender equality and leaving no one behind:* the evaluation notes that human rights, gender equality and leaving no one behind are prominent in programme design, but less consistently prominent in implementation. Greater emphasis will be placed by the programmes within the shared strategic vision in the region for implementing relevant framework and policies with further reporting on the successes, measurable achievements and lessons learned.

### Recommendation

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<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Management Response (accepted/partially accepted/rejected)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Pause in Programme Design Activities Across the Region:</strong> It is recommended that programme design preparation work for each of the five programmes be paused until the current lack of clarity in roles, responsibilities and programme structure is resolved.</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility:</strong> The five programme managers with the Regional Section for Europe West and Central Asia (RSEWCA) and under the direction of Division for Operations (DO) management.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. Regional Planning Conference/ Retreat:</strong> A planning conference/retreat is recommended, the specific intent of which is to address the regional programming structure and to provide clarity of direction for all management and staff in the region. The planning conference should at minimum involve the managers responsible for each of the five programmes, the line managers for each of these programme managers, and key personnel from RSEWCA. This participation of key responsible programme stakeholders is key, as it is critical that any decisions made at the planning conference are binding on participants.</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility:</strong> The five programme managers, together with RSEWCA and DO management.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Programme Structure Definitions:</strong> It is recommended that UNODC headquarters, together with field office representatives, define, for the organisation, a full set of definitions and criteria for the geographical structures that frame and are responsible for delivering UNODC programming.</td>
<td>Partially accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility:</strong> DO management, coordinating with other, relevant divisions.</td>
<td>In the assessment of relevant programme managers, this goes beyond the scope and responsibilities of the evaluated programmes and should be addressed as a policy issue by UNODC senior management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>Management Response (accepted/partially accepted/rejected)</td>
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<td>4. <strong>Tracking Longer-term Successes</strong>: It is recommended that particular focus be given in the programme documents for the next 5-year phase to designs, monitoring approaches and reporting on each programme’s full history and on all of short, medium and longer-term objectives and results. Within the defined programming approach, each programme is entering a new 5-year phase, offering the possibility of understanding longer-term impacts and requiring an analysis of this same perspective.</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong>: The five programme managers in West and Central Asia, jointly, with specific collaboration of RSEWCA.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Regional Fundraising Focus and Process</strong>: It is recommended that the programmes in the region look jointly at fundraising strategies and approaches with the intention of maximising opportunities while demonstrating a regional cohesion.</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong>: The five programme managers in West and Central Asia, jointly, with specific collaboration of RSEWCA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. <strong>Contributions to One UN Processes</strong>: It is recommended that the current visible engagement in One UN processes, including United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs), be further strengthened across the region through development of strategic frameworks for partnership with sister UN agencies and related involvement in funding strategies. A particular focus in the coming period is a focused engagement with UNCTs on development of UN Sustainable Development Frameworks (UNSDCFs) at country level and how UNODC mandates and activities can form key components of the SDCFs.</td>
<td>Partially accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong>: The five programme managers in West and Central Asia, jointly, with specific collaboration of RSEWCA and Strategic Planning and Interagency Affairs Unit (SPIA).</td>
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In UNODC assessment the UNSDCFs are sufficient frameworks for partnership with sister UN entities with required level of granularity. In UNODC assessment, development of separate strategic frameworks for partnership with UN entities, while having its benefits, is not advisable from the cost-benefit point of view.
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<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Management Response (accepted/partially accepted/rejected)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. <strong>A More Strategic Implementation of Leave No One Behind Principles:</strong> It is recommended that the programmes place a greater emphasis on their strategic vision for implementing a framework of leaving no one behind. As noted above, some emphasis is placed in these areas and some focus is visible, but this emphasis decreases in actual implementation of many initiatives and in programme reporting.</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility:</strong> The five programme managers in West and Central Asia, jointly, with specific collaboration of RSEWCA.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. <strong>Human Rights Strategy/Policy:</strong> It is recommended that UNODC develop a human rights strategy/ policy in the same way it has a gender strategy and to give consideration to providing support to it in the same way as happens with the Gender Unit. Guidance on this issue is emerging within UN agencies and can be used as a resource by UNODC.</td>
<td>Partially accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility:</strong> DO management, coordinating with other, relevant divisions.</td>
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While the importance and value of development of a human rights strategy/ policy in addition to existing policies, including Human Right Due Diligence Policy, is supported, in the assessment of relevant programme managers, this goes beyond the scope and responsibilities of the evaluated programmes. The responsible senior manager will inform the senior management of DO, as well as the Office of the Executive Director of this recommendation.
INTRODUCTION

The region of West and Central Asia spans a wide geographic area and holds within it a diverse range of peoples, cultures and histories. What joins the eight countries of the region – Afghanistan, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan – is their joint exposure to the threats posed by transnational organised crime. This is typically centred around drug production and trafficking but brings with it a wide range of ill effects, including corruption and illicit financial flows, the weakening of state institutions, increasingly porous borders and negative impacts upon citizen health, safety, wellbeing and livelihoods. Such threats place enormous burdens upon society and materially impact their capacity to deliver the vision of better and more sustainable futures captured in the United Nations 2030 Agenda and its associated sustainable development goals.

PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

To address these threats, and with work based on its own research and international initiatives, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has developed approaches for the region at different levels: country, regional and inter-regional. Currently, there are five programmes operating in West and Central Asia. The Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries is a programme focused on regional initiatives. In addition, UNODC has the Programme for Central Asia, which works in five countries in Central Asia. Working at the country level UNODC is represented by the Country Programme for Afghanistan, the Country Programme for Pakistan and the Country Partnership Programme in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The objectives of the country and Central Asia programmes are to work singly and together with the Regional Programme, and in a coordinated fashion with UNODC’s global programmes, to deliver timely, relevant and effective responses to the threats stemming from criminal activity at all levels. The five programmes working in the region were designed with a common sub-programme structure, being, broadly: sub-programme 1: law enforcement; sub-programme 2: criminal justice; sub-programme 3: drug use and health; and sub-programme 4: research and analysis, although as will be seen later the common structure is not as strong in the programming detail.
PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Given the interconnectedness of the five programmes operating in West and Central Asia and the fact that each was due a final evaluation, it was decided that these evaluations should be undertaken as a cluster. The overall purpose of the evaluation was to understand the extent to which the UNODC programming in West and Central Asia addresses the specific context and national needs while contributing to addressing regional and inter-regional issues related to transnational organized crime, trafficking and terrorism threats. The evaluation aims to provide a comprehensive picture of UNODC work in the region and identifies how the implementation of the various programmes contributes to regional and intra-regional initiatives, promotes networking and relationship-building and addresses national needs in UNODC mandated areas.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic, requiring development of a methodology that was at once robust while also remaining viable under conditions that constrained travel and direct observation. In doing so the team drew upon of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards as well as UNODC’s own Evaluation Handbook and specific aspects of UNEG’s Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – Towards UNEG Guidance and UNODC’s Covid-19 guidance note.

The evaluation emphasised a participatory approach, included a conflict sensitive approach and ensured a culturally sensitive approach. The methodology aimed to produce analysis with a focus on utility - that the evaluation results should be of substantive value to the five programmes in designing and planning their next five-year cycles. Emphasis was placed on wide and rigorous review of existing, secondary, data and an extensive programme of multi-method consultation (including quantitative surveys, questionnaires and key informant interviews) so that triangulation across a range of data types could be achieved. In total, the evaluation received input from 227 stakeholders, of whom 170 were interviewed while 59 responded to email questionnaires and 15 an online survey. All field research was analysed using the online qualitative data tool Quirkos. The main report covers UNODC work in the region as a whole, while each of the 5 programmes has a dedicated annex.

MAIN FINDINGS

RELEVANCE

Across all five programmes in the West and Central Asia region, key programme stakeholders, notably government counterparts, noted the relevance of programming to their needs and priorities. The programmes were found to be based on appropriate research and consultation with the Member States. Counterparts commented on the flexibility of UNODC in the face of changing needs, priorities and circumstances. The evaluation found that the programmes were designed in consideration of UN and other frameworks and the priorities of the international community. The position of each of the programmes at the

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beginning of a third 5-year programme requires consideration of the longer-term in programming, monitoring and reporting, including a focus on impact.

COHERENCE

There is currently a lack of strategic and operational coherence between the Regional Programme and Country Programmes (particularly the Programme for Central Asia), clearly indicating the need for clarification and detailing of a strategic and operational framework for the coming programming phase. The evaluation found strong evidence that UNODC’s programmes and staff in the region are valued partners for Government Counterparts (GCs) and other stakeholders, noted for their technical expertise and capacity to work with stakeholders in building national and cross-border relationships and partnerships. UNODC programmes in the region are also valued members of the UN family in all the countries of West and Central Asia, contributing to UNCTs and in delivery of and reporting on UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs)\(^5\).

EFFECTIVENESS

The evaluation found a range of important results visible across the region. These results span all sub-programmes and each country in the region. Government counterparts note the importance and usefulness of the activities and results of programmes, a finding that was strong across all of West and Central Asia. Specific mention is made by government counterparts regarding the effectiveness of partnership development, both within countries (e.g. linkages between law enforcement, prosecutions and the courts) and across borders, including formal relationships such as Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) and informal relationships based on dialogue and interaction. These relationships were seen as particularly important where the political situation between Member States (MS) is difficult. The growing level of work on and impact from Financial Action Task Force (FATF) compliance initiatives and focus on financial crimes is notable, as are a number of aspects in health and alternative development, including the Strengthening Families Programme.

EFFICIENCY

The evaluation found that programmes maintain acceptable rates of implementation, but there is a fundamental problem of funding shortfalls which impacts on efficiency. Programme reporting in the region is well-structured and of good quality in most areas but would benefit from a greater emphasis on outcome level analysis and linkages to higher level frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and UNDAFs. Clearer linkages to UNODC’s strategic framework and similarly tighter linkages in programme structures across the region would benefit aggregation of reporting. Across the region, programme indicators are not focused sufficiently on longer-term and higher-level results, which understanding of the greater significance of UNODC’s work.

IMPACT

Across the region the programmes are making significant contributions to MS implementation of international Conventions and other instruments such as the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Mandela Rules; and Bangkok Rules for women). UNODC work supporting MS in meeting requirements of the FATF also created impact. Overall, impact potential of UNODC programming in the region is significant, but programming would still benefit from a greater focus on capturing/tracking the programme results that are delivering, or are on the road to

\(^5\) Work on UNSDCF is only just beginning in West and Central Asia.
delivering, longer-term impact. More work is also required in programme reporting on the concrete contributions being made to SDGs.

**SUSTAINABILITY**

The evaluation found many examples of national ownership of programme initiatives from across the region, including the rule of law roadmap initiatives in Pakistan’s Balochistan and Sindh provinces, the Strengthening Families Programme implementation in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Iran (I.R. of), and primary responsibility for Pakistan’s Action to Counter Terrorism (PACT) in Pakistan being transferred to the Ministry of the Interior. At the same time, however, it was also found that national ownership and sustainability of change are both negatively impacted by staff turnover in government (counterpart) agencies.

**HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND**

Human rights, gender and the principle of leaving no one behind are prominent in programme design across the region. Government counterparts notice the prominence of each programme’s focus in these areas and confirm that this focus has meant they give a greater consideration to human rights, gender equality and the principle of leaving no one behind. These focus areas are less consistently prominent in implementation. There are important initiatives and outcomes visible in regional programming, particularly in law enforcement, in criminal justice (e.g., with orphaned youth at risk of both criminal recruitment and criminal victimisation) and in health and alternative livelihoods (e.g., with women entrepreneurship successes in Afghanistan as a result of alternative development programming, as well as work on Opioid substitution therapy in Central Asia).

**MAIN CONCLUSIONS**

The evaluation’s conclusions aim to highlight key matters for consideration of UNODC management and programmes in planning the next 5-year programme cycle. Conclusions revolve around issues of design relevance, coherence and the longer-term context of UNODC programming in the region.

On the matter of **programme design relevance**, two conclusions are drawn. First, while a relatively coherent programme structure and result logic is visible across all five programmes, providing the foundation for a theory of change at both programme and regional levels, a significant number of designed components are currently unfunded or underfunded. Aside from ensuring diminished or no activity in these areas, fragmented funding of this sort has significant negative impacts on effectiveness and, importantly, on design relevance. It cannot be properly stated that a programme has a theory of change where component inputs/activities do not happen. Without a programme-level funding model, the findings of this evaluation show that delivery may be little more than an assemblage of projects, losing many of the benefits conferred by a programme approach.

Second, again with an eye on design of the next programme cycle and with the exception generally of work in sub-programme 3, the evaluation found that while UNDAFs and SDGs figure prominently in programme documentation, there is much less focus on working within these frameworks visible in implementation approaches and reporting on impact in these areas. In particular, a much clearer definition of, and design adherence to, human rights principles and approaches is needed. On a more positive note, however, the design relevance of all programmes was found to be strengthened by the key support UNODC is providing to countries in implementing international conventions and standards (including UNCAC and FATF, UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), the Mandela and Bangkok rules and UNODC/WHO International Standards for the treatment of drug use disorders and those on drug use prevention) and in supporting cross border partnership and collaboration such as through the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network of West and Central Asia (ARIN-WCA) network. These point to the importance of this to UNODC work in the region.
With respect to **programme coherence**, the evaluation draws key conclusions to inform the next programme design cycle. First, issues with the programme structure in the region are impacting negatively on work processes within and between UNODC offices. The negative impact is on both efficiency and effectiveness, with duplication of effort and overlaps. More importantly, the larger, agreed, programme structure of three country programmes, the Programme for Central Asia and the Regional Programme, does not function in the way it was intended. There is evidence across all five programmes that the intent and effectiveness of the regional structure is waning and requires a re-set, and that the problems with it are particularly acute with respect to relationships between the Regional Programme and the Programme for Central Asia. Second, while the programmes are designed with the framework defined in the **UN Biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2018-2019**
6, their own sub-programme structure does not directly follow or reflect this. This detracts from the ability of UNODC as an organisation (and the programmes as well of course) to offer any aggregated reporting on its work or its results and therefore hampers the ability of the programmes and UNODC more generally to tell a story of its success and of the importance of its work.

Finally, looking into the **longer-term context of UNODC programming in the region**, it is timely to reflect upon how the effects and impacts of this engagement are being measured and reported on. The five programmes have had significant engagement for a long enough time that it is likely that, without a focus on gathering and sharing evidence of change, an appreciation of what has occurred will be lost. Ensuring the programmes have a clear picture of not just what they have done, but also what they have achieved, including through more informal/soft initiatives, will in all likelihood provide a clearer and more detailed perspective on where programming should go in the future.

**MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Recommendation 1 – Pause in Programme Design Activities Across the Region:** That programme design preparation work for each of the 5 programmes be paused until the current lack of clarity in roles, responsibilities and programme structure is resolved.

**Recommendation 2 – Regional Planning Conference/Retreat:** That a regional planning conference or retreat be convened during the design preparation pause, with the specific intent of addressing the regional programming structure and to provide clarity of direction for all management and staff in the region. The conference should at minimum involve the managers responsible for each of the five programmes, the line managers for each of these programme managers and key personnel from the Regional Desk.

**Recommendation 3 – Programme Structure Definitions:** That UNODC headquarters, together with field office representatives, establish for the organisation a full set of definitions and criteria for the geographical structures that frame and are responsible for delivering UNODC programming, including, but not limited to, a ‘region’ and a ‘regional programme’.

**Recommendation 4 – Tracking Longer-term Successes:** That particular focus be given in the programme documents for the next 5-year phase to designs, monitoring approaches and reporting on each programme’s full history and on all of short, medium and longer-term objectives and results.

**Recommendation 5 – Regional Fundraising Focus and Process:** That the programmes in the region look jointly at fundraising strategies and approaches with the intention of maximising opportunities while demonstrating a regional cohesion.

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6 This is the version of the strategic framework referenced for the most recent 5-years.
Recommendation 6 – Contributions to One UN Processes: That the current visible engagement in One UN processes, including UNCTs, be further strengthened across the region through development of strategic frameworks for partnership with sister UN agencies and related involvement in funding strategies.

Recommendation 7 – A More Strategic Implementation of Leave No One Behind Principles: That the programmes place a greater emphasis on its strategic vision for implementing a framework of leaving no one behind. As noted above, some emphasis is placed in these areas and some focus is visible, but this emphasis decreases in actual implementation of many initiatives and in programme reporting.

Recommendation 8 – Human Rights Strategy/ Policy: That UNODC develop a human rights strategy/ policy in the same way it has a gender strategy and to give consideration to providing support to it in the same ways as happens with the Gender Team. Guidance on this issue is emerging within UN agencies and can be used as a resource by UNODC.

Figure 2: Workshop on Global Integrity Education Project.

MAIN LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

The evaluation found significant support for the good quality of the experts that provide support and training through UNODC’s programmes.

While the quality of expertise is a notable positive of UNODC programming, there is a view that a greater emphasis should be placed on the use of local (national/ regional) expertise, particularly in delivering training programmes. The sense is that international experts can miss the appropriate areas of emphasis and focus as they are not sufficiently aware of local specifics. Drawing in more local knowledge will add a practical edge, while continuing with the high levels of knowledge and skills of internationals, including their experience in other locations, would give a balance of both, and will demonstrate the principle of ‘nothing about us without us.’
Funding shortfalls have a significant impact on programme effectiveness. There is a clear perspective from UNODC staff across the region that lessons on funding are not being considered and learned and need to be if the current issues are to be effectively addressed.

Relationship building was highlighted by Government Counterparts (GCs), implementing partners and donors as demonstrating good practice by UNODC. This good practice is discussed in detail in the report.

Despite the existing challenges discussed throughout the report, the programme approach and related five-year programming framework are good practice. More strategic and better developed funding approaches are required in order for this more strategic footing to be best used.

The evaluation found the developing use of evidence-based programming as of great benefit to counterparts as well as the programmes as they enable more refined programming and provided opportunities to demonstrate successes. The Pakistan rule of law roadmap projects reflect innovation in this respect.
# SUMMARY MATRIX OF FINDINGS, EVIDENCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The current agreed strategic and structural arrangements of the programmes in West and Central Asia are not operating effectively. Programming cohesiveness between the RP and Country Programmes/ the Programme for Central Asia is not visible to the intended extent.</td>
<td>Programme reporting Interviews with UNODC staff across the region Interviews with UNODC Headquarter (HQ) staff Interviews with GC Interviews with donors</td>
<td><strong>1. Pause in Programme Design Activities Across the Region:</strong> It is recommended that programme design preparation work for each of the five programmes be paused until the current lack of clarity in roles, responsibilities and programme structure is resolved. <strong>Responsibility:</strong> The five programme managers with RSEWCA and under the direction of DO management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The current agreed strategic and structural arrangements of the programmes in West and Central Asia are not operating effectively. Programming cohesiveness between the RP and Country Programmes/ the Programme for Central Asia is not visible to the intended extent.</td>
<td>Programme reporting Interviews with UNODC staff across the region Interviews with UNODC HQ staff Interviews with GC Interviews with donors</td>
<td><strong>2. Regional Planning Conference/Retreat:</strong> A planning conference/retreat is recommended, the specific intent of which is to address the regional programming structure and to provide clarity of direction for all management and staff in the region. The planning conference should at minimum involve the managers responsible for each of the five programmes, the line managers for each of these programme managers, and key personnel from the RSEWCA. This participation of key responsible programme stakeholders is key, as it is critical that any decisions made at the planning conference are binding on participants. <strong>Responsibility:</strong> The five programme managers, together with RSEWCA and DO management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The current structure of programmes in West and Central Asia, and the related management lines and arrangements contribute to a lack of strategic cohesion, difficulties in communication, competition between and duplication of programme activities and a level of frustration among programme staff.</td>
<td>Programme documentation Programme reporting UNODC documentation Programme reporting Interviews with UNODC staff across the region Interviews with UNODC HQ staff Interviews with GC Interviews with donors</td>
<td><strong>3. Programme Structure Definitions:</strong> It is recommended that UNODC headquarters, together with field office representatives, define for the organisation a full set of definitions and criteria for the geographical structures that frame and are responsible for delivering UNODC programming. <strong>Responsibility:</strong> DO management, coordinating with other, relevant divisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>Recommendations</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The programmes are about to enter into a third, 5-year programme. This positioning, which provides a longer-term perspective backwards, over many years of programming, also provides perspective on longer-term impact. Documentation (programme documents and reporting) do not yet take this longer-term/ impact perspective – documents retain a focus on current programming.</td>
<td>Programme documents                                               Programme reporting                                              Evaluation reports</td>
<td>4. <strong>Tracking Longer-term Successes</strong>: It is recommended that particular focus be given in the programme documents for the next 5-year phase to designs, monitoring approaches and reporting on each programme’s full history and on all of short, medium and longer-term objectives and results. As discussed above, within the defined programming approach, each programme is entering its next 5-year phase, offering the possibility of understanding longer-term impacts and requiring an analysis of this same perspective. <strong>Responsibility</strong>: The five programme managers in West and Central Asia, jointly, with specific collaboration of RSEWCA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Funding approaches are not strategic nor regionally focused and do not have an equal involvement of headquarters, global programmes and the five programmes being evaluated.</td>
<td>Programme documentation                                               Programme reporting                                               Interviews with UNODC staff across the region</td>
<td>5. <strong>Regional Fundraising Focus and Process</strong>: It is recommended that the programmes in the region look jointly at fundraising strategies and approaches with the intention of maximising opportunities while demonstrating a regional cohesion. <strong>Responsibility</strong>: The five programme managers in West and Central Asia, jointly, with specific collaboration of RSEWCA and Co-Financing and Partnership Section (CPS).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Engagement in One UN processes, including UN reforms, UNDAFs and UNCTs, is visible, welcomed across the UN family and provides a strong basis for contributions to future success.</td>
<td>Interviews with UN Agencies and international organisations</td>
<td>6. <strong>Contributions to One UN Processes</strong>: It is recommended that the current visible engagement in One UN processes, including UNCTs, be further strengthened across the region through development of strategic frameworks for partnership with sister UN agencies and related involvement in funding strategies. A particular focus in the coming period is a focused engagement with UNCTs on development of UNSDCFs at country level and how UNODC mandates and activities can form key components of the SDCFs. <strong>Responsibility</strong>: The five programme managers in West and Central Asia, jointly, with specific collaboration of RSEWCA and SPIA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Findings</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>Recommendations</td>
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</table>
| 7. While there is a growing visibility of human rights and gender, and to a lesser extent the rights of vulnerable groups in programme design and implementation, these underlying principles and approaches are not as prominent as they could be. There is no visibility of conflict sensitive approaches. | Programme documentation Programme reporting UNODC documentation Programme reporting Interviews with UNODC staff across the region Interviews with UNODC HQ staff Interviews with GC Interviews with donors | **7. A More Strategic Implementation of Leave No One Behind Principles:** It is recommended that the programmes place a greater emphasis on their strategic vision for implementing a framework of leaving no one behind. As noted above, some emphasis is placed in these areas and some focus is visible, but this emphasis decreases in actual implementation of many initiatives and in programme reporting. 

**Responsibility:** The five programme managers in West and Central Asia, jointly, with specific collaboration of RSEWCA. |
| 8. UNODC does not have a human rights policy or strategy, similar to its gender strategy, and therefore offices are not provided with the theoretical and methodological frameworks that would assist in design and implementation. | UNODC does not have a human rights policy/ strategy.                                    | **8. Human Rights Strategy/ Policy:** It is recommended that UNODC develop a human rights strategy/ policy in the same way it has a gender strategy and to give consideration to providing support to it in the same way as happens with the Gender Unit. Guidance on this issue is emerging within UN agencies and can be used as a resource by UNODC. 

**Responsibility:** DO management, coordinating with other, relevant divisions. |
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

OVERALL CONCEPT AND DESIGN

Aiming to assist MS in their efforts to address the security, economic, governance, social/health and development challenges in the region of West and Central Asia, which are of an interrelated nature, UNODC has developed approaches for the region at different levels: country, regional and inter-regional. Currently, there are five programmes operating in Central and West Asia. One is a regional programme focused on regional initiatives – the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries. In addition, UNODC has the Programme for Central Asia, which works in five countries in Central Asia. Working at the country level UNODC is represented by the Country Programme for Afghanistan, the Country Programme for Pakistan and the Country Partnership Programme in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Each of the programmes have a detailed results framework along with indicators of achievement, however the programmes do not have a single overall objective. Historically, strategic regional approaches have been formulated, including the Rainbow Strategy, in 2007, a first attempt to market UNODC work in the region. The UNODC One Concerted Approach for Europe, West and Central Asia also worked to bring together the achievements and impacts of relevant country, regional and global programmes in an integrated manner, building on lessons learned and focusing on key areas where UNODC has the greatest added value and impact. The HARP (harmonised approach) also aimed to bring together achievements and impact at country, regional and global levels in an integrated way, building on lessons learned and focusing on areas where UNODC has the greatest potential for adding value. The HARP focused on common deliverables in Law Enforcement Cooperation, Criminal Justice and Judicial Cooperation and in Social and Human Development.

The Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries (Regional Programme or RP) is currently implementing its second phase, which runs from 2016 to 2020 (first phase: 2011-2015). The Regional Programme was designed in consultation with Member States to provide a platform for better coordination and facilitation of counter-narcotics efforts across the West and Central Asian Region, bringing coherence to activities conducted by UNODC. Since its launch, the Regional Programme has become the core mechanism for UNODC to promote regional responses in West and Central Asia to achieve concrete regional cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking and trans-national organised crime. During its first phase the Regional Programme was successful in supporting several initiatives that strengthened law enforcement and legal cooperation and bringing together countries in the region to share experiences and best practice in drug demand reduction. The Regional Programme proposes strong complements and links to all the other programmes operating in West and Central Asia.

Programme for Central Asia. UNODC’s presence in Central Asia dates back to 1993 with the establishment of the Regional Office for Central Asia in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Central Asian countries recognised the need for international cooperation to address drugs and crime related threats to the region through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in 1996 and which laid the ground for launching coordinated initiatives aimed at strengthening national and sub-regional capacities, including for information sharing, joint operations, legal harmonisation and sharing of best practices. Based on best practices of existing programmes and projects in the region, as well as to better support the implementation of national priorities, UNODC introduced an integrated programme approach in Central Asia in 2015. The current Programme for Central Asia aims to enhance law enforcement, criminal justice, health and research capacities across Central Asia, including through targeted interventions at the national level in a country-specific context, better cooperation and better allocation of resources and provision of technical assistance for cooperation by the international community to the countries of Central Asia. The Programme has established itself as a key cooperation
framework, with a high degree of harmonisation and coherence with national priorities and with regional configurations.

**Country Programme for Afghanistan.** UNODC has a strong presence in and a long history of partnership with the Government of Afghanistan in providing specialised expertise in law enforcement, criminal justice, drug demand reduction, HIV/AIDS among drug users and alternative livelihoods. Despite a recent decline in poppy cultivation (World Drug Report 2020), Afghanistan remains the largest producer of illicit opiates, fuelling organised crime and drug consumption in the region and beyond. In this context, UNODC through its Country Programme for Afghanistan aims to contribute to stability and development of Afghanistan by strengthening the criminal justice system, counter narcotics and drug demand reduction efforts and capacity building of the Government, including in research.

**Country Partnership Programme in the Islamic Republic of Iran.** The Country Partnership Programme continues to support Iran’s (I.R. of) efforts to respond to challenges posed by drugs and crime with the main emphasis being placed on capacity building related to countering illicit trafficking, drug demand reduction, criminal justice, anti-corruption and alternative development. Iran (I.R. of) and UNODC Iran moved from technical cooperation under the Country Programme of Technical Cooperation (2011 – 2014) to the UNODC Country Partnership Programme in the Islamic Republic of Iran (2015 – 2019). The main objective of the Country Partnership Programme is to support the enhancement of national capacities, policies, and programmes to respond to the pressing challenges of drugs and crime in Iran (I.R. of). It will also aim at the reduction of illicit drugs supply and demand. This will be achieved through an integrated and balanced approach based on international cooperation and capacity-building. Furthermore, the Country Partnership Programme will address Iran’s (I.R. of) national priorities while linking to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. It will also support regional collaborative efforts and frameworks.

**Country Programme for Pakistan.** As with the other UNODC Field Offices in West and Central Asia, the UNODC Country Office in Pakistan moved in 2010 from stand-alone projects to an integrated programming approach. The Country Programme for Pakistan aims to promote the rule of law and public health. The Country Programme focuses on three main areas of work: i) illicit trafficking and border management; ii) criminal justice and legal reforms, and iii) drug demand reduction, prevention and treatment. Common strategies in each of the three areas are enhancing national capacities and promoting international cooperation and good practices. These strategies are delivered through a focus on achieving outcomes, through a cooperative and flexible approach designed to adapt to emerging needs and opportunities. The Country Programme aims to increase the responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness of UNODC’s support to Pakistan.

**STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMMES**

A detailed table of the logical/ result structure of the five programmes can be found at Annex XI: Structure of the Programmes.

**PROGRAMME SUMMARY**

A detailed programme summary for the five programmes can be found at Annex XII: Programme Summary. The annex covers project/ programme numbers, titles, locations, links to thematic programmes, links to UNDAFs, links to SDGs and overall and approved budgets.

**DISBURSEMENT HISTORY**

The disbursement history of the five programmes and their component projects, up to date through 13 November 2020, can be found at Annex XIII: Disbursement History.
II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

PURPOSE

In line with UNODC evaluation policy, each of these programmes require a final in-depth evaluation when nearing their conclusion. The overall purpose of the evaluation was to understand the extent to which the UNODC programming in West and Central Asia addressed the specific context and national needs while contributing to addressing regional and inter-regional issues related to transnational organized crime, trafficking and terrorism threats. As the programmes are strongly interlinked in addressing existing and emerging challenges in transnational organised crime, border management and trafficking, counter-terrorism, anti-money laundering, law enforcement and criminal justice, drug use prevention, treatment and related issues including alternative development and health, these evaluations were undertaken as a cluster. The cluster approach intended to ensure a utilisation-focused evaluation, to address accountability and learning, and to focus on the development of the next phases of the programmes, including a contribution to the strategic future thinking for the region. While each programme was individually assessed as part of the evaluation, the cluster focus was used to assist strategic planning and programming in the region, particularly in the development of the next phase of programming. The evaluation delivers a comprehensive picture of UNODC work in the region and also identifies how the implementation of the various programmes contributed to regional and intra-regional initiatives, promoted networking and relationship-building and addressed national needs in UNODC mandated areas. The evaluation also considered the extent to which specific contexts, including conflict, were considered in programme design and implementation.

The evaluation assessed the benefits/added value that the various levels of programming (national, regional and global) brought by analysing their individual and collective relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, derived lessons learned from the programmes and provides recommendations and areas of potential for improvement.

Per the Terms of Reference, the purpose of the evaluation was to:

- Contribute to organisational learning by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the programmes in West and Central Asia.
- Identify the existing footprint of UNODC on the ground and the strengths that should be further promoted and moved forward.
- Assess the work of the programmes on capacity development of national counterparts and sustainability of such interventions.
- Identify areas of interventions for further strengthening of cooperation with national partners.
- Contribute to accountability for all stakeholders by assessing the achievements and results made by UNODC in the region, including each programme.
- Assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the interactions of global programmes with the programmes in the region.
- Assess the role of the programmes in supporting the achievement of national SDGs and alignment with UNDAFs/UNSDCF.
- Assess the opportunities and risks in the alignment of UNODC programmes in the region.

> One UNODC Concerted Approach: Interconnecting Europe with West and Central Asia

See Annexes 1-5 for detailed analysis of each of the 5 programmes.
II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

- Assess the alignment of UNODC’s position in the region to the UNSDCF process, and the SDGs.
- Provide an analysis of the current alignment and future opportunities of UNODC Programmes with regional initiatives.
- Identify the vehicles and best practice through which the programmes deliver support to Member States.
- Document best practice on strategic policy influence of the programmes.

SCOPE

The evaluation provides an overview of UNODC’s interventions in West and Central Asia as a whole and provides analysis of the five programmes – it did not look in detail at each sub-programme of the five programmes, although these provided the basis of the evaluation’s research and analysis.

The OECD/ DAC criteria were assessed during the evaluation: relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. In addition, established partnerships and cooperation, as well as aspects of human rights and gender mainstreaming and vulnerability, including persons with disabilities were assessed.

The intended main users of the evaluation are UNODC management, recipient Governments and their respective beneficiaries, the Programme Coordinators, and project managers, and donors.

THE COMPOSITION OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation team was comprised of an evaluation expert (with experience in the region), three international experts, each with expertise in one of the sub-programme thematic areas and five national/regional evaluators. The three thematic experts were responsible for field research and analysis in their area. The national evaluators were responsible for national focus, assistance and analysis. The lead evaluator was responsible for sub-programme 4 and overall responsibility for analysis and reporting.
## II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Annex IX: *The Evaluation Team* provides a more detailed description of the composition of the evaluation team.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Short bio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Newkirk</td>
<td>Lead evaluator</td>
<td>Jim has worked in development for over 40 years, including the past 13 years focused on result-based management and evaluation processes for international organisations in a large number of settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chantelle Cullis</td>
<td>SP1 – Team member/Law Enforcement Expert</td>
<td>Chantelle is an accomplished law enforcement/border security professional with 20+ years of employment with the Canada Border Services Agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Brown</td>
<td>SP2 – Team member/Criminal Justice Systems and Legal Expert</td>
<td>Mark is an Australian with more than 30 years of experience in research and evaluation in various criminal justice and law sectors. He is Director of the Centre for Criminological Research at the University of Sheffield, UK, where he is also Deputy Head of the School of Law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deborah Alimi</td>
<td>SP3 – Team member/Health, Social and Human Development Expert</td>
<td>With more than 10 years of academic and professional experience in the drug policy field, and in development cooperation and governance support, Deborah is a French researcher specialised in the study of the links between the illicit drug economy and the essential development dimensions of societies and communities (health, HIV/AIDS, socio-economic conditions, vulnerabilities of populations, education, rule of law...).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nastaran Moossavi</td>
<td>Team member/National Evaluation Expert</td>
<td>Nastaran is a long-term practitioner, having worked in the fields of gender, rural development and alternative livelihoods in Iran (I.R. of), Afghanistan, Cambodia and Lao PDR. Nastaran focused on the evaluation’s work in Iran (I.R. of).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinara Esengul</td>
<td>Team member/National Evaluation Expert</td>
<td>Chinara is Bishkek-based with extensive experience in policy and regional political analysis and with a master’s degree in international relations. Chinara has a range of experience with international organisations, including UN Agencies, as a policy expert, researcher and trainer. Chinara’s role was focused on Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aida Alymbaeva</td>
<td>Team member/National Evaluation Expert</td>
<td>Aida is a Bishkek-based consultant/researcher/evaluator, with a master’s degree in public policy. Aida has extensive work in Central Asia with international organisations, including UN agencies, and has specific evaluation and security-focused thematic experience. Aida’s role was focused on Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saeed Ullah Khan</td>
<td>Team member/National Evaluation Expert</td>
<td>With 15 years of professional experience in programme management, monitoring and evaluation, Saeed has completed master’s degree in development economics from University of Sussex, United Kingdom and master’s degree in business administration with focus on management of development programmes from National University of Science and Technology, Pakistan. Saeed’s role in the evaluation was a focus on Pakistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghan National Evaluator</td>
<td>Team member/National Evaluation Expert</td>
<td>Holds an MBA and an undergraduate degree in economics, the evaluator has a range of experience in programme management and implementation, including evaluations, research and analysis. The evaluator focused on the evaluation’s work in Afghanistan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

APPROACH

The evaluation was undertaken during the *global Covid-19 pandemic* health crisis. In designing the evaluation’s methodology, and data collection tools and instruments, the evaluation team gave consideration to both the complexities of evaluation research during this time of extreme limitations to travel and face-to-face interactions as a result of the global COVID-19 health crisis and the wide geography and national complexity of the region on which the evaluation is focused. The team made use of the UNODC IES guidelines on this,9 with the intention of being effective in data collection and innovating to the extent possible to ensure the best possible outcomes. Field work in particular was impacted by the constraints of the pandemic, with actual field processes taking over three and a half months to complete.

The evaluation’s *enquiry focused on stakeholders* that designed and/ or implemented the programmes, implementing Civil Society Organization (CSO) partners, direct beneficiaries (generally, government counterparts in sub-programmes 1 and 2 and community-based organisations, communities and individuals in sub-programme 3) and knowledgeable others who are not involved directly in programme design or implementation (donors, UN agencies and management including representatives of UNCTs and Resident Representatives). No enquiry was made with indirect beneficiaries or the general public.

The evaluation team worked to ensure its approach was undertaken within appropriate and defined *guidelines and frameworks*. This approach was developed through study and discussion of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) *Norms and Standards*.10 As well, the evaluation team used UNODC’s *Evaluation Handbook*11 in preparing the work of the evaluation. The evaluation team drew on specific aspects of UNEG’s *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – Towards UNEG Guidance*12 document in formulating its approach and methodology.

The evaluation used a *theory-based approach*, focusing for the purposes of this evaluation on the results frameworks of each of the programme’s being evaluated, and their links in an overall implied regional theory of change.

The evaluation took a *cross-cutting approach* to human rights and gender equality, drawing out analysis throughout data gathering and reporting processes. As can be seen in the Evaluation Matrix, data collection and analysis of cross-cutting areas of enquiry are visible in a number of evaluation questions and there is also a specific focus in this area (Evaluation Questions 16 and 17). Two types of analysis were undertaken and are visible in the findings and conclusions sections:

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• Process-wise: examining how, and to what extent, human rights, gender equality and considerations of vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, are mainstreamed in the programming process, i.e., how programmes are guided by organisational and system-wide objectives, with a particular emphasis on how this is visible in programme design.

• Result-wise: assessing the extent to which the programmes have taken specific measures to address the needs and priorities of human rights, gender and vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities and are achieving results in these areas.

The evaluation design process included a focus on distance research, given constraints on travel and face-to-face interviewing processes because of the COVID-19 global health crisis and potential security issues. The evaluation team was in communication with UNODC’s field offices to develop a clear understanding of the complexities associated with ‘distance evaluation’ processes, including such things as online communication with GCs. This approach meant a greater than usual focus on email questionnaires, the use of tools such as MS Teams and Zoom to access stakeholders such as community members benefitting from alternative development interventions or health/law enforcement agency trainees. Access to community level final beneficiaries was hampered by difficult access to the field.

While maintaining its independence, the evaluation was carried out based on a participatory approach, with a focus on the views and assessments of all parties identified as the key stakeholders of the programmes, including Core Learning Partners (CLPs).

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The evaluation was designed to include a **conflict sensitive approach**, with a focus on ensuring an appropriate representation of the population when selecting informants for interview or survey, particularly given the distance nature of data collection.

The evaluation geography extends across many countries in West and Central Asia, and includes stakeholders representing a complex range of languages, religions and cultural practices. The evaluation team comprised both international and national experts with the specific intent of maintaining a **culturally sensitive context and approach**.

The evaluation team anticipated that specific approaches would be required in the different countries, although the analytical framework and evaluation tools would be the same. It was in the details such as protocols and cultural expectations that differences would be visible. Within this context and in the context of the Covid-19 crisis and related constraints on travel and gatherings, it was clear that the **national evaluators** would play a substantive role as a bridge between stakeholders and the evaluation team and a significant role in facilitation of data collection and in actual data collection processes.

While the evaluation team planned to incorporate a Most Significant Change component in its field work and analysis, this was not possible due to the constraints encountered in engaging with counterparts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**METHODOLOGY**

The main elements of the evaluation process included the following:

*SCOPING*

**INCEPTION**: Detailing and refining approaches, analytical framework, methodology and data collection instruments.

**DATA COLLECTION**: Secondary sources / documentation; field research through interviews, questionnaires and surveys.

**REPORT DRAFTING**

**ANALYSIS** of findings using qualitative analysis software (Quirkos) and incorporating a number of meetings / workshops of the evaluation team.

*Figure 5 - Elements of the evaluation process. Source: Evaluation team.*

In considering its analytical framework the evaluation team gave extensive consideration to the best approach to addressing both a programme focus and an overall focus. Ultimately, it was determined to have three key components of analysis:
• An overall, strategic-level main narrative, addressing OECD DAC criteria at the regional level.
• Case studies, provided as annexes and also with specific components incorporated within the main, strategic-level narrative that highlight, emphasise and illustrate key findings.
• Programme-based annexes (Annexes I – V), addressing OECD DAC criteria at the programme level.

DATA SOURCES

The evaluation used a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods and a mix of primary and secondary sources of data.

SECONDARY SOURCES – DESK REVIEW

During the inception phase, the evaluation team undertook a review of all relevant programme documentation. This analysis was summarised in the inception report. Supplementary documents were received during the evaluation’s subsequent phases. This documentation has also been reviewed by the evaluation team – analysis included in the evaluation’s findings. These secondary source materials provided a key basis for evaluation conclusions and informed subsequent, primary research. The full list of reviewed documents can be found at Annex VIII: Desk Review List and includes UNODC documents, external reports and strategies as well as publicly available research and thematic material.

PRIMARY SOURCES – KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS, QUESTIONNAIRES, SURVEY

Stakeholder mapping. While the stakeholder list provided in the Terms of Reference was extensive, the evaluation team undertook further work on the stakeholder ‘map’ during the inception phase, including discussions with UNODC management and programme staff in a process of identification, confirmation and detailing. Annex IX: Stakeholders Contacted During the Evaluation details the stakeholder contacted during the evaluation. The primary source material from the engagement of the evaluation team with stakeholders was the critical component of the evaluation’s field research. This field research ensured the evaluation team was able to gather detailed data and inputs on the evaluation questions, as well as on the preliminary findings from the document review. Engagement with stakeholders was also a key tool in evaluation triangulation, bringing a range of perspectives to the initial research and evaluation questions.

DATA COLLECTION

Meetings with key stakeholders. The evaluation team held a number of initial meetings with key stakeholders during the scoping mission. These meetings assisted in focusing the work of the evaluation team and contributed to stakeholder mapping.

Programme office discussions. Focus was given to early, regular, ongoing communication with country offices as a way of ensuring local contexts, constraints and complexities were able to be addressed effectively. The international members of the evaluation team focused thematically, with each team member communicating directly with each programme, offering increased opportunity for coordination beyond that available with a geographic approach.
**III. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

*Desk review of all programme materials.* All provided materials were assessed.

*Field research* including key informant interviews with key project stakeholders and beneficiaries, email questionnaires and surveys. A total of 172 males and 62 females provided inputs to the evaluation. As and where needed, survey instruments and interviews were undertaken in the local language.

An innovation in this approach to a case study with beneficiaries during a pandemic was the use of an implementing partners in facilitation of the survey.14

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**DATA ANALYSIS/ REPORTING**

Based on the evaluation team’s desk review of project documentation, and the undertaken field research, and within the framework of the evaluation matrix/ evaluation questions, the evaluation team synthesised and analysed the findings of the field work, using the qualitative analysis software Quirkos. This synthesis/analysis was drawn together into a set of coherent findings, based on the research. Based on these findings, the evaluation team prepared its conclusions to the key evaluation questions and together with these conclusions provided a set of lessons learned. The evaluation team also prepared a set of recommendations. The way the team worked allowed each international evaluator to focus on their thematic area but to also provide a substantive contribution across all five programmes, contributing to quality and triangulation of the evaluation’s analysis.

The evaluation team was aware of providing its analysis in a report that is ‘approachable’ by stakeholders, i.e. not overly long nor making use of overly sophisticated language. The evaluation team’s focus was on providing a report that is of use to stakeholders and that conveys its analysis clearly.

Reporting is provided from two perspectives: a) analysis is framed and presented on a programme-by-programme basis in the five programme annexes and b) at the overall, strategic level in the main report narrative.

**EVALUATION MATRIX**

An evaluation matrix was prepared for the Inception Report. The matrix included all evaluation criteria, evaluation questions and the indicators the evaluation team was looking at in its analysis. It also defined a

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14 In order to address the potential of bias, and to ensure confidentiality, the survey is being put in the field by the implementing partner but is being returned to the national evaluator for analysis by the evaluation team. At the time of submission of the draft report, the survey is still in the field.
range of sub-questions and indicated the collections methods and sources anticipated to provide data for each evaluation question. This evaluation matrix was populated for each programme and for the evaluation as a whole. Programme level matrices are found in the annex for each programme (Annexes I – V). The overall evaluation matrix is found at Annex X: Summary Evaluation Matrix for the Five Programmes.

DATA TRIANGULATION

Special attention was paid to an unbiased and objective approach and the triangulation of sources, methods, data, and theories. Of the four basic types of triangulation:15 data, investigator, theory and methodology, this evaluation made use of:

- Data triangulation (use of primary and secondary sources). Information from secondary sources was triangulated with data from primary sources.
- Investigator triangulation. The gender-balanced evaluation team comprised 4 international members and 5 national members, each with different backgrounds, qualifications, experience and knowledge.
- Methodological triangulation, involving document review, interviews with a variety of stakeholders, online surveys and email questionnaires. Of particular note here is the wide perspectives gathered from interviews, questionnaires and survey with the full range of stakeholder types.

LIMITATIONS TO THE EVALUATION

National evaluators were very slow to be engaged in country. Where these key national resources were expected to play a significant role in the evaluation’s processes in the context of the Covid-19 crisis, and to contribute from the inception phase through to reporting, they were not appointed until several weeks into the field work. This added to the complexity of the protocol and communication issues discussed above. They simply were not able to insert themselves into all field processes as they were not contracted. When appointed, each of the 5 took on a strong and effective role in working with field offices in all aspects of field work.

The political difficulties that occurred in Kyrgyzstan during the evaluation impacted on data collection in that country. The evaluation team included national evaluators located in Bishkek, and particular attention was given by them to getting access to and inputs from counterparts and this was achieved, to a certain extent although not at the levels anticipated in evaluation planning. A case study planned for Kyrgyzstan was not able to be undertaken as a result of this turmoil.

Government counterparts in Iran (I.R. of) preferred to respond via written questionnaires, rather than to be interviewed. With one exception, all interactions were completion of email questionnaires. This has impacted on the breadth of data available for the Country Partnership Programme in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The evaluation did not address questions/enquiry to the general population nor to indirect beneficiaries – all enquiry was with key stakeholders, including project staff, implementing partners, donors and direct beneficiaries.

Observation – no direct observation was possible as a field tool during the evaluation as the Covid-19 pandemic meant the scheduling of programme activities was limited and none took place during the period of field research. Limited online observation of UNODC-GC meeting and collaboration in Pakistan took place.

The evaluation did not have a balance of inputs across genders, with 172 males and 62 females providing inputs. A further 22 stakeholders provided inputs to the evaluation while declining to provide gender details.

## STRUCTURE OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

The main narrative of the report presents synthesised findings from across the region (West and Central Asia), as well as conclusions and recommendations related to all of the five programmes. Each of the five programmes has its own annex, where all evaluation questions are addressed and conclusions drawn for the individual programme. The Case Study reports are found at the end of this document.

The focus for recommendations has been on the region.

*Figure 7: Country Programme for Pakistan First Responder Orientation to Police Department.*
IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

RELEVANCE

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

1. Were the programmes designed based on evidence (research, lessons learned from past programming, evaluations?)

2. To what extent does the defined structure of programmes in the region align with current regional practice and future directions?

3. To what extent are the objectives of the programmes aligned with regional priorities and UNDAFs/UNSDFs/SDGs?

4. To what extent do the programmes respond to the changing and emerging regional and national (Member State) priorities and needs?

Programme design documents follow an established UNODC framework and in this sense are generally well-structured. The documents have a basis in historical initiatives, i.e., they are based on earlier interventions or are continuations of ongoing and sometimes lengthy projects/programmes. This historical aspect appears to be the key component of sub-programme design, together with ongoing design revisions. In most cases, the involvement of government counterparts has influenced the design of the sub-programmes. Some national counterparts are directly involved in framing the design of the programme. Others are involved indirectly through participation in and reflection on programme activities. Government counterparts (GCs) confirm engagement in design processes, through such activities as consultative meetings and programme steering committees. GCs across the region are also consistently supportive of the relevance of programme design to their needs and priorities.

In Afghanistan, particularly given the rapidly changing landscape in the country, flexibility in approach was noted, as was the growing emphasis on capacity-building in investigations and on financial crimes (through support from the Global Programme against Money Laundering – GPML). The evaluation found high levels of satisfaction among GCs with the quality of technical expertise and mentoring, including in the field of alternative livelihoods where Afghanistan represents the most developed and advanced programme of its type in the region.

In Pakistan, programme design has a defined process with clear direction from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and engagement of a sub-programme technical committee (SPTC) for each sub-programme. More recent programmatic interventions, specifically the Rule of Law Roadmaps for Sindh and Balochistan, evidence a clear model of data-driven programming and institutional mechanisms to underpin change and achieve sustainability. Particular relevance is noted in work with the Government of Pakistan to support its response to and

Rule of Law Roadmaps in Pakistan

Despite the early stage of the Balochistan and Sindh roadmap projects, internal and external coherence is visible in both. This was reflected in increased synergies between departments, each working within its own remit toward the same goal, such as an increased conviction rate for certain agreed types of offences. Similarly, performance of those departments was increasingly aligned with international norms and standards.
obligations under the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). The Programme is in line with the National HIV and Hepatitis C programme, the drug demand reduction (DDR) pillar of the Government of Pakistan National Anti-narcotics plan.

In Iran (I.R. of), programme design included direct consultations with Drug Control Headquarters (DCHQ), rather than the wider group of agencies from earlier programming. GCs noted relevance of the programme’s work on corruption, criminal justice and other matters, but noted also the limitations placed on programming through the lack of donor funding, notably under its Sub-Programmes 3 and 4. In a national context marked by unilateral sanctions and a situation of drastic funding shortages, the capacity for planning and action has been severely reduced.

In Central Asia, design highlights cooperation among the countries of Central Asia and feedback from GCs was a key component of the programme’s consultation process, across the 5 Member States, and GCs report strong engagement with UNODC in defining priorities that underpin programming and its timely revision. Discussion with donors and the engagement of an international expert at the design phase also contributed to alignment of the programme with stakeholder needs and priorities and enabled agreement on the programme document to move quickly across all 5 countries. Particular relevance was indicated in the prison reform initiatives in Kyrgyzstan that has grown into a wider set of criminal justice and crime prevention initiatives in Central Asia. In some countries, such as Kyrgyzstan, UNODC has supported national initiatives on naloxone distribution and prevention of overdoses, rehabilitation of former and current prisoners, methadone programmes and the development of alternatives to incarceration for people who use drugs and work, together with global programmes, on AML.

Across the region, GCs were overwhelmingly supportive of the alignment of the RP with their needs and of its flexibility in the face of changing circumstances. Support was particularly appreciated in areas of fast-moving change, such as methods of complex financial crime, where national-level expertise is often low or even absent. The RP’s design document describes a harmonised approach to programming in West and Central Asia, including ‘the comparative advantages of each UNODC office in West and Central Asia (i.e. Country Office for Afghanistan (COAFG), UNODC Country Office in the Islamic Republic of Iran (COIRA), UNODC Country Office in Pakistan (COPAK) and UNODC Regional Office for Central Asia (ROCA)) together in an integrated programming effort.’ This harmonised approach is confirmed in the programme document of each of the other 4 programmes.

Particularly, but not solely, in relation to activities within sub-programme 3, covering the thematic area of drugs and health, across the programmes, civil society organisations and related knowledge sources are visible in design and implementation. In this way, sub-programmes are based well in the historical, national, cultural context in which they are operating, on current practice and on the lessons learned from past programming.

There are a number of global frameworks and programmes that impact on and have relevance to the work of the programmes with their national counterparts. These include the Paris Pact Initiative, the United Nations
Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), the three international drug control conventions (the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988), the Global Container Control Programme (CCP), Afghan Opiate Trade Programme (AOTP), the Doha Programme, the programme on prison reform and the Programme on Building Effective Networks Against Organized Crime (BENATOC). These global frameworks and targets are visible in programme design documentation, more so in more recent documents. What is not so visible is the linking of these frameworks from design through implementation and into reporting. This is particularly true of the SDGs and of the commitment to leave no one behind. These frameworks/targets appear much more visible in design than they are in implementation and they are often not visible at all in reporting. There is clear improvement in these areas, based on analysed evaluation reports, but weaknesses are still visible in programme documentation, including reporting.

It is visible in all programme design and reporting, as well as in evaluation reporting, that the work of the programmes at the regional level is particularly relevant to and aligned with the priorities of the Member States (MS) participating in the programmes. GCs themselves note this relevance, particularly in relation to cross-border/international drug control strategies and the building of systems and practice of cross-border communication, coordination and collaboration. The Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) is a critical component mentioned in documentation as addressing regional priorities, as is the inter-regional drug control approach (IRDC). The Triangular Initiative is an initiative that also had

Healthy Lifestyles – Programme for Central Asia

Identifying healthy lifestyles as a key resilience factor protecting young people vulnerable to criminal recruitment or victimisation, the PCA worked with the Doha Declaration Global Programme to bring Line Up Live Up - UNODC’s evidence-informed and sports-based life skills training curriculum developed under the Declaration’s auspices – to Central Asia. The programme has been specifically tailored to the Central Asian environment. For example, as well as translation into national languages, initial testing found that elements involving discussion of sexual orientation required modification to suit cultural norms. The programme has been adopted into educational curricula in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan and is moving towards the same in Tajikistan.

21 https://www.unodc.org/dohadeclaration/
relevance to counterparts. Similarly, counterparts note their different cultures and legal frameworks and the relevance of work focused on bringing partner countries together on a regular basis.

The work being done with GCs which impacts on regional and global responsibilities is also noted for its relevance. The majority of programme initiatives fall within this area and include all work with national agencies on law enforcement, border controls, counter-narcotic capacity, money laundering, trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants.

The evaluation took two perspectives on UN frameworks and conventions—alignment with UNDAFs/UNSDCFs and SDGs and contribution to these frameworks. Both programme documentation and UN Agency representatives including Resident Coordinators provided research data. This data indicates a clear alignment in programme documentation with UNDAFs across all the countries in the region. Each programme document addresses UNDAFs and discusses specifics of UNODC priorities in relation to and contributions to UNDAFs. SDGs are visible in a similar way to UNDAFs, with each programme defining its alignment to specific SDGs in the programme design document. UNDAFs and SDGs are not as visible in sub-programme documentation as they are at the programme level. UNSDCF is only at the beginning of development in countries across the region and comes into discussions with stakeholders and in documentation only in a limited way.

UNODC programming is presented in the UN’s Biennial Programme Plan. Detailing of the sub-programme structure is found in the General Assembly—Official Records, Seventy-first Session, Supplement No. 6: Biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2018-2019 document. Nine sub-programmes are defined in the programme plan, of which Sub-programmes 1-7 are directly relevant to programming in West and Central Asia. The programmes of West and Central Asia reflect these seven sub-programmes, although there is not a direct correlation, neither between the programmes in the region and the Biennial Programme Plan nor between the programmes in the region themselves.

The evaluation did not find any conflict sensitive design awareness or specific approaches, although it is noted that at the time of their design there was no requirement for this within UNODC. Conflict impacts on the programme specifically in Afghanistan, which is dealing with an insurgency, and Iran (I.R. of), which is significantly impacted by unilateral sanctions and levels of conflict within the region. During the evaluation, Kyrgyzstan experienced political turmoil. In each of these, programming is impacted but there is no indication of the programmes addressing their work in a specifically conflict-sensitive way, i.e., there is no evidence in programming documentation, nor from field research, of any specific conflict-sensitive design nor a specific and direct application of conflict sensitive approaches.

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The programme approach in the region, and the framework of 5-year programming frameworks for each of the programmes, is now entering the third 5-year phase (second 5-year phase in Central Asia). This places the programmes at an important juncture in their development, as the consistency of approach and implementation implied in a programme approach, and visible in the programme structures, should be able to provide perspective on longer-term results (outcomes and indications of impact). The ability to tell a story of change and impact, based on evidence from delivered initiatives, is not yet visible in documentation.

The current programme design model does not contribute to an effective external (evaluation) analysis of design and implementation. Programme documents, and programme result frameworks, have a clear result logic and it is visible to the external reader that a chain of results exists. The described chain of results contributes at output and outcome levels and is relatively coherent across the five programmes as well. This provides the foundation for a theory of change, at both programme and regional levels. However, as discussed in detail later, a number of designed components are unfunded or underfunded, which raises a number of important questions: Does a programme exist where it is unfunded? Is there a valid theory of change, whether implied or stated, when the fundamental component (activities) does not take place? Further, the programme design, the result framework, cannot be analysed for effectiveness, and in some senses for relevance and efficiency, where planned/described initiatives are not funded nor implemented.

**SUMMARY - RELEVANCE**

The evaluation found significant programme relevance for key programme stakeholders, with relevance of programming to Member States specifically notable.

The programmes are all designed in consideration of UN and other programming frameworks and the priorities of the international community.

The position of each of the programmes at the beginning of a third 5-year programme approach requires consideration of the longer-term in programming, monitoring and reporting, including a focus on impact.

**COHERENCE**

**EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

5. To what extent did the programmes develop or strengthen existing and new partnerships at bilateral, regional and international levels?

6. To what extent do the programmes contribute to the One UN, UNDAF, and other UN system-wide coordination mechanisms (e.g. participation in UN Country Team) and the extent to which UNODC participation in UN activities influences its performance?
Country Offices are seen as trusted, long-term partners by GCs, who also note the importance of the five programmes in addressing regional and cross-border communication and collaboration. UNODC is considered an important bridge to the wider world, and where there are difficult relations between MS the role UNODC plays in enabling communication is noted and appreciated. The expression ‘facilitator of dialogue’ is used. Stakeholders in Iran (I.R. of), Pakistan and Afghanistan all referenced the importance of this role, and UNODC activities such as the Triangular Initiative (TI), notwithstanding ongoing issues with its effectiveness due to the difficult political situation between MS, provides an important example. Two other areas of regional programming receive consistent mention when GCs and other stakeholders speak about regional and cross-border partnership development: the growing level of work on and impact from FATF compliance initiatives and focus on financial crimes; a number of aspects in health and alternative development, including SFP. Both of these areas of work are of growing importance at both country and regional levels and receive good feedback from GCs and other stakeholders on their usefulness. At the national level, the role of UNODC as an intermediary across ministries and sectors was also recognised as a good practice that helped engage stakeholders in developing and tailoring a shared understanding, notably of what a balanced and integrated approach to drug policy would be or how it could be improved.

The evaluation found a range of collaboration with global programmes, including close cooperation with the Global Programme on Money Laundering (GPML), GLOG80 - the Container Control Programme (CCP), various Global Programmes on HIV/AIDS and drug use prevention and treatment, the Global Programme for Strengthening the Capacities of Member States to Prevent and Combat Transnational Organized and Serious Crimes (GLOT32), GLOR35 - Strengthening the legal regime against terrorism, Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants (GLO.ACT), and GLOK42 - Prevention of illicit drug use and treatment of drug use disorders for children/adolescents at risk. Mention is also made, particularly in relation to sub-programme 4 initiatives across the region, of collaboration within the Thematic Programme on Research, Trend Analysis and Forensics. Having said this, the evaluation also found a level of competition between global programmes and country programmes, as well as a need for better clarity of roles and responsibilities and a stronger management direction in relation to the strategic frameworks that are in place. This is specifically relevant to the operation of global programmes, regional programmes, sub-regional programmes and country programmes in the same locations and with the same or similar mandates.

Links to neighbouring regions are also a focus, notably through the Joint Planning Cell (JPC) with the Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre (SELEC), the Gulf Criminal Intelligence Centre (GCIC) and the Asia Pacific Intelligence Chiefs Conference (APICC). Programmes also reference their coordination and collaboration with the Paris Pact Initiative, the Heart of Asia (Istanbul) Process, the Afghan Opiate Trade Project (AOTP) and the Inter-Regional Drug Control Approach (IRDC). CARICC is both a product of the Programme for Central Asia and an important regional coordination body for Member States. Stakeholders in Afghanistan in particular noted the importance of CARICC, its role as an observer and intentions to become a full member.

**UNODC support to the implementation of the Strengthening Families Programme (SFP) in West and Central Asia**

**Adapting SFP to country context – the example of Iran**

The Iranian implementation of the SFP provides a good example of how a tailored and sequenced approach to the SFP was instrumental in boosting the programme’s acceptance and GC receptivity to the opportunities it offered.

**Rule of Law Roadmaps in Pakistan**

In Balochistan, the roadmap articulates a formal theory of change linking rule of law transformation to governments’ capacity to secure functional, constitutional and social legitimacy. Linked to this is a scheduling of strategic objectives – a strategic prioritization across the five-year programme cycle.
Specifically, in the context of coherence, mention is made in programme documentation of the application of the UNODC strategy for engaging with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and CSOs, particularly in the area of drug demand reduction. One noted aspect was the increase in information-sharing between GCs and CSOs engaged in programme-related activities such as support to integration of human rights protections into prisons and drug treatment facilities. Partnerships with CSOs are described as valuable and indispensable for UNODC programmes at the country level and are noted particularly in sub-programme 3 initiatives as key partners.

There is a general commitment across programmes to the One UN framework, including participation in development, coordination and implementation activities and leadership at the strategic and operational levels such as engagement in UNCTs. The evaluation found that Country Offices are considered ‘good partners’ with UN Agencies and the UNCTs, with a focus on avoiding duplication and increasing synergy and complementarity, in partnership with other UN Agencies. Mentioned UN Agency partners include the United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Women, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations World Food Programme (UNWFP), UN Habitat, the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), the UN M&E Group, JUNTA, the PSEA Task Force, the UN Communications Group, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and UN Cares. The evaluation found significant support from representatives of UNCTs, and from Resident Coordinators, on the engagement of UNODC staff in UNCTs generally and in the implementation of and reporting on UNDAFs. UNODC Chairs the UNDAF Pillar Group on Drug Control in Iran (I.R. of) for example.

Coherence between the RP and the other four programmes being evaluated was the single area of contention encountered by the evaluation. It is, therefore, looked at in some detail. There is evidence that the structural relationship between the other programmes and the RP is no longer articulated effectively and requires updating or a re-set. This is a significant issue in the relationship between the Programme for Central Asia and the RP - some issues exist with the other programmes, but in a much more limited sense.

Figure 8: Country Programme for Pakistan Workshop on Victim Identification & referral for TIP and SOM

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There are in fact two frameworks overlaying the work of UNODC in the region. One is the RP (over all 8 countries in the region) the other is the Programme for Central Asia (over the five countries of Central Asia). While there has been, historically, a clear separation of the roles and responsibilities of these two frameworks, this clarity has decreased in recent times. The evaluation found the defined structure for delivery of UNODC’s strategy in West and Central Asia is at three levels: Country, Region, Global. This model is detailed in the RP’s programme document and coherence with the RP is referenced in all programme documents for the other programmes. This model does not however operate in reality. The bulk of evidence from the evaluation’s enquiry would indicate that this described role as ‘UNODC’s framework’ of support, and the aim of bringing countries together and strengthening effectiveness of collective responses, is not currently functioning in the ways envisaged in the RP’s programme document and agreed in the design of all five programmes.25

The Programme for Central Asia is not a ‘regional programme’, per inputs to the evaluation, but it is referred to generally, by GC and many other stakeholders, as the Regional Programme for Central Asia. The office for the Programme is called, formally and extensively, the Regional Office for Central Asia (ROCA). In Central Asia, in many conversations the expression ‘regional programme’ is used and it is not clear if the speaker refers to the RP or the Programme for Central Asia.

The full name of the Regional Programme is no longer appropriate for its role and function. When the programme was addressing solely counter-narcotics, and the impact of Afghanistan’s drug production on the region and the rest of the world was of singular importance, the name made sense. In the context of current regional programming this is no longer the case.

These cohesion issues impact on programme effectiveness, as communication between staff of the two programmes is inconsistent and there is evidence of poor/ unclear coordination mechanisms, with some indication of duplication and overlap of efforts and activities which has a negative impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of UNODC programming in the region. For example, the evaluation found references to similar programming from different programmes and stakeholders determining their engagement with one or the other based on their perceptions of the overlap. Further, there is substantive evidence from the evaluation that these are management, rather than programming, issues and that programme coherence and the resolution of future directions in the region requires engagement from higher levels of UNODC management.

While there is significant support across GC in all of the countries of West and Central Asia for a regional approach there is no UNODC definition of a ‘regional programme’ – the only reference found for regional programmes, in the Programme and Operations Manual, states ‘there is no set model for a Regional Programme’ and the ‘design of a Regional Programme is a partnership process between UNODC experts, both at Headquarters and in the field, and with the countries in the region.’26 UNODC does not have a definition nor a set of criteria for an ‘Office’, including when a ‘country office’, ‘programme office’ or ‘regional office’ will be established and why. It is clear across the five programmes (and between the five programmes) that work is required to strengthen definitions, roles and the practical day-to-day collaboration. The absence of these definitions creates unclarity on roles and functions of programmes, offices and management of these programmes that actively contributes to the reduced efficiency, effectiveness and coherence across UNODC programming in West and Central Asia. Failure to define and decide between these key concepts and structures will make disentangling programme overlaps and duplication more difficult and, by dint of this, make the creation of important programme synergies more difficult to achieve.

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25 This resonates with findings of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) evaluation of UNODC (May 2020): see page 18, para 39 - https://oios.un.org/file/8536/download?token=DfiDT1fC

The design documents of the three country programmes and the Programme for Central Asia say they are based on the design framework of the RP, including the four sub-programmes. This sub-programme alignment is visible, but somewhat loose, and as such does not contribute to regional programme coherence. Further, a clearer and more specific alignment with UNODC’s overall strategic framework (and sub-programme names/definitions) would benefit both organisational coherence and aggregation of reporting/results. All of this would, over longer terms, make a contribution to an understanding of how programmes are contributing to impact.

**SUMMARY – COHERENCE**

While there are positive examples of programme coherence in the region, there is a range and quantity of evidence on the lack of strategic and operational coherence between the RP and Country Programmes (particularly the Programme for Central Asia and the RP) clearly indicates the need for priority to be given by UNODC to the clarification and detailing of the strategic and delivery frameworks for the coming programming phase. While alignment with the overarching UN/UNODC strategic frameworks is critical, so too is how the programmes will operate at the operational level, including clarification of roles, responsibilities and collaboration/coordination arrangements.

UNODC’s programmes and staff in the region are valued partners for GCs and other stakeholders, noted for their technical expertise and capacity to work with stakeholders in building national and cross-border relationships and partnerships.

UNODC programmes are valued members of the UN family in all the countries of West and Central Asia and make significant contributions to UNCTs and in the delivery of and reporting on UNDAFs.

**EFFECTIVENESS**

**EVALUATION QUESTIONS:**

7. To what extent were the objectives and outcomes stated in programme documents achieved? What were the facilitating and hindering factors in achieving results?

8. How effectively did the programmes address national and regional needs and priorities?

9. To what extent are the programmes effective in strengthening and promoting cross-border cooperation and collaboration with regional entities?
As indicated earlier, GCs are consistent in their analysis of the ability of programming in West and Central Asia to meet their needs and priorities, regionally and nationally. Commentary includes planned programming and the flexibility to address emerging needs. A number of examples from across the region are provided below to highlight the achievement of intended results, addressing of GC needs and particularly providing insight into partnership. The focus of the RP on bilateral partnerships and formalising of relationships through MoUs and related instruments was noted. These include:

- Partnership in Financial Investigation Units (FIU).
- Cooperation with mutual legal assistance (MLA) processes.
- Engagement in the Triangular Initiative (TI).
- Initiatives related to the Heart of Asia.
- Engagement with the Paris Pact.

Sub-programme 1 across the region: There are a number of effective initiatives. Operation Reflex and Operation Substitute are specifically mentioned operations that were agreed on by GC, coordinated and executed successfully and were followed by debriefs in which lessons learned and best practices were shared among MS. The establishment of Border Liaison Officers (BLOs) across Central Asia, with related initiatives being pursued in other geographies are consistently mentioned as effective. The Counter Narcotic Police Agency (CNPA) forensic lab in Afghanistan is considered a significant outcome, with potential to be replicated. The increasing capacity of CARICC and the extension of CARICC’s role beyond Central Asia is effective, points to impact potential and has significance in regional collaboration. The K9 centre in Iran (I.R. of) is a particular example of effective outcome and potential for sustainability. The development of capacity in the Anti-Narcotics Force, particularly related to modern techniques on synthetic drugs which are seen as an emerging threat.

Sub-programme 2 across the region: There are a number of effective initiatives. The introduction of the ARIN-WCA structure is a significant result and has clear potential for impact. All aspects of work on financial crimes across the region, including developments with the FATF and initiatives with FIUs are seen as important results for the programmes. The work on rule of law in Sindh and Balochistan and its initial effects are clear pathway to impacts. The strategic focus on training and outreach to jail authorities to deliver treatment support to HIV positive prisoners using drugs. Similarly, work being done with judicial and prosecutorial authorities on the introduction of non-custodial penalties as an alternative to imprisonment. UNCAC compliance is progressing, as is the development of national legislation on UNTOC, and some progress in mutual legal assistance (MLA) is noted.

Sub-programme 3 across the region (called sub-programme 4 in Iran (I.R. of)): There are a number of effective initiatives that are

**Improving law enforcement authority literacy and capacities on HIV and Drug Use prevention and treatment in Pakistan**

The training positively communicated a “fresh perspective” on drug abuse and a comprehensive approach to HIV prevention, including the respect of the rights of HIV positive people and the importance of counselling, confidentiality, and consent issues.
visible. Based on Iranian experience and structures, access to and development of opioid substitution therapies have improved, placing Iran (I.R. of) as a regional example in this field. The dynamic response to the specificities and evolutions of the HIV epidemic among people who inject drugs (PWID) in Pakistan, concentrated in key vulnerable populations, notably by targeting vulnerable populations in prisons settings. Alternative livelihoods projects in Afghanistan were particularly efficient in generating rapid income and ensuring a minimum of food security in targeted communities and represented a successful avenue to economic growth and entrepreneurship for some households and individuals, including women. Detail on results of one component of sub-programme 3 is provided in CASE STUDY 3 - UNODC support to the implementation of the Strengthening Families Programme (SFP) in West and Central Asia.

PACT is a solid example of the effectiveness of programming, reflecting the quality of work of the Country Programme team and confidence on the part of the government.

Discussions on effectiveness, across the region, are always qualified by funding constraints and the likelihood that full programme design will not be implemented. Each programme in the region is impacted by this and how it affects results, but also impacts on efficiency and coherence, particularly where staff positions are not filled. This is particularly true where unfilled positions are key to, or have played significant roles in, coordination or liaison between programmes. The sub-programme 1 Senior Coordinator role in Central Asia is one such position.

The other critical issue for programme effectiveness, although outside the control of programmes, is the steady staff turnover in government agencies, turnover that impacts on the potential for embedding training and developing institutional memory.

The Covid-19 crisis disrupted programme implementation, although the programmes were flexible in responding to the challenges, making use of remote and online solutions for example. GCs responded positively to the approach taken by the programmes in trying to address programming during the pandemic, but the effectiveness of initiatives was negatively affected.

**E-Learning in Pakistan**

The Country Programme has incorporated E-learning at 55 e-learning centres at various academic institutions across the country. The programme is cross-cutting across programmes and Outcomes in both sub-programme 1 and sub-programme 2, incorporating 90, adapted computer-based training modules such as on Border Interdiction Techniques, Drug Identification and Testing, Interview and Search of Persons etc.) in three local languages: English, Urdu and Pashto. The programme has trained site managers and training managers at the e-learning centres, building local capacity – they deliver training independently, as required, from the 90 modules. At the last audit, 43,000 individuals had undergone 315,000 hours of training. The programme is now part of GLOU-61, the Global E-Learning Programme, and is looking forward to providing e-learning within the framework of sub-programme 3 under CP-III in the near future.

**SUMMARY – EFFECTIVENESS**

There are a range of important results visible across the region. These results span all sub-programmes and each country in the region.
GCs note and the evaluation found evidence of the importance and usefulness of the activities and results of programmes – this is noted strongly across all of West and Central Asia.

The effectiveness of partnership development, both within countries (often mentioning linkages between law enforcement, prosecutions and the courts) and across borders, including formal relationships such as MoUs and more informal relationships based on dialogue and interaction is specifically evidenced. Informal relationships are particularly important where the political situation between MS is difficult.

EFFICIENCY

**EVALUATION QUESTIONS:**

10. Were the resources and inputs converted to outputs and outcomes in a timely and cost-effective manner?

Generally speaking, programmes report acceptable levels of implementation rates and donors generally express positive perspectives on the activities and outputs of programmes, both in terms of relevance and in the way in which the programmes expend resources in achieving results. However, across the region funding shortfalls exist and are commented on. While discussed above, in the Effectiveness section, this is also worth mentioning here as constant concerns about funding impact on staffing and the ability to ensure all necessary implementation and administration tasks are covered appropriately. This places the ‘programmatic approach’ at risk – it can be questioned if it even exists if all components of the ‘programme’ are not funded and implemented. Funding issues draw technical staff away from substantive delivery and into activities related to funding, resulting in inefficiencies in programme delivery, and stakeholders noted the potential in this for negative impacts on UNODC’s wider strategic role and its place in the UN family. These issues also impact on staff, who comment on concerns regarding their employment.

There is no regional approach to fundraising, which reduces opportunities for pool funding, for cross-SP funding and the potential to pursue a regional approach to UNCT funding possibilities, including a UNCT strategy which would be implemented at the country level.

All programmes are well-structured in terms of programme logic, i.e., each programme document and its revision documentation include a clear structure of activity, output and objective, within sub-programme areas. Across the design documents of the programmes, at the output to outcome level there is a reasonably consistent logic visible, i.e., it is generally possible to see that the designed outputs will make a strong contribution to achieving the intended outcomes and it is generally easy to see how a set of activities will deliver the intended output. While documentation is generally logical in this way, it is not always the case. The evaluation found limited capacity in current result indicators to capture longer term change and transformation, i.e., to capture what UNODC is actually being able to build in the different countries of the region, including its work as a soft influencer through dialogue building, sharing of expertise and policy guidance. Related to this is the need for better alignment with and ability to report on SDG indicators.

Programme documentation across the region gives consistent focus to risk definition and risk management strategies.
There are both strengths and weaknesses in programme reporting. Strengths include the framing of the reports, based on UNODC templates. This approach ensures that areas of priority in reporting are included and also ensures a standard approach that allows comparison across sub-programmes or programmes (sub-programme reporting is structured differently to country programme reporting). The report templates also create links between important components of programme design and reporting, such as the SDGs, UNDAFs and human rights/ gender, although these links are not direct. Reporting is generally not strong in a number of areas:

- There is little on specific contributions to SDGs in reporting. There is not always a direct correlation between the SDGs defined at the design stage and what is reported on and reporting is not always detailed in how the sub-programme/ programme is actually contributing. Sub-programme reports do not, apparently, require this analysis and programmed reporting is limited.
- There is limited discussion on actual engagement in Delivering as One approaches or specific contributions to UNDAFs in country programme reports. UNDAF reporting is generally not visible in sub-programme reporting or is only discussed in very general terms. As noted above, the programmes make significant contributions to the One UN, but these are not well-covered in reporting.
- There is a heavy emphasis on activity/ input reporting, rather than an analysis of how activities are actually delivering the planned results (outputs and outcomes), where emphasis needs to be on analysis, i.e., reflection on and description of the conversion of inputs (time and money) into results.
- There is a need for results frameworks to be reviewed, with a clear eye to removing those things that are not results (inputs and activities) and refocusing upon those things that are (outputs and outcomes).
- This is particularly true, and of growing importance, as programmes grow in length. With programmes entering a third 5-year phase there is a real need for consideration of and reporting on higher level outcomes and impact, which is as yet not visible in reporting.

One other aspect of reporting requires discussion. As noted above, UNODC has a strategic framework which includes the definitions of 9 sub-programmes, 7 of which are relevant to regional programming. The programme structure of the programmes in the region maintain a loose correlation to these sub-programmes of UNODC’s strategic framework but they do not correlate directly, neither with the strategic framework nor with each other. This lack of direct correlation detracts from the ability of programmes to report in a way that can be aggregated at the UNODC level for ease of reporting on the UNODC strategic framework and within One UN reporting frameworks/ requirements.

The evaluation found consistent support across the region for the role played by the regional desk in assisting design, implementation, administrative and reporting requirements for the field offices.

Administrative and procurement processes take too long. This is true for recruitment of expertise, procurement of equipment and materials, all processes related to travel. The length and complexity of these arrangements detract from effective delivery and impact on stakeholder perspectives on UNODC systems.

The global COVID-19 pandemic is impacting on programme efficiency, blocking normal and regular delivery approaches and having a negative impact on results. Donors and GCs have been very responsive to and understanding of impacts on programming. Donors noted the impact of COVID-19 on implementation processes while also noting the flexibility of the programmes during this period.

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SUMMARY – EFFICIENCY

Overall, each programme maintains acceptable rates of implementation, but the more fundamental problem of funding shortfalls impacts significantly on programme efficiencies.

Programme reporting is well-structured and of good quality in most areas but would benefit from a greater emphasis on outcome level analysis and linkages to higher level frameworks such as the SDGs, UNDAFs and the UNODC strategic framework.

Programme indicators are not focused sufficiently on longer-term and higher-level results (outcome/impact) hampering the ability of programmes to understand the greater significance of their work.

IMPACT

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

11. To what extent did the programmes contribute to counterpart implementation of relevant international Conventions and other instruments?

12. To what extent can long-term sustainable results be expected for all stakeholders from current programme implementation?

13. To what extent did the programmes contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals?

The evaluation found evidence from a range of activities and outcomes that demonstrate impact or that clearly are demonstrating impact potential.

Programme initiatives that engage in work on a wide range of treaties and international conventions are noted across programmes, with specific and consistent noting of involvement in the Paris Pact; being signatories to UNTOC and UNCAC; the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Mandela Rules; and the Bangkok Rules for women). Notable also are the two supplementary protocols of UNTOC on the combatting of trafficking in persons (TIP) and smuggling of migrants (SOM) and an adherence to frameworks regarding AML and CFT, together with formal relationship with the FATF coordination committee. Not all counterpart countries are signatories to all of these conventions or treaties, but there is significant evidence from across the region of the impact of engagement with these international treaties and conventions. FATF processes, and all work on AML including the ARIN-WCA network are becoming more important to GCs. Other examples of impact potential include noted examples of cross-border cooperation through the Expert Working Groups on precursors and training; the SFP and FAST have been effective in influencing development of an evidence-based early prevention strategy built on common standards in the region; CARICC remains an indication of sustainable impact and is growing in these areas with time; the CNPA forensics lab demonstrates institution building and sustainable impact and replicability; the Anti-Corruption Justice Centre and Office of Asset Recovery in Afghanistan embed technical approaches to financial crime investigation and prosecution within an institutional architecture.
Some aspects of both national and regional work on alternative development contributed to strengthening and diversifying licit livelihoods of small and marginalised farmers, with increases in farmer productivity, income, food security and employment. This has also occasioned contributions to the peace and security pillar of the Afghan national agenda. The SFP demonstrates engagement of the Iranian (I.R. of) government in mainstreaming the programme across its national curriculum and expanding it to older audiences (adolescents and families in broader socio-economic settings).

The programmes ensure communication is not blocked between MS and are able to keep neighbouring countries talking to one another and learning from one another.

There is significantly more discussion in documents on alignment with SDGs than discussion on actual contributions to their implementation. As discussed above, the indicators in the result frameworks of programmes offer little assistance in understanding impact level, long-term sustainable results.

**SUMMARY – IMPACT**

Impact potential is significant – programming would benefit from a greater focus on capturing/tracking the programme results that are delivering or are on the road to delivering longer-term impact.

Across the region the programmes are making significant contributions to member states’ implementation of relevant international Conventions and other instruments.

Much more work is required in programme reporting on the concrete contributions being made to SDGs.

**SUSTAINABILITY**

**EVALUATION QUESTIONS:**

14. Has national ownership of the programmes been generated? In what ways? What factors have hindered or facilitated this ownership?
15. How have the programmes developed national capacity to support sustainability of effort and benefit?

Sustainability is best perceived through the evaluation’s feedback on GC ownership of processes and initiatives, as there are a range of important examples that indicate the ways in which MS drive processes and take responsibility for the programmes, both of which are indicative of sustainability. There are a number of examples of programme initiatives being taken up by national governments: the Inter-agency Mobile Teams in Uzbekistan\(^{28}\), the legal foundation for the Border Liaison Officers\(^{29}\) and the working of the Drug Control Agency in Tajikistan\(^{30}\) and the Line Up Live Up (LULU) life education through sport programme in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The Drug Control Agency in Tajikistan is the best example of national ownership in Central Asia. The agency was built up over a number of years and then, in close consultation with authorities, an exit strategy was developed through which funding and UNODC resource allocation were gradually decreased over time.

CNPA (Afghanistan) capacity has been built over the years. While support/ mentoring is still required, CNPA works well on its own. While not yet fully self-sustained, CARICC’s development is assisted by financial support from Kazakhstan and developing measures for further contributions from other MS. The Anti-Narcotic Police K9 unit in Iran (I.R. of) is now completely run and funded by the national police. They have their own training curriculum, breeding programme, and do their own procurement. The new counter-narcotics laws, into which UNODC has been codified, reflects the role that UNODC has had in driving counter-narcotics strategies in the country. In the area of financial crime there is clear evidence of member state ownership of reforms. This is evidenced, for example, through budget provision for Afghanistan’s Anti-Corruption Justice Centre (ACJC) and protection of this new institution both financially (through ring fencing of the budget) and against malign influence (through direct reporting lines to the Attorney General). However, national budget provision is inadequate for all necessary activities of the ACJC and it is widely agreed that it will require ongoing technical and financial support into the medium term.

The Joint Planning Cell in Tehran is largely self-sustained, with the Government of Iran (I.R. of) covering the cost of its own officer and through other in-kind contributions. Sustainability and success are precluded by Pakistan and Afghanistan not funding their officers, which has on occasion been provided on a short-term basis by UNODC.

Ownership by Government of Pakistan entities/ agencies is visible across a wide range of areas. Possibly of most significance is the role that MOFA will play in directing the design of the new Country Programme. There is visible improvement in the capacity levels of national and provincial authorities in HIV and drug use prevention and treatment. Further, adoption of Rule of Law Roadmaps by provincial governments has increased inter-agency coordination and been allocated dedicated budget provision. This has contributed to momentum among stakeholders on the need to consolidate their strategy and knowledge base in these areas. The building of a standardised, universal curriculum, together with the creation of a pool of national trainers, has contributed to greater ownership and to a continuity of the transferred skills and knowledge.

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\(^{29}\) February 2015. 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. UNODC.

\(^{30}\) XAC/ Z60 Sub-programme 1 Programme Document revision.
Programme reporting and evaluation documents provide examples of provided infrastructure as contributing to sustainability of initiatives. The RP’s Programme Steering Committee, in its role as secretariat, is particularly critical in identifying MS needs and priorities and bringing them to the centre of programming. In Iran (I.R. of), Kazakhstan and to some extent in Uzbekistan, the SFP has been scaled up into national and/ or school curricula, and into the provinces.

Increased knowledge and skills, i.e. capacity, is consistently mentioned in discussions on sustainability, and UNODC’s contribution to this sustainability.

High staff turnover continues to impact negatively on the potential for sustainability of impact across all programmes. There are specifically expressed concerns that rather than ‘capacity-building’ the training being provided is for ‘capacity substitution’.

**SUMMARY – SUSTAINABILITY**

There are many examples of national ownership of programme initiatives from across the region.

The contributions made by UNODC programmes to greater MS capacity are making direct contributions of sustainability of effort and outcome.

National ownership and sustainability of change are both negatively impacted by staff turnover in government (counterpart) agencies.

**HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND**

**EVALUATION QUESTIONS:**

16. To what extent have human rights and gender priorities and principles, including the needs of vulnerable groups, guided programme design (reference framework, planning structure)?

17. To what extent have specific measures been taken to address the needs and priorities of human rights, gender and vulnerable groups during implementation of the programmes?
It is worth noting that unlike its gender strategy, UNODC does not have a Human Rights strategy that programmes apply during the design phase.

While not consistently applied across programmes and sub-programmes, and sometimes found as a more generic discussion rather than a contextualised approach to these issues at the country or regional level, the application of the principle of leaving no one behind, specifically in relation to human rights, gender equality and the dignity of individuals, is readily visible in programme documentation. There are clear examples of programme design and implementation with a well-developed and clear human rights approach, and the specificities of the human rights/ gender context in the region are also taken into account at the design stage. These examples tend to be in the ‘higher-level’ documents such as country programme documents and in documents focused on SP3 (alternative development and health), and in the monitoring of programme activities (notably gender disaggregated data on training participation). There is however extensive use of, and dependence on, standard phrases in programming documents. In many documents, a variety of the phrase ‘Human rights are an integral part of every aspect of UNODC's programme’ provides a significant component of design considerations – i.e., there is little other detail. While this is better than the many design and reporting documents with no reference to human rights or gender in design or implementation, it does not in fact indicate any real application of the ‘integral’ nature of human rights and gender in programming. Design documentation in many cases provides a statement about or commitment to human rights and gender equality that is not then visible in reporting on implementation. There is insufficient consideration of SDG 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) in programming design and implementation. Evaluations of programmes are consistent in raising similar questions. Examples include the Mid-term In-depth Evaluation of the Country Programme Promoting the Rule of Law and Public Health in Pakistan (2010-2015) noted ‘little analysis of human rights and gender issues, which translated into a similar exclusion from operational interventions and the In-depth Mid-Term Evaluation of the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries raised concerns about the low priority being given to sub-programme 3. The In-depth Thematic Cluster Evaluation of the projects: XAC/Z60, TAJ/E24, TAJ/H03, RER/H22, XAC/K22 noted that ‘what is of particular concern is the lack of a specific intent, a focus on consideration of how human rights and gender could become more prominent in planning, implementation and reporting, for the Sub-programme and for counterparts.’

Field research provided significant inputs to the evaluation’s understanding of programme approaches to gender, human rights and to leaving no one behind. It is clear from this work that the programmes take seriously the principles of human rights, gender equality and leaving no one behind in their design and, to a lesser extent, in implementation. Moreover, GCs recognise UNODC’s attention to these priorities, as do other stakeholders such as sister UN agencies who all comment on the visible commitment the programmes have made to broadening their work in these areas, and the quality of discussions at UNCTs. However, UNODC partners such as UNAIDS have been identified as having developed a greater presence and a more efficient strategy in these areas.

In the rule of law sphere in Pakistan, the gender focus has ensured a prominent place and high priority given to gender-based violence. Consistent with the coordinated whole of government approach of the rule of law initiatives, this spans from police investigation through additional sensitisation and training of prosecutors.

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31 2015. Mid-term In-depth Evaluation of the Country Programme Promoting the Rule of Law and Public Health in Pakistan. UNODC

32 March 2015. In-depth Mid-Term Evaluation of the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries. UNODC.

33 November 2018. In-depth Thematic Cluster Evaluation of the projects: XAC/Z60, TAJ/E24, TAJ/H03, RER/H22, XAC/K22. UNODC.
and the judiciary to recognition of the special difficulties faced by women who find themselves in prison. Under the umbrella of work on human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants, gender analysis is now taking place. This included the establishment of baselines and analysis in respective components. Prioritisation of specific forms of gender needs, such as in the investigation and prosecution of gender-based violence, and support for victims of this violence, is now visible. Vulnerable groups are clearly targeted in programming, for example in the programmes for legal aid in prisons that aim to reduce rates and length of unsentenced imprisonment, a phenomenon that is acute in Pakistan and that negatively impacts on a range of human rights. Indeed, the evaluation heard the phrase ‘UNODC’s ongoing and long-term advocacy on human rights and gender has enabled’ government to open up on dialogue on these concepts.

Training of female service providers was ensured to respond to the need of a gender-sensitive DDR and HIV prevention response in targeted settings. Training curricula also incorporated human rights principles and gender-sensitive materials in line with international standards. While the evaluation's desk review noted Government of Pakistan commitment to tackling HIV and drug use, notably among women in its constitutional and international commitments under the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the field phase did not provide further corroborative elements of this approach.

In Afghanistan, not surprisingly, activities within sub-programme 3 demonstrate the clear overlaps between alternative development interventions and human rights-based approaches to development. People-centred, alternative development intervention aims at empowering marginalised communities and vulnerable populations, to draw them out of the illicit economic chain. The principle of ‘do no harm’ becomes critical when considered in the context of drug control and development. Alternative development activities demand a careful understanding of social, cultural, environmental, political and economic factors. Particular attention was given to promoting and advancing women entrepreneurship, resulting in several individual success stories.

In Central Asian countries and Iran (I.R. of), the SFP provides another example of the focus on gender in programming. Although it was not specifically designed to meet the current needs and priorities from such perspectives, the project was responsive to a number of measures that indirectly related to them. For example, the target groups included boys and girls (not necessarily in the same room), module materials were adapted to overcome existing national sensitivities related to gender so some steps could be taken forward in advancing concepts and approaches of social inclusion. In some countries, it was also made obligatory to have both male and female facilitators/trainers in each team, to help better deal with parental concerns and needs and to develop an inclusive and participatory prevention approach. The leave no one behind umbrella provides for a more progressive agenda in Iran (I.R. of), such as including homeless people who use drugs within target populations as well as directing DDR efforts towards prison settings. However, gender and human rights issues are being only indirectly addressed. Activities in this regard are scattered, if not delayed because of lack of governmental support, while language remains careful and politically reworked.

The programmes point to a number of factors that constrain them in applying a focus to these cross-cutting areas in their work. One consistently mentioned factor is the sensitive cultural constraints and political contexts in which the programmes operate, an area that would benefit from detailed consideration during design processes when fully contextualised approaches could be developed. Another factor is the mentioned funding constraints which hamper the programmes’ capacities to address human rights, gender and vulnerability concerns across all sub-programmes. This is particularly visible in the prisons area and with respect to matters such as prison conditions and the imprisonment of women and youth.

GC note the importance of gender and human rights to donors, a fact that provides assistance to UNODC’s application of these cross-cutting principles, and it is also noted that most countries in the region accept and follow international norms and regulations in relation to human rights, also providing a basis on which programming can be implemented and priorities emphasised.
SUMMARY – HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

Gender, human rights and the principle of leaving no one behind are prominent in programme design across the region, although discussions in design documentation can be relatively generic, not fully contextualised to national and regional situations and lack the detailed consideration necessary to assist in programme delivery.

GCs notice the prominence of each programme’s focus in these areas and confirm that this focus has meant they give a greater consideration to human rights, gender equality and the principle of leaving no on behind.

These focus areas are less consistently prominent in implementation. There are significant and important initiatives, and outcomes, visible in regional programming, particularly in the areas of criminal justice, health and alternative livelihoods, but this is not universal.
The conclusions below are not a summarisation of the findings but are conclusions drawn with a view to providing value to planning for the next programme cycle (utility).

PROGRAMME DESIGN AND RELEVANCE

The Findings section provides analysis of the current programme design approach wherein:

- Programme documents and programme result frameworks have a clear result logic.
- It is visible to the external reader that a chain of results exists.
- It is visible how the described chain of results contributes at output and outcome levels.
- A relatively coherent programme structure and result logic is also visible across the five programmes.

This provides the foundation for a theory of change, at both programme and regional levels, and is particularly useful in understanding what is meant to be achieved and how it is intended to go about achieving these results.

However, a significant number of designed components are unfunded or underfunded. This underfunding is visible in each of the five programmes and impacts to a greater or lesser extent based on the extent of funding shortfall. These funding shortfalls are consistent and longstanding and mean in some instances that the whole of a sub-programme in a country programme is unfunded and so has no activities or results.

There are a number of impacts from this situation, apart from the obvious absence of activity and result. One impact is that it is not possible for judgements to be made on effectiveness in the framework of design, except to point out the likely ineffectiveness of the programme. Analysis of relevance is also impacted negatively, as it is logically difficult to analyse the relevance of a sub-programme activity that in fact did not take place.

In this situation, the result framework or the implied theory of change is in fact a shopping list or, better said, a concept note. It does not describe a programme. While UNODC’s shift in recent years from project-based work toward a programme model and more coherent programmes is to be welcomed, as currently implemented the approach remains more or less an assemblage of projects. This is coupled with the absence of any funding model or related funding tools, globally or regionally, that is required to ensure the programming vision can follow through into programming.

PROGRAMME DESIGN AND RELEVANCE – UN FRAMEWORKS AND INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

While programme documentation makes clear reference to and draw alignment with UN frameworks and international conventions, implementation and (particularly) reporting, across all programmes, is much less focused on actually working within these frameworks, contributing to these frameworks and reporting on how their work has had an impact in these areas. This hampers all the programmes in working closely with sister UN agencies who focus beyond ‘drugs and crime’, as a greater visible engagement in human rights, gender and leave no one behind principles, across sub-programmes, and demonstrable commitment to and expertise in these areas, would encourage engagement by these other agencies with UNODC programmes.

A much clearer definition of, and design adherence to, human rights principles and approaches is needed. Programmes depend too much on generic statements, which makes it difficult for programme staff to actually apply effective approaches, particularly for those staff with no specific experience or training in these areas. While these frameworks are more visible than in the past, and while stakeholders note the visibility of these
frameworks in UNODC programming, achieving effective results in day-to-day work requires a more detailed approach during programme design. More concrete, detailed discussion in reporting is also required.

Across all programmes, the work of UNODC in supporting countries in implementing anti-corruption and money laundering conventions and standards (particularly, UNCAC and FATF) was strongly supported by GC. Together with increasing support for cross border partnership and collaboration, such as through the ARIN-WCA network focused on asset recovery, UNODC work in the area of financial crimes is emerging as an increasingly important area of activity. Notably, this is underpinned by strong support from Vienna headquarters through the GPML and the extensive research support available there.

**PROGRAMME COHERENCE**

The significant issues with the programming structure in the region is impacting negatively on work processes within UNODC offices and between UNODC offices. The negative impact is on both efficiency and effectiveness, including issues with coordination and the duplication of effort and overlaps, but is in fact more fundamental than just these areas. It is affecting the confidence of UNODC staff in the organisation and detracts from working relationships, as well as organisational systems and governance. The agreed programming structure, which includes the three Country Programmes in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran (I.R. of), the Programme for Central Asia (covering the five countries of Central Asia) and the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries does not function in the way it was.

**PROGRAMME COHERENCE – THE UN BIENNIAL PROGRAMME PLAN AND PRIORITIES**

Regional programming is designed with the UNODC strategic framework, as defined in the UN *Biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2018-2019* in mind. However, the programmes and their sub-programmes are not closely correlated to the sub-programmes of this strategic framework. As importantly, and possibly more so, even in the region there is no direct correlation of sub-programme structure – the correlation is visible but loose. This loose correlation detracts from the ability of UNODC as an organisation (and the programmes as well of course) to offer any aggregated reporting on its work or its results and therefore hampers the ability of the programmes and UNODC more generally to tell a story of its success and of the importance of its work.

**LONGER-TERM PERSPECTIVES**

In the current context, where each programme is entering the planning for a new 5-year phase, it becomes important to consider how the work of UNODC in the region is properly measured and reported on. It becomes important to ensure that the story of change and impact, brought about by significant inputs over a significant period, is told. It becomes important for this story to be told based on up-to-date evidence, evidence that is presented against clearly delineated outcome and impact indicators. The programmes have had significant engagement for a long enough time that it is likely that, without a focus on gathering and sharing evidence of change, an appreciation of what has occurred will be lost.

There is a second aspect to this analysis – ensuring the programmes have a clear picture of not just what they have done, but also what they have achieved, including through more informal/soft initiatives, will in all likelihood provide a clearer and more detailed perspective on where programming should go in the future. Given that past, successful programming has built a foundation for success, visible in the trust and quality of relationships with GCs, donors and with NGO implementing partners, it makes sense to build up from the most solid of those foundations. Understanding what these are requires analysis based on evidence.
While this includes forward thinking, it is as important in ensuring the foundations laid and successes achieved over the past 10 years, and those expected to be achieved in the next five years, are not lost, neither in reporting nor in planning for future initiatives and making use of these foundations.

Figure 9: Country Programme for Pakistan Setting KPI’s in Prosecutor Coordination Mechanism Workshop.
The recommendations below have been drawn from the conclusions above and given both the evaluation’s findings and the related conclusions a significant focus is visible on programme coherence. This has required a widening of designated responsibility for the consideration and implementation of the recommendations.

**RECOMMENDATION 1 – PROGRAMME COHERENCE**

**PAUSE IN PROGRAMME DESIGN ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE REGION**

It is recommended that programme design preparation work for each of the five programmes be paused until the current lack of clarity in roles, responsibilities and programme structure is addressed.

**Responsibility:** The five programme managers with RSEWCA and under the direction of DO management.

**RECOMMENDATION 2 – PROGRAMME COHERENCE**

**REGIONAL PLANNING CONFERENCE / RETREAT**

Further, a planning conference/retreat is recommended, the specific intent of which is to address the regional programming structure and to provide clarity of direction for all management and staff in the region. The planning conference should at minimum involve the managers responsible for each of the five programmes, the line managers for each of these programme managers and key personnel from the Regional Section for Europe West and Central Asia (RSEWCA). This participation of key responsible programme stakeholders is key, as it is critical that any decisions made at the planning conference are binding on participants. The intended decisions of the planning conference include:

- The programming context and structure for the coming 5-year programmes. Specifically, this will address
  - Overall objectives for the RP, the Programme for Central Asia and the Country Programmes.
  - The roles, functions and naming of country programmes and offices and framework arrangements (such as the RP and the Programme for Central Asia).
  - Sub-programme structure and alignment. The evaluation findings show that sub-programmes across each and every programme should align directly with UNODC’s strategic framework. While sub-themes can be agreed, they should remain consistent across regional programming.
- The roles and functions of all of these arrangements where there is a shared or intertwining component to work.
- Consideration of a straightening and/ or realignment of reporting lines for programme managers in the region, so that managers of all programmes report along the same lines.
- A clear and agreed approach to fundraising. Here it is emphasised that this discussion should not be about constraining any given office to certain fundraising approaches but to addressing funding across the whole of the region for the benefit of all programmes and sub-programmes.

**Responsibility:** The five programme managers, together with RSEWCA and DO management.
RECOMMENDATION 3 – PROGRAMME COHERENCE

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE DEFINITIONS

It is recommended that UNODC headquarters define, for the organisation, a full set of definitions and criteria for the geographical structures that frame and are responsible for delivering UNODC programming. The intention of this clarification and defining is to ensure objectivity in decision-making when determinations on types of programming are made. Included in these determinations are:

- A clear rationale and criteria for establishing/maintaining an office in a country, including roles and responsibilities.
  - Programming imperatives (need).
  - Financial prospects (sustainability).
  - Administrative/management structure (cost, reporting structure).
- A clear rationale for any administrative and management structure above the country level.
- A definition of a ‘region’, including roles and responsibilities.
- A rationale for establishment of a ‘regional programme’.
  - Programming imperatives (need).
  - Financial prospects (sustainability).
  - Administrative/management structure (cost, reporting structure), including clear reporting arrangements between any country structure, regional structure and headquarters.
  - Agreed naming conventions be developed from these definitions.

Responsibility: DO management, coordinating with other, relevant divisions.

RECOMMENDATION 4 – PROGRAMME DESIGN

TRACKING LONGER-TERM SUCCESSES

It is recommended that particular focus be given in the programme documents for the next 5-year phase to designs, monitoring approaches and reporting on each programme’s full history and on all of short, medium and longer-term objectives and results. As discussed above, within the defined programming approach, each programme is entering a third 5-year phase, offering the possibility of understanding longer-term impacts and requiring an analysis of this same perspective. Minimum requirements include:

- Clearly delineated outcome indicators.
- Clearly delineated impact indicators.
- Processes for gathering up-to-date evidence.
- Use of indicators/evidence in reporting.
- Ensuring a longer-term (outcome/impact) focus in reporting – telling the story of the change that the work of the programme has brought about.
- Using monitoring details and reporting to regularly address future directions and potential changes to emphasis or direction.

Responsibility: The five programme managers in West and Central Asia, jointly, with specific collaboration of RSEWCA.
RECOMMENDATION 5 – PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY

REGIONAL FUNDRAISING FOCUS AND PROCESS

It is recommended that the programmes in the region undertake a joint donor mapping exercise and then look jointly at fundraising strategies and approaches with the intention of maximising opportunities while demonstrating a regional cohesion. A number of key areas are worth consideration:

- Development of a fundraising strategy that
  - Incorporates all aspects of regional programming priorities.
  - Details all potential donor frameworks and requirements.
  - Formulates a plan for each potential donor.
  - Includes donor relationship development, including strong communication approaches with donors.
  - Is recognised, is understood by, and engages all key staff.
- Implement and monitor the strategy as a regional team, focusing on engagement of all staff in the processes of strategizing, as well as the actual fundraising activities.
- Develop a strong skillset (one or more designated individuals) for donor proposal requirements and the development of well-defined and structured proposals.
- Give consideration to an individual (or small team) in the region with specific responsibility to oversee and drive fundraising approaches and activities.

There is scope and an imperative for the regional desk and global programmes involved in programming in the region to be involved formally in this regional structure and process, and to be engaged in related decision-making.

Responsibility: The five programme managers in West and Central Asia, jointly, with specific collaboration of RSEWCA.

RECOMMENDATION 6 - COHERENCE

CONTRIBUTIONS TO ONE UN PROCESSES

It is recommended that the current visible engagement in One UN processes, including UNCTs, be further strengthened across the region through development of strategic frameworks for partnership with sister UN agencies and related involvement in funding strategies. A particular focus in the coming period is a focused engagement with UNCTs on development of UNSDCFs at country level and how UNODC mandates and activities can form key components of the SDCFs.

Responsibility: The five programme managers in West and Central Asia, jointly, with specific collaboration of RSEWCA and SPIA.

RECOMMENDATION 7 – LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

A MORE STRATEGIC VISION OF IMPLEMENTATION ON LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND PRINCIPLES

It is recommended that the programmes place a greater emphasis on strategic vision for implementing a framework of leaving no one behind. As noted above, some emphasis is placed in these areas and some focus
is visible, but this emphasis decreases in actual implementation of many initiatives and in programme reporting. Some consideration should be given to:

- Engaging with sister UN agencies through joint programming, joint events etc.
- Strengthening of leave no one behind principles into deliverables (policies, training materials).
- Designation of focal point as a way of giving greater emphasis to these principles (a focal point). A necessary aspect of this will be funding of these positions.

**Responsibility:** The five programme managers in West and Central Asia, jointly, with specific collaboration of RSEWCA.

**RECOMMENDATION 8 – LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND**

**HUMAN RIGHTS STRATEGY / POLICY**

It is recommended that UNODC develop a human rights strategy/policy in the same way it has a gender strategy and to give consideration to providing support to it in the same way as happens with the Gender Team. Guidance on this issue is emerging within UN agencies and can be used as a resource by UNODC.

**Responsibility:** DO management, coordinating with other, relevant divisions.
LESSONS LEARNED

The programme steering committee model (RP) is seen as both a lesson learned and good practice that could be emulated in other regions, if not already, and in so doing would give structure to GC inputs to and influence on programme design and implementation.

While the evaluation found a wide range of evidence on the quality of expertise in UNODC offices in the region (see below), it also found evidence of staff rotation/staff turnover. The very important good practice of relationship building can be negatively impacted by this turnover – stakeholders view it as an important lesson for UNODC that maintaining staff in the region is critical to longer-term success.

While the quality of expertise is a notable positive of UNODC programming, there is a view that a greater emphasis should be placed on the use of local (national/regional) expertise, particularly in delivering training programmes. The sense is that international experts can miss the appropriate areas of emphasis and focus as they are not sufficiently aware of local specifics. Drawing in more local knowledge will add a practical edge, while continuing with the high levels of knowledge and skills of internationals, including their experience in other locations, would give a balance of both, and will demonstrate the principle of 'nothing about us without us.'

As discussed throughout this report, funding shortfalls have a significant impact on programme effectiveness. There is a clear perspective from UNODC staff across the region that lessons on funding are not being considered and learned and need to be if the current issues are to be effectively addressed. As one stakeholder said, ‘our funding models and approaches to donors need to be analysed - are we doing this in the most effective way?’

GOOD PRACTICE

The SFP and FAST

The Strengthening Families Programme (SFP) and Families and Schools Together (FAST) programmes constitute good practice in evidence-based, early prevention programmes, dedicated to children, young adolescents and parents. All eight RP countries have now piloted, and implemented to an extent, both the SFP and the FAST. In Iran and Uzbekistan SFP 10-14 has been formally adopted into the national curriculum and the programme has been scaled up nationwide in schools of excellence in Kazakhstan. The methods used in the SFP were particularly appreciated for having been theoretically and empirically tested, and for being easily replicated and adapted to country contexts, and a number of SFP facilitators and trainers were also trained during the programming period. The regular publication of SFP implementation cases at international conferences or in journals has further developed the evidence basis for future implementation within or outside the region. GC and practitioners interviewed underline the positive influence of the regional events for engaging and exchanging experiences. These practices are considered to pave the way to a more balanced and integrated approach to prevention in the region.
RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Relationship building was highlighted by GCs, implementing partners and donors as demonstrating good practice by UNODC. Of particular importance is how donors emphasised this, as their analysis also provides a good indication of where future focus with donors should be placed. All donors commented on the trust they have with the programmes, as well as the value of having a known partner and the contribution to their own processes of engaging with a UN agency. They also comment on the general alignment of their priorities with UNODC strategic directions. It is in the detail that the good practice of relationship building is noted. One donor representative specifically mentioned partnership in describing the relationship – they do not see their interaction with the programme as a giver and a receiver but as a sharing. Another donor representative described a proactive engagement from UNODC staff wherein they organised a visit to a donor country, negotiated with the main donor agency for a group of potentially interested government representative in the donor country to hear a presentation on UNODC programming in the region. The donor noted how this demonstrated a level of commitment and an extra step for ‘selling’ the programmes, noting ‘it is very different to sending a report’.

With reference to GCs, it is worth noting two specific points made in terms of the quality of relationship between UNODC and GCs: one, regularity of interaction and coordination and two, transparency in interactions. Where visible, these two approaches demonstrate good practice. The evaluation also heard inputs on the GC/UNODC relationship that resonate with comments above on donors/UNODC, a recognition of partnership and team as the underlying ethos of the relationship.

Bilateral relationship building is also a function of the range of regional gatherings, meetings, initiatives that take place, for a variety of reasons, in regional programming. Of particular importance in these regional meetings is the relationships between representatives of MS where there are political sensitivities between countries. Regional meetings for example on precursors, provide a technical and practical agenda on which law enforcement specialists are able to communicate where these types of interactions might not be possible in other forums. Similar examples were provided in criminal justice and alternative development initiatives and discussed also as good practice in these sub-programmes.

QUALITY EXPERTISE

The evaluation heard a wide range of commentary on the good quality of the experts that provide support and training through UNODC’s programmes. As one stakeholder said, ‘when we get the right people in the region and they cooperate well with our people we get good results. I encourage our people to interact with the experienced, knowledgeable UNODC people.’ These sentiments were echoed widely.

E-LEARNING APPROACHES

The approach to e-learning in Pakistan, with 92 modules accessible in 55 e-learning centres across the country is an example of good practice in training. The approach is continually growing and will soon include modules across all sub-programmes. Virtual technologies in general are becoming more prevalent in programming/training and offer valuable opportunities for knowledge exchange and programme continuity in times of restricted social interaction related to COVID-19. However, in the long run and outside exceptional times, virtual technology can only complement traditional training and collective activity formats that allow more interaction and real-life simulation exercises.

THE PROGRAMME APPROACH

Despite the existing challenges discussed throughout the report, the programme approach and related five-year programming framework are good practice. More strategic and better developed funding approaches are required in order for this more strategic footing to be best used.
EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMMING

The evaluation found the developing use of evidence-based programming as of great benefit to counterparts as well as the programmes as they enable more refined programming and provided opportunities to demonstrate successes. The Pakistan rule of law roadmap projects reflect innovation in this respect.

**UNODC support to the implementation of the Strengthening Families Programme (SFP) in West and Central Asia**

The Strengthening Families Programme has been effective in influencing development of an evidence-based early prevention strategy built on common standards in the region. The SFP constitutes thus a good practice in providing policy makers, decision makers and practitioners (including at the regional level) with knowledge, structures and skills for the development of comprehensive, evidence-based drug use prevention programmes and systems.
UNODC’s close relationship with Pakistan and long experience in the country allows the Office to have a frank understanding of the country’s challenges and context specificities. The development of and access to DDR services in the country appears intertwined with normative and perception concerns. Drug dependence, as well as behaviours and practices increasing the risks of HIV transmission carry severe penalties and suffer from high levels of stigmatisation. Furthermore, drug dependence is mainly understood as a criminal offense, and not recognized by all stakeholders as a health disorder. Law enforcement authorities and agents often remain at the front line when identifying and dealing with populations at risks. As documented through the interviews carried out in the framework of this evaluation, policy visions often differ from a ministry to another, while interventions to prevent and treat drug use disorders and HIV risks are often secondary priorities on counter-narcotics agendas. Besides, knowledge of how HIV is transmitted is extremely low in the general population and in LEA (only 13 per cent can accurately name three modes of HIV transmission). It seems that opportunities to prevent onwards transmission are being missed.

**Sub Programme 3 desired impact:**
To contribute to increased access to quality drug treatment and harm reduction services for vulnerable populations

Outcome 9: Knowledge of harmful effects of illicit drugs and misuse of psychotropic medicines increased in collaboration with government stakeholders

Outcome 10: Need-based drug treatment and rehabilitation services integrated into existing national systems (including health, education and social welfare) with emphasis on vulnerable groups women and children

Outcome 11: Increased access to and uptake of HIV prevention, treatment and care services for people who inject drugs in line with global and national policies, strategies and guidelines

Output 10.1: Technical assistance provided to support national accreditation system for standardising drug treatment services at the national level

Output 11.1: Increased access to HIV prevention, treatment and care services for PWID and spouses of PWID especially in prison settings and areas of high HIV prevalence

Output 11.2: Knowledge and skills of LEAs and service providers to deal with people who use drugs enhanced.

*Figure 11: Sub Programme 3 Impact, Outcomes and Output. Source: Evaluation team.*
In such context, the specific needs to sensitise law enforcement authorities and structures, including prisons and jail authorities, on drugs use and HIV prevention and treatment represent key areas of relevance and usefulness of UNODC support. Expanding the capacity of counterparts to deliver evidence-based drug use prevention and drug dependence services thus constitutes essential inputs of UNODC programming in the country and contributes to several outputs of the overall sub-programme.

RELEVANCE AND PURPOSE OF THE CASE STUDY

Through the analysis conducted during its inception phase and elements brought by its first interviews with key stakeholders in Pakistan, the evaluation team came to formulate the following observations:

1. The primary cornerstone of the CP strategy in Pakistan towards strengthening drug use and HIV prevention and treatment response has been to focus on i) supporting long-term institutional capacity development and ii) facilitating inter-ministerial dialogue and inter-departmental coordination to encourage greater prioritization of DDR and HIV prevention on the government agendas across board.
2. UNODC support is valued for the trust it built overtime with authorities in charge of security related issues and praised for its role as a catalyst for dialogue building.
3. Capacity building and training interventions are a cross-cutting type of intervention in all three SPs, and across the region, but are unevenly distributed among themes and countries.

Considering all the above, the evaluation team found relevant to dedicate greater attention to the case of training activities specifically targeted towards LEA audience in Pakistan while improving the selection criteria of LEA personnel for the trainings. The evaluation defines LEA audience as all staff working within a public order authority depository structure including police and prison personnel. Inquiry focused on the trainings attended by LEA staff, whether the activity directly or indirectly targeted them as key audience. The studied trainings enter under two thematic areas of intervention and are summarized in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of intervention</th>
<th>HIV prevention</th>
<th>Drug use prevention and treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type and audience</td>
<td>Direct targeting training to police officers to increase their HIV literacy to reduce risky behaviours among LEA staff</td>
<td>Trainings on voluntary counselling and testing (VCT), and HIV/AIDS prevention, care, treatment, and support for service providers and prison staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main activities observed</td>
<td>2017 – Lahore</td>
<td>VCT and HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment - 3-5 May 2018 and 4-6 June 2018 Training on HIV Testing and Counselling in Prison – Standard operating procedures, Islamabad, 22nd – 24th November 2018 UNAIDS/UNODC Virtual training on HIV testing and counselling services in prisons, July 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 main courses from Nov 2018-2019, including ToT modules</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Uncommented
Applying the DAC criteria in a more transversal way, the case study will be helpful to appreciate:

- To what extent UNODC was in a preferred position to challenge and reduce the existing barriers on drug use and HIV transmission that may slow down the development and access to quality drug treatment and harm reduction services for vulnerable populations
  - Relevance and coherence - how well does the intervention fit with regards to the country needs and to UNODC role? How does it contribute to programming coherence?
- To what extent was the programme effective in strengthening knowledge and skills of LEAs and service providers to deal with people who use drugs and HIV/AIDS affected people?
  - Effectiveness: is the intervention achieving its goals? Is it a good practice?
- To what extent can long-term sustainable results be expected from this type of intervention, especially on direct final beneficiaries (LEAs) and indirect ones among populations at risks?
  - Impact and sustainability: what difference does it make, for how long and for whom?

**METHODS**

In addition to the information and materials available and collected through the inception and field phases, additional sources of information and materials were constituted in parallel. The SP3 lead and officers at the Country Office were particularly helpful and keen to provide the evaluation team with relevant additional documentation. Triangulation of data was possible via:

- Key stakeholders’ interviews with key UNODC country staff, and GC;
- Review of programme documentation and additional materials – training reports, curriculum, participant lists, satisfaction surveys etc.
- Phone interviews with 6 including 2 women training participants in their quality of LEA representatives (Anti-Narcotic Forces, Police of Punjab and Police Training School of Islamabad) across all trainings through short semi-open questionnaire adapted from the main KII questionnaire.

The case study however faced some important limitations and can only provide indications of UNODC performance and elements of responses to the above-mentioned questions. Among them, although facilitated by the Country office, the process to reach direct final beneficiaries entailed long authorisation processes that prevent the constitution of a fully representative sample. Based on a voluntary basis, the information has been collected in a remote manner – the COVID 19 pandemic reducing the possibilities of organizing any focus groups or face-to-face discussions.

**FINDINGS**

**RELEVANCE AND COHERENCE**

There is strong evidence that all trainings responded positively to the need of increasing LEA’s literacy and knowledge on HIV transmission patterns and drug use prevention and treatment. This was highly noted in prison settings - both at the administration and prisoner levels. Interviews with trainees underlined the fact that while participants were familiar with certain aspects of the training, most of the knowledge they gained was new to them. For example, an official from a prison department remarked, “The training helped me learn some very important things that I usually took for granted. I used to dispose-of used injections without covering its needle which I learned may prick someone and may potentially spread HIV.” Designed in close consultation with GoP authorities, all types of trainings demonstrated high level of relevance and usefulness. Training reports and interviews with trainees show that most LEA participants and prison staff attending training on HIV prevention found in UNODC support a primary source of information and knowledge on the topic. With no or limited prior knowledge, participants broaden their understanding of HIV prevention for both, their own
person, and the population at risks they work with daily. Against personal beliefs, the training positively communicated a “fresh perspective” of drug abuse and comprehensive approach to HIV prevention including the respect of the rights of HIV positive people and the importance of counselling, confidentiality, and consenting issues. For instance, a clinical psychologist working with the Anti-Narcotics Force acknowledged to the evaluation team “having realized drug abuse is a social issue, rather than a criminal one” and said to have integrated in consultation with the trainers “new practices in counselling sessions, including “spiritual healing” and “personal coaching” and “tailored intervention to the patients’ socio-economic background”.”

Despite the limited scope of the intervention, UNODC staff believed the training was useful and informative on the basis of the dynamic interactions of participants. Trainees participants, as underlined in pre- and post-assessment reports, perceived to have highly benefited from the program, increasing their knowledge of the issue by more than 80%. The same applies to UTC and UPC trainings. Reports also suggest trainee’s appetite for this kind of interventions. For example, reports from Training of Law Enforcement Officials on Communication and Engagement with Drug Users and Vulnerable Populations (2017, Police Training College, Chung, Lahore) illustrate the high levels of satisfaction of police officials.

Such format further facilitated the tailored diffusion and appropriation of international standards, notably WHO guidelines on HIV infection and AIDS in prisons as well as the introduction of complex sets of human rights principles and law. The development of a dedicated manual for HIV prevention with experts from the country and the region, combined with the participation of officers from law enforcement agencies from neighbouring countries were further noted to contribute to reduce the stigma and discomfort some participants could had with the issue, and raise awareness about the different possible framing of illicit drug and HIV related issues as health problems.

However, for the various trainings to benefit its trainees, some adjustments have been found needed at the participation selection stage. UNODC staff underline the importance of a minimum of familiarity with the proposed topics of the trainings. Examples in prisons settings suggest that the lack of a minimum of understanding reduce the chances of trainee’s participation and receptivity to conveyed message and skills. While institutional culture may explain such unfamiliarity, UNODC efforts to mix audiences, notably in the UTC and UPC national trainings proved to be beneficial in reducing LEA misperceptions, inducing dialogue and confronting views with professionals from other ministries and expertise horizons. Information collected also demonstrated efforts towards an inclusive and gender-sensitive approach to training, which participate to
INDEPENDENT IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF INDEPENDENT IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF UNODC PROGRAMMING IN WEST AND CENTRAL ASIA

INCREASE AWARENESS ON GENDER-RELATED ISSUES THAT ARE OFTEN MARGINALIZED WITHIN LEAs AND PRISON SETTINGS.

Interview with female medical officer from the Sindh province points out how the training was “very informative” and allowed to “educated various women prisoners on the risks they are exposed to when they use injectable drugs”.

UNODC is perceived to be the only external entity able to access and deliver adequate service on drug use and HIV prevention in prison settings, including by other UN agencies working with the Office to raise awareness on HIV prevention and treatment in prisons. There is thus an opportunity for UNODC to lead on developing a collective UN approach to the matter, that would also contribute to achieve their common objectives under the SDGs, in addition to share the funding burden.

EFFECTIVENESS

Despite limitation of funding, the different interventions were successfully implemented and reached the number of targeted trainees. Consultations with past implementers from the Colombo Plan had been particularly useful in avoiding past pitfalls and developing a more systematic implementation strategy to UTC and UPC modules. With INL support, UNODC built a more tailored approach to the trainings, taking into greater consideration the need to adapt the curriculum to institutional needs and cultures, and concentrated on the training of trainers and their certification process to ensure greater continuity of the intervention. Several factors thus enhanced the programme efficiency.

The attention given by UNODC staff to the adequacy, standardization, and relevance of the training material (thorough review of the manuals esp. for UTC and UPC, close cooperation with the trainers etc..) and to the proper sequencing of the different modules programmed ensured the trainings to be well adapted to their respective audience and their institutional interests, practices and concerns. It increased in turn, the level of receptivity and audibility of the messages conveyed. For example, starting 2017, UNODC took a multiphasic intervention approach to UTC trainings with a first phase of national training, a second one of refresher courses and International Certified Addiction Professional (ICAP -1) Exam and 3rd phase of Training of Trainers (ToT) to prepare the second line of UTC trainers for Pakistan. At the implementation stages, relying on local staff and building internal institutional capacities instead of relying on intermediaries such as NGOs, allowed more continuity in delivery, fostering some level of ownership. The strong relationship UNODC country office developed with Pakistan National institutions from the prison authorities to that National AIDS Control Program ensured high level of participation and interest. The UTC Selective committees appears as a good practice in that sense.

During the COVID 19 pandemic, UNODC was also flexible enough to develop innovative means of implementation. An online training was elaborated with UNAIDS in July 2020, allowing more than 90 participants (health care staff and management staff) of several prisons across three provinces to complete a virtual training on “HIV testing and counselling services in prisons-Standard operating procedures”. The use of technology such as WhatsApp allowed to palliate to the lack of face-to-face interactions. The trainer contacted all participants prior to the training to discuss the workbook assignment as well as the challenges that can come during the virtual training.

Nevertheless, some adjustments would need to be taken into consideration for the effectiveness of the intervention to be increased. Besides issues in the selection process mentioned above, choices in timing and geographical coverage would need to be more carefully considered. In 2018, one of the VTC Prison training was held during the Ramadan Fasting period, impacting on the attention and level of energies of the participants. It is however at the programmatic level that the main hindering factors were found. The lack of fund impacted on the regularity of the training delivery as well as its coverage: little attention was given to the harm reduction side of the projects due to lack of funds. The absence of a coherent disbursement scheme across COPAK SPs in training was pointed out as a missed opportunity to join internal efforts to develop a
more integrated approach to training of LEAs that would combine theme, optimize the trainee’s selection process, and improve the funding situation.

**Figure 13: UTC Examination.**

**IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

There are strong signs that the Programme interventions modified existing perceptions and enriched knowledge on highly misperceived issues related to drug use and HIV/AIDS. Information collected through training reports, interviews with key stakeholders as well as trainees shows that the trainings helped identify high risk behaviours and taught participants to trace potential sources of HIV. They were found to have significantly contribute to document the health and medical aspects of the drug issue among LEA personnel – a perspective relatively limited in the departments’ culture prior to the intervention. As a trainee from the District Prison Peshawar put it “The sessions were full of knowledge. The trainings taught us new things like sources of HIV, the right way to treat addicts, and our role in rehabilitating them. I have incorporated those lessons into my professional practice.”

It also supported the development of closer inter-sectoral ties, and to some extent, of a more coordinated response to DDR and HIV prevention in a selection of prison settings. It notably enabled Provincial Aids Control Program to coordinate with relevant stakeholders to conduct screening tests and facilitated National Aids Control Program to access prisons. The trainings were also highly instrumental in introducing the dimensions of Human Rights, stigma and discrimination to the topic – that tend to be timidly addressed in national DDR discourses.

Whereas the interventions’ objectives were achieved, the long-term impact of such intervention remain however uncertain for several reasons. First, the high level of staff turnover constitutes an important challenge to scale up the intervention in terms of training levels. Some interlocutors underlined the need to enlarge the scope of audiences and increase awareness among the populations as well: school administration and parents were designated important stakeholders in the national DDR landscape. New priorities are also emerging, like NPS. Considering that there is no baseline on the level of knowledge of the LE personnel and little understanding of the different types of drugs, integrating new materials appears all the more challenging.
Finally, the measurement system used to report on these training is mainly quantitatively oriented, measuring outputs rather than outcomes. There is neither a qualitative approach to the evaluation nor a follow-up mechanism that would enable UNODC to collect information on long-term behavioral change and use of skills outside of the training framework. More broadly the level of ownership remains low, threatening the possibility of developing a comprehensive, nationwide, and continued implementation strategy. Tensions and divergence in policy visions on drugs remain critical across ministries, slowing down any emerging political will to invest any national resources or integrate the trainings modules into the national curricula of LEA formations and schools.

CONCLUSIONS

This case study underlines UNODC important role in providing relevant support to deconstruct existing misperceptions and enhance national capacities on drug use and HIV transmission. With these kinds of intervention, UNODC carves for itself a niche of intervention and ensures it has a comparative advantage on DDR and HIV prevention. Expertise, institutional knowledge, and trust from LEAs were defined as main comparative advantages of UNODC, enabling the Office to have a preferred access to LEA professionals specially to prison authorities.

Although much still needs to be done to forge a fully-fledged DDR culture among LEAs and in the country at large, the programme was successful in contributing to induce a change in mindsets pertaining to drug use and HIV/AIDS transmission. It built the capacity of prison authorities and Anti-narcotics Force and raised awareness, to some extent, among people who were potentially at risk. While strengthening counter narcotics efforts in Pakistan through enriching the LEAs skills and knowledge, these trainings provided participants with increased opportunities for interaction with other key actors of the country drug responses with whom dialogue mechanisms are often reduced. This include health professionals, prisons administration, provincial and national counterparts, and in some cases, regional experts. It thus helped forging stronger inter-departmental links for better coordination. The assistance to the National and Provincial Aids Control Program in achieving their objectives and providing counselling services to PWIDs especially women were particularly relevant to that end.

UNODC’s intervention largely contributed to sensitize the LEAs and prison authorities on issues that were important in the context of drug use and HIV/AIDS prevention, yet with little indication of any sustainable impacts or measurable effect on indirect final beneficiaries. Being technical in nature, the subject requires basic understanding, interest and willingness to learn which the prison authorities largely lacked. However, funding difficulties and defaults of governmental prioritisation of DDR issues ultimately translated into limited government support for the implementation and reduced scope for UNODC potential support. Mutualising the funding strategy with other SPs as part of a larger programmatic approach appears a preferred avenue for increasing UNODC efficiency and role in conveying a more coherent message on policy coordination to GC.
CASE STUDY 2 - RULE OF LAW ROADMAPS IN PAKISTAN

BACKGROUND

The World Justice Project’s 2020 global Rule of Law Index ranks Pakistan 120 out of 128 nations on a composite measure of rule of law. Further still, the Project ranks Pakistan 126 out of these 128 nations in terms of its capacity to secure order and security for its citizens.34

RULE OF LAW ROADMAPS

UNODC introduced Rule of Law Roadmap initiatives in Balochistan in 2018 and in Sindh in 2019. As indicated by the World Justice Project data, rule of law in Pakistan is fragile and the relevance of this work is strong. In addition to the broad problem of securing rule of law, the roadmaps are based on recognition of enduring coordination and coherence challenges in the criminal justice sector in Pakistan, both nationally and provincially. Strengthening criminal justice responses is thus key to securing rule of law and the rule of law roadmaps address this sector directly. The roadmap plan aims to increase coordination and cooperation within criminal justice, namely, in relation to police, levies, prosecution, judiciary, bar, prison, and reclamation and probation departments. In Balochistan, the roadmap articulates a formal theory of change linking rule of law transformation to governments’ capacity to secure functional, constitutional and social legitimacy. Linked to this is a scheduling of strategic objectives – a strategic prioritization – across the five year programme cycle.35 In Sindh, delivery of the new initiatives is underpinned by a programmatic model known as ‘deliverology’, a coordination process developed in the UK government but also tried and tested in Pakistan, such as in the Punjab government’s Special Monitoring Unit.36 The evaluation found strong evidence of perceived appropriateness and satisfaction among government counterparts with these evolving rule of law structures.

One of the primary purposes of the roadmap approach has been to increase and support coordination across government. Despite the early stage of both projects, the evaluation found evidence of both internal and external coherence. Here, for example, evidence was found in both provinces of increased synergies between departments, each working within its own remit toward the same goal, such as an increased conviction rate for certain agreed types of offences. Similarly, performance of those departments was increasingly aligned with international norms and standards, such as the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, otherwise known in respect of male prisoners as the Mandela Rules. Inter-provincial knowledge and information sharing was also reported on as a positive development by government counterparts and information sharing was observed by the evaluators during online stakeholder meetings.

DATA-DRIVEN POLICY MAKING AND PROGRAMMING

Part of the difficulty of achieving meaningful criminal justice reform in Pakistan has been the poor quality of data upon which decision makers must rely, whether that be in terms of problem specification or results and impact measurement. The effectiveness of the rule of law roadmaps initiatives and, indeed, the sustainability of their impacts, rests on a data driven model of strategic policy setting, reformative interventions and performance measurement. While, once again, the projects are probably in too-early stages of their development and programme cycles to be providing conclusive findings in these respects, as also is the case in relation to longer term impact, there are strong indications of progress in the right direction.

Two pieces of evidence may be mentioned in support of this. First, the roadmaps have developed an institutional architecture and infrastructure appropriate to their task and this is found to be largely in place. In Balochistan, for example, this involves a high-level Steering Group that sets direction for a Delivery Unit that in turn both directs and receives data from departmental Technical Working Groups. The approach is demonstrated in the organisational chart here.37 Second, provincial governments have provided separate budget allocation in support of the rule of law initiatives. Since this evaluation has identified failure adequately to fund as a significant factor undermining programme effectiveness, and local ownership as key to sustainability, these financial commitments are very positive signs. Nevertheless, the evaluation also identified areas of concern for effectiveness, impact, sustainability and efficiency. One, recognised by stakeholders of all types, was the problem of high rotation of trained staff in provincial departments. Such rotation robs units and departments of key skills and impedes progress towards goals. Another was doubts expressed in some quarters, and unclear in available documentation, regarding quality control mechanisms on data. Third, while it is clear that funding has been earmarked for the rule of law initiatives, the data were much less clear on adequacy of budgeting tools, despite indications that UNODC has supported this area of work.

Figure 14: Organization of Roadmap work. Source: Evaluation team.

37 Govt of Balochistan (2018), The Rule of Law Roadmap. p.68.
THE IMPORTANCE OF INCLUSIVENESS

Evidence from Sindh programme documentation suggests that lessons have been identified from the Punjab ‘deliverology’ experience and that a focus is drawn on developing limited, well-defined remits with actionable plans. This clarity of focus is visible also in Balochistan planning. In both cases, attention to cross cutting issues of gender and human rights are visible not only in general programme documentation but also in the establishment of targets and indicators related to violence against women, including in Sindh, for example, in relation to investigation and successful prosecution of these offences. The importance of vulnerable groups is also recognised in, for example, legal aid in prison programmes in Balochistan that target hardest to reach groups who may languish for long periods in prison as a result of illiteracy, poverty and other factors affecting their capacity to raise an appropriate legal defence to charges.

CONCLUSION

Together, triangulated data revealed a positive picture of UNODC’s rule of law programming and its roadmaps approach. Caveats do apply, in particular the presently early stage of these programmes’ development, but overall their focus on clear theory of change and institutional sustainability approaches provide a model that might be learned from elsewhere. In order to capture the learning that has occurred in these early stages, and since issues have been identified, such as around data quality, which is the Achilles heel of data driven programming, some kind of early, formative, evaluation might assist in capitalising on early achievements and identifying any threats to long term programme effectiveness, impact, ownership and sustainability.
Building on past testing and roll out of, the extension phase (2016-2019) of the Regional programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries continues under its Sub-Programme 3, the development and expansion of the Family and School Together (FAST) and Strengthening Families Programme (SFP) – two internationally recognised, evidence-based family-skills training prevention programmes. The SFP constitutes a key input to promote common minimum standards to support professionals in delivering scientific evidence-based practices in drug prevention, and to increase policy- makers and practitioners’ knowledge and skills for the development of comprehensive evidence-based drug use prevention programmes and systems (output 6.1). Since 2010, all eight RP countries have now piloted, and implemented to an extent, both the SFP and the FAST. In the evaluated programme period, the SFP for young adolescent aged 10 to 14 was introduced in Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan and upscaled in Afghanistan, Iran (I.R. of), Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.

**The Strengthening Family Programme (SFP)**

Developed by Dr. Karol Kumpfer and associates with a grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) of the U.S. Department of Health, from 1982 to 1986, for substance-abusing parents with children aged 6 to 11 years (SFP6-11), the SFP has since been enriched and replicated by multiple agencies in the United States and Europe for the past 30 years with outstanding documented results. Early drug use prevention components are integrated into a broad, comprehensive, and inclusive training approach to enhance learning in parenting skills, youth life and refusal skills. Designed for both high-risk and general populations, this community-based intervention improves parenting skills of bonding, setting boundaries, and monitoring, with the view of keeping children and the family members safe including alcohol and drug use. The SFP has been improved and updated over time, based on practitioners’ feedback, pilot experiences and programme monitoring.

**RELEVANCE AND PURPOSE OF THE CASE STUDY**

From preliminary review of project documents and early interviews with key stakeholders, multiple references were made to the SFP as providing a good example of “synergies between the RP and the other programmes” in the region, both in terms of outputs and project cooperation, as well as a good illustration of programme effectiveness and “positive influence” on countries’ engagement into nationwide early prevention strategies. In such context, the evaluation team considered this programme to be an interesting comparative case. Applying the DAC criteria in a more transversal way than in the main enquiry, this case study appeared relevant:

- To study the extent to which UNODC regional approach to programme implementation could enhance the alignment of priorities at the national and regional levels and in turn, stimulate the development of a shared understanding and vision of DDR prioritisation and measures.
INDEPENDENT IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF UNODC PROGRAMMING IN WEST AND CENTRAL ASIA

- Relevance and coherence - how well does the intervention fit with regards to the country needs and to UNODC role? How does it contribute to programming coherence?
- To gauge the extent to which UNODC effective support to early prevention programme could encourage governments to engage further in the development of policies going beyond counter-narcotic efforts per se.
  - Effectiveness: is the intervention achieving its goals? Is it a good practice?
  - Impact and sustainability: what difference does it make, for how long and for whom?
- To appreciate how far community-based interventions could be a positive way forward to diversify and open up UNODC final beneficiaries base, so the Leaving no one behind dimensions find an explicit translation into programme implementation.
- Leaving no one behind: how far vulnerable populations have been reached? How gender and HR concerns have been taken into consideration? For what types of results?

METHODS

Triangulation of data was possible via:

- Review of programme documentation provided in the framework of this evaluation;
- Collection and review of additional materials provided by key SFP stakeholders along the evaluation process – scientific articles published on the SFP experiences, UNODC reports, videotaped participant feedback;
- Key stakeholders’ interviews with UNODC country staff, and GC as delineated within the main evaluation exercise;
- Focused interviews with governments counterparts involved in the planning and implementation of the SFP at their national levels (ministry of education, ministry of health), experts in charge of the adaptation of the program, as well as teachers and in-school trainers in charge of the development of the program (Kazakhstan Nazarbayev Intellectual School-NIS).

The SP3 leads, global program and country officers and experts at the country and HQ levels were helpful in providing evaluators with additional documentation and to facilitating additional interviews, where possible, with key stakeholders involved in the SFP implementation notably in Iran (I.R. of), Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. This case study was the only opportunity the evaluation team had to speak to some Iranian stakeholders. The role of the national evaluator was highly instrumental to that end and could be considered a good practice for future evaluation exercises. In addition to the limitations applying for the whole evaluation, this case study could not be based on in-situ observations or reach out beneficiaries enrolled in the programme mainly due to the pandemic situation.

FINDINGS

RELEVANCE AND COHERENCE

The evaluation team found strong evidence that the SFP positively aligned to national priorities on drug demand reduction. Most of interviewees referenced the programme as being one of their “main achievements” of their cooperation with UNODC, and a “successful experience” that would need to be pursued, and if not yet, “easy to replicate and tailor” to other countries in the region.

The SFP for children between 10 and 14 years old (SFP 10-14) for drug prevention was introduced through a regional introductory meeting in August 2015 in Tehran, following which several regional coordination meetings and training sessions were organized to provide updates and monitoring on countries experiences of SFP. Examples of initial reluctance were given, that were overcome thanks to regionally embedded dialogue
processes. Several interviewees as well as project and scientific documentation underlined that the regional meetings provided an enabling environment for both policy makers, practitioners and UNODC experts to have a frank and open discussion on the programme challenges, but also on existing ways to bypass them, means to enhance the programme adequacy and usefulness to national contexts, and to exchanges examples of good practices.

The regional vision behind the implementation of the SFP in West and Central Asia not only demonstrated UNODC critical role as an intermediary and dialogue broker in the region, but also provided a relevant and useful framework to impulse DDR policy thinking and developments across the region. The prevention field in West and Central Asian countries has generally been less developed and less well-resourced than in other regions of the world, mainly because of diverging policy visions at national levels, strong historical and cultural beliefs, and discrepancies in national capacities and resources.

At national levels, the integration of SFP into country programming in close consultation with national counterparts and a broad range of concerned ministries helped to engage stakeholders in developing and tailoring a shared understanding of programme. In Kazakhstan, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Healthcare and the Ministry of Internal Affairs coordinated the SFP, which was referenced as a key factor of success in the piloting and testing of the programme in Kazakhstan Nazarbaev Schools.

As drug demand reduction and harm reduction programmes at the country programme level were facing substantial budget constraints that jeopardized these programmes to a large extent, the SFP provided a critical entry point to ensure a minimum of continuity of UNODC support. In Iran (I.R. of), for example, where lack of funding dramatically impacted SP3 implementation, the SFP was mainly referenced as a country programme activity. Although this can translate a lack of clarity between levels of programming and dramatic financial gaps, it also demonstrates the pertinence of a strong integration of the RP with country programming, both on the level of outputs and staff coordination.

EFFECTIVENESS

There is strong evidence of the programme effectiveness, with several facilitating factors identified across countries, but also across concerned institutions and types of stakeholders (decision and policy makers, practitioners, trainers). The sequenced implementation enabled each country to gain in familiarity and knowledge, so its scaling up could be adjusted according to each locality specificities, needs and resources. At each levels of implementation, the choice of concerted, multi-stakeholder approach was also praised by interviewees for allowing a coherent and effective development of the program from the ministry to the school levels. In Kazakhstan, the piloting of the program in NIS school of the capital facilitated the national scaling up of SFP in other NIS of the country. From these experiences, Ministry of Education is now planning to integrate SFP in all public schools. Furthermore, in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, all pilots were effective since school psychologists worked closely with the school management, which raised the interest of children, and an increasing number of parents in a sustainable manner (across the entire 7-week module).

A core and recurrent element contributing to the programme effectiveness was its evidence-based methodology. Having been theoretically and empirically tested around the world, the training turned out being easily replicated and adapted to country contexts. Despite being manualized, the UNODC SFP support demonstrated flexibility, which enabled alignment with local priorities and cultural norms. There were many challenges in adapting the SFP to the countries in the region, considering the differences in their respective social-political-cultural and historical contexts, and those where the programme was first designed. In Iran (I.R. of) for example, a Cultural Adaptation Committee was created that included UNODC, Drug Control Headquarter, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, the State Welfare Organization as well as three NGOs active in the field of drug prevention to help tailoring the modules contents to national cultures and where possible to language grids (video character’s names and clothing habits were adjusted etc.). UNODC guidance further ensured a homogeneous channelling and understanding of the
prevention standards introduced in the programme, avoiding risks of contents misinterpretation or transformation. Interviewed GC and practitioners further underlined the positive influence of the regional events for engaging and exchanging experiences. These practices are considered to have paved the way to a more balanced and integrated approach to prevention in the region.

**Adapting SFP to country context – the example of Iran**

The Iranian implementation of the SFP provides a good example of the how a tailored and sequenced approach to the SFP were instrumental in boosting the programme acceptance and GC receptivity to the opportunities it offered. The first round of Strengthening Families Programme 10-14 in Iran started in 2016 with the support of the RP. Benefitting from the past experience in implementation of FAST Programme, UNODC in Iran and the MoE conducted a seven-week SFP pilot project in three girls’ schools in outskirt areas of Tehran. A first evaluation of the project proved the effectiveness of the SFP in enhancing parenting skills, building a strong parent-adolescent relationship and family cohesiveness among 30 families with no drug abuse history. The second round of SFP, in alignment with outputs of the CPP, was piloted in 2017. During this period, 8 facilitators (6 Iranians and 2 Afghans) received training and certification of “SFP Trainers of Facilitators” and the programme was up-scaled in 6 provinces through holding technical workshop for 24 national experts of MoHME and MoE. The capacity building of Iranian SFP facilitators was continued in the following year. By 2018, there were 170 (F:110; M:60) trained SFP facilitators to be engaged in programme scaling-up process. The Drug Control Headquarter, the main national counterpart of UNODC in Iran, assured that it would support the expansion of the programme country-wide.

In 2019, UNODC in Iran introduced the “Strong Families” Programme to its counterparts, adapted from the SFP, with funding assistance from the Government of Japan. This programme, being developed on the basis of lessons learned from SFP, was piloted in different centres across the large urban areas of Tehran and Karaj. For implementation of “Strong Families” Programme, DCHQ introduced 10 centres (MoE: 1 girls school and 1 boys school, SWO: 2 community centres, MoHME: 2 community primary health care centres: NGOs: 4 centres). Meanwhile a committee, named “Cultural Adaptation Committee”, was formed to review and revise the training package. Upon its approval, the training materials were translated into Persian.

One significant achievement of SFP in Iran was its acceptance among different beneficiaries and stakeholders during its pilot phase. This was partly due to adapting the training materials to the context of the country. A distinguished example was that a training film on SFP topics was produced in Persian by using the English version as a model but making necessary changes to have the film fit culturally. Another factor that influenced acceptance of SFP (and “Strong Families”, later) was the fact that the programme was not only about the danger of drug abuse among the youth but focused on ways to help families function better in challenging circumstances. The methodology to put forward serious issues and practice creative ways out of problems appealingly encouraged group participation in workshops.

**IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

In its new phase, Sub-Programme 3 was planned to increase its focus on the special needs of children and adolescents in the region. Whereas the SFP directly contributed to address those needs, there is no available data, neither at the national nor programmatic level, that allowed the evaluation team to compare and appreciate the role of the SFP in the situation of drug use among youth in the region.
However, the evaluation is of the view that UNODC support to SFP implementation in the region demonstrated a level of impact from the RP and involved Country Programmes, although this will only be able to be confirmed over time. There are signs in some countries of increased ownership of the program as well as positive influence at the community levels. Most of interviewees as well as evaluation reports underlined that where implemented, the SFP had significant effects on children behaviours in class and at home, on parenting stress relief and on participants’ family environment. The fact that more parents and teachers expressed interest in joining the program in Kazakhstan over time, where selection processes may have been challenging at the earliest stages of the programme, gave proof of success and overall satisfaction. Pre- and post- surveys were also conducted, highlighting the positive influence the training had on participants in terms of skills enhancing and knowledge diffusion. The regular publication of SFP implementation cases at international conferences or in journals has further developed the evidence basis for future implementation within or outside the region.

A number of SFP facilitators and trainers were also trained during the programming period. UNODC supported the development of ToT courses and awarding certificates on Master Training and/or ToT training on SFP to help national authorities and implementing schools to upscaling the programme. In Uzbekistan for example, where hesitation arose earlier in the programming period, the preparation of more than 1500 facilitators from all regions of the country was seen as a significant step in supporting the development of institutional capacity of national partners to incorporate SFP 10-14 into the education system of the country, in addition of reducing the programme costs on the long run. In 2019, the SFP10-14 served as a basis programme to the “Happy Schools” project of the Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan. After three years of implementation, more than 45,000 families and 4,500 schools were reached. The programme methods combined with the level of expertise UNODC brought in notably through the organisation of regional training sessions of SFP implementers were referenced several times as critical elements to generate solid knowledge of the programme to be nationally implemented and encourage greater ownership. The example of the training session for Iran (I.R. of) and Afghanistan implementers in September 2016 was given, underlining the presence of trainers from Great Britain - Ms. Deborah Allen and Mr. Lindsey Coombes – two specialists of health needs assessments who pioneered an exploratory pilot study of the SFP 10-14 in the UK.

There are also indications of increased government engagement in the ongoing scaling up of the programme. The regional exchanges facilitated intra-regional dialogue on the pro and cons of the programme. By triggering candid discussion around best tools, contents adaptation and best target audiences, the RP provided a needed platform to discuss the value of prevention in general and specially to evidence based prevention among the policy makers of the region. From interviewees perspective, there are encouraging signs that the SFP discussion had a positive and significant impact on the perception of the value of evidence based early prevention strategies. The inclusion of the SFP in the school curriculum of the national network of NIS in Kazakhstan and to some extent in public schools of Iran (I.R. of) and Uzbekistan, from capitals into the provinces, further shows higher level of ownership and engagement than in the past.

Yet, the documentation insists on the significant role of this programme in providing support to the regional Member States to advance drug use prevention, notably in the context, of the SDG 3.5. The evaluation team noted however that the relative limitations of scope and geographical coverage of the SFP makes it difficult to really conclude to what extent the programme contributed to develop a nationally owned drug use prevention vision and subsequent policies. The programme has been unevenly monitored in the region. Its monitoring was only based on the reporting and evaluation grid available in the programme methodology. The limited availability of independent evaluations makes it difficult to anticipate impacts further than immediate satisfaction of trainees. At best, the SFP did contribute to demonstrate effective practices and promising yet insufficient results and triggered new possibilities and interests for increased actions in that direction. The degree and sustainability of impact from a programme such as the SFP, is highly dependent on available resources and support to government engagement in the ongoing funding and scaling up of the programme. While there are indications that this is happening to some extent, including references to inclusion of the SFP in the national school curriculum, it is not certain that this will indeed be the case over
LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

The SFP provides a good example of the focus on gender in UNODC programming. This was first visible in the almost perfect gender balance at the participation level. Women participation was overreached for the SFP, to the point that in some schools, boys were underrepresented. Where possible, the programme counted on both male and female facilitators/trainers in each team, to help better deal with parental concerns and needs and to develop an inclusive and participatory prevention approach. One should however note the gender bias of the sectors of implementation (education and health).

Although it was not specifically designed to meet the current needs and priorities from a strict gender and human rights perspective, the project was responsive to a number of measures that indirectly related to them. For example, the target groups included boys and girls, although in separate settings (notably in Iran (I.R. of)). The SFP’s approach to the family concept and practice helped to discuss social inclusion priorities and indirectly, gender roles within the family. Cultural tailoring of the training materials was decisive in carefully conveying the message of a more gender-sensitive approach to family roles and responsibilities, although in an indirect and incomplete manner. Without fully overcoming existing national sensitivities related to gender, so some steps could be taken forward in social inclusion processes.

The leaving no one behind dimension was however mostly used as a designing principle than an effective implementation criterion. The selection process of pilot areas was found wide enough to include most vulnerable populations. Although targeting most middle-class families, the programme managed to be diversified in different settings in Iran (I.R. of) and Uzbekistan and reach out to some level to families living in more vulnerable conditions. It must however be noted that limited field observation has made it difficult to assess how extensively the programme did reach to most vulnerable populations and how far gender-related concepts were appreciated and received by both SFP audiences and planning government authorities.

Despite examples within the SFP of some influence happening, it is recognised there are still important risks involved addressing the priorities of human rights and gender in the region, especially at the community level. Cultural beliefs, but also political perceptions make it all the more difficult to deconstruct the stigma as well as the criminal figure attached to drug use and risky behaviours, but also to frame women and men roles differently. Further, addressing priorities of human rights and gender are issues on which interactions with GC should be happening at higher levels than with the programme officers implementing initiatives.

CONCLUSIONS AGAINST THE CASE STUDY FOCUSED QUESTIONS

The case study shows that the regional implementation logic contributed to build an enabling environment for lessons learned and experience sharing that highly contributed to enhance, even in some countries, to create the demand for advancing concrete programming of SFP as well as for building capacity to plan and integrate it into broader DDR strategies. While reinforcing the position of UNODC as a regional dialogue broker, it has been however found not sufficient to install a culture of prevention at the national or regional level. The lack of comparable data on drug use among youth in the region as well as the lack of independent monitoring of the program are additional obstacles to anticipate entirely the effect of the programme in that matter.

Within DDR, the SFP has been effective in influencing development of an evidence-based early prevention strategy built on common standards in the region. The Strengthening Families Programme (SFP) constitutes thus a good practice in providing policy makers, decision makers and practitioners (including at the regional
level) with knowledge, structures and skills for the development of comprehensive, evidence-based drug use prevention programmes and systems. While long-term impact is possible, much more work and time is required.

Lessons learned from past implementation and implementation in other regions pointed out the need to carefully consider the impact of context when promoting prevention initiatives, as well as the iterative, non-linear, and multi-faceted nature of promoting a culture of prevention in the region. The SFP was a model of effectiveness, in the way it was adapted to different cultural contexts and built the capacity of a solid number of trainers.

Community-based interventions such as the SFP are an indirect yet cautious and smart way to advance gender and HR perspectives in the region. Committing to cultural competence, shared leadership with local school communities, and introducing inclusive approaches to key concepts of family and school life participate to the advancement of more gender-sensitive prevention strategy, at the earliest stage of socialisation processes. Whereas such efforts would need to be intensified, notably by widening the scope of SFP audiences, it participates to place UNODC as a credible partner to reach out beyond its primary beneficiary bases, i.e. policy makers and health professionals.
As the world’s largest producer of opium, accounting for approximately 84 per cent of global opium production over the past five years (UNODC 2020 World Drug Report), Afghanistan counts important shares of its population counting on the incomes generated by the illicit cultivation of poppy crops. The illegal opium industry has become a critical feature of Afghanistan’s socio-economic landscape, severely challenging the national government and its partners to contend with the combined issues of drug control and socio-economic sustainable integration, in complex and often remote environments. UNODC’s long experience in the country and expertise in alternative development programming shows that no simple formulae exist to that end, but that there is a need for a rationale of intervention built on i) a thorough understanding of these complexities and the different policy fields to be articulated; ii) a balanced and multipronged strategy taking into account counter-narcotics exigencies within a broader development and governance framework, and iii) on community-driven coping mechanisms that enhance human development outside the illicit economy in an inclusive, participatory and sustainable manner.

Figure 16: Key components of the Alternative Development Programme – Conception: Evaluation team based on primary project documentation. Source: Evaluation team.
INDEPENDENT IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF INDEPENDENT IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF UNODC PROGRAMMING IN WEST AND CENTRAL ASIA

RELEVANCE AND PURPOSE OF THE CASE STUDY

The Country Programme for Afghanistan benefits from a long history of UNODC trials and experiments in alternative development, and now constitutes one of the most advanced examples of alternative development intervention in West and Central Asia. In addition to strengthening national capacities on alternative development policy formulation, programme design, implementation and impact assessment, this sub-programme component can also be read as a critical field of intervention that can impact in the long term on the illicit drug economy of the entire region.

Through the analysis conducted during its inception phase and elements brought by its first interviews with key stakeholders in Afghanistan, the evaluation team found the Programme to adopt a more pragmatic and realistic approach to alternative development. It is understood that UNODC has opted for interventions that would lay down the foundations for a sustained transition from illicit cultivation and sale of poppy towards licit entrepreneurial avenues for an improved quality of life of rural households in the mid-term, and a sustainable livelihood on the long run. In this perspective, great emphasis was given to the human aspect of alternative livelihoods, including increased capacity-building interventions, a more nuanced gender sensitive approach, as well as a more diverse and tailored sets of opportunities as summarized in the figure 1. More specifically, the evaluation team observes that:

- A cornerstone of the design of the Alternative development programme in Afghanistan has been an in-depth understanding of existing challenges at both the national and community levels, and an extensive consultation process to ensure the sub-programme is aligned with governmental strategic priorities and with final beneficiaries needs and potentials.
- Targeting 20 different provinces, the alternative livelihood interventions had combined different types of supports that had notable results in terms of infrastructure building, community-level participation, rapid income generation, market and entrepreneurship accesses, and women’s empowerment.
- An inclusive and preventive approach to programme implementation has prevailed, leading to a selection of target provinces and beneficiaries that are not necessarily involved in illicit poppy cultivation, so a more comprehensive and integrated approach of alternative development could be tested, in line with both counter-narcotics objectives and provincial and national development strategies.

More broadly, at the organisational level, since the past 5 years, UNODC has led important efforts to reassess its Alternative development approach and to improve knowledge and understanding on the role of illicit cultivation for the local economy and communities, and the impact of AD work on both curbing illicit production and ameliorating people’s lives. In that line, the Research and Trend Analysis Branch for example has recently developed an important research agenda to that end. The Afghanistan Opium Surveys now monitor and provide a more comprehensive picture of illicit opium cultivation in Afghanistan, taking into greater consideration the socio-economic dimensions of the phenomenon. Studies are also underway to collect and systematize information on the status, characteristics and scope of alternative development projects worldwide, and in an attempt to assess the impacts of AD work at the level of concerned communities and territories.

Considering all the above, the evaluation team found relevant to dedicate greater attention to the final beneficiaries’ perspective on UNODC performance and usefulness of alternative development programming in the country. Yet, although this case study exercise resonates with ongoing efforts to assess more closely the results and longer-term impact of AD interventions, it is however a much more modest exercise proposed here, both in terms of scope and objectives. Optimizing available resources for this cluster evaluation, the team decided on a case study approach to have a more focused understanding of:
• the level of integration of specific measures to address the needs and priorities of human rights, gender and vulnerable groups as part of the implementation process, in line with Leaving no one behind principles; and
• the immediate visible results of such international for final beneficiaries and the potentials for long-term impact of intervention and the underlying sustainability strategy to strengthen and diversify licit livelihoods of small households;
• the final beneficiaries’ perspective and voice on the opportunities and possible breaches of AD programming as provided in a given context.

Applying OECD DAC criteria in a more transversal way and mainstreaming a LNOB approach, the case study will be helpful to appreciate:

• To what extent was the programme useful and effective in responding to final beneficiaries needs and complex environments, and considering the specific needs of women and other vulnerable groups in targeted areas of intervention?
  o Relevance and effectiveness: is the intervention achieving its goals? Are there any good practices on which future programming could be built?
• To what extent can long-term sustainable results be expected from this type of interventions, especially on direct final beneficiaries?
• Impact and sustainability: what difference does it make, for how long and for whom?

METHODS

In addition to the information and materials available and collected through the inception phase and key stakeholder interviews, a survey was prepared for final beneficiaries of alternative development interventions in Afghanistan. In close cooperation with the SP3 lead of the Afghanistan Country Office, the national evaluator and the expert evaluator delimited the scope of the case study after a mapping of the different interventions implemented in the country as part of the alternative development programme, their corresponding implementing and coordinating stakeholders, as well as the scope and socio-economic profile of the final beneficiaries targeted.

FEASIBILITY, RISKS, AND LIMITS

As part of this endeavour, two important steps were to clarify the feasibility of a remotely conducted field survey and to identify the several layers of final beneficiaries targeted at the population level. In this process, the following risks were considered:

• The level of direct/indirect interactions of the programme with these populations;
• The stage of implementation and results of the project;
• Possible security risks for vulnerable populations attached to their participation to a survey;
• Possible logistical constraints (translation needs, collection of responses);
• Possible risks for future programmes implementation;
• Possible risks for evaluation independence and impartiality.

Considering the above as well as the large geographic scope of the programme, the resource limits imposed by the evaluation exercise (time, human resources) and the constraints added to any field work by the current Covid-19 pandemic, the evaluation took a convenience sampling approach to delimit the surveyed population as well as its means of administration. As a result, the findings to this survey present important limitations in terms of:

• Its level of representativeness: only a small sample of communities could be accessed, due to programming timing constrains, additional processes of coordination deployed in the context of a
global pandemic, as well as the framework of resources and objectives of the cluster evaluation exercise.

- Perception biases: the questionnaire refers to a small group of final beneficiaries’ own experience with one or two aspects of UNODC alternative development interventions in the country, as implemented by one partner. As such, the responses do not give full account of UNODC alternative development programming in Afghanistan, but only indications of areas for satisfaction and needed improvement.

- Interpretation of the final beneficiaries’ voices due to the different intermediaries involved between the evaluation team and the surveyed population, as well as the translation processes.

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE AND ADMINISTRATION PROCESS

The survey questionnaire was developed by the evaluation team based on a desk review of project documentation, additional material provided by the Country office and information collected in KII. It was structured in three parts as follows:

- **Background information**: this section aimed at collecting information about the surveyed population, their background and living socio-economic situation.
- **Satisfaction and usefulness of provided support**: this section collected perceptions of the services and assistance provided. It aims at gauging the level of satisfaction with the interventions and how they responded to the beneficiary needs.
- **Sustainability of achievements**: this section asked about how the programmes addressed the specific needs of targeted communities and their perceptions of impact on their living situation.

The questionnaire was designed in a gender-sensitive manner and included 4 types of questions: background closed questions (one option only, and with multiple choices); ranking questions to gauge the usefulness of specific interventions; satisfaction questions that required indicating the level of relevance and utility of specific interventions; and open-ended questions to collect qualitative information on the implementation process, appreciation of the interventions and recommendations from the beneficiaries’ perspective. A copy of the questionnaire is available in the annexes document.

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<tr>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great extent</td>
<td>Some extent</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Not much</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 17: Scale provided to measure satisfaction - 5 being the maximum of satisfaction and 1 the minimum.*

An innovation in this approach to a case study with beneficiaries during a pandemic was the use of an implementing partner in facilitation of the survey. The support provided by the implementing partner was offered on a voluntary basis, after a presentation and a discussion of the case study objectives closing the Key Interview session. In line with a culturally sensitive approach, UNODC Country staff and the implementing partner were consulted in the preparatory process of the questionnaire to ensure its adequation with the implemented activities and with the cultural background of the communities involved. A short training and pre-test of the questionnaire was also organized in-country with the implementing partner project team and national evaluator before the survey administration. To address the potential of bias, and to ensure confidentiality and impartiality, the survey was prepared by the evaluators, put in the field by the implementing partner but returned to the national evaluator for translation and analysis by the evaluation team.
SURVEY SAMPLE AND RESPONDENT PROFILE

UNODC AD programming in Afghanistan supports 60,312 beneficiaries in 20 provinces and counts on the financial support of the United States, Japan and the Russian Federation. This case study concerns only a small portion of final beneficiaries who participated in the Boost Alternative Development Interventions Through Licit Livelihoods (BADILL) project as implemented by the Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA) with the financial support of the United States as the main donor (INL). The BADILL project is part of the Sub-programme 3 of the Country Programme for Afghanistan. Launched in 2017 for a 4-year period, the BADILL project has been jointly designed by UNODC Country Office for Afghanistan, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation Livestock, (MAIL), the Ministry of Counter Narcotics (MCN), and the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Bureau (INL) of the United States. Different NGOs are also involved, acting as implementing partners across the 13 provinces of Afghanistan targeted. We are here focusing on the interventions implemented by DCA as summarized in the table 1. The targeted areas are not considered to be poppy cultivated areas. As part of the two interlinked phases of the BADILL project, DCA has been an implementing partner since 2017. The survey provinces cover 1,948 beneficiaries out of 5,000 total project direct beneficiaries. The participating provinces are considered by implementing stakeholders as good examples of “successful interventions” to improve the dairy value chain this activity, with high numbers of women involved in that field.

Information collected through interviews with key project staff (UNODC and implementing partners) underlined a thorough selection process for intervention that included in-depth context assessments, the development of selection criteria based on socio-economic vulnerabilities and indicators38, as well as pre-and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Target areas and beneficiaries</th>
<th>Interventions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overarching project:</strong> Boost Alternative Development Interventions through Licit Livelihoods (BADILL)</td>
<td>17 districts in 6 provinces - Bamyan, Kabul, Kapisa, Parwan, Panjshir and Wardak</td>
<td>1. Improve and strengthen dairy value chain and related livelihoods. Providing cowshed construction material such as window and door, feeder, drinker, milking tools, churning machine and hygiene kits such as gloves, soap and Dettol.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Period:</strong> Dec. 2017 – Dec. 2020</td>
<td>DCA has worked with 5,000 farmers (90% women) and 78 local service providers/entrepreneurs. Communities have been targeted through individual and community-based interventions.</td>
<td>2. Improve backyard poultry farming and strengthen among the target beneficiaries. Provision of four-month-old pullets, coop construction materials, feeder, drinker, concentrate feed and vaccination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implementing partner:</strong> Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA)</td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Establish feed banks and silage making centres. Provision of chopper, fodder seed, training on how to make concentrate feed and silage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Establish Milk Collection Centres. Providing milk collection utensils, milk testing tools, training on milk testing and processing and packing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Kitchen gardening. Providing farmers with vegetable seed, farming and vegetable collection tools.</td>
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Figure 18 - Summary of case study project. Source: UNODC Country Office, key evaluation interviews.

Enforcement Affairs Bureau (INL) of the United States. Different NGOs are also involved, acting as implementing partners across the 13 provinces of Afghanistan targeted. We are here focusing on the interventions implemented by DCA as summarized in the table 1. The targeted areas are not considered to be poppy cultivated areas. As part of the two interlinked phases of the BADILL project, DCA has been an implementing partner since 2017. The survey provinces cover 1,948 beneficiaries out of 5,000 total project direct beneficiaries. The participating provinces are considered by implementing stakeholders as good examples of “successful interventions” to improve the dairy value chain this activity, with high numbers of women involved in that field.

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38 These included size of land, size of households, involvement with illicit drugs (use or cultivation), unemployment, role of women.
post-intervention monitoring surveys and close coordination with the joint monitoring committee including national ministries of MAIL and MCN.

80 individuals participated in the survey. All are women living in large households (49 declare having between 8 and 12 people living/eating at home daily, 23 between 4 and 7 people and 8 more than 12 people) and for whom, in majority (77 people), it is the first time they benefit from external assistance (provided by an NGO, governmental authorities or an external partner). With no property rights on the land on which they work, most of respondents are involved in gardening, cultivation (often one or two culture of corn, wheat, vegetable), and chicken farming and small-scale animal husbandry.

Figure 19: During input distribution 3 kg seeds, 50 kg fertilizer, 50 kg Urea for each household in Koshki Abdul village of Balkh district also distributed soaps, masks, gloves and brochures on hygiene in the local language.

**FINDINGS**

The following section is based on the findings of the case study survey as well as data collected throughout interviews with key project stakeholders and desk review of additional documentation provided by UNODC Country office in the framework of this case study.

**SATISFACTION AND USEFULNESS**

There is strong evidence underlining the necessity of support provided as part of UNODC Alternative Development Programme. The relevance and the usefulness of alternative development interventions have been tied to the development of close and regular consultations with involved communities. As the survey illustrates, 70% of respondents declared to have been consulted directly or indirectly via a member of their community more than once by a Project stakeholder (NGO, provincial authority or/and UNODC representatives) in the deployment of implemented activities, suggesting a continuous dialogue and engagement process from the project stakeholders. Although this is a first experience of alternative development intervention for most of the survey respondents, the continuity of the project presence for more than 2 years was also welcomed by 80% of them.

These consultations, coupled with in-depth assessments of the project’s targeted areas and communities, appeared to have benefited directly final beneficiaries considering that 54% of them declared to be satisfied “to a great extent” and 45% “to some extent” with the assistance provided. The same proportion remains regarding the consideration of the specific needs of women and children in the households. It further enabled
the development of tailored and adequate interventions that helped final beneficiaries to address their key needs in terms of food security (“sufficient food for your household needs”), rapid income generation and substantive support for production and production selling (equipment, material provision and technical assistance) as reported by order of importance by survey respondents.

Asked about the characteristics of their living environment, survey respondents said to be rather satisfied with the existing level of access to basic services (dispensaries, schools ...). Survey respondents however deplored a limited access to market (product processing, collection and selling centres) as well as limited infrastructures for improved poultry production and management (veterinary centres, vaccination, reproduction centres) and lack of access to advanced technologies for improved culture techniques.

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**Figure 20: Responses to survey question 10 (multiple choice): What type of assistance was provided in your area? By frequency, out of 80 survey questionnaires collected. Source: Evaluation team.**

Assistance was thus mainly directed towards poultry management and improvement of the dairy value chain in these provinces and broken down into specific types of assistance as summarized in the figure 7. Cultural norms indicate that even though Afghan women are involved in backyard poultry, they have limited access to activities involving selling. In this framework, as part of that project, women were trained on all aspects of poultry farm management (feeding, watering, breeding, vaccination, and nutrition) maximizing their capacity of production and opening some avenues for facilitating women’s implication in production transactions.

**SUSTAINABILITY OF ACHIEVEMENTS**

The case study corroborates the findings of the evaluation overall enquiry, illustrating how far alternative development programming in Afghanistan produced visible and relatively timely results. Despite being limited in scope and geography, results are visible at the household and individual levels. The evaluation team found that the programme contributed to strengthening and diversifying licit livelihoods of small and marginalised farmers, with increases in farmer productivity, income, food security and employment. There are also good examples of strengthened value chains notably of dairy products and individual success stories as reported in the box. Overall, according to project additional documentation, within the four-year timeframe of the Programme implementation across Afghanistan, income from backyard poultry has raised up to about 3000 AFN per month while it was zero before the project development.
At the case study level, more than 90% of respondent considered that the programme provided adequate support that enabled them to increase their productivity and diversify their activity on a long term. Several elements were cited as having significantly contributed to these results: provision and facilitated access to veterinary services, participation to trainings and access to expertise on food supplements and standardized production techniques, increased access to sale exhibitions and fair events.

However, such interventions are found to only pave the way for more sustainable, improved socio-economic conditions. Little evidence was found from the field on how UNODC-supported interventions could be re-appropriated and pursued by national and internal actors within a broader development strategic framework. As one of key project implementer underlined: “people need options. Not because it is licit or illicit but because there is concrete income and food security linked to these interventions. Small change at community and household levels is a first step but it should go hand in hand with broader development support and investments”. An indication of slow integration of alternative development beneficiaries into national economic dynamics and structures can be found in the existing limits and challenges in the linkages between alternative development targeted communities and national markets as illustrated by the responses provided in figure 8.

Although surveyed beneficiaries considered the hypothetic withdrawal of external support as a clear challenge for the improvement of their living conditions, they also suggested that provided assistance represented one of skills and economic development, and not only one of survival support. To the question “if the support provided were to be withdrawn, to what extend do you think it would impact your-self and your conditions of living?”, a large share of responses highlight the value training and learning services provided by the project represented for them to be able to develop sustained production that respond to high quality and market standards. The access to veterinary support was also referred by several beneficiaries as a critical addition that stabilized their production and enabled them to foresee better living conditions. A significant share of responses was also calling for more development programs and increased integration of their activities into broader rural development strategies.
CONCLUSIONS AGAINST THE CASE STUDY FOCUSED QUESTIONS

This case study provides a good example of how far UNODC’s Alternative Development programme in Afghanistan was useful and effective in responding to final beneficiaries needs and complex environments, giving a clear and welcome focus to women’s role, needs and empowerment. Although visible results at household levels constitute significant successes, it proved however insufficient to estimate the effectiveness of the programme on the longer-term and at a broader scale. A few pockets of development are emerging as well as good practices, notably thanks to good coordination and experienced and proactive project stakeholders, from UNODC office staff to implementing partners. Yet, it is rather premature to anticipate sustainable transition paths to stable economic situations. The diversification of activities, the questions of land rights as well as the relative involvement of national actors question further how to transform these opened avenues into more substantial and sustainable dynamics country wide. Although necessary, alternative development interventions seem to be requesting longer-term support and increased resources to capitalize on their encouraging results, including a broader partnership landscape that would engage further with governmental authorities and other development actors. This also raises questions on future opportunities and possible threats to sustain and transform the steps taken forward into balanced and holistic measures to both drug control and development objectives.

Key lessons from the case study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Community-level, tailored interventions</td>
<td>- Short-term engagement and impact</td>
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<td>- Rapid and significant income generation</td>
<td>- Individual-level focus</td>
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<td>- Improved working conditions</td>
<td>- Slow access to national economic structures</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Women empowerment</td>
<td>and markets</td>
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<tr>
<td>- IP technical expertise and project coordination</td>
<td>- Limited partnership with other development</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stakeholders/programmes</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Scaling up possibilities</td>
<td>- Limited governmental ownership/Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Market demand</td>
<td>- Securing land rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Women’s increased entrepreneurship avenues</td>
<td>- Limited integration within broader development</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Appetite for training and skill enhancement among final beneficiaries</td>
<td>strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Experimented and well accepted implementing partners</td>
<td>- Lack of clarity around the sequencing of programme provision as related to areas of illicit cultivation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Security challenges</td>
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</table>

A Dairy Shop - a story of a successful beneficiary of the BADILL project

One beneficiary started his dairy business with 5000 AFN and selling 30-40 kg dairy products per day, and then became a BADILL project beneficiary in early 2018. After joining BADILL, he started collecting and selling milk and received technical guidance and equipment for storing, testing and processing milk. Today he sells 300-350 kg dairy products per day and earns around 420,000 AFN per month. His products are well known throughout the province and even has customers from outside his province. Previously, this beneficiary had a small booth and was selling cigarettes, tobacco, and related products and was involved in narcotics trade as well. A social contract was signed as a prerequisite to be admitted to BADILL project engaging the beneficiary’s responsibility to exit the narcotics trade once he secured a licit income.

Source: UNODC internal documentation, 12 May 2019