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# AFGHANISTAN ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOODS PROGRAM SOUTH (ALP/S)

**PLAN FOR INTEGRATION AND COLLABORATION WITH OTHER  
ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOOD PROGRAMS**

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**April 2005**

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## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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<b>ACRONYMS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Section 1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Section 2. Local and International Entities Working on AL Activities .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Section 3. Current and Planned AL Activities Funded by the International Donor Community .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Section 4. Current and Planned Government of Afghanistan Alternative Livelihood Initiatives .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Section 5. Progress on Other Counter Narcotics Pillars .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Section 6. Synergy Between Counter Narcotics and AL .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Section 7. Synergies Among AL Programs.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Section 8. Plan for Integration and Collaboration Among AL Programs.....</b>	<b>23</b>

## ACRONYMS

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AL	Alternative Livelihood
ALP	Alternative Livelihoods Program
ALTWG	Alternative Livelihoods Technical Working Group
AREU	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CADG	Central Asian Development Group
CDC	Community Development Council
CPEF	Central Poppy Eradication Force
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DDR	Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration
DDS	District Development Shura
DFID	Department for International Development
DRRD	Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
EC	European Commission
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GAA	German Agro Action
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
HAVA	Helmand Arghandab Valley Authority
ICARDA	International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas
ILO	International Labor Organization
MAAH	Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry
MCI	Mercy Corp International
MISFA	Microfinance Investment and Support Facility for Afghanistan
MOE	Ministry of Economy
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NEEP	National Emergency Employment Program
NRSP	National Rural Support Program
NSP	National Solidarity Program
PCB	Provincial Coordination Body
PDC	Provincial Development Committee
PDS	Provincial Development Shura
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
RALF	Research on Alternative Livelihoods Fund
RAMP	Rehabilitation of Agriculture Markets Program
TREE	Training for Rural Economic Empowerment
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
VAU	Vulnerability Assessment Unit
VFU	Veterinary Field Unit

## **Section 1. Introduction**

This report examines ongoing and planned Alternative Livelihoods related projects/programs in Kandahar and Helmand provinces. It presents an inventory of development assistance and assistance providers. The current situation of poppy cultivation is analyzed and ways of creating synergies between AL projects of the government, other donors and ALP/S program are explored. The report presents a series of recommendations for activities that may be carried out in the short, medium and long terms to provide sustainable Alternative Livelihoods to rural communities for whom the income from poppy cultivation forms a significant part of their livelihood strategy.

### **1a. Summary of Findings**

In Southern Afghanistan there are a limited number of projects and programs which focus on alternative livelihoods. Among the significant donors, other than the USAID funded RAMP and AIP projects and the development projects funded by the PRT, the UNDP, UNAMA, FAO, JICA and EC fund a variety of projects that complement AL objectives. Most of the projects funded by these donors are related to small rural infrastructure and do not have a direct bearing on sustainable alternative livelihoods. The small DFID funded projects and to an extent the EC funded projects do focus on livelihoods and are broader in scope than only infrastructure.

At present there is a lack of transparency and accountability in the provincial governance structures in the two provinces. The willingness and capacity of the provincial government departments and agencies to effectively support and strengthen the GOA counter narcotics policy is limited by the weak financial and human resources available at this level. A more serious problem from the AL program implementation perspective is the concern that a drug cartel type situation may already be in the process of formation in Afghanistan.

The ability and capacity of the ALP/S to effectively reach its stated targets in the counter narcotics field will depend to a large degree on the willingness and ability of the government of Afghanistan to put in place effective, transparent and accountable governance institutions for law enforcement, judiciary and administrative reform at the local government level in the target provinces

ALP/S can strengthen relevant institutions in the government structure at the provincial level through capacity building and training, but it is not in a position to ensure better governance through improved transparency and accountability of the law enforcement, administrative and judicial structures. This will require a policy and administrative commitment by the Afghan government.

The new local governance and program planning bodies at the district and provincial levels proposed by the MRRD are not in place yet in Southern Afghanistan and the provincial authorities are as yet uninformed about their structures, functions and roles. The interaction with and level of support to these structures to be provided by ALP/S will become apparent once the process of forming them starts.

The program coordination structures in place currently at the provincial level are generally considered to be ineffective by the stakeholders. ALP/S will have to take the lead along with the relevant government agencies and development assistance providers to strengthen coordination and information sharing between all AL related programs and initiatives.

A high level of synergy and coordination can be created with the AIP, RAMP and PRT. Close cooperation with other donor funded development is relatively difficult given the reluctance of most donor funded projects to be associated with counter narcotic related activities

## **Section 2. Local and International Entities Working on AL Activities**

The major donors funding projects in Kandahar and Helmand are the USAID which funds the RAMP, AIP and ALP/S projects, EC which funds agricultural development projects of Mercy Corps (MC), the World Bank which is funding irrigation infrastructure rehabilitation projects through FAO across the country including in Kandahar and Helmand, the UNDP which is managing the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program, JICA which is funding infrastructure projects in Kandahar, DFID which funds both MC and ICARDA which have small research, seed demonstration and extension projects, and several other UN agencies and International NGOs which fund small development and infrastructure projects in the two provinces.

### **Mercy Corp (MC)**

Current project focus on:

1. Farmer-led Experimentation & Extension Services
2. Small-scale Value-added Processing
3. Organic Export Feasibility Study
4. Community Participation and Agricultural Governance

*Completed and ongoing projects in Helmand and Kandahar:*

Afghanistan Rural Recovery Program: *Project End Date: July 2006. Project Budget Euro 6.5 million for 6 provinces, including Kandahar and Helmand. Donor EC.*

Focus on community mobilization, rural infrastructure, cash for work, agriculture and livestock production, vegetable and poultry enterprises for women and veterinary field units.

Southern Afghanistan Quality Seed Supply: *Ongoing project, funded by FAO. No End date and budget.*

Focus on working with around 100 independent seed growers to produce quality seed of cereals and lentils. Seed processing units in Helmand and Kandahar to process and market seed.

Animal Health Support Program for Afghanistan: *Project end date September 2007, Budget Euro 1.6 million, donor EC.*

Focus on improving veterinary services and capacity building of VFU's. They support 5 VFU's in Helmand and 5 in Kandahar.

Restorative Agriculture and Rural Economy (RARE) Research Project: *Project end date December 2006, Budget \$ 400,000, donor DFID*

Focus on Farmer led Experimentation and Extension Services, Small scale value added Processing, Organic Export Feasibility Study, Community Participation and Agricultural Governance. The project has set up 50 women and 50 men community councils in Helmand province.

Marketing of Livestock and Livestock Products: Market Demand, Potential Returns to Producers and Constraints to Market Access *Project ended in February 2005, budget \$ 109,437, Donor DFID.*

Focus on Livestock survey and Market Assessment Report should be available in March 2005.

Planned MC Projects:

Requested funding for: Ariana Financial Services Group/Microfinance Investment & Support Facility for Afghanistan: *Funding requested from the MISFA program.*

Fruit and Almond Orchard Re-establishment and Marketing. Through Mercy Corps generated funds, and potentially additional donor funds, Mercy Corps will expand its work on 48 fruit and almond tree nurseries across southern Afghanistan and will step up its related marketing activities.

Institutional Support to Provincial-level Departments of MAF. This project will specifically focus on building the capacity of the Helmand and Kandahar Departments of MAF. It is expected that donor funding will soon be approved to start a capacity-building project that will build the organizational management capacity of MAF in Helmand and Kandahar and will look at the role of these provincial offices in broader economic development of the regions. Exchange trips to the U.S are planned and an international consultant is slated to be engaged in leading this effort.

**ICARDA** - *Funded by RALF/DFID*

Is researching the potential for promoting Mint and Basil oil production in Helmand and Kandahar

**Land o Lakes**

Have explored possibility of reviving the BALCO (local business group/NGO) dairy production facility in Kandahar and have heard of dairy production possibilities in Helmand but have not committed to any project because of security concerns.

**FAO**

Currently FAO is implementing a seed multiplication program. In addition FAO is implementing a World Bank funded irrigation infrastructure rehabilitation project in Afghanistan. This is a US\$ 70 million project for all of Afghanistan. The share of the 5 southern provinces is around \$ 8-10 million. Other than these two activities FAO does not have any other project in either Kandahar or Helmand. A planned project to support livestock production was shifted from the southern provinces to Northern

Afghanistan. FAO believes that support to the livestock sector is needed in Kandahar and Helmand but has not been able to attract donor interest.

### **CIDA/Canadian Government**

The Canadian government does not fund any significant activity in Southern Afghanistan. This may change after August 2005, when the Canadian forces take over the PRT operations in Kandahar.

### **DDR: Various donors, implemented by UNDP.**

Under this project vocational training will be provided to 2,500 ex combatants to enable them to find work in the construction sector. Under cash for work projects 10,000 ex combatants will be provided employment as unskilled labor on DDR funded infrastructure projects where the requirement is that 30% of all unskilled jobs should go to ex combatants. In addition, the project funds school construction projects in Kandahar and also have a project to provide in kind grants of up to \$ 650 to demobilized ex combatants in the form of agricultural tools, livestock and poultry. This project is implemented through a number of local and international NGO's.

*Details on budget, timeframe etc not available in Kandahar. In addition, there was no provincial breakdown of the number of people trained.*

### **National Solidarity Program (NSP)**

*Helmand:*

*NSP implemented by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC);*

NSP is currently working in the districts of Garmser, Nahre Siraj and Nawzad. During its extension phase in 2005 it will cover communities in Lashkar Gah and also extend its coverage to another 20 villages each in Garmser and Nahre Siraj districts. In the districts where it is currently operational it does not cover all the villages, e.g. In Garmser it is currently working in 72 out of 160 villages. The program mainly focuses on rural infrastructure projects including small scale rural electrification (installing generators in villages which the community agrees to maintain and operate), small irrigation projects etc. There do have a limited number of training courses for book keeping and basic literacy. None of the sub-projects funded by the NSP in Helmand have a livelihoods focus.

BRAC has not been able to form any women council in Helmand even though they are required to do so. They claim that they have not been able to form women councils because of the conservative nature of society. However, MC is working with women groups in Helmand and has started income generation projects for them.

BRAC/RRD have been reluctant to allow any other agency to work with the Community Development Councils (CDC's) formed under the NSP. MC was not allowed to work with the CDC's in Garmser and was told to form its own CDC's. Similarly MC was not allowed to work in villages in Lashkar Gah where the NSP program was being implemented.

The process from first contact with a community to sub-project completion lasts between 8 to 10 months. For 3 to 4 months after the sub-project is complete BRAC pays follow up visits to the community but then it stops all further contact with the CDC and has no knowledge whether the CDC continues meeting after the end of their visits or not. Nor does it know whether the community infrastructure is being maintained after the NSP involvement ends.

#### *Kandahar:*

UNCHS (HABITAT) is implementing the NSP program in Kandahar in the districts of Arghandab, Daman, Dand, Shegah, Maiwand and Zehri. Unlike Helmand, in Kandahar the NSP program engages all the communities in the districts where it is operating. In the six districts the NSP is active in a total of 216 villages. The program budget for each district is approximately US\$ 2 million. Each community on average gets 2 or 3 projects.

The community councils have gone through a process of preparing a vision statement which lays out the development goal that they want to attain in 5 years. The timeframe from first contact to project identification is 4 months. Total time needed until completion of the first sub-project is around 10 months. Currently most CDC's are implementing their second project. No community has spent all the allocated funds so far. The Community Development Council (CDC) itself implements the project or hires a contractor. Usually young educated people are elected as members and office bearers of the CDC's. In some villages residents are asking for new elections as they are not happy with the CDC members.

In each district the NSP/UNCHS have on average 20 staff including 6 Social Organizers, 5 engineers, 2 admin staff and support staff. Almost 90% of priority needs are infrastructure. The Kandahar Rural Rehabilitation Department (RRD) has 4 staff members assigned to monitor NSP activities. GTZ has oversight responsibility for the NSP and have 2 staff members in Kandahar. NSP has formed 216 men CDC's and 50 women councils.

WB, the main donor to the NSP, insisted that in the initial two years the focus of the program should be on infrastructure and not on income generation. This was done to ensure that the community councils are trained in the process of identifying sustainable livelihoods options before the NSP agrees to release funds for such projects. After two years of working with CDC's in Kandahar the NSP believes that the CDC's are now ready for income generation projects and may soon start shifting their focus from infrastructure to livelihoods oriented projects. For women councils the NSP has already been providing funds for income generation projects.

#### **Central Asia Development Group (CADG)**

It is implementing RAMP and UNDP funded projects including agriculture extension/demonstration plots and business development. They are implementing a UNDP funded income generating project for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Kandahar province. Under this project they have set up a peanut oil extraction plant in which 500 IDP's are provided employment. As raw material they use peanuts from

Helmand where an estimated 9,000 mt of peanuts are produced each year. The peanut oil is marketed locally at a wholesale price of Afs 45/kg and easily competes with imported edible oils. The plant itself operates at a loss because of the high labor cost. If they did not have to support this large labor force they could operate at a profit by using machines to shell peanuts. The oil extraction machines cost approximately US\$ 10,000.

Other micro enterprise projects include small units for seed cleaning, cumin cleaning and lentil cleaning.

The raisin cleaning and packaging project established by CADG is currently closed because raisin prices have increased in the local market and project is no longer financially viable.

Under a previous project they set up a micro credit fund in Helmand and helped small businesses set up cotton gins. The gins were closed by the Governor and the operators arrested. Machines for gins cost around US\$ 600 per unit. The production of cotton production in Helmand had reached a high of 7,000 mt a year before falling to its current level of around 2,000 mt last year. The drop in cultivation was due to the low price offered for cotton by the state owned cotton gin.

### **Rebuilding Agricultural Markets Program (RAMP)**

Is funding a number of sub-projects in Helmand and Kandahar which include the construction of check dams, poultry production, seed multiplication, livestock production and marketing, agro production/processing/marketing and storage and transportation of grain and agro products. It is also supporting the MISFA project under the MRRD.

In addition to the above projects RAMP is also funding the US\$ 18 million AIP project in Helmand which will generate 2.5 million labor days through cash for work projects.

### **European Commission EC)**

The EC is funding several MC projects in Kandahar and Helmand. Other than these projects the EC does not directly fund any other AL or Ag development project. It is a donor to the NSP and MISFA.

### **Japan International Cooperation Agency JICA)**

The Japanese government is funding a 3 year, \$ 90(?) million development project for Kandahar. Under this project JICA funds a variety of infrastructure projects including large road building projects, irrigation projects and school building. In addition, JICA is part funding the DDR program and will soon start vocational training courses for demobilized fighters.

Currently JICA is mainly working in Kandahar province, and even here, due to stringent security requirements of JICA, it is mainly operating in the three districts of Dand, Daman and Arghandab.

JICA plans to coordinate its funding with the NSP so that they can fund infrastructure priorities identified by CDC's but not funded by the NSP. They also plan to cooperate with the Kandahar PRT and fund some PRT projects.

The Kandahar Department of Public Works has presented a list of irrigation projects for funding to JICA. These projects are in the three districts where JICA is working and the list is currently under review in JICA headquarters.

### **Association of Experts in the Fields of Migration and Development Cooperation (AGEF)**

This organization, which is funded by the German Government, is involved in supporting returning refugees by creating sustainable livelihoods opportunities for them. The program has been providing financial support for business development to returning refugees. Under the program returnees have been provided with business training and with financial support to set up small businesses. In addition, the program has been funding a vocational training/internship for returning refugees by giving financial support to local businesses to induct a certain number of trainees/interns. During the initial six months a trainee is paid a stipend of Euro 100/pm and for the following six months the trained ex refugee is employed by the business where he was trained.

Under the equity participation program AGEF was providing 40% of the capital of a business up to a maximum of EURO 10,000. The condition for this equity participation was that the business should employ a certain number of returning refugees.

These programs have now ended and under a new program AGEF together with the DAG bank of Germany will start providing loans to small and medium businesses.

AGEF has registered a number of businesses in Kandahar which are interested in obtaining support under the new AGEF/DAG program. At present 900 small and 100 medium businesses are registered with them.

### **Section 3. Current and Planned AL Activities Funded by the International Donor Community**

Project activities specifically focused on Alternative Livelihoods are currently limited to the USAID funded AL projects in Helmand, Kandahar (South), Nangarhar and Laghman (East) and Badakshan and Takhar (North). Besides these there are the DFID funded projects under the RALF which funds Alternative Livelihoods projects and research in Helmand, Kandahar, Bamyan and Badakshan through the Aga Khan Foundation, Mercy Corp, FAO and ICARDA. The European Commission funds a Euro 9 million Alternative Livelihoods project in Nangarhar and Laghman called the Program for Alternative Livelihoods (PAL).

If we take into account the broader development/agricultural sector support projects in the country then there are numerous projects funded by the EC, World Bank, DFID as well as projects funded by a variety of UN agencies and international bilateral agencies like the GTZ, GAA etc. These projects are engaged in watershed management, irrigation systems rehabilitation, agriculture/livestock development, rural rehabilitation, poverty reduction etc.

In addition to these projects and programs directly funded by the donors, there are the donor funded National Priority Programs implemented through the Afghan Government Ministries. These NPP's include the National Solidarity Program (NSP), The National Emergency Employment Program, the Micro-credit Investment and Support Facility for Afghanistan (MISFA), The National Irrigation and Power Program (NIPP), The Afghanistan Stabilization Program (ASP), besides several other ongoing and planned Priority Programs which have a bearing on rural livelihoods and poverty reduction.

In Kandahar and Helmand the number of AL and donor funded development programs are limited in number and have been described above.

## **Section 4. Current and Planned Government of Afghanistan Alternative Livelihood Initiatives**

At the national level the Government of Afghanistan coordinates counter narcotics related matters, which includes Alternative Livelihoods, through the Counter Narcotics Steering Group. Technical input to this body on Alternative Livelihoods is provided by the Alternative Livelihoods Technical Working Group (ALTWG) which meets in Kabul on a regular basis, usually once a month. This body is chaired by the Minister of Narcotics, or his Deputy, and contains representatives of other relevant GOA Ministries like the MRRD, MAF, CN etc as well representatives of donor countries, WB, UN agencies and NGOs implementing AL projects (MC, AKF etc).

The ALTWG discusses issues related to AL. It attempts to reach a common agreement on approach, definition and strategy. It has in the past attempted to reach a common understanding on counter narcotics mainstreaming and conditionality, without much success as different donor countries have a widely divergent view about the definition and utility of conditionality in particular. The main benefit of the ALTWG is that it provides an opportunity for the donors interested in CN/AL to air their views and lay out their approach and understanding. The forum provides an opportunity to modify and adapt the differing approaches to CN/AL to avoid overlap and seek synergy between programs operating in the same geographic area.

### **4a. Coordination in Kandahar and Helmand**

#### Kandahar

In Kandahar there are at present at least three Coordinating bodies. The first is the coordination cell operating under the governor's office which holds monthly meetings where the heads of provincial government departments meet with representatives of donor agencies to discuss a variety of program strategy and implementation related issues. It is in this forum that issues related to security and problems faced by donor and implementation agencies are resolved.

The second coordination meeting is between the Heads of UN agencies and includes heads of donor agencies in the province like the head of JICA. This meeting discusses coordination and strategic issues related to their program. The UN and donor Heads of Agencies also discuss security related matters for the region as part of the regional Security Management Team (SMT).

The third coordination meeting takes place under the SWABAC which is a coordination body for the NGO's in the province. This meeting is held every two months. Participants include representatives of the International and national NGO's.

During discussions in Kandahar with heads of different donor agencies, NGO's and government departments it was apparent that most agencies consider that the meetings do not lead to improved inter-agency coordination. This is primarily due to the fact that agency program priorities and focus, budgets and timelines are set outside the

region. This does not allow agency heads the level of flexibility to adapt their project direction and approach to coordinate with other projects. There is also reluctance on the part of some agency heads, particularly among the UN agencies, to share project financial information with other agencies and in particular with government counterparts. The coordination meetings were at best considered to be information sharing bodies.

### Helmand

The status of coordination in Helmand is much weaker than in Kandahar. There are very few donor agency representatives present in the province and there are no regular coordination meetings held at this level. Many agencies, including the UN agencies have their regional offices in Kandahar and information sharing or coordination issues related to Helmand are discussed during the meetings in Kandahar.

The coordination meetings in Helmand which bring together the heads of government departments with the representatives of donors and major NGO's are intermittent in nature and the last such meeting took place in June 2004.

The governor does hold monthly coordination meeting for the heads of government departments. However, as the governor does not have administrative responsibility over the heads of departments, who are directly accountable to their parent ministries in Kabul, the decisions reached at these meetings are recommendatory in nature and not mandatory.

The most effective coordination between agencies and with the government at the regional, provincial or district levels takes place on an informal, one to one basis whereby representatives of individual agencies meet with government representatives and heads of other agencies to discuss and decide upon program implementation and coordination matters. This is the preferred medium of finding synergies between projects and programs at present.

## **Section 5. Progress on Other Counter Narcotics Pillars**

### **5a. Public Information**

A robust public information campaign was launched prior to the poppy planting season starting in September 2004. This campaign involved provincial authorities, religious leaders and the Ministries of Haj, Interior and Counter Narcotics as well as donors including the US, UK and UNODC.

The religious council of Afghanistan held a gathering and issued a Fatwa (religious decree) condemning all aspects of narcotics. Regional assemblies of religious leaders were held which endorsed the decree of the central council. Several thousand copies of this decree were distributed all over the country and were pasted on the walls of mosques in all the poppy growing provinces. High level inter-ministerial delegations from Kabul visited provinces and encouraged provincial authorities to actively involve themselves in the anti poppy information campaign.

The national and provincial media sources were closely involved in the anti narcotics information campaign. TV and radio stations in the country broadcast programs on the anti narcotic issue.

The current low level of poppy cultivation in most of the major poppy growing provinces like Helmand and Nangarhar is attributed to the strong public information campaign launched prior to the planting season. Additionally, the strong efforts to encourage and motivate provincial authorities to involve themselves actively in the anti poppy campaign has paid dividends in the shape of a reduced level of poppy cultivation

### **5b. Capacity Building**

Progress in building the capacity of national and provincial authorities and civil society organizations to take a lead role in counter narcotics and alternative development policy making has been limited. One important reason for this has been the delay in reaching consensus on policy, approach and a common understanding/definition of key counter narcotics policy options among the donors in particular. This has been a significant issue where the policies of 'conditionality and mainstreaming' are concerned.

Some donors, particularly the UK, US and UNODC have initiated steps to strengthen the capacity of the relevant government counterparts in the MRRD, MCN, MAF and MOI etc to play an active role in counter narcotics. Support in the form of training and equipment have to a degree helped in improving national capacity but this effort is mainly focused on Kabul and the results are not visible at the provincial levels. In the provinces of Kandahar and Helmand it is only in the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan regional office where the results of improved training and equipment

support is visible. This is an eleven person unit under the Ministry of Interior, carrying out narcotics interdiction activities from its regional office in Kandahar.

The GOA has set up a new Ministry of Counter Narcotics and a new post of Deputy Minister for Narcotics within the Ministry of Interior. The regional offices of the MCN are also being strengthened. Donors are supporting capacity building and strengthening of the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA), the Central Eradication Planning Cell (CEPC) and the Central Poppy Eradication Force (CPEF).

While there are several projects in place to improve counter narcotics law enforcement capacity, a similar level of attention has not been paid to strengthening the capacity for Alternative Livelihoods. The limited efforts in this area have been led by the UK/DFID and are focused on the MRRD. UNODC has planned an AL capacity building project for the MCN but this has not started yet. In the two provinces of Kandahar and Helmand the lack of understanding of the concept of Alternative Livelihoods is quite visible. The provincial counterparts still appear to believe that AL means infrastructure development. There is a need for training and support at the provincial level and this should be a priority activity under the institutional building component of ALP/S.

#### **5c. Judicial Reform and Law Enforcement**

Efforts to improve the legal framework have started. These include improving prison and court infrastructure, training for judges and prosecutors as well as reform of the legal system and procedures. The GOA has recently announced setting up of specialized drug courts. Activities aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Justice Ministry, the Supreme Court and the Attorney Generals Office have begun. Donors for this activity include the UK, US, Canada, Italy, EC and UNODC. To date these activities have not been extended to the provincial levels and are limited to Kabul based legal structures.

#### **5d. Interdiction**

Drug interdiction is carried out by the local police, the Highway police and the special Counter Narcotics Police force. Exact details for the amount of seizures are not available but there have been several significant seizures including some individual seizures of over several hundred kilograms.

Centrally led interdiction operations are scheduled to start in Helmand in early April. There are anecdotal reports of drug labs operating in central and southern Helmand and these may be the target of interdiction operations.

The seized drug used to be stored in a special section in the Kandahar customs compound but recently a special store has been built in the office of the Counter Narcotics Police and seized drugs are stored here. It is expected that drug interdiction will increase during the poppy harvest season in the south which will start at the end of April.

#### **5e. Eradication**

Poppy eradication is carried out by the provincial authorities as well as by the Central Poppy Eradication Force. The Central Eradication Planning Cell authorizes all Kabul led eradication efforts.

Anecdotal evidence reveals that this season there has been a significant drop in poppy cultivation with some estimates speaking of a drop of around 50% compared to last season in most of Helmand. In Kandahar projections prepared by UNODC after their Rapid Assessment of Opium Cultivation in March 2005, speak of an increase in the level of poppy cultivation. The reason for the drop in poppy cultivation is primarily the awareness campaign carried out by the government during November and December 2004. Losses faced by poppy farmers due to plant disease and a drop in the price of opium have also had an impact on the level of cultivation this season.

No eradication campaign has been conducted in Kandahar up to the end of March 2005. It is expected that eradication will start in Kandahar in April 2005. Units of the Central Poppy Eradication Force have been sent to Kandahar and are expected to eradicate poppy fields in Maiwand and Panjwai districts.

The provincial authority in Helmand has been active in eradicating poppy cultivation, particularly in Central Helmand and has recently started eradicating poppy fields in Sangin district. This eradication campaign though has to an extent been dogged by allegations of bribery and corruption. Reportedly in some areas, farmers who could afford to bribe the eradicators were able to protect their poppy fields while the poorer farmers had their fields destroyed. It is reported that some farmers have paid a bribe of around Afs 1,000 per 1/5 of a hectare to the eradication teams to protect their poppy fields. These eradication efforts have been the result of the ‘governor led’ eradication campaign. According to eradication data provided by the provincial authorities approximately 6,000 ha of poppy has been eradicated in Helmand by 31 January 2005. Eradication is still continuing and the updated figures will be available in June 2005.

Area eradicated in Helmand upto 31 January 2005. Figures provided by provincial government and have not yet been verified independently.

<b>District</b>	<b>Area eradicate in Jeribs (1/5 Ha)</b>
Lashkargah	4,562
Nadali	4,213
Marjah	3,260
Nawa Barakzai	2,232
Garamser	5,650
Greshk	1,685
Sangin	1,622
Musa Qala	2,209
Washer	1,445
Khanneshin	725
Kajaki	1,820
Deshu	300
Nawzad	0
Baghran	0

<b>TOTAL</b>
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<b>29,633 (approx 6,000 HA)</b>
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A survey on the extent of poppy cultivation and to verify the eradication is currently being undertaken by UNODC. It is expected that the results of the rapid assessment of poppy cultivation will be available by mid April 2005 while the poppy eradication verification report will be available by the end of the harvest season in June 2005. The complete Afghanistan poppy cultivation and opium production survey will come out around the end of September 2005.

## **Section 6. Synergy Between Counter Narcotics and AL**

An important prerequisite for the effective implementation of ALP/S will be the necessity of ensuring that the program and its staff are not in the 'front line' when the lines between the poppy reduction objectives of the program and the CN objectives of law enforcement become increasingly blurred. This could happen when intensified law enforcement efforts target drug production and trafficking in Helmand and Kandahar, thus putting the program staff in a potentially risky situation in case they are perceived as being too closely associated with the law enforcers. By their regular visits to field sites, long term presence in the area as well as lower level of security as compared to the law enforcement agencies, AL program staff is generally seen as soft targets. The poor state of security and an increasing level of insurgent activity in the southern part of the country are already a matter of concern for the program. Increasing tensions in rural areas of the south caused by poppy eradication and interdiction, particularly at a time when the poppy fields are close to being harvested, have the potential of disrupting program activities and causing security problems for program staff.

Improved coordination and information sharing between the ALP/S and law enforcement agencies operating in the area will to an extent allow program activities and staff security issues to be planned in a manner to reduce the disruption and risk factors. The appointment of a law enforcement liaison office/r within the PRT or the local governor's office who will inform ALP/S about planned law enforcement activities in the program area would help in reducing the risk to program staff and operations. However, given the need for secrecy in interdiction operations it is perhaps unrealistic to expect timely information on law enforcement operations in the program area. This matter needs to be discussed both with the local authorities and with the Kabul based counter narcotics agencies to reach a solution that satisfies the needs all concerned parties.

It has been generally accepted that for an effective and sustainable elimination of poppy cultivation there needs to be synergy and coordination between alternative development and law enforcement. Achieving this synergy in a manner that is workable and acceptable to all parties is not easily done. To date the norm has been for development and AL programs, to at best, being informed that a counter narcotics operation will be launched at some unspecified date in a province or region. The lack of details does not allow programs to plan for any negative consequences of the operation on their activities.

Under ideal conditions the generally preferred methodology for eliminating poppy cultivation is to apply conditionality and carry out eradication once a certain level of AL assistance has been provided to an area. This methodology has been tried and has been successful in Thailand and Pakistan and is currently being used in other countries of South East Asia and South America. Under such a methodology the community is aware that once certain agreed level of assistance has been provided, poppy cultivation will not be allowed and law enforcement operations would be started to eradicate any poppy cultivation. The level of resistance by poppy farmers under this arrangement is low and program operations are not seriously disrupted.

In Afghanistan, with the high degree of international and national concern about the level and extent of poppy cultivation, it would probably be unrealistic to expect that many donors would be willing to allow a long timeframe for eliminating poppy cultivation. The time frame currently being mentioned for a significant (70%) reduction of poppy cultivation is another 2 years i.e. by 2007. Given the short timeframe and the urgency that international and national authorities attach to poppy reduction it is not expected that the CN and AL programs will reach a significant level of synergy and coordination.

ALP/S will need to seek closer coordination and information sharing with the counter narcotics efforts in order to reduce the risk to program operations and staff security in the target area. For this ALP/S should establish close liaison and coordination with the regional heads of the Counter Narcotics Ministry and the Counter Narcotics Police in addition to the provincial police chiefs.

Wherever possible at a local level ALP/S will need to seek out windows of opportunity to intervene with assistance and support to areas that have reduced or eliminated poppy cultivation due to the pressure of law enforcement. Such interventions will need to be carefully timed and planned so as to take maximum advantage of the opportunity and to minimize risk to program resources and staff.

## Section 7. Synergies Among AL Programs

In Kandahar and Helmand there are few donor funded programs with a bearing on Alternative Livelihoods. The few that are operating in the area which do have some bearing on livelihoods are the DFID and EC funded agricultural development/income generation projects implemented by MC, The USAID funded RAMP and ALP/S projects, The FAO irrigation project and the NSP. Other smaller projects are the DDR and the AGEF projects. Out of these projects the JICA and AGEF projects are not operating in Helmand.

The possibilities for sectoral synergy exist between the infrastructure components of the ALP/S and the JICA and FAO funded infrastructure rehabilitation projects. The JICA project is scheduled to end in December 2005 but there is a possibility that it may be extended for another two years. ALP/S is already coordinating and has established synergy with the AIP and RAMP projects for its infrastructure component; this can be continued up to the life of these two projects. Rehabilitating rural infrastructure where it can support the agri-business and business development components of the ALP/S strategy should be given priority.

Collaboration arrangements may be feasible with the EC funded income generation projects for women and vulnerable groups. These projects are implemented by Mercy Corp (MC) in Helmand. Once the focus of the NSP changes from infrastructure to livelihoods, which may happen soon, it would be possible to collaborate with NSP to provide alternative livelihood opportunities to communities in poppy growing areas and in particular to the poorer and more vulnerable sections of rural society.

At some stage ALP/S may be required to fund project priorities identified by the MRRD led provincial planning process. A similar process undertaken in the eastern part of the country in March 2005 identified a number of district development priorities. These priorities did not have a bearing on livelihoods and consisted almost entirely of small rural infrastructure. ALP/S will need to select projects from the list of identified priorities that can feed into the broader development and livelihoods context and which benefit a wider range of the socio economic groups in a district rather than a small elite group.

Strengthening and improving access to credit for business development can be coordinated with the planned MC project in collaboration with the MISFA. The possibility of joint funding and coordination to support business development and access to credit can be examined with the new AGEF project in Kandahar.

A forum for coordination and creating synergy is available in the form of the regular meetings of the Alternative Livelihoods Technical Working Group (ALTWG). ALP/S should take an active part in the meetings of the Kabul based ALTWG where all donor representatives and relevant Government Ministries like the MRRD, MAF, MPW and MCN are provided with a forum to decide broad program coordination and sequencing related issues. This forum provides technical input on Alternative Livelihoods priorities and policies to the Counter Narcotics Steering Group which is the premier counter narcotics policy formulating body. Membership of the ALTWG

will ensure that ALP/S opinions, ideas and concerns are heard and considered in the CN decision making process. It is in this forum that issues related to the interface and timing of AL activities with law enforcement operations are discussed and resolved. ALP/S will seek to play an active role in this forum

The scope of coordination and synergy with the other USAID funded AL programs in the Eastern and Northern parts of Afghanistan is limited by the lack of geographical contiguity of target areas. The three programs are not in a position to complement and coordinate their activities to prevent the ‘balloon effect’ caused by poppy cultivation moving to the periphery of program target areas. The different opium markets and trafficking routes as well as the different agricultural calendar also reduce the scope for coordinating program activities to complement and maximize the impact of program interventions. The primary focus of coordination between USAID funded AL programs should be on the following areas:

- Sharing of lessons learnt and best practices;
- Sharing feasibility studies on agri-business development options;
- Creating a common salary structure to avoid the possibility of ‘job shopping’ among the limited number of national staff with experience of counter narcotics and alternative livelihoods;
- Sharing of information on capacity, credibility and integrity of implementing partners/subcontractors; and,
- Sharing information on security issues and other developments which may impact on program activities.

## **Section 8. Plan for Integration and Collaboration Among AL Programs**

Prior to examining the potential for synergy and coordination between agencies working on development and alternative livelihood in Kandahar and Helmand one must understand the existing constraints, these are:

- There are very few donor funded programs focusing primarily on livelihoods in the two provinces. Among the livelihoods focused programs the USAID funded AIP, RAMP ALP/S and the EC funded projects of MC are the main ones.
- The provincial departments of the Afghan government do not have a development budget and do not implement development or livelihoods oriented projects. The exceptions to this are the Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (DRRD) which implements/monitors the NSP and the Department of Agriculture and Food (DAF) which implements/monitors donor funded agriculture sector support projects.
- Most donor funded development projects have in the past shown a marked reluctance to be involved in counter narcotics programs. This is primarily due to a concern for staff security and the fear that involvement in counter narcotics programs could lead to the disruption of their program activities. In the current security environment, particularly in the south of the county these agencies would be even more reluctant to be seen as having a counter narcotics role.
- The MRRD and its donors have expressed an unwillingness to have the NSP take a role in counter narcotics as this is seen as counterproductive for its community development role.
- The existing coordination mechanisms at the provincial level are ineffective and seen as having an information sharing role rather than as a coordination forum. The reluctance of some donor agencies to share information on budgets and programs does not lead to effective coordination. The government capacity for and understanding of coordination is limited.
- The lack of accurate and updated development related data at the provincial level is a major constraint for planning and coordination.

Given these major constraints and from prior experience at the provincial levels, it would be better and more realistic to aim for a high level of coordination and synergy between ALP/S and the other USAID funded projects like AIP and RAMP as well as with its sub-contractors like the CADG, MC and ICARDA etc. Coordination and synergy can also be maintained between these projects and those of the provincial PRT's in the two provinces.

With other donor funded projects, particularly with the DFID, EC, FAO and JICA projects it would be possible and feasible to aim for coordination and synergy on a sub-project basis rather than on a broader program basis.

In view of the differing program priorities, target areas and timelines it would be difficult to have an effective coordination body encompassing all the different assistance providers. A more effective mode of coordination would be between individual agencies in areas and sectors where their program interventions overlap or can potentially complement each other.

The MRRD led provincial planning and local governance initiative could be a medium for community participation in, and ownership of, development initiatives in an area. This process has certain weaknesses which are:

- The process of facilitating communities in identifying their development needs is not focused on livelihoods related issues and is mainly focused on rural infrastructure. In the east of the country the development priorities identified by the communities included several proposals for construction of structures that have traditionally been the responsibility of the community itself; these for example include karez cleaning and building latrines. Implementing such projects could lead to a culture of dependency in a community and have negative consequences for developing community based organizations and local governance structures.
- The level of acceptance for these new structures and the planning process among the wider donor community is unclear. It is not yet certain whether all the donors are willing to work through these structures and accept their recommendations for development needs. Unless there is wider acceptance among the donor community for these district/provincial development plans, it would not be possible to achieve synergy and coordination between different assistance providers and donors. If ALP/S is required to fund these development plans then it may have to do so without the participation of other donors and without any modicum of synergy or coordination with their projects.

To some extent ALP/S can remove possible flaws in the new district/provincial planning process by getting closely involved with this process at an early stage and guiding the focus of planning from infrastructure to livelihoods. For this ALP/S will have to engage in an intensive capacity building and training activity for the MRRD community facilitators and for the community, district and provincial Shuras that are formed as a result of the MRRD activity. Guiding the new development Shuras and Councils to prepare development plans which identify livelihoods options would help ALP/S in designing a strategy for business development which would have a higher degree of acceptance and ownership among the communities and the provincial authorities.