

United Nations Development Programme  
Evaluation office



## Case Study Afghanistan

**EVALUATION OF UNDP ASSISTANCE TO CONFLICT-AFFECTED COUNTRIES**

# HUMAN SECURITY

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## **Acronyms**

AIAF	Afghan Interim Authority Fund
ANBP	Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
D-SRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
LOFTA	Law and Order Trust for Afghanistan
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NABDP	National Area-Based Development Programme
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NSP	National Solidarity Programme
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Assistance Programme
UNGA	UN General Assembly

## **Executive summary**

The human security situation in Afghanistan is precarious. On the positive side, since 2000, the Taliban has been overthrown; three elections have been held and formally democratic institutions established; some five million refugees have returned and some four million girls have returned to schools. At the same time, the insurgency is intensifying especially in the south; the legitimacy of the Government is weak because of the role of former commanders in key positions; crime and human rights violations are widespread, especially crimes against women; unemployment is high and access to public services is weak and in some areas nonexistent; and poppy cultivation is increasing.

The international community, especially the United Nations, has contributed to stabilization through its presence, through the Bonn process which has established political institutions, and through community-based reconstruction programmes. However, the role of the international community has been hampered by an overly top-down approach in which stability takes precedence over justice; the scale and inefficiency of the international effort; the absence of a regional approach that would tackle the insurgency through dealing with instability in neighbouring countries; stringent security regulations; and an excessive preoccupation with time frames.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has provided continuous assistance to Afghanistan through the decades of war and during the period 2000-2005. In 2000-2002, the UNDP office was based in Islamabad and assistance consisted largely of the PEACE programme, a community-based programme executed by United Nations agencies, but implemented mainly by Afghan non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Since 2002, UNDP has developed one of its largest programmes in Afghanistan. The primary focus has been filling critical gaps, with considerable nimbleness and speed, and managing large Trust Funds, which have been essential for the overall international programme. In particular, UNDP paid the salaries of civil servants and the police in the immediate aftermath of the fall of the Taliban. It has also carried out programmes in nearly all the key areas of importance to long-term recovery – rule of law (judiciary and police), elections, parliament, area-based rural development, women's rights, sustainable livelihoods and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration. Over 95 percent of programmes have been financed from non-core funds.

Perhaps because of the scale of the programme and the need to act quickly, UNDP has tended to act in a service-providing role and has often lacked a substantive input into the programmes it manages. Since 2002, it has shifted from civil society and community-based programmes to an exclusive focus on government institutions, which may have reinforced centralized decision-making. Moreover, because of short time frames, direct support has meant inadequate attention to capacity building. UNDP's effectiveness has also been constrained by security concerns.

It is generally agreed that the experience of the integrated office in Afghanistan has been positive. However, traditional UNDP concerns have been subordinated to the overall mandate and to the preoccupation with time frames. UNDP has worked closely with the Government of Afghanistan and with the World Bank. However, relations with Afghan NGOs and civil society have been less close since 2002, not least because of the difficulty of access due to security concerns.

Lessons learned for the international community include:

- The need to integrate human security into overall programmes, including more attention to human rights, especially economic and social rights, legitimacy, consultation with civil society, and the regional dimensions of conflict.
- The need for structural changes in delivery in order to promote the development of national capacity, reduce duplication and waste, and increase transparency.
- The need to rethink security rules.

Lessons learned for UNDP include:

- The need to supplement gap-filling and service-providing with substantive capacity that builds on the organization's knowledge and experience in conflict countries, especially in governance, recovery and community-based development.
- The need for a surge capacity for development.
- The need to increase transparency and the speed and efficiency of delivery.
- The need to improve the quality of personnel in conflict countries through appropriate incentives and through fair, meritocratic and broadly based recruitment at national level.

## Introduction

Afghanistan has experienced over two decades of war and oppression. Over a quarter of the population was displaced during this period and between one and two million people were killed – around five percent of the population. Physical and social infrastructure was devastated. As a consequence, human development indicators like literacy and life expectancy declined so that Afghanistan is now near the bottom of the human development index. During the Taliban period, a virtual gender apartheid was introduced. After the fall of the Taliban, Government capacity was very weak and in some parts of the country non-existent. Long the victim of sanctions, Afghanistan's economy was in a precarious and fragile state. Key government institutions were void of

KEY EVENTS IN RECENT AFGHAN HISTORY	
<b>27 April 1978:</b>	Communist coup
<b>27 December 1979:</b>	Soviet invasion
<b>28 April 1992:</b>	Mujahideen take power in Kabul
<b>5 November 1994:</b>	The Taliban captures Kandahar
<b>24 September 1996:</b>	The Taliban captures Kabul
<b>7 October 2001:</b>	United States air attacks against the Taliban regime begin
<b>13 November 2001:</b>	The Taliban falls and Northern Alliance forces capture Kabul
<b>5 December 2001:</b>	Bonn Agreement signed
<b>December 2001:</b>	Afghan Interim Authority Fund established by the UNDP to cover all reasonable costs associated with start-up and operational costs of the Interim Authority. Donors contribute US \$73.4 million
<b>22 December 2001:</b>	Afghanistan Interim Authority takes over power in Kabul under the leadership of Hamid Karzai
<b>21-22 January 2002:</b>	International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan, held in Tokyo, pledging US \$4.5 billion in financial aid over five years
<b>April 2002:</b>	National Development Framework prepared
<b>June 2002:</b>	Emergency Loya Jirgah (traditional Grand Assembly) elected Mr. Hamid Karzai as President
<b>December 2003:</b>	Constitutional Loya Jirgah convened
<b>4 January 2004:</b>	New Constitution adopted by Constitutional Loya Jirgah
<b>Feb. – Jun. 2004:</b>	UNDP Afghanistan returns to Kabul from Islamabad
<b>31 March -1 April 2004:</b>	International Afghanistan Conference in Berlin. A multi-year commitment of US \$ 8.2 billion was made for the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan for the fiscal years 1383 – 1385 (March 2004 – March 2007), which includes a pledge of US \$ 4.4 billion for 1383 (March 2004 – March 2005)
<b>22-24 April 2004:</b>	Afghanistan Development Forum was held in Kabul where the Government clearly set out its national programmes to donors

qualified staff and many key institutions had to be more or less built from scratch.

The invasion by the United States in October 2001 and the signature of the Bonn Agreement (5 December 2001) irreversibly changed the country's political options. The Bonn Agreement brought about a roadmap and timetable for peace and security, the country's reconstruction, the institutionalization of key organizations, and the protection of human rights. It contained provisions to address military demobilization and the reintegration of ex-combatants into civilian life, international peacekeeping and human rights monitoring.

Yet, the Bonn Agreement also reflects the rigidities of the international architecture for peacekeeping and peace-building. First, it was both a peace agreement and a constitutional programme. As a consequence, former commanders who participated in the Northern Alliance and facilitated the American victory have come to

play a dominating role in the new institutions, with serious implications for legitimacy and human rights. Secondly, the Bonn Agreement was based on a phased approach, which is typical of the international community's approach to conflict in different parts of the world. An initial emergency, humanitarian phase is followed by a phase of stabilization, which in turn is followed by rehabilitation, reconstruction and reintegration. Institutional strengthening and capacity building is the last (and current) phase. Thus the political process is often rushed while development needs are neglected and postponed to a period when international concern may have subsided.

The Bonn Agreement was endorsed by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1383 and an integrated mission was established under the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Lakhdar Brahimi. Because of the integrated nature of the United Nations' presence under the SRSG, UNDP's programme in Afghanistan is oriented almost entirely in support of the Bonn Agreement, which the UNDP facilitated and assisted in preparing.

Even though there was an integrated United Nations mission, the international peacekeeping forces were under a NATO umbrella, and numerous other agencies and NGOs have also been operating in Afghanistan. At the Conference on Reconstruction for Afghanistan held in Tokyo in January 2002, some US \$4.5 billion was pledged by donors.

In this report, we start by considering whether the human security situation has improved; we then consider the contribution of the United Nations and the international community; this is followed by a analysis of the role of UNDP and the role of partnerships, and finally we conclude with some lessons learned.

# **1. Has human security in Afghanistan improved since 2000?**

Perhaps the most striking evidence of an improved human security situation is the hopeful mood among Afghans today, at least in Kabul and the surrounding provinces.<sup>1</sup> Under the Taliban, people lived in fear and without expectations for future change. Today, Kabul is bustling with activity; music plays in the streets, children fly kites and people are buying, selling, building and arguing. One human rights activist interviewed by the mission described the last four years as the “years of miracles”.

The hopeful mood is, above all, demonstrated by the return of some five million refugees and internally displaced persons since 2001, mainly from Pakistan and Iran – a level of refugee return unprecedented anywhere in the world.

How far does this mood reflect reality? As one person we interviewed put it: “It is not hard to be better than the Taliban.” In our interviews, we found a notable difference in perceptions of the current reality between members of the Government and some sections of the international community on the one hand, and civil society and other sections of the international community on the other. The former group stressed the achievements of the last four years, while the latter tended to stress the failures and the disappointments of the last four years.

As the Afghan human development report illustrates, there is a dearth of reliable statistics about Afghanistan; human development indicators are inadequate and human security indicators are non-existent. There have been a number of useful reports produced by United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which summarize existing information (see bibliography). Based on this information as well as interviews conducted during our mission, some broad conclusions are suggested below.

## **1.1 The conflict**

Afghanistan is often described as a ‘post-conflict’ country. The most intense period of violence since 2000 was in 2001, when the combination of American air strikes and Northern Alliance attacks led to the fall of the Taliban. Estimates of the casualties in the war vary, but there were probably between two and three thousand direct civilian casualties as a consequence of bombing and some five thousand indirect civilian casualties because humanitarian agencies were unable to reach remote areas. The level of military casualties is not known.

The conflict has continued since then. The insurgency in the south and east intensified in 2005, with the use of new tactics apparently imported from Iraq, including suicide bombing and increasing attacks against ‘soft’ targets, that is, civilians. Some areas in the south and east are now ‘no-go’ areas for the United Nations. Attacks have

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<sup>1</sup> Field visits were conducted in Dec 2005- January 2006.

also increased in the north and in Kabul itself. During 2005, some 125 Coalition soldiers and some 1500 Afghan civilians were killed, "...making it the bloodiest year since the fall of the Taliban..." (Institute of War and Peace Reporting, 23 December 2005.)

There was a further dramatic increase in violent incidents throughout the country in the first few months of 2006. There are two main factors contributing to the continuing insurgency. One is the supply of resources, which includes financial support from abroad, the export of terrorists from Iraq, as well as income from illegal activities such as drug production and trafficking. The continuing instability in Pakistan has provided a haven for Al Qaeda and the Taliban and the border areas remain insecure and inaccessible. The other factor is the continued readiness on the part of the local population to tolerate, if not support, the insurgents. While Islamic fundamentalism continues to have adherents in Afghanistan (especially in the south and east), for the local population, choosing sides is often based more on an assessment of where they can expect greater protection. This is especially relevant in a social context where hospitality and succour to people in danger, particularly in the same tribe, is traditional. On the other hand, human rights violations by Coalition forces, monitored in several reports (see for example, Human Rights Watch World Report 2003: Asia: Afghanistan) include illegal detentions, intrusive house searches, especially at night, and collateral damage. The legitimacy of the Government in Kabul is also questioned because of the prominent role played by commanders of the former Northern Alliance.

According to one United Nations official interviewed: "The central problem of the insurgency is the lack of legitimacy of the Government... People feel that they got rid of the Taliban and now they have a corrupt Government full of warlords. And essentially they feel that the people in the insurgency are no worse than the war lords in the Government." This view is confirmed by a report produced by a group at Tufts University, which was also quoted in the Afghan human development report. The Tufts report suggests that people in areas with a low level of insurgency but with powerful commanders feel less secure than in areas where the insurgency is stronger.<sup>2</sup>

## **1.2 Crime and human rights violations**

The rule of law is extremely weak in Afghanistan. There are widespread reports of murder, rape, kidnapping, illegal detention, torture, land seizures, and lack of access to justice (see reports of UNGA 2005, Cherif Bassiouni, AIHRC). In these circumstances, it is difficult to distinguish between crime – acts undertaken for private motives – and human rights violations undertaken by illegal armed groups or by people in the uniforms of state agents.

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<sup>2</sup> "A vast majority of areas that are a 'high risk/hostile environment' or 'medium risk/uncertain environment' for the United Nations and the NGOs are often experienced as secure with few reported conflicts by the local rural populations. In contrast, regions that show up as 'low risk/permission environment' on United Nations security maps are areas where local populations often report high levels of conflict and are experiencing insecurity at the hands of armed political groups, warlords, commanders and their associates, including district authorities and police forces." (Afghan human development report, p.50)

Of major concern is the continuing power of former Mujahideen commanders or warlords. Immediately after the fall of the Taliban, members of the Northern Alliance occupied key positions in Government and the state apparatus; their militia were absorbed into the Afghan Military Forces (those not absorbed into the Afghan Military Forces are considered illegal armed groups). Subsequently, commanders were given key positions as Governors, and were allowed to run for parliamentary positions (both houses) bolstered by their only partially disarmed militias, ministers, district chiefs and the newly created security services (the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police). In the newly elected lower house (Wolesi Jirga) commanders account for around half the seats.

Broadly speaking, there are two views about the role of the commanders. One holds that they have been co-opted into the political process and this has contributed to stability and limited their ability to undermine progress towards peace. Proponents of this view point to the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process, particularly the cantonment of heavy weapons, which makes it impossible for the commanders to fight each other. They also stress the fact that President Karzai has removed some commanders from positions as Governors – for example Ismail Khan in Herat – even though in many cases they have been appointed to other positions. The other view holds that the position of the commanders has been entrenched and legitimized thus calling into question the legitimacy of the newly established political institutions and allowing a culture of impunity, which reduces the long-term prospects for peace. Those who make this argument point out that the commanders do not need heavy weapons for repression (indeed heavy weapons are expensive to store and maintain) and that much more could be done to take away the impunity of commanders and limit their power. In particular, they call for transitional justice and for the exclusion of those known to have committed war crimes from office.

According to a survey of 700 Afghans undertaken by an Afghan human rights organization:

“Afghans continue to be exposed to all manner of humiliation and abuse at the hands of gunmen. The rule of law is effectively non-existent throughout the country, and consequently, a culture of impunity dominates. Although many of the Afghans we interviewed are more confident about the security situation now than they were one year ago, they also recite a litany of crimes committed against them mainly by commanders or their men. Confidence and trust in the police is low. Afghans say their central Government is weak, and they are desperately calling for it to be more assertive. Although a majority of those surveyed think there are fewer weapons in the hands of gunmen than there were one year ago, 88% of people we spoke to want the Government to act to reduce the powers of commanders. Nearly two-thirds believe disarmament is the most important way to improve security.”<sup>3</sup>

### **1.3 Legitimate livelihoods and public services**

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<sup>3</sup> ‘Take the Guns Away: Afghan Voices on Security and Elections’, The Human Rights Research and Advocacy Consortium, Kabul, September 2004.

Agriculture, which accounted for 85 percent of GDP before 1979, has been largely destroyed in 25 years of war, as has the small manufacturing sector that was established during the Soviet period. There are two main sources of income – opium production and income from abroad, either through international assistance or remittances. Although banned by the Taliban in 2000-2001, opium production has increased every year since 2000. As of 2004, Afghanistan’s opium production accounted for 87 percent of world opium production and around 60 percent of GDP (see UNODC, Bassiouni, Leslie). While reconstruction has generated some employment, there are still very few sustainable, legitimate sources of income. Indeed, some activities such as handicrafts have been undercut as a result of post-Taliban liberalization. Many refugees who returned to Afghanistan are now going back to Iran and Pakistan because of their failure to find jobs.

Most of those displaced from rural areas have moved to cities, where housing, employment and services are under huge strain. There is an overwhelming lack of basic services, in the midst of job and physical insecurity. For instance, access to fresh water supply is limited and existing communal water supply (as opposed to water supply to individual houses) is often disconnected by the government authorities, which affects poorer families who do not have water supply at home.

The human development report charts the poor condition of Afghanistan, which ranks 174<sup>th</sup> in the human development index. Access to education and health services has greatly improved since 2001; nevertheless, literacy rates are very low as is life expectancy. Basic services, such as clean water, electricity and sanitation, remain precarious.

Communication, on the other hand, has greatly improved. In 2001, there were only 10,000 phones; now there are more than a million. Improved communication has created around 20,000 jobs.

#### **1.4 Women’s rights**

The position of women could not fail to improve in relation to the Taliban era, when women could not leave their home without wearing a burqa or being accompanied by men, and girls were not allowed to attend schools. Some four million girls have returned to school and women are active in the new political institutions. A new Ministry of Women’s Affairs has been established. The constitution guarantees gender equality. In the recent elections, some 44 percent of the voters were women (although given the high proportion in socially conservative areas, the European Union observer mission speculated that this could be a sign of proxy registration<sup>4</sup>) and some 68 women were elected to parliament out of a total of 351 seats<sup>5</sup>. Nevertheless, there are widespread

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<sup>4</sup> According to a survey undertaken by the Human Rights and Advocacy Development Consortium, many women complained that heads of families had voted for them.

<sup>5</sup> The Wolesi Jirga (lower house) of the parliament has 249 members and the Meshrano Jirga (upper house) has 102 members.

reports of crimes against women particularly early and forced marriages, lack of access to justice (especially traditional justice), serious health problems as a result of lack of access to health clinics, as well as vulnerability to every-day crime. One woman human rights activist told us: “It’s true I don’t have to wear a burqa any longer but now I have death threats in front of my house.”

## **1.5 Summary**

It is impossible to draw a definitive conclusion about progress in human security as both positive and negative trends can be observed. This illustrates the fragility of the Afghan situation and how easily it could deteriorate further. In an interview with Ashraf Ghani, the former Finance Minister and now Chancellor of Kabul University, he outlined three scenarios for the future of Afghanistan:

- A narco-mafia state
- The Lenin scenario – two steps backwards and one step forwards
- A developmental state

At the moment, he said, Afghanistan is between the first two scenarios.

## 2. Contribution of United Nations to human security

The international effort in Afghanistan is one of the most ambitious and innovative interventions anywhere in the world. In certain key areas, there is a good case for arguing that this intervention has been of critical importance in enhancing the human security of the Afghan people.

First of all, the international presence itself offers a form of protection. In particular, the presence of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the Provincial Reconstruction teams – even though this is NATO rather than the United Nations – both in Kabul and elsewhere are an important deterrent against a renewal of sectarian violence among the commanders, though not necessarily to the spread of the insurgency.

Secondly, the Bonn process, initiated, managed and implemented by the international community, has helped establish a set of political institutions that are the key to providing public security. The Emergency Loya Jirga (traditional Grand Assembly), the Constitutional Loya Jirga, and the Presidential and Parliamentary elections have completed what has been viewed as the first phase of state building. Even though there were many irregularities in both elections (multiple voting, proxy registration, intimidation) the overall results are widely considered fair and they have, undoubtedly, been welcomed within Afghan society. Turn-out was considerably lower in the Parliamentary elections than in the Presidential elections, both because of the complexity of the voting procedure and because of the presence of so many commanders as candidates. Nevertheless, our own interviews and opinion surveys show considerable enthusiasm for the prospects of an elected Parliament. Along with the political process, the DDR process and efforts at sustaining and building administrative capacity have also been important (see below).

Thirdly, the National Solidarity Programme (NSP), which has established local councils *shuras* and small infrastructure projects in some 13,000 villages, is widely considered a success, in spite of criticisms that it was too ‘formulaic’ and that the results were ‘patchy’. Our own visits to NSP projects confirmed that they had helped to create solidarity and stimulate local activity and even, in one case, to offer a restraint against opium production.

However, there are five main problems with the international community’s role in Afghanistan:

1) *Too top-down*. The first problem is related to the role of the former commanders. According to a recent report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour: “A notable feature of the transition is the failure, thus far, to tackle impunity, either for past or current crimes. Many Afghans complain that armed strongmen continue to dominate their communities...” (UNGA 2005, para 31).

It can be argued that there has been tension between a top-down pragmatic approach and a bottom-up human security approach, that is, between those who consider construction of the state and making deals with the commanders to be a priority on the one hand, and those who feel justice and human security should come first on the other. The United States, beholden to the commanders and primarily interested in a friendly regime, has taken the first position. Civil society and European donors have tended to take the second position, while the United Nations has been squeezed between the two positions. Some would argue that because the political process (Bonn) began only when the Northern Alliance had created 'facts on the ground' and because ISAF initially did not extend beyond Kabul and, even in Kabul, did not challenge the local rule of commanders, the privileges given to commanders within the political institutions were inevitable. Others argue that the commanders were actually very weak at the time of the fall of the Taliban and dependent on international goodwill, especially American goodwill; they were not expecting to be brought into the political process. Moreover, there were contingent moments – at the Emergency Loya Jirga, for example, when commanders were placed in a prominent position, or in the failure to push for transitional justice at an earlier stage – when the United Nations could have done more, by involving civil society, to press the Government to deal with the commanders either politically or legally. Several people quoted Lakhdar Brahimi, the first SRSF after 2001, as saying that stability comes before justice.

In the recent Parliamentary elections, for example, it was felt that more could have been done to exclude the commanders. Article 15 of the constitution states that: "Individuals who practically command or are members of unofficial military forces or armed groups shall not be qualified to candidate themselves for elections." Although 208 candidates were provisionally excluded, this was reduced to 37 after a vetting process, which was considered by the European Union observer mission to be highly 'untransparent'. According to the European Union observer mission, this "...outcome brought the electoral system into serious disrepute in the eyes of much of the electorate... It is reasonable to assume that this led to disillusionment with the elections and seriously impacted their outcomes, not least the level of voter turn-out." (p.11)

2) *Cost and inefficiency of the international operation.* In any one year, the international community spends US \$1.6 billion while the Government spends US \$600 million. "When we look at the figures, we just panic...", one local NGO member, who worked during the Taliban period, told us. The international community has created a parallel structure, which undermines Government capacity by absorbing the most skilled people and which does not deliver effectively to the Afghan people. There is layer upon layer of donors, implementing agencies, contractors and sub contractors, each taking their share of the budget and generating a competitive culture in which the self-interest of each agency tends to come before the goal of helping Afghans. In one National Solidarity Programme project near Herat, we were told of seven layers of oversight. In Kapisa province, the Governor gave us several examples of excessive costs (one of the few Governors who had not been a commander). According to him, a paved road built by USAID for US \$250,000 could have been built locally for US \$40,000. Likewise, the cost of wells built under UNDP's area-based programme is US \$600 if built by a local

*shura*, US \$1000 if built by a local NGO and US \$3000 if built by an international NGO. Moreover, the scale of the international effort has exposed the rentier character of the new Afghan state and may have contributed to widespread corruption.

3) *Absence of a regional strategy.* A third problem is lack of attention to borders and relations with neighbouring countries. The need for a regional approach involving especially Iran and Pakistan is a key factor in dealing with the insurgency. In particular, it is crucial to address the sources of instability in Pakistan, as well as the overall War on Terror, since Afghanistan is directly affected both by the war in Iraq as insurgents replicate tactics used in Iraq, as well as by the perception of a global conflict.

4) *The security ghetto in which the United Nations operates.* Most of the embassies, bilateral agencies and international NGOs impose curfews on their staff in Kabul at either 2200 or 2300 hours every evening. At the time of the evaluation mission, the curfew for United Nations' staff started at 2100 hours. Throughout the day in certain parts of the country and after dark in Kabul, any transport must consist of at least two vehicles. Only a few restaurants in Kabul are accessible to international United Nations staff. For many international staff whose functions do not require frequent contacts outside the office or travel outside Kabul, the rigorous security instructions restrict their movements to travelling between a protected United Nations guesthouse and a 'bunkerized' United Nations office. It seems that, in reaction to criticism about security measures following the tragic August 2003 bombing of the United Nations compound in Baghdad, the organization has developed security rules far more restrictive than other international actors.

This has a number of consequences. First, it affects staff morale by forcing them into a rather claustrophobic existence in a security ghetto. Second, it impacts operational efficiency by imposing severe limitations on direct assessment of needs and monitoring and evaluation of projects. Finally, it cuts staff off from essential interactions with the public and civil society, and projects the image of an isolated, distant and insensitive international presence.

On the other hand, the recent increase in the number of security incidents in Kabul and elsewhere make it difficult to relax the current restrictions. Nevertheless, through intensified dialogue on security matters with other international actors including NGOs, the United Nations should aim at balancing security considerations with the need to maintain an effective and meaningful operational presence. There is a need, in particular, to develop and formalize alternative means of ensuring proper monitoring of activities, even in areas where United Nations access is restricted, by contracting independent Afghan NGOs or commercial entities to monitor operations.

5) *The preoccupation with time frames.* 2002 is seen as year zero. The Bonn process with its tight time frames, is seen as the first post-conflict phase in which the political process took priority; Afghanistan is now entering the post-Bonn phase where the emphasis will be on capacity-building, institution-building, and development. Yet it is difficult to describe Afghanistan as post-conflict as it is still in the midst of conflict.

Moreover, capacity-building, institution-building and development are crucial during conflicts in order to increase legitimacy. A big problem with the tight time frames associated with Bonn was that they made it difficult to build capacity and gave the political process priority over development. The elections were hugely expensive, costing some US \$300 million. But because of the tight time frame, the international community relied on expatriates and failed to create sustainable local capacity to run elections<sup>6</sup>.

The uneven growth of Afghan institutions is an expression of the phasing of assistance. The early humanitarian phase saw the proliferation of national ‘development’ NGOs geared to implement small-scale construction contracts at the expense of civil society organizations capable of fulfilling the role of independent watchdog and advocacy in the public interest. It also resulted in delays in strengthening key government institutions required for long-term conflict management and stability. Because capacity development takes time, this delay created a vacuum in areas critical for sustainable peace- building, such as the rule of law and local administration.

Thus an overall assessment suggests that the international community did contribute to stabilization outside the main conflict zones, which in turn contributed to human security. The international community also helped build the political institutions that are a necessary condition for establishing the rule of law and promoting development. However, the failure to deal with commanders and the inefficiency in delivery for cost, security and bureaucratic reasons, may have weakened the legitimacy of the new institutions. This weakness is dangerous because the insurgency feeds on any lack of legitimacy.

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<sup>6</sup> Although the Joint Electoral Management Board and subsequently its successor the Independent Electoral Commission were created, because of tight time frames, foreign capacity was forced to substitute for Afghan staff. The challenge therefore is to develop sufficient national capacity to run essential electoral institutions prior to the next round of elections.

### 3. The role of UNDP

#### 3.1 Overview

UNDP has provided assistance to Afghanistan throughout the decades of war and the period 2000-2005. The structure, content and management of its programme have been adapted over time to reflect the prevailing economic, political and security environment and the stance of the international community as expressed at the United Nations. During the period between the Mujahideen takeover of Kabul and the fall of the Taliban, the UNDP country office operated from Islamabad (Pakistan) for security reasons. The country office in Kabul was fully re-established following the convening of the Loya Jirga and the formation of an interim Government in early 2004.

During the period of Taliban rule, because of their policies on women and the international community's unwillingness to recognize the legitimacy of the Taliban Government, the UNDP programme was almost solely focused on community-based development and reconstruction<sup>7</sup>. National NGOs and civil society organizations were used extensively as partners in the implementation of UNDP's United Nations agency-executed programmes for social animation and community mobilization as well as the reconstruction of small-scale, community-level infrastructure. UNDP and the United Nations agencies involved worked directly with local communities to determine priorities. In many cases, traditional *shuras* managed the implementation of small projects, repairing infrastructure such as local roads, irrigation canals, water supply systems, culverts and bridges.<sup>8</sup> The location of UNDP offices for Afghanistan in Islamabad on the other hand, resulted in a heavy dependence on largely Pakistan-based, Pushtun-oriented national NGOs. Although UNDP Afghanistan no longer works with most of these NGOs and many of the staff with experience of the PEACE programme have left UNDP, the UNDP office was, and continues to be, largely staffed by personnel drawn from this period despite recent restructuring<sup>9</sup>.

In 2002, after the United States-led war and the fall of the Taliban, the UNDP programme shifted into an innovative, perhaps opportunistic, emergency mode, taking on a service-oriented approach and filling essential gaps. This approach was driven both by a need to implement UNDP's mandate as well as the imperative of mobilizing non-core

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<sup>7</sup> UNDP and the programmes of other United Nations organizations and NGOs in the country were based on the Ashgabad International Forum on Assistance to Afghanistan's tenets of January 1997. It embodied: (a) peace-building integrating humanitarian, rehabilitation, development and human rights activities; and (b) working with Afghan civil societies at the community level.

<sup>8</sup> The period for which a community-based approach was taken was from 1989 (withdrawal of Soviet forces and start of Operation Salaam) until 2001. The community-based approach was sharpened and focused through the PEACE programme from 1997 onwards, with its Phase II starting in 2000.

<sup>9</sup> Anecdotal evidence and views expressed by some Afghans familiar with UNDP but not directly associated with it, suggest that the regional and ethnic domination of the UNDP by individuals from a few southern provinces has influenced some of the programme and administrative decisions taken by the UNDP office. The mission was not in country long enough to sufficiently verify this information, although in a society long polarized through sectarian conflict, perception alone is an important factor that can affect UNDP's ability to operate even-handedly.

resources that are essential for the organization as a whole<sup>10</sup>. Having said this, it is clear that UNDP has only sought funds in areas that are directly within its mandate. As is discussed below, however, the rush to mobilize resources has at times been at the expense of national capacity building and sustainability.

UNDP's flagship efforts during the period 2002-2004 included managing a fund for the payment of civil service and police salaries, facilitating the UN Department of Political Affairs' efforts to convene a Loya Jirga, and brokering a *modus vivendi* between local and national leaders who were considered key players during the conflict and were therefore in a position to influence the achievement of peace. During this period, UNDP's approach appeared to be based less on a systematic analysis of the conflict and a strategy addressing the structural elements of long-term peace building, and more on a service orientation driven by the demands of the international community and later, the interim Afghan authorities. UNDP has however provided extensive support to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in key areas of state building.

#### *Transitioning from community to State*

Since 2004 and international recognition of subsequent governments, the UNDP has radically changed its approach towards 'governance and state-building'. This has led to a dramatic shift away from the strengthening of broader governance, including civil society organizations and NGOs, to an almost exclusive focus on formal state institutions of the executive, judiciary and more recently, the legislature. While this shift was in response to the urgent need to strengthen and empower the State in the face of challenges from provinces controlled by warlords, it has resulted in a weakening of Afghanistan's nascent civil society, which is also critical for a democratic state<sup>11</sup>.

UNDP has also been extensively involved in managing and administering the Presidential and local and Parliamentary elections. The organization's long experience with community-based development and partnership with national NGOs has been to a large extent abandoned and ceded to the World Bank. Indeed, the World Bank manages a community-based development programme, the Afghanistan NSP,<sup>12</sup> that works directly with village and district *shuras*. This Programme is very similar in design to area-based programmes that UNDP has, since the mid-1980s, touted as one of its signature product lines in conflict-affected countries in Central Asia, west and north Africa and Cambodia. Indeed, UNDP's PEACE programme in Afghanistan during the civil war operated on a similar model. By contrast, UNDP's current area-based development programme in Afghanistan is almost solely focused on strengthening centralized mechanisms for

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<sup>10</sup> UNDP's global dependence on non-core resources has become very significant, with a ratio of just under four non-core dollars to each dollar of core resources available to it.

<sup>11</sup> It should be noted that UNDP's CPAP for 2006-2008 makes a clear reference to initiating programmes to develop partnerships with a range of non-state actors in the future.

<sup>12</sup> In its first phase, the NSP received some US \$160 million in total funding in the form of grants mainly from the World Bank, but included contributions from some bilateral donors. Under the NSP model, *shuras* are allotted lump sum grants that they can use to fulfil priorities identified through a consultative process at the village level. It is therefore viewed by villagers as being more responsive to their needs. Village *shuras* also oversee and monitor the implementation of contracts and villagers often provide their own contributions in cash and in kind.

managing local development at the provincial level and below. The latter is discussed at greater length below.

### **3.2 Performing service functions in the immediate post-conflict phase**

The UNDP country office began its move from Islamabad to Kabul in November/December 2001. It was a slow process due to restricted access to ‘security slots’ for international staff and the SRSNG’s wish to maintain a ‘light footprint’. While other agencies managed to move in relatively large numbers of staff using humanitarian and relief assistance as a compelling rationale, the UNDP was severely constrained in the number of people it was allowed to mobilize as development was, in the spirit of a phased approach, viewed as a lower priority. At the same time, the Secretary-General appointed the Administrator of UNDP to take on the responsibility of leading the early recovery effort in Afghanistan in his capacity as Chairman of the United Nations Development Group<sup>13</sup>, and much later the UNDP Resident Coordinator was appointed Deputy SRSNG for Humanitarian Coordination and Development Cooperation.

The UNDP adapted rapidly to the new situation. It used its international legitimacy and the convening power of the United Nations to bring different groups together and provided services to the interim Government and the international community in areas that could not be filled by other agencies. In a break with the past, direct attention on the part of the Administrator ensured that UNDP provided support to most of the key processes that the United Nations and international community were involved in, including convening the Loya Jirga, and preparing documentation and needs assessments for the Bonn Conference. These activities brought the UNDP, and by extension other United Nations agencies, back into the picture in the management of the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, which had been taken over by the World Bank.

Demonstrating an ability to be flexible and to move faster than the World Bank and other international financial institutions in the immediate post-conflict period, UNDP provided reliable financial management services both for agencies that did not have sufficient administrative capacity within country and for the administration of direct budget support to the Government in the absence of reliable treasury systems and banking institutions. UNDP administered three trust funds on behalf of the international community. These were:

1. ***The Afghan Interim Authority Fund (AIAF)***: for the payment of civil service salaries and recurrent costs
2. ***Law and Order Trust for Afghanistan (LOFTA)***: for the payment of salaries and operational costs of the national civil police.
3. ***Counter Narcotics Trust Fund***: for implementation of the National Drug Control Strategy.

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<sup>13</sup> UN Press Release SG/SM/8034, AFG/166 of 19 November 2001.

It was also involved in managing the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund which was established in May 2002. The Trust Fund took over from the AIAF and provided a coordinated financing mechanism for the Afghan budget and simplified management and oversight of funds for the Afghanistan Transitional Administration by coordinating financial assistance to the Government to meet serious funding shortfalls in the salaries of civil servants. The Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund also funded priority reconstruction projects, and was one of the funding sources designed to facilitate the return of skilled Afghans interested in helping to rebuild their country. The Asian Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank, UNDP and the World Bank jointly manage the Fund with the latter serving as the Fund's Administrator.

***The Afghan Interim Authority Fund*** US \$73.4 million contributed by donors to the AIAF were used to pay for re-establishing the civil service, including recruitment, salary payment, winterization of government buildings, office equipment and vehicles, and other essential costs required to sustain the new Authority. Despite the absence of financial infrastructure or even basic public payrolls data (estimates on the total number of civil servants varied from 10,000 to 230,000), a civil service payroll system was set up within the Ministry of Finance just one month after the signing of the Bonn Agreement. From January to July 2002, salary payrolls were re-established for all 32 provinces of Afghanistan, salary payment control systems were installed in the Ministry of Finance, finance staff was trained, including in information and communication technology skills, and emergency repairs were completed for 30 ministerial offices of the Afghan Interim Authority. The AIAF further supported the commissions created under the Bonn Agreement, including the Emergency Loya Jirga that endorsed the Transitional Administration led by President Hamid Karzai.

The AIAF effectively ceased operations at the end of the Interim Authority's tenure in June 2002. Due to standing commitments, including payrolls for the Interim Authority's last month - 22 May through 21 June - disbursements continued to be made from the Fund until all commitments were settled. A total of US \$71 million was expended and the savings of US \$2.3 million were transferred to the World Bank-administered Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund as originally foreseen.

The AIAF was instrumental in establishing the legitimacy of the Interim Authority. During the six months of the Interim Authority's tenure, the AIAF ensured the retention of civil servants, facilitated the re-establishment of basic services, assisted in the preparation of a national development framework, helped build basic capacity to coordinate assistance, and helped organize a major donor conference in Kabul. The Emergency Loya Jirga, also funded from the AIAF, marked a break with the violent past and constituted a first step towards the establishment of democracy in Afghanistan. The AIAF modality proved a flexible tool for quick resource mobilization, rapid disbursement of budget support and early institution building for the international community. The immediate disbursement of assistance significantly reduced the risk of an early relapse into conflict.

UNDP's management of the AIAF under the overall leadership of the SRSB and

within the integrated framework of UNAMA demonstrated the benefit of using UNDP's implementation capacity in support of an integrated United Nations mission, creating a possible precedent for the future. Based on the experience in Afghanistan, UNDP now plans to provide operational support to United Nations peacekeeping and peace-building operations by establishing a service line within its Thematic Trust Fund for Crisis Prevention and Recovery for providing support to transitional authorities in the immediate post-conflict period at the request of the international community.

***The Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan*** While the bulk of the functions performed under the AIAF were transferred over to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, the donor community opted to continue funding the national civil police force through UNDP. LOFTA was established for the purpose in May 2002 with the following priorities:

- Payment of police staff salaries nationwide
- Acquisition of non-lethal equipment
- Rehabilitation of department facilities
- Recruitment and training
- Institutional development

The project has been implemented in three phases, the duration of which was linked to donor funding cycles. UNDP established a computerized unit to manage an Electronic Payroll System for the police force. Software prepared by the project was tested in Kabul and Ghazni provinces and subsequently rolled out to other provinces. Staff in police headquarters was trained in 20-day workshops and computers were issued for the rollout to provinces. The project also collected personnel data and computerized personnel records have been established for the first time. Files for some 21,350 personnel have been verified and entered. Budget, revenue (from fines and penalties) and non-salary expenditures have been fully computerized as have the payment of salaries and benefits and attendance records.

UNDP procured a range of equipment for the police services: four hulls for helicopters, office furnishings and equipment, two vehicles, 34 computers, 490 +610 UAZ 4x4 vehicles, 490 Codan communication systems, and 275 police belts. Computers, generators, copiers, printers and computer desks were procured for 11 provinces and one container was purchased to be used as a store for the project in the Ministry of Industry. LOFTA also enabled construction of 69 highway police check posts on the Turkham-Kabul-Herat highway and six police stations in Ghor, Farah, Maidan and Wardak. The rehabilitation of police stations in three other provinces (Samanghan, Badghis and Zabul) is also planned. A three-month training course on financial management and reporting, and on minimizing expenditures ineligible for coverage by LOFTA has been completed for 47 Ministry of Interior officials from 34 provinces, with the involvement of the Ministry of Finance. Six staff members from the human resource department of the Ministry have been trained in computer data entry.

Implementation, however, has been affected by a shortfall in contributions. The Phase I and II budgets totalled US \$275,846,292, but experienced a shortfall of about 50 percent. The total target budget for Phase III is US \$159,340,000, but shortfalls have been experienced in the final phase as well. There appears to be a degree of donor fatigue setting in, compounded by concern over the reputation and performance of the civil police. The police have a generally bad reputation in Afghanistan and are not trusted by the general population and this may also affect the willingness of donors to contribute to LOTFA. Much work needs to be undertaken to professionalize the police force, but this is not, at least at present, within the purview of the UNDP's programme of support. At present, Germany and the United States are taking the lead in the professional training of the civil police.

Both the AIAF and LOTFA have enabled the continued functioning of essential government institutions. In this, UNDP's role has been principally one of ensuring accountability in the use of funds and in the building of capacity to manage the funds. It has provided relatively little advice in the reform of institutions or in the development of substantive, technical capacity. In the case of the police department, this is a particular problem as the legitimacy of the state's authority is in some ways being compromised by perceived corruption, inefficiency and human rights abuses in police operations.

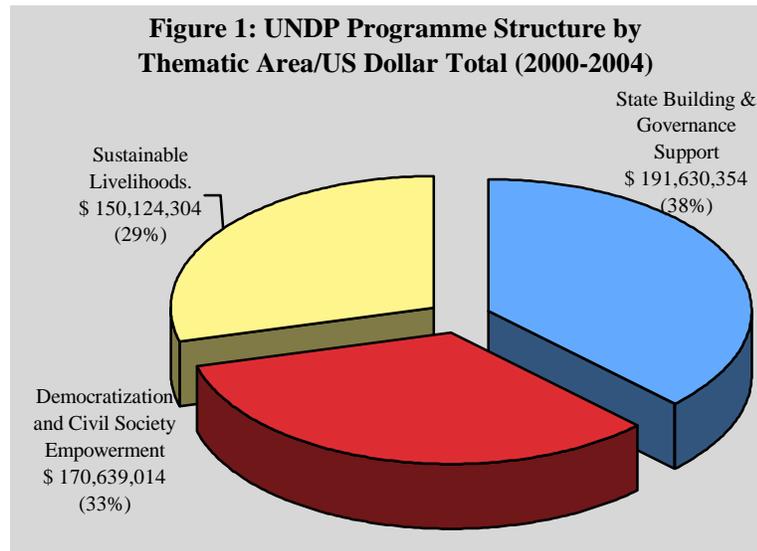
By adopting an 'emergency' service-oriented approach in Afghanistan – moving into voids that other agencies were unable to fill – UNDP has served a valuable function for the United Nations and for the international community. However, it could be argued that it has proved difficult for UNDP to emerge from this emergency service-orientation to a more content-driven strategic approach to long-term peace building and development. Other programmes that should be more strategic and content driven also continue to be process oriented (see below). Both because the transition has been so fast and because of the approach adopted by UNDP, it could be argued that the political and institutional changes that have taken place since 2002 are just surface deep and the future stability of institutions and democracy itself remains precarious.

***Counter-Narcotics Trust Fund*** The UNDP has established a trust fund to help the Government attract and manage funds in support of the Government's National Drug Control Strategy. UNDP's involvement is intended to provide the required transparency and accountability that would enable donors to contribute resources and to ensure greater coherence and coordination in the funding of counter narcotics programmes. The Counter Narcotics Trust Fund is nationally executed, although UNDP plays a very active role in the review and approval of all cash advances. The programme is just in the process of being launched and has no significant outcomes yet. It will address all eight pillars of the National Drug Control Strategy as follows:

1. Alternative livelihoods
2. Institution building
3. Public information and advocacy
4. Enforcement of drug laws
5. Strengthening of criminal justice

6. Poppy eradication
7. Drug demand reduction and treatment of addicts
8. Cross-border cooperation

The fund has an ambitious target of US \$900 million. Only US \$1.8 million has been received to date.



### ***Non-programmatic system-wide service functions***

As in most other countries, and despite the presence of UNAMA, the UNDP provides a wide range of services for most of the agencies that constitute the United Nations Country Team. These include managing both office facilities and the UNAMA Guest House, as well as providing support for coordination of the United Nations Country Team. Because of the presence of UNAMA, security is managed by the main United Nations operation although these functions will no doubt be shifted over to UNDP once the Security Council mandate is completed. These functions are performed on the basis of partial reimbursement by the United Nations agencies concerned, but involve a significant investment of time on the part of UNDP staff responsible for operations. As such, it probably entails a significant subsidy from UNDP's core resources and programme overheads.

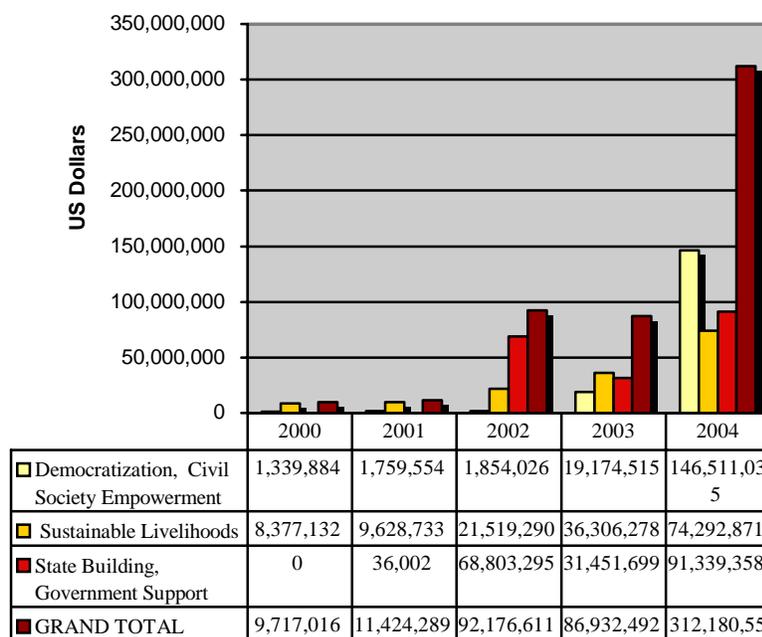
### **3.3 Structure of the UNDP programme**

The UNDP programme covers three themes:

1. State-building and Government support
2. Promotion of sustainable livelihoods
3. Democratization and civil society empowerment

A total of US \$512,393,672 was delivered by UNDP during the period 2000-2004. Of this total, US \$191,630,354 (38 percent) was delivered for state building and Government support, US \$150,124,304 (33 percent) for sustainable livelihoods, and US \$170,639,014 (33 percent) for democratization and civil society empowerment.

**Figure 2: Total Expenditures/US\$**



During the period of the Taliban, UNDP was prohibited from providing support to official structures of the state, but between 2000 and 2002, UNDP's support to Government rose from nil to US \$68,803,295, with only about US \$36,000 being spent in 2001 for programme formulation. 2004 shows a particularly high delivery on democratization and civil society empowerment (approximately US \$147 million). This reflects UNDP's role in the preparation and management of elections rather than a reversion to increased support for civil society organizations that characterized the programme during the civil war and under the Taliban regime.

The programmes and projects under the three thematic areas are as follows:

UNDP Programme of Assistance to Afghanistan (2000-2005)		
Thematic Areas	Programmes	Projects
Promotion of sustainable livelihoods	Reconstruction, rehabilitation and employment generation	National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP)
		Recovery and Employment Afghanistan Programme
		Partnership for Private Sector Development
		Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management for Afghanistan

UNDP Programme of Assistance to Afghanistan (2000-2005)		
Thematic Areas	Programmes	Projects
	Reduction of threats to human security	Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP) Mine Action Capacity Building
	Disaster risk management	Capacity Building of the Government Department of Disaster Preparedness
		National Human Development Report
		HIVAIDS
		Urban Development
State-building and Government support	Strengthening law enforcement & counter narcotics programmes	Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA)
		Law and Order and Counter Narcotics
	Strengthening capacity of public administration	Afghan Interim Authority Fund
		Civil Service Commission Training and Development
		Civil Service Leadership Development
		Public Administration Internship
		Women's Advancement and Equal Opportunities in the Afghan Civil Service
		Afghanistan Information Management Services
		Making Budgets Work
		Bridging the Public Information Gap
		Support to the Diplomatic Institute
		Information and Communication Technology
		Democratization and civil society empowerment
Establishment of the Afghan Legislature		
Promotion of rights and equality	Rebuilding of the Justice Sector of Afghanistan	
	Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission	
	Institutional Capacity Development for the Ministry of Women's Affairs	
	National Programme for Action on Disability	

### A. Promotion of sustainable livelihoods

Poverty and the lack of employment opportunities coupled with a relatively young population and increasing income disparities set a foundation for potential conflict in the future and if unchecked, will take their toll on the growth of democracy. The absence of viable alternatives will continue to entice farmers to produce illicit crops and young men to work with private militias. Both will result in the further proliferation of arms and the violent resolution of localized conflicts. While those interviewed remain for the most part optimistic, there is an urgent need to provide the population with access to productive employment opportunities. UNDP's approach to the problem has been 'downstream', focusing on the rehabilitation of productive infrastructure that small producers utilize. Its programme has relatively little policy content. Nor does the experience gained downstream appear to be used to inform policy work. Yet substantive strategic policy changes in the fiscal environment and the creation of incentives for small-scale entrepreneurship are key to long-term success both in the generation of income and in the provision of essential services on a sustainable basis. There is an

urgent need for the UNDP to engage with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Government in a policy dialogue to address these issues as soon as possible.

*National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP)* This project aims to promote urgent recovery and longer-term development in priority areas while building the Government's capacity to lead and coordinate participatory approaches to development in all provinces. NABDP was launched in April 2002 and is now in its second phase. It emphasizes the creation and strengthening of systems and processes for the identification, formulation, planning, management and implementation of projects in the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD).

Phase I of NABDP focused on building MRRD's infrastructure and staff skills. In Phase II, the focus shifted to developing the organizational and management capabilities of the Ministry. Immediate recovery projects have been continued from Phase I into Phase II, reflecting a continuing need to rehabilitate communities affected by conflict.

NABDP activities are divided into three categories:

i) *Immediate recovery* Achievements include:

- The distribution of urea fertilizer to 70,000 vulnerable families.
- The completion of 139 small-scale infrastructure projects including school and hospital construction, water supply, roads and irrigation in 2002-2003. A further 174 projects were funded in 34 provinces of Afghanistan in 2004, of which 21 have been completed. A total of about 900,000 people have benefitted thus far. A further 18 projects in 9 provinces were started in 2005.
- Some 3,300 shelters were completed in three districts of the Shomali Plains, which was one of the areas worst hit by fighting in 2002.
- Some 500 earthquake-resistant shelters were completed in Nahreen in response to the earthquake of March 2003.

ii) *Capacity development*

- Hands-on capacity building has taken place through the preparation of 32 provincial plans with project-funded Provincial Management Advisers and Capacity Development Advisers working closely with MRRD staff on each of the plans to build their capacity.
- Fifteen MRRD provincial offices have been rehabilitated and furnished and 43 MRRD provincial directors attended a five-month training programme organized by BRAC, a Bangladeshi NGO.
- One hundred MRRD staff received English language training in Kabul.
- A Senior Women in Management programme has enabled 19 women from different ministries to receive a six-month training programme in management, computers, English and accounting. The extent to which this has affected the work of women in their ministries has not been systematically monitored.

iii) *Regional economic regeneration* This programme has involved:

- The preparation of feasibility studies for small and medium enterprises such as the Spinzar cotton gin in Kunduz.

- The preparation of studies on the textile, food stuff, livestock and horticulture sectors
- The development of a niche industry for rose oil.

Despite these achievements, the village *shuras* interviewed viewed NABDP as less successful than the World Bank's NSP, as villagers had less ownership of projects implemented under the former. Priorities are heavily influenced by Government officials, reflecting the effort to strengthen the role and capacity of state institutions.

While MRRD and project staff do consult local *shuras*, the *shuras* themselves have relatively little influence in prioritization. NABDP does not focus heavily on community mobilization. This is ironic as this approach is reminiscent of area development projects implemented by the World Bank in the 1970s, while the community-based, community-managed programme implemented by the World Bank in Afghanistan is more in line with UNDP's area-based development programme modality that was first started by UNDP in Sudan in the mid-1980s and Nepal in the 1990s. It then later developed into a post-conflict peace-building and development model in Central America and Cambodia and was promulgated in many countries including Tajikistan.

NSP has established new elected *shuras*, ensuring that younger, professionally trained individuals are brought in to participate in meetings, and in several instances, heads of the *shura* are no longer restricted to the village elders. Parallel women's *shuras* have also been created with some funds allocated to them. However, the women's *shuras* have to communicate their needs to the World Bank, UNDP project staff and MRRD through the men's *shura*, which no doubt provides the men with considerable control over the priorities funded.

Originally launched as a direct execution programme with the United Nations Office for Project Services and the Food and Agriculture Organization involved as associated agencies, the NABDP was converted to national execution in July 2002 following the formation of an internationally recognized Government. The programme has five international advisers. None of the national or international advisers working directly with the *shuras* and local authorities are women. For security reasons, the advisers now work from Kabul. The quality of national field personnel recruited appears to be low and while standard UNDP procurement procedures are employed for infrastructure rehabilitation, the monitoring of implementation is uneven at best. Although the mission did not get to visit many sub-projects, one of the few that it visited – a new, very fancy school construction in the Shomali Plains for over 1,000 pupils – was being completed on a rather marginal plot of land without any piped water for the 26 toilets included in the blueprint. When asked, the project foreman indicated that piping had not been provided for in the project plans or in the budget.

The NABDP is not being used to influence national policy – for instance by introducing greater decentralization in decision-making. Rather, it has continued to strengthen existing mechanisms and approaches to rural rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, most of which are centralized and inefficient if not ineffective. Indeed, it is apparent that most decisions, particularly those that require resource allocation, have to

be referred back to Kabul. The result is that decision-making is relatively slow and there appears to be a penchant for relatively large projects that are identified by the district offices of the MRRD.

The creation of jobs and incomes for people throughout the country, and in rural areas in particular, is clearly one of the most important challenges in post-war Afghanistan. Providing small-scale businesses with some technical and management advice and support, and even more importantly, with access to micro-lending, is perhaps one of the greatest needs at the present time. Village *shuras* and ex-combatants who we interviewed suggested a range of income-generating ideas, such as carpet weaving, honey production or mud brick production. Such assistance needs to be linked to changes in macroeconomic policies that encourage small enterprises. Unfortunately, the weakest link under the NABDP is the economic regeneration programme. The approach adopted – implementation of feasibility studies of dubious quality for relatively large-scale industries – is unlikely to have any long-term impact both because it is focused on schemes that were favoured during the Soviet period and because under the present circumstances, both investment and market access are insufficient for them to be viable.

Finally, the NADBP does not appear to build on or learn from the successes of the PEACE programme and earlier community-based programmes that were implemented in Afghanistan during the civil war. These programmes were largely implemented through civil society organizations and NGOs, and relied upon the mobilization of local communities at the village level; a model that is very different from the NADBP.

*Recovery and Employment Afghanistan Programme* This programme, implemented in Kabul, Kandahar and Jalalabad from March 2002 onwards, is intended to provide short-term employment to vulnerable groups. Some 260 projects have been implemented and some 40,000 jobs created. Most jobs have been in the construction of infrastructure – construction of public baths, some 285 kms of road, 330 culverts, 150 kms of irrigation canals, rehabilitation of 12 parks, 660 kms of drainage canals, etc.

The programme has made active efforts to target women as it remains culturally difficult to mainstream them in labour-based construction programmes. Ten vocational training programmes specifically targeted women and a number of women's gardens (*baghzanana*) were rehabilitated. Despite this, while women benefitted from the improvement of urban infrastructure in general, the programme did not greatly increase the employment of women.

As with other UNDP programmes in Afghanistan, questions have been raised about the quality of contract supervision and monitoring, although the evaluation mission did not have a chance to directly assess this from a technical standpoint.

There is no doubt that one of the outcomes of the project was the rehabilitation of large areas of some of Afghanistan's major cities and their environs. However, although employment generation was one of the principal objectives of the programme, it is not clear why there was no systematic attempt to maximize the use of labour; most

construction projects were implemented as standard subcontracts. In the past, UNDP has closely partnered with the International Labour Organization to implement large scale, labour-based public works programmes that employ methods to maximise the use of manpower. This modality has been applied in post-conflict situations in particular, with a view to supporting the reintegration of war affected populations in countries such as Sudan, Cambodia and Mozambique. Indeed, such programmes have become a well-recognized product line, and the partnership between UNDP and the International Labour Organization could readily be replicated in Afghanistan, with its established construction standards and ratios between supervisory services and construction workers.

*Partnership for Private Sector Development* UNDP helped establish an Afghan Business Centre, which has assisted over 30 businesses in developing their business plans and loan applications. Two market studies have been completed in seven sectors for small and medium enterprises. The project has also helped the Ministry of Commerce establish a database of registered companies and has sponsored several roundtables and conferences.

Access to markets and credit and the rule of law are critical factors for small businesses, as is the regulatory framework and the protection of assets. Land grabbing has become a major problem as individuals in official positions and with access to militias continue to impose their will. Most investment in the country therefore has a short horizon and the most lucrative form of private activity continues to be in the non-productive sector; trade and construction constitute the backbone of the post-conflict economy. A programme of support to the private sector needs to be developed based on a more systematic analysis of the problems faced by entrepreneurs so that its impact is greater. While this project is a good start, there is a need to address weaknesses in the legislation and regulatory framework to create incentives for sustained private investment.

*Capacity Building for Sustainable Land Management for Afghanistan* Implemented in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme, this is perhaps one of the few UNDP programmes that does not directly support peace-building and the project has begun to lay a basic, if somewhat precarious, foundation for environmental programmes in Afghanistan. One of the achievements under the programme is the creation of a few institutional focal points in the Government to address some of the more pressing environmental issues. For instance, an office has been established in the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry to work on the issues of land management; technical support was provided in planning the Greening Afghanistan Initiative led by the United Nations Country Team, which involves planting trees in urban and peri-urban areas.

### ***Reduction of threats to human security***

Security sector reform in Afghanistan is composed of five pillars: i) DDR; ii) creation of the Afghan National Army; iii) creation of the Afghan National Police; iv) the war on drugs; and v) judicial reform. UNDP has supported all five pillars.

*The Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme (ANBP)* is one of the cornerstones of UNDP's post-conflict involvement. It is a programme for DDR of the Afghan Military Forces and has been managed by UNDP with Japan as the lead donor. A total of US \$145 million was required under the programme, and a shortfall of only US \$5 million was experienced.

The programme focused on the disarmament and demobilization of some 63,000 combatants from the Afghan Military Forces, which consisted of former militias that had been placed under the authority of the Ministry of Defence in 2001. Over 20,000 ex-combatants have completed the ANBP reintegration process and over 11,000 heavy weapons have been cantoned. The ANBP has declared Jalalabad, Kahdahar, Gardez, Mazar-e-Sharif and Bamyán to be free of all known working or repairable heavy weapons. Kabul too has been declared free of heavy weapons by ISAF. The cantonment of heavy weapons has been the most successful part of the programme and has greatly reduced the risk of internicine fighting among former commanders. A further 9,000 light weapons have been handed over, although there has been less success than in the case of heavy weapons. Over 611 ammunition caches have been secured and over 1,200 anti-personnel and 500 anti-tank mines have been destroyed.

Former Afghan Military Force members including commanders, officers and soldiers were assisted in finding alternative sources of income including demining, vocational training and job placement, agricultural activities, contracting teams, small businesses, teacher training, and placement in the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police. There is no follow-up data to ascertain whether these packages of assistance have been fully utilized and successful, although it is generally understood that the reintegration process has been less intensive and as a consequence, less effective than the disarmament and demobilization.

Equally importantly, the ANBP has mapped illegal armed groups throughout the country and over 1,800 such units have been identified. Provincial weapons collection points have been established for the voluntary submission of weapons under the Disarmament of Illegal Armed Groups Programme. Some 14,000 weapons and 20,000 boxes of ammunition have been verified and some 8,000 heavy and light weapons have been collected.

The Disarmament of Illegal Armed Groups Programme constitutes an interesting innovation that has been possible because of the credible threat of force resulting from the presence of NATO forces in ISAF. The Programme involves a voluntary phase followed by an enforcement phase. Warlords have been enticed to disband their militias and give up their arms in order to be able to run for political office and gain influence through the newly vitalized political process. Failure to voluntarily relinquish weapons leads to enforcement action by the Afghan National Army and ISAF. The UNDP will continue to be involved through the voluntary phase. The political will for enforcement on the part of the international community has yet to be tested.

The Afghan National Army involves some 70,000 personnel and has a basic operational budget of US \$250-300 million per year. In the immediate post-conflict phase, the United States Government covered the entire operational budget. US \$120 million is now contributed from the national budget and the remainder comes from several donor countries. This progressive transfer of the budgetary burden is expected to continue over the next couple of years. It should be noted that the budgetary requirements of the Afghan National Army continue to rise as insurgency and other destabilizing activities in the south of the country increase; this increase has led to extensive 'cordon and search' operations being undertaken by the Afghan National Army. Over time, the equipment of the Afghan National Army will also need to be replaced as much of what is currently being used is outdated and worn out from years of use.

A major problem in both the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police is the role of former militias. The Afghan National Police is a mixture of professional police and demobilized militias. Typically, the middle and junior ranks consist of regular policemen and the Mujahideen occupy the higher ranks. There are some 300 generals and 2,500 colonels, all of whom receive much higher salaries than the lower ranks. In Kapisa, the local police chief, a professional, said that training was not the major problem faced by the police, but rather it was the presence of "donkeys...you can't turn a donkey into a horse...". The Afghan National Army consists entirely of demobilized combatants. The first Minister of Defence, Qasim Fahimi, was himself a commander and led the largest militia (largely Tajiks from the Panjshir valley and the Shamali plain). He staffed the Ministry with his own commanders and some 90 out of 100 generals came from his faction.

A highly critical report from the International Crisis Group suggests that militia leaders were able to "...subvert the DDR programme with the tacit support of the central government and/or the US-led coalition." Afghan Military Force commanders were reassigned to civilian posts "...particularly as governors and police chiefs. These offices fall outside the ambit of the ANBP, so commanders can employ their former militiamen as police, maintain patronage links with sub-commanders and protect their economic interests." (ICG 2005, p 6-7)

*Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan* UNDP has supported mine clearance under this Programme, which was originally established in 1989 and consists of the United Nations Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan and 16 implementing partners. The current effort entails a gradual process of capacity development so that the entire Programme can be transferred to Afghan hands. UNDP has helped prepare a transition plan and draft legislation for establishing a national mine action agency, and has also undertaken a detailed performance assessment of the United Nations Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan in order to structure the transition better. A Chief Technical Adviser is assisting in strategic planning for mine action as the transfer takes place, contributing to organizational development. The Advisor is helping to carry out a training needs assessment and designing a human resource development plan for the future national mine action agency.

The fact that mine action capacity has not been created for so long is surprising, even in the face of all of the political factors that mitigated against the creation of a national facility. UNDP has, with the international community, developed models for national mine action services elsewhere in the world and it would be very useful if the Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Recovery identified best practices with a view to ensuring that the Afghan service benefits from the experience gained.

### ***Disaster risk management***

*Capacity building of the Department of Disaster Preparedness* Situated as it is in an earthquake prone zone and because of extensive deforestation and inappropriate land management throughout the civil war, Afghanistan is particularly prone to earthquakes, floods and landslides. These can pose a serious challenge, especially when one considers the regional tribal and clan overtones that are such an important part of Afghanistan's post-conflict body politic. The UNDP has worked with UNAMA, the Asian Development Bank and the Government to strengthen the Department of Disaster Preparedness. UNDP has supported basic capacity building, training staff in the use of office equipment including computers. Office and communications equipment have been provided and installed. UNDP is currently working with the Department of Disaster Preparedness on the preparation of a disaster management plan for the country. The full outcome of the programme has yet to be seen. The programme has received US \$1.3 million and has a current shortfall of US \$500,000.

*HIV/AIDS* The current incidence of HIV/AIDS in the country is not known as sentinel testing is weak. However, Afghanistan's porous borders, the importance of cross-border trade and the extensive use of injectable drugs both in Afghanistan and in neighbouring countries make Afghanistan vulnerable to an increase in prevalence. A National HIV/AIDS Control Programme was defined in mid-2003 by the Ministry of Public Health and its first five-year plan defines surveillance and research, prevention of HIV, prevention and management of other sexually transmitted diseases, blood safety and voluntary testing, counseling and treatment as priorities. UNDP's assistance to the sector has just begun with a programme designed to facilitate a multi-sectoral response to HIV/AIDS and to develop the knowledge and capacity of the Ministry of Health to implement a comprehensive programme of action. The programme has only recently got underway and it is too early to ascertain its outcomes. The programme has a target budget of US \$590,000 and US \$200,000 has been received thus far.

## **B. State building and Government support**

The LOTFA programme, which is an important part of UNDP's support to state building, has been discussed above as has the Counter Narcotics Trust Fund (CNTF). Other cornerstone projects include the following.

*Support to the Civil Service Commission – training and development* Thus far, UNDP's contribution to capacity development of the civil service has taken the form of training. Relatively little attention has been paid to broader policy issues and the reform and

development of systems. The Department of Training of the Independent Administrative Reform Commission was created by Presidential decree in May 2002 and a training needs assessment was conducted. UNDP helped prepare a training policy based on the needs assessment and funded a major civil service leadership development training programme. Some 550 individuals drawn from the top three grades of the civil service were trained. It is not clear what follow-up monitoring, if any, has been conducted to ascertain how those trained have applied the principles imparted. Training centres have been established in each ministry; 40 people have been trained in basic office skills in a six-month course and 20 staff members at the managerial level have been trained in office skills, communications, project management, procurement and financial management in a three-week course. Over 3,000 individuals have been trained at the centre and in the provinces. The effectiveness of capacity development will depend on significant reform of civil service policies including:

- i) A manifold increase in salaries and benefits
- ii) A reduction in the total number of individuals on the payroll
- iii) A reduction in the number of government institutions based on a rationalization of the functions to be performed by the executive branch of government.

Several factors make the required reforms difficult to implement, at least in the medium term. The wage bill, which amounts to US \$380 million, constitutes some 56 percent of the national operating budget while the average civil service salary is just US \$10 per month with a further US \$40 per month paid in food and other allowances. It is estimated that the average civil servant would require some US \$500 per month for basic survival, a figure that is unlikely to be tenable even with a 50 percent cut in the size of the civil service. (Some salary increases have been instated for those who have received refresher training, raising their monthly salaries to a hugely improved US \$200, but such changes will be difficult to instate across the board.) Immediately after the fall of the Taliban, the former commanders, as one person put it, "...occupied the administration". The consequence is very low capacity especially at the provincial and district level; we were told that some 30 to 40 percent of district chiefs were illiterate. This hugely complicates efforts to achieve rapid downsizing. The Head of the Civil Service Commission told us "There are some good people...but they are very few and they have very little influence."

*Civil Service Leadership Development* The project is designed to assist the Civil Service Commission in the implementation of its new Civil Service Leadership Development Strategy. The objective is to strengthen the capacity of key senior civil servants in priority national government institutions and will provide at least 550 senior civil servants with competency-based training, career development programmes and management training. The programme, which was signed in April 2005, began by establishing its delivery capacity. Outcomes can only be reasonably assessed in a few years. The programme's target budget is US \$3.4 million. About half of this total has been received to date.

*Public Administration Internship Programme* Along with the Civil Service Commission, UNDP is supporting a small group of outstanding graduate and post-graduate students to get exposure to the work of line ministries in areas of relevance to their field of study. Sixteen female and eight male interns have been selected for the process and have been assigned to work in a range of ministries and Government agencies such as Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Justice, Parliament, the High Court and the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission itself. Having only just begun, it is too early to assess the outcome of this initiative. The total cost of the programme is just US \$34,000.

*Women's Advancement and Equal Opportunities in the Afghan Civil Service* Also at a very early stage of implementation, the project has only undertaken a needs assessment mission to ascertain the status of women in the civil service and their career prospects. The strategy of specifically targeting women is essential in the Afghan context. There are certain cultural factors that require particular attention if they are to be overcome, and the status and role of women in positions of authority – particularly through in-service advancement as opposed to political appointment – needs to be improved following years of Mujahideen and Taliban influence.

*Making Budgets Work* Intended to build capacity to monitor budget implementation – particularly at a time when so much budget support is being provided to the Government – the programme has helped institutionalize a donor database and track over 90 percent of ODA being provided to the country. It has also supported the preparation of the national budget (2005-2006) and has helped establish systems for monitoring achievements, financing gaps, implementation constraints and activities across some 16 major national programmes. The programme has established guidelines for the preparation of the Public Investment Programme and has established a Portfolio Management and Monitoring and Budget Coordination Unit. The programme has involved a team of 42 young Afghan professionals who are being gradually integrated into the Ministry of Finance. It has a target budget of US \$6.4 million, of which US \$5.4 million has been received.

*Bridging the Public Information Gap* Public perceptions are a crucial factor in the implementation of post-conflict recovery; perceptions are often as important as facts. Failure to convey the full extent of progress achieved to the public can lead to major setbacks and even a loss of legitimacy on the part of the Government. This programme has helped the President's Office develop a public information policy and disseminate daily and weekly reports on achievements. Six media units have been established – the news and media relations unit, the media monitoring unit, the media production unit, the publication unit, the strategic communication planning unit, and the provincial public information unit. Unlike in many other post-conflict countries where such public information efforts have been internalized within the United Nations operation, UNDP's effort to create national capacity for the purpose is a very positive strategy. The President's Office, however, faces an uphill struggle as the interviews conducted by the evaluation team suggest that the public perceptions of the performance of the

Government, the Parliament, judiciary and international community have all deteriorated in the past year.

*Afghanistan Information Management Services* Most of the maps currently used in Afghanistan have been produced with support from the Afghanistan Information Management Services project. This project has provided services to the Government, United Nations, international community and NGOs in the development of a GIS database at the Cartographical Institute and in the Ministry of Economy, which is responsible for economic planning. Capacity building has been provided at the centre; in addition to the establishment of the database and the coding of new provinces and regions, this has involved training in the use of GIS software, management of databases, English and cartography. The maps and database created have, among other things, been used for disaster management, but most of the demand has been from the international community. There have been some problems in retaining personnel as the UNDP has resisted the payment of salary supplements to project personnel, a practice that is common in externally funded projects in Afghanistan.

*Information and Communications Technology* This project has been relatively successful. When the project was launched, telephones were not available outside Kabul and only CODAN radio transmissions were available in the country. Cell phones have now proliferated, and telekiosks have been introduced in several areas in Kabul. Numerous internet cafes have opened, and an Afghan domain name has been introduced. With CISCO involvement and USAID funding under the UNDP projects, IT training has been conducted in Mazar, and Herat, and will soon be replicated in Kandahar and Khost. UNDP has also supported the rehabilitation of facilities.

### **C. Democratization and civil society empowerment**

*Promotion of Rights and Equality* UNDP has assisted the Government with the preparation of a 10-year plan for reform and strengthening of the justice sector called 'Justice for All' that was recently approved by the Cabinet.

There are around 384 courts in Afghanistan, and some 30-40 have been rehabilitated or fully reconstructed since the war. Most courts however, still lack basic equipment and transportation. The level of training of judges is low and has not been renewed in the past 30 years. Salaries of judges are low, with few earning more than US \$30 per month, excluding food and other allowances. Threats of physical violence against members of the judiciary are frequent. Many of the courts are non-functional and all are dependent on the local executive branch of government for their salaries, transportation and security, and for the operating budget of the courts,. This makes judges more prone to outside influence and can compromise their independence. It has certainly contributed to public perception of corruption in the judiciary, particularly as many instances of criminality involve local government officials or militia and others associated with the local authorities.

UNDP has supported the strengthening of the justice sector, including the Supreme Court. In addition to the rehabilitation of facilities and the procurement of equipment, UNDP has helped capacity building of the court administration by providing computer, management and English language courses. Members of the Supreme Court look to other Islamic systems for training and interpretation of the Sharia law and suggested to the mission that UNDP should facilitate access to contacts with the judiciary in Iran. UNDP has, along with USAID and the Italian Government, provided training for some 300-350 judges in commercial, criminal, civil and constitutional law, criminology and criminal investigation, juvenile justice and judicial methods. UNDP has also provided advisory services to the Law Curriculum Development Committee of the Faculty of Law and Political Science of Kabul University in the preparation of a new curriculum for legal studies. In November 2005, the UNDP approved a project entitled Access to Justice at the District Level, which focuses on improving people's ability to access justice at the district level through formal and informal justice mechanisms. The Access to Justice project will adopt a bottom-up approach to justice sector development, focusing on capacity building of justice sector staff at the district level with a view to entrenching the rule of law nationwide by balancing activities at the centre and the district levels. It was too early at the time of the mission to evaluate the project's results.

*Institutional capacity development for the Ministry of Women's Affairs* UNDP has provided institutional capacity development for the Ministry of Women's Affairs and its 34 provincial offices, focusing on creating capacity for advocacy and training. The project has helped establish a computer centre in the Ministry, which has trained some 450 students in the basic use of computers, and has supported 28 women in the completion of programmes for CISCO certification. A further 79 students are undergoing CISCO certification at present. Gender training has been provided in 11 line ministries including the Ministries of Justice, Education, Commerce, Economy, Health, Interior, Foreign Affairs, Information and Culture, Pilgrimage and Religious Affairs, Higher Education, Rural Rehabilitation and Development and the Martyrs and Disabled. Government offices in 10 provinces have been covered including in most of the populous ones: Bamiyan, Badakshan, Mazar, Ghazni, Logar, Herat, Kandahar and Parwan. A total of 205 people have received gender orientation seminars and 405 people (male and female) have been trained in gender awareness, gender and development and gender analysis. A total of 225 Ministry of Women's Affairs staff have been trained in report writing, management and accounting, covering the provincial offices in Kunduz, Herat, Bamiyan, Parwan and Nangahar. Under the UNDP project, the Ministry of Women's Affairs has undertaken a survey of women's conditions in nine provinces: Nooristan, Zabul, Panjshir, Daikundi, Badghis, Orozgan, Paktia, Samangan and Ghor. Drafts of gender awareness manuals have also been produced.

It is difficult to ascertain the actual impact of the project on the condition of women or the way in which gender issues are taken into account in policy decisions at the present time as the project has not collected such data. It is fair to say that the role of women has improved considerably in urban areas since the fall of the Taliban, but the reintegration of women into the mainstream of government and economic life is still at an early stage.

*Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission* UNDP has supported the Commission since its establishment as a result of the Bonn Agreement and a Presidential decree in June 2002. UNDP has managed funds that have been channeled to the Commission. The Commission has established six units: i) Investigation and Monitoring; ii) Transitional Justice; iii) Women's Rights; iv) Child Rights; v) Human Rights and Education; and vi) Research, Policy and the Media. The UNDP programme has continually funded workshops on women's rights, child rights and human rights in Kabul and in all regional and provincial offices. It has also supported the production of radio and television broadcasts on human rights issues. The Chief Technical Adviser of the UNDP project and some thematic technical advisers have worked with the Commission on human rights education and women's rights. The latter advisers completed their contracts in 2004. The Human Rights Commission expressed considerable frustration with UNDP because of:

- high support costs associated with UNDP's management of funds
- bureaucratic procedures and extensive delays in the recruitment of experts and consultants
- the inability of experts provided to adapt and to contribute to the work of the Commission under the conditions prevailing

The UNDP has just begun a project with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency to build the capacity of the Women's International Affairs and Human Rights Unit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to report on implementation in fulfilment of its commitments to the following international conventions:

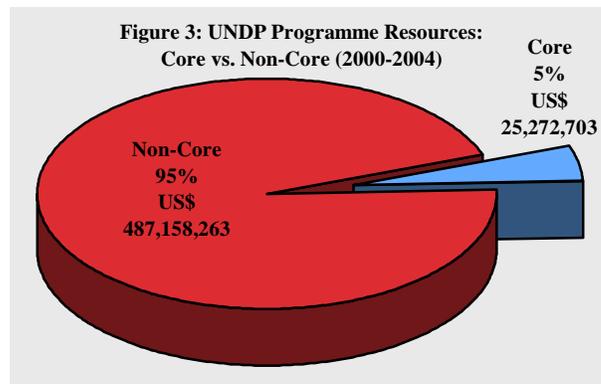
- Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Covenant on Political and Civil Rights
- Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
- Convention Against Torture
- Convention on the Rights of the Child

*Voter registration and elections* UNDP has provided massive support to the Joint Electoral Management Body in the implementation of the Presidential, Parliamentary, and Provincial and District Council elections. Funds channeled through UNDP were used for purchasing computers, registering voters, inputting data, preparing ballots, counting, recording and analysis of votes, creating an independent Electoral Complaints Commission and establishing an Electoral Media Commission. Funds channeled by the international community through UNDP amounted to US \$71.7 million for the Presidential elections and US \$172 million for the Provincial and District Council elections. They covered in-country as well as overseas registration and voting by eligible voters. The single major criticism of this effort is that it was geared to meeting the relatively unrealistic deadlines laid out in the Bonn Agreement. The principal focus was on 'getting the job done' and very little long-term national capacity has been established. In addition, the timeline established by the Bonn Agreement did not provide sufficient time to ensure the quality of elections, particularly the vetting of candidates to ensure that

they were not linked with any armed groups. Although funding is no longer available in such large volumes, the UNDP needs to urgently turn its attention to the fine-tuning of systems, and the recruitment, training and retention of appropriate staff. It also needs to ensure that the staffing and operational costs associated with all elections are fully provided for in the national budget and that sufficient capacity is created so that future elections can be managed without external support. By all accounts, this goal is a long way off.

UNDP supported the Free and Fair Election Foundation, a coalition of civil society organizations established to monitor the Presidential and Parliamentary elections. The coalition was able to cover some 25 percent of the polling stations nationwide and 30 percent of the observers were women. UNDP funded transportation, stationery and other operational costs. This did not, however, substitute for the need to strengthen the capacity of the Electoral Complaints Commission, which does not have sufficient staff or funds to undertake the investigations required to deal with the problems reported to them.

*Support to the Establishment of Afghan Legislature* Under this newly approved project, UNDP is supporting the newly elected bicameral Parliament, which consists of the Wolsej Jirga (lower house) and the Meshrano Jirga (upper house). Comparative experience is being imparted to newly elected members of Parliament as UNDP has brought in members of Parliament from several democratic countries in Asia, Africa and Europe. The project will also provide training to the Secretariat of the Parliament in administration and financial management. Information and communication technology systems are being established throughout the Parliament and support is also being provided for public information and ensuring the transparency of proceedings. Funding to cover the basic running costs of both houses is also being managed by UNDP. To date, several task forces have been established and some 123 staff have been trained. Rules of procedure have been drafted and adopted as have staff regulations and security regulations. Staff has received computer training, and the British Council has provided training in English. Essential equipment has been procured, parliamentary facilities have been renovated, and LAN, VSAT, telecommunications and voice intercom systems have been installed in the National Assembly building.



### **3.4 Sources of funding**

Just five percent of the resources used for UNDP's programmes during the period 2000-2004 were derived from its core resources (TRAC 1, 2 & 3). Much of these core resources were used either for programme preparation or as seed money to attract non-core resources.

A significant portion of the US \$487 million of non-core resources channeled through UNDP from 2000-2004 was for direct budget support. UNDP provided a service to the transitional Government and the international community, ensuring sound financial management for salaries and wages and other operational costs of the civil service and the civil police in the absence of reliable systems or capacity in the Government. Some of these funds were subsequently used to establish systems and to train staff in the Treasury and relevant line institutions in the accountable management of resources.

Although a fund was established under the World Bank to manage resources for Afghanistan, donors generally opted to fund UNDP programmes directly as the processes applied by the World Bank were too slow; the rapidity with which UNDP was able to provide fiduciary resource management was a major advantage in the period immediately following the United States-Afghan war in 2001-2002, as was the reliability of UNDP's financial management procedures.

On the other hand, the lack of core resources made UNDP more reactive to donor interests and policies. UNDP was also governed by the needs identified as a part of the Bonn process and by individual donors. UNDP could afford to place less effort on taking the lead in defining the international community's peace-building strategy in the post-conflict period.

The lack of core resources and the voluntary nature of the funding of development assistance has resulted in a severe uncertainty in funding. For example, the NABDP, one of the most important programmes for the creation of sustainable livelihoods in rural Afghanistan, has a target budget of US \$182 million, of which just US \$42 million has been received. While the promise of development assistance leads to raised expectations and considerable work being done on the identification of needs, funding uncertainties often result in large components of programmes being left unfulfilled. In the programme for civil police, for example, while large volumes of resources have been used for payment of salaries and other operational costs, the all important training programmes have been left unfunded.

### **3.5 Summary**

The programme in Afghanistan is one of UNDP's largest and has been characterized by a concerted effort to move as rapidly as possible to fill critical gaps in the immediate post-war period, and to provide a conduit and reliable, transparent financial and managerial oversight for funds from a range of donors in an environment characterized by weak national institutions and insufficient management capacity. The Bonn Agreement has

dictated the overall strategy and positioning of the programme. To this extent, the UNDP has been active in all of the key areas related to the implementation of the Agreement and has fully supported the broader United Nations Security Council mandate.

The international community has adopted a phased approach to the post-conflict period and UNDP has had to operate accordingly. By all accounts, UNDP has demonstrated considerable nimbleness and speed in filling gaps in the immediate post-conflict phase. It has successfully managed payment of the salaries of all civil servants and of the police force at a time when the Treasury functions of the Ministry of Finance were unreliable and the banking system non-existent. UNDP has since developed government capacity to take over these essential functions.

UNDP has programmes in most of the areas considered to be of critical importance to long-term recovery: rule of law (judiciary, police), elections, parliament, area-based rural development, sustainable livelihoods and DDR. UNDP has also supported programmes to strengthen the national response to natural disasters. Each of these programmes have their strengths and weaknesses and they are discussed at some length below. Over 95 percent of UNDP's programme is implemented with non-core resources.

While UNDP's management of funds has facilitated and enabled the work of essential government institutions, it has not adequately addressed either the capacity-building functions or the essential reforms of the institutions concerned. For instance, while UNDP has managed funds under the LOTFA programme, which enabled the continued functioning of the national police force, the retraining of police was addressed in parallel under bilateral programmes and UNDP has not had much say in the substantive content of such programmes. In other areas, such as the management of elections, UNDP has focused on direct support and the development of sustainable national capacity has been largely overlooked.

Following a return to Afghanistan in the wake of the invasion and the fall of the Taliban, the UNDP programme shifted from one almost exclusively focused on civil society and community-based institutions and NGOs to one entirely oriented towards the strengthening of government institutions. This has, perhaps inadvertently, served to reinforce centralized decision-making and has limited the effectiveness of programmes that target the development of communities in rural areas. This is in marked contrast to community-based programmes implemented in Afghanistan in the past and to models of community-based programmes that UNDP has applied in other conflict-affected countries.

The scope and geographic reach of UNDP's programme in Afghanistan is severely limited by security concerns. This has also raised the 'cost of doing business' and it is unlikely that the security conditions will improve in the near future. Innovative solutions are probably required, but will further reduce the cost-efficiency of programmes.

## 4. Partnerships, coordination and management

### 4.1 The integrated mission

When Lakhdar Brahimi was appointed SRSG for Afghanistan on 3 October 2001, he was given a mandate encompassing political, humanitarian and reconstruction aspects. In a report to the Security Council dated 6 December 2006, the Secretary-General emphasized that the SRSG had "...overarching authority over all United Nations activities in Afghanistan, providing guidance and direction to ensure overall coordination and coherence of action..."<sup>14</sup> From the beginning, the SRSG made it clear that he wanted the United Nations presence to leave a 'light footprint' and concentrate on empowering the Afghan Government. The integrated mission, as it evolved in Afghanistan, did not strictly follow the initial intent.

Despite a mandate that called for directive coordination, the SRSG and UNAMA could not totally rein in United Nations agencies and programmes in the absence of real authority over their budgets, programmes and staff. Coordination, in the end, could be achieved only through guidance and consensus. The new mission also missed the opportunity to draw more fully on the knowledge and experience of staff involved in United Nations programmes and coordination mechanisms that existed between 1988 and 2001. Finally, the integration of the human rights and humanitarian assistance wings of the United Nations in the integrated mission initially raised fears that the necessary independence of these functions could be compromised through subordination to political objectives.

The 'footprint' ended up being anything but light. This was due partly to the rapid and massive deployment of staff by emergency relief agencies competing for visibility and donor funding. The United Nations Department for Peacekeeping Operations itself contributed significantly to this impression of an overwhelming United Nations presence by deploying its standard mission support package, which is heavy on administrative and logistics expatriate staff. For many of the Afghans consulted by the evaluation mission, this large, visible and expensive presence was perceived as a diversion of resources intended for Afghanistan's reconstruction. Others, on the contrary, would have preferred a heavier but more substantive United Nations presence, particularly in the fields of human rights, rule of law and transitional justice.

One of the major new features introduced in Afghanistan was the creation of the post of Deputy SRSG (D-SRSG), bringing together as an integral part of UNAMA the functions of Resident Representative of UNDP, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system and United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator. As mentioned earlier, the

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<sup>14</sup> UNAMA was the first application of the concept of integrated missions derived from the Brahimi Report ('Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations', United Nations document S/2000/809 of 21 August 2001). The quotation is from the Secretary-General's report on 'The Situation in Afghanistan and its Implications for International Peace and Security' United Nations document A/56/681 – S/2001/1157 of 6 December 2001.

directive coordination initially envisaged could not be applied and the D-SRSG had to rely largely on building consensus among the members of the United Nations Country Team.

For UNDP, but also for the United Nations Country Team as a whole, the creation of the post of D-SRSG represented new opportunities and challenges. The D-SRSG, responsible for what became known as the 3Rs pillar<sup>15</sup> of UNAMA (the other pillar being the political one), ensured that the interests and concerns of UNDP and the Country Team were taken into account in defining the Mission's policies and strategies. This formula allowed UNDP to play a central role in UNAMA, particularly by serving as a conduit for donor funding in support of the Bonn political process.

Despite the initial fears regarding the merger of political, humanitarian and human rights mandates, there was a general consensus among persons interviewed by the evaluation team that the introduction of the concept of an integrated United Nations mission in Afghanistan was a major step forward in enhancing coherence within the United Nations system. In practice, however, the integrated mission also meant that some of the functions traditionally performed independently by UNDP were transferred to UNAMA. This concerned mainly the coordination function and the leadership in developing reconstruction and development strategies, two areas now perceived as being in UNAMA's domain. This further strengthened the perception that UNDP was concentrating on service providing activities in support of UNAMA and moving away from its traditional mandate.

Once the traditional coordination responsibilities of the Head of the UNDP country office were taken over by the integrated United Nations structure, there was a resulting modification in the role of UNDP vis-à-vis the United Nations Country Team. The D-SRSG is perceived more as a senior UNAMA officer than as the Head of UNDP in Afghanistan, and the lead role on reconstruction and development issues is naturally assumed by UNAMA. When the D-SRSG chairs the regular meetings of the United Nations Country Team, UNDP becomes just another member around the table. This new separation of roles is reflected in the creation of a new UNDP post of Country Director to oversee the day-to-day management of UNDP programmes and activities. UNDP did assume a central role, however, in supporting the major political achievements of the United Nations in Afghanistan, but this was done mainly in the capacity of provider of support services. The downside is that UNDP lost its traditional leadership role in the formulation of a United Nations strategy for development assistance.

## **4.2 Developing partnerships**

Developing partnerships is central to UNDP's corporate strategy. UNDP aims at establishing working relations with a number of partners within the United Nations system, Governments, donors, the private sector and institutions and organizations of the

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<sup>15</sup> The 3Rs refer to Relief, Recovery and Reconstruction, describing the main areas of responsibility of the D-SRSG.

civil society. In the case of Afghanistan, the international community and the United Nations adopted early on a strategy of strengthening and working through the new legitimate authorities.

The capacity of UNDP and other agencies to work effectively with national authorities has been hampered, however, by the limited capacity of most ministries to develop and implement policies and programmes to standards that would satisfy donors. Although ministries are involved in establishing priorities and approving programmes, most donors still refrain from channelling their funds through the Treasury and opt for direct disbursements to executing agencies approved by the Government. UNDP is no exception to this practice as it has favoured a direct execution mode of implementation (see section 4.3 below). UNDP has nevertheless endeavoured to increase the capacity of ministries and government institutions through specific training projects or by incorporating capacity building and institutional support in most other projects.

UNDP works with donors in Afghanistan in two main areas. The first is UNDP's participation in the complex coordination structure put in place by the Government and the international community. Seventeen Consultative Groups have been created to deal with the major sectors of the reconstruction effort, while six Advisory Groups cover cross-cutting issues. Each Consultative Group is chaired by the ministry responsible for the sector while a lead entity within the international community is assigned the role of a focal point supporting the concerned ministry and generally acting as a Secretariat. Other relevant and interested government institutions and donors participate in the Consultative Groups as members. Although the performance of Consultative Groups varies considerably – with some no longer even meeting – they represent the basic coordination mechanism for assistance to Afghanistan and illustrate the Government's effort to assume full ownership of the reconstruction process. UNDP is a member of 10 out of 17 Consultative Groups and two out of six Advisory Groups. UNDP has not been designated as a focal point for any of the Consultative Groups. This is probably the result of a certain marginalization of UNDP in the early days of the reconstruction effort<sup>16</sup> as well as a reflection of the transfer of a number of substantive coordination functions normally performed directly by UNDP to UNAMA. In contrast, the World Bank acts as focal point or co-focal point for three Consultative Groups.

The second major area in which UNDP works closely with donors is in the management of Trust Funds. As discussed earlier in section 3.2, the capacity of UNDP to move quickly in developing this service for donors was one of the major strengths of the organization. Donors generally see three major advantages in using UNDP-managed Trust Funds. First, UNDP provides a conduit for funding perceived as 'neutral' by both the Government and the donors. Second, smaller donors appreciate the possibility of participating in a larger effort without having to put up an implementation or management capacity of their own. Finally, some donors recognize and appreciate the flexibility shown by UNDP in advancing funds when their own pledges are late to materialize.

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<sup>16</sup> As discussed in sections 3.2 and 4.6 of this report, UNDP was comparatively slow in transferring fully its operations from Islamabad to Kabul in 2002 and in building up its human resources.

It is refreshing to note the excellent relationship between UNDP and the World Bank in Afghanistan. The Head of the World Bank office in Kabul attributed this harmonious relationship to the strong leadership provided by UNAMA and the capacity of the D-SRSG to address in a systematic and pragmatic way any overlap between programmes. In a context where UNDP itself does not have a coordinating mandate, it can more easily become a partner for the World Bank.

Briefing documents prepared by the UNDP country office emphasize that "...all UNDP activities are undertaken in close collaboration with the Government of Afghanistan, UN agencies and donors...". This is in stark contrast with the practice prior to November 2001 when, in the absence of a recognized Government, the international community and the United Nations system worked almost exclusively through NGOs, both international and Afghan, and directly with local communities. Over the last four years on the other hand, the country office has focused on supporting the political work of UNAMA and on assisting selected National Priority Programmes, and the interaction between UNDP, NGOs and the Afghan civil society has remained sporadic at best.

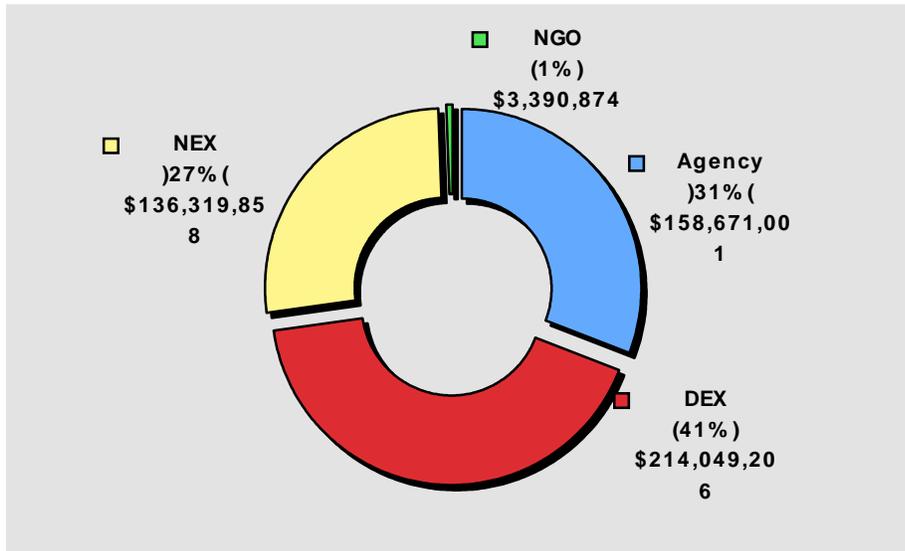
As the Government and the international community prepare to enter a new post-Bonn phase, UNDP is developing a much needed strategy that will give more space to partnerships with the civil society and NGOs. UNDP and the Country Team involved various civil society organizations in the process of formulating the common country assessment (October 2004), leading to the adoption of a two-year United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2006-2008). The latter document states that "...the United Nations system will pay particular attention to the social dimensions of the country's political and economic transformation and will promote increasing participation of civil society, encouraging active public participation and partnership."

### **4.3 Implementation mechanisms**

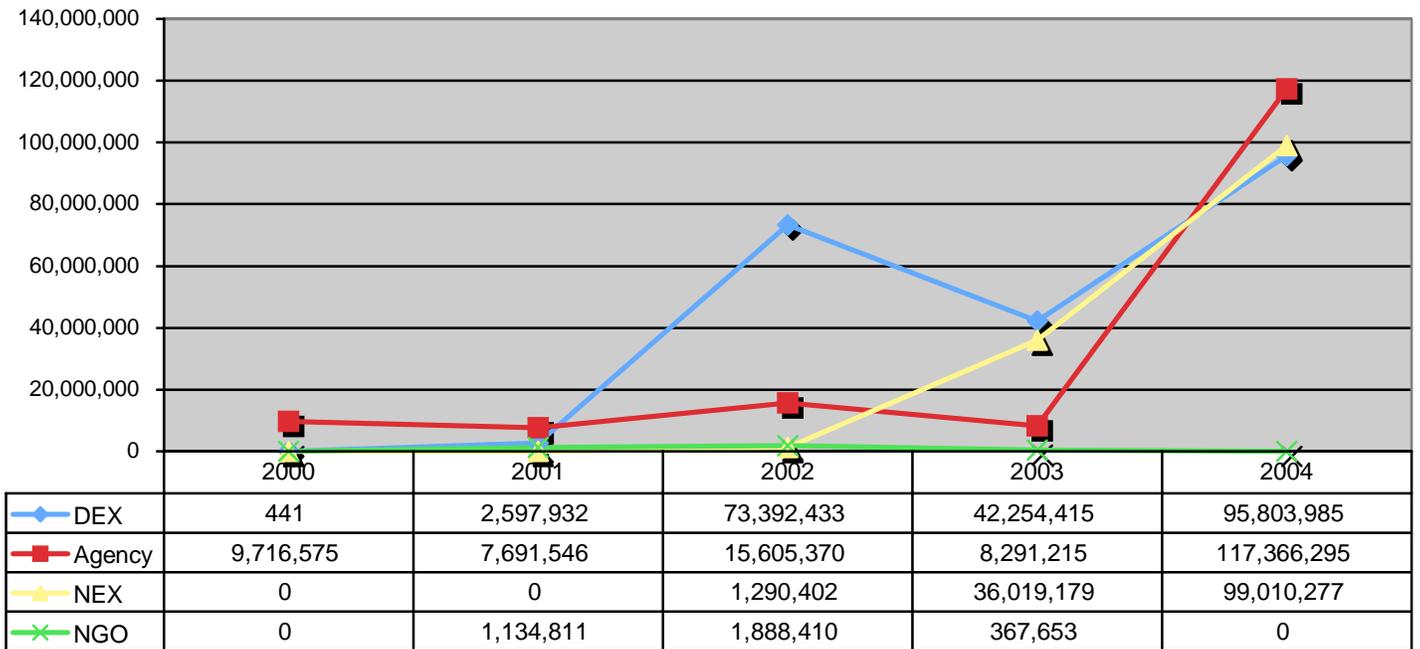
UNDP normally implements its programmes through the Government or other national entities. This is referred to as national execution. Under this formula, the national entity receives and administers funds and is fully responsible for all aspects of the agreed project. On the other hand, the direct execution modality implies that UNDP itself manages the project directly, normally through a special direct execution unit located in the country office. Implementation responsibility can also be delegated to another United Nations agency or to international NGOs. Direct execution applies mainly in countries emerging from conflict, where national capacity is still weak. The objective of UNDP is to gradually transfer implementation to national entities as capacity is built up.

The table below shows the evolution of different implementation modalities between 2000 and the end of 2004. It illustrates the progress achieved since 2002 in shifting a significant proportion of programmes to the Government. The national execution formula, as it is now applied in Afghanistan, still implies intensive coaching and oversight by the UNDP office, but it does form part of a very sensible strategy of gradually empowering national authorities.

**Figure 4: Proportion of Expenditures by Execution Modality (2000-2004)**



**Figure 5: Expenditures by Executing Agent (2000-2004)/US Dollars**



Source : United Nations country office, Afghanistan

#### 4.4 Efficiency of response and organizational flexibility

UNDP has recently achieved impressive progress in developing structures, mechanisms and procedures designed to make the organization more responsive to the special needs of countries in crises or emerging from conflict. A study<sup>17</sup> undertaken by UNDP in 2002 identified a broad typology of operational flexibility based on actual operational responses in eight different post-conflict situations.

Comparing this theoretical framework with the actual UNDP response in Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban, it appears that the organization has been particularly successful in three major areas:

- a) Assuming new or emergency-related roles at short notice. Within days of the establishment of the Afghan Interim Authority in December 2001, UNDP advanced funds for basic supplies and equipment for the new ministries and set up the Afghan Interim Authority Trust Fund to ensure that civil servants' salaries could be paid promptly. UNDP also provided crucial support for the organization of the Emergency Loya Jirga and also supported all the successive political benchmarks of the Bonn process.

<sup>17</sup> 'Flexibility in Crises and Post-Conflict Situations – Best Practices from the Field', published in 2004 by the UNDP Evaluation Office. Afghanistan was not included among the cases studies.

- b) Flexible project implementation. UNDP moved quickly to establish a capacity for direct execution of projects and for managing large Trust Funds in response to the requirements of donors.
- c) Rapid initial deployment of expertise. UNDP deployed the necessary expertise to participate in a joint assessment of needs together with the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. This assessment provided the basic document for the International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan, held in Tokyo on 21 and 22 January 2002 (although one account suggested that UNDP was marginalized – see Johnson and Leslie 2004).

The evaluation team found, however, that UNDP is still perceived as an overly bureaucratic and slow organization. The major weaknesses identified were delays in the procurement of goods through the New York Contracts Committee and in the transfer of funds to ministries or other implementing agencies, even when the operation was a simple transfer on behalf of a donor.

#### **4.5 Increasing transparency**

Some members of Afghan ministries and many of the civil society representatives interviewed by the evaluation team perceived UNDP as a rather opaque organization. The exact contents of projects, details of implementation modalities and budgets are not easily accessible to outsiders. Transparency is particularly important in large scale post-conflict programmes such as the one in Afghanistan where there is a general perception that the large amounts of assistance announced in international conferences never seem to trickle down to concrete improvements for citizens.

#### **4.6 Human resources**

As mentioned above, UNDP successfully stepped in with temporary expertise at crucial moments, such as for the initial needs assessments prior to the Tokyo Conference, or for the occasional preparation of plans and appeals. UNDP also supported its country office in the early days of the post-Taliban period. A former Resident Representative was sent back to manage the Afghan Interim Authority Fund, an Operations Manager was deployed to strengthen the human resources function and procurement and finance personnel was deployed on loan from other offices.

Prior to the establishment of UNAMA, the UNDP country office operated as a joint office of UNDP and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance in Afghanistan, with the head of that office combining the functions of Humanitarian Coordinator and Resident Representative of UNDP. With the advent of UNAMA, the humanitarian component folded into the new United Nations structure and UNDP once again became a stand-alone country office. Several internal audit reports have underlined the country office's slow process of adaptation to the new environment, and by July 2004, the country office was still described as "...operating in a 'fire-fighting' reactive mode..."<sup>18</sup>. UNDP has now finally moved away from the emergency mode of management and, in the words of the current Country Director,

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<sup>18</sup> 'Limited Scope Audit: UNDP office in Afghanistan', report no. RCM 0144 issued on 5 July 2004.

“...the end of the Bonn process also means that UNDP is moving out of the Heroic Period...”.

National staff constitutes the essential backbone of any United Nations field operation. During the difficult period that preceded the ousting of the Taliban, when all United Nations international staff had been evacuated, it was the local staff of all agencies then operating in Afghanistan that maintained a permanent United Nations presence and ensured that a minimum of humanitarian relief was available under war conditions. UNDP took considerable time in transferring its staff and activities to Kabul from Islamabad, where most of the functions of the country office were located prior to the fall of the Taliban. UNDP finally completed its move to Kabul in June 2002, seven months after the installation of the new Afghan Interim Authority. The UNDP country office's prolonged exile in Pakistan prior to 2002 meant that several vacant posts had to be filled from among the Afghan population exiled in Pakistan. As a result of this, the composition of UNDP staff could not appropriately reflect the regional and ethnic diversity of Afghanistan.

Despite the numerous initial difficulties, the build up of human resources has accelerated in recent years, peaking at the end of 2003 with a total of 1015 staff (all categories, including project staff) and now standing at some 700. Despite the increase in numbers, UNDP still faces considerable difficulty in attracting its best senior staff to what has become the organization's largest programme. For example, there was a three to four month gap (between November 2004 and February 2005) before the critical post of Country Director was filled by a very senior and seasoned UNDP officer with several years of experience as Resident Coordinator in other situations.

#### **4.7 Monitoring and evaluation**

The evaluation team examined UNDP activities in Afghanistan bearing in mind that the exercise was not a detailed evaluation of programmes and projects in Afghanistan but rather a case study contributing to the broader objective of assessing the role and contribution of the organization in countries affected by conflicts. The team nevertheless examined project documents and briefing notes on programme activities. As in the other case studies covered, while UNDP Afghanistan has been relatively meticulous in maintaining a record of project and programme outputs, indicators pertaining to broader programme outcomes relating to human security and development have not been monitored. For instance, there is no data collected to track the effects of agricultural infrastructure rehabilitation activities of the NABDP on incomes in target communities.

The team also noted that many of the documents were rather weak in establishing a clear link of causality between inputs, outputs and outcomes. The latter, in particular, are often defined in such broad terms that their accomplishment (or absence thereof) can be attributed in only a very indirect manner to the UNDP input. The 2004 internal audit report quoted earlier also notes “...the absence of work plans and benchmarks to monitor and evaluate activities and performance at project level...” Monitoring and evaluation

functions are also hampered by restrictions imposed on staff movement due to the security situation and by the absence of core UNDP staff outside Kabul

The assignment of UNDP programming and monitoring staff in the eight regional offices of UNAMA could also help the organization develop much needed outreach beyond the capital.

## 5. Lessons learned

### 5.1. Lessons learned for the United Nations in general, including UNDP

- a) The main goal of the international community in Afghanistan was state-building. But state-building should have been viewed as a means to an end: human security, i.e. the safety and well-being of individual Afghans. The 1970s saw a disenchantment with state-building due to the lack of legitimacy of states – their authoritarian, predatory character. The 1980s and 1990s saw a shift in focus to markets and civil society. The interest in state-building in Afghanistan is a welcome reversal of the focus during the 1980s and 1990s. However, the risk in Afghanistan is that an authoritarian state is being reproduced with international complicity. What is needed is state-building for human security. Such a strategy would have meant, from the beginning:
- An emphasis on human rights, political and civil as well as economic and social. This could include:
    - i) Public security (law and transitional justice), which is the key prerequisite for safety.
    - ii) Legitimate livelihoods. Legal jobs are a key priority as they provide an alternative to militias, drug trafficking and so on.
    - iii) Women’s rights.
  - An emphasis on legitimate political authority, that is, administrative capacity that reaches out to people and emphasizes both participation and delivery.
  - A bottom-up approach, which implies wide consultation with civil society about how to set priorities. The international community tends to identify civil society as NGOs and traditional organizations. In Dari, civil society tends to mean critical intellectuals. It is these people, together with the newly created *shuras* and women’s groups that need to be consulted. This will be very important in relation to the new Afghan National Development Framework.
  - Cross border elements. The focus on state-building per se tends to neglect the regional dimension of human insecurity. Whether the concern is jobs or the insurgency and drug trafficking, a strategy toward neighbouring countries and borders is critical.
- b) There is an urgent need for structural change in delivery. It is important to change the expensive, competitive culture of international agencies. Some suggestions include:
- Agree upon a standard salary scale for nationals. This was tried in Tokyo but failed.
  - Agree upon a generalized procedure for contracts for all United Nations agencies, except UNAMA. Establish a local committee comprised of both Afghans and internationals.
  - Give priority to nationally managed programmes (both the State and local NGOs) and establish preferential terms for national procurement.

- Increase transparency by publishing audit and monitoring reports as well as project documents.
  - Establish realistic human security indicators.
  - Increase delegated authority for local spending.
- c) There is a need to rethink security rules. The current procedures for dealing with security in conflict zones need to be totally re-evaluated so as to ensure that United Nations personnel can interact with society, and their safety is not seen as privileged over the safety of nationals.
- d) There needs to be a rethinking of the notion of ‘phases’ and ‘time frames’ in conflict situations.

## 5. 2 Specific lessons for UNDP

- a) UNDP needs to decide what sort of organization it is – is it a service provider in conflict? Is it a development agency? Or is it both? While it should probably perform both functions, UNDP should focus on the development role during conflicts. In the case of Afghanistan, this means an emphasis on governance and job creation at a provincial and district level since UNDP’s traditional community development role was supplanted by the World Bank. In future, this is also likely to be the case in other areas. However, the sort of small-scale projects undertaken by the NSP do not generate sustainable livelihoods. What is needed is the establishment of functioning *shuras* at district and provincial levels linked to small-scale income-generating projects such as carpet weaving or brick making.
- b) UNDP needs to capitalize on its long-term knowledge and experience in conflict countries. Many people have stressed the fact that UNDP was present in Afghanistan before, during and after the conflict, but the ending of the PEACE programme meant that UNDP failed to build on its experience.
- c) UNDP needs a surge capacity for development. Humanitarian agencies are much more rapid in gearing up for emergencies. But the lesson of Afghanistan, as also other conflict countries, is that development efforts need to be sustained through conflicts.
- d) As a service provider in conflict, UNDP needs to emphasize capacity building. But capacity building needs to be understood in substantive ways. In the post-2001 period, there was an urgent need to pay salaries and undertake basic training. But this is not the same as building administrative capacity. Salaries may be paid to unqualified people; training may encourage the best people to find other jobs. In the case of the elections, of course, capacity-building was subordinated to the need for speedy delivery.
- e) UNDP needs to increase its own transparency. The UNDP country office could gain credibility by developing clear statements about funds actually received against planned budgets and pledges, and then posting on its website and generally making public signed project documents with their full budget as well

as monitoring and evaluation reports. Increased transparency is also required regarding the rules for calculating the varying percentages retained by UNDP and, as applicable, by its implementing agents on funds contributed by donors. This openness should also relate to the respective shares of such administrative fees going to UNDP Headquarters and to the country office and the utilization of such funds.

- f) UNDP needs to improve its own monitoring and evaluation. It would be important for UNDP to establish stand-alone capacity – perhaps in the form of a separate project – to monitor the outcome and impact of UNDP’s programme of assistance.
- g) UNDP needs to find ways to increase the speed and efficiency of delivery. Procurement performance can easily be addressed through a greater delegation of authority to a local Contracts Committee established with the necessary guarantees of independence and accountability. The UNDP country office currently enjoys a delegation for purchases and contracts of up to US \$100,000 while the United Nations Office for Project Services country office, for example, can contract for up to US \$2 million without referring back to their Headquarters.
- h) UNDP needs to improve the quality of personnel, both expatriates and nationals, to match its strategic priorities. As a service provider in conflicts, it needs personnel experienced in conflict as well a roster of experts in the varied tasks that may be required (DDR, transitional justice, de-mining, counter-narcotics, etc.). In a key posting like Afghanistan, UNDP needs to offer career incentives to ensure that the very best people are deployed. There is a need for UNDP to review its personnel policy so as to ensure that its most experienced staff are attracted and selected for service in difficult emergency situations. An attractive incentive package needs to be developed, which would reward service in countries in crises or emerging from conflict. Such incentives could include accelerated promotions and within grade increments as well as an upgrade in conditions of life and service. National recruitment needs to be broadly based, fair and meritocratic.

## **Annex I: List of People Consulted**

Mission Team: Mary Kaldor, Rajeev Pillay, Carrol Faubert, Mohamed S. Niazi, Khaled Ehsan, Nurul Alam

### **United Nations**

Mr. Chris Alexander, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General  
Ms. Ameerah Haq, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General

### **UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)**

Ms. Julie Lafreniere, Deputy Programme Director

### **UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) Afghanistan**

Mr. Dave Edwards, Deputy Country Director

### **World Bank, Afghanistan**

Mr. Jean Mazurelle, Director

### **UNDP Afghanistan**

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### **Others contacted**

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Mr. Horia Musadiq, Head of the Human Rights and Research & Advocacy Consortium (HRRAC)  
Mr. Saeed Rahim Satar, Eng. Mohammad Sharif, Dr. Mohammad Humayon and the representatives from the Afghan NGOs Coordination Body (ANCB)  
Mr. Mohammad Nasib, Director of Wadan (Afghan NGO)  
Mr. Amerzai Sangin, Minister for Communications  
Ms. Sitara, Asst Country Director (ACD), Head of Democratization & Civil Society  
Mr. Sima Samar, Director of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission  
Mr. Ahmad Nader Naderi, Head of the Free & Fair Elections Foundation (FEFA)  
Gen. Rahim Wardak, Defense Minister  
Mr. Soroush, Programme Manager, Area Base Development Programme (ABDP)  
Ms. Fulya Vekiloglu, Project Manager, Support to Ministry of Women Affairs (MOWA)  
Mrs. Eba Tarzee, Wazhma Popal and Mrs. Malika Qanah, the Afghan Women Network

(AWN)

Mr. Aziz Rafiee, Director of the Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF)  
Mr. Abdul Malik Kamawee, Deputy of Supreme Court  
Mr. Mir Ahmad Joynda, Parliament Member, Chairman of FCCS, Deputy Director of AREU  
Mr. Abdul Jabbar Taqwa, Governor of Parwan  
Chief of Provincial Police, Law and Order Trust Fund (LOTFA)  
Mr. Sarwar Danish, Minister of Justice  
Mr. Abdul Bari and State Building Unit  
Mr. Abdul Satar Murad, Governor of Kapisa  
Mr. Basil Massey, OIC, Afghanistan New Beginning Programme  
Mr. Youns Payab and Sustainable Livelihood Unit  
Mr. Talat Big, UNAMA Kandahar  
Mr. Abdul Rashid Fakhri, Deputy Minister of Economics  
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Mr. Liu Shunkun, Chinese Embassy  
Mrs. Irina Kaye Muller-Schike, Germany Embassy  
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Mr. Hanif Atmar, Minister for Rural & Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD)  
Mr. Jolyon Leslie, Chief Executive Officer, the Aga Khan Trust for Cultures  
Mr. Vladimir Krivenkov, Project Manager, Law and Order Trust Fund (LOTFA)  
Mr. Niamatullah Ibrahim, Researcher, International Crisis Group  
Mr. Saeed Mohammad Naizi and Mr. Omar Sharifi, Foundation for Culture and Civil Society  
Gen. Basir Haider, Ministry of Interior  
Mr. Javid Ludin, Presidential Chief of Staff

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